

CAL POLY

SAN LUIS OBISPO

English Department

THE MEDIAL CAESURA

2013

Kickin' it with Kauffmann

Meet one of our newest faculty:

Dr. Krista Kauffmann

Conference Conundrum?

Check our tips and tricks before your next presentation

Celebrating Our Talented Students:

Photography, poetry, paintings and more!

A Letter from the Director



Were I to take the above image (covertly swiped from some online repository by our student editors) as a prescriptive prompting, I might use this space to wax eloquently about the delectable nature of grad course dialectic, the variegated and colorful contours of intellectual inquiry, or the post-structuralist's call to dive beneath the airily whipped surface of meaning before licking it up. Given the nature of what follows, however, it seems more appropriate to linger over some of the more deliciously distinctive qualities of the graduate program at Cal Poly.

If our graduate program qualifies as the most rigorous in the state with a five-part comprehensive exam that draws upon a reading list more exhaustive than those of any other UC or CSU M.A. programs it also boasts one of the more friendly, hospitable English departments anywhere. Faculty regularly open their homes to

grad students for department parties and film screenings, work alongside students outside of class to prepare their work for off-campus venues, and occasionally accompany those students to conferences and other professional development events. Faculty and students join forces through course curricula that privilege the reading list, “evenings with the pros” that survey requested literary periods, and student-led study groups that meet regularly throughout the summer and school year.

Our students may occasionally pause from study, but as the following articles will attest, they lose no creative momentum in doing so. Arguably, it is this very willingness to let loose that grants their professional work such creativity and energy when they turn back to their books. We hope you enjoy this display of play. It helps make us who we are.

- Dr. Paul Marchbanks

CAL POLY DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH THE MEDIAL CAESURA 2013

The Medial Caesura is published for alumni, faculty, students, prospective students and friends of the English Department.

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[english.calpoly.edu/content/
engl_masters](http://english.calpoly.edu/content/engl_masters)



A Letter from the Editors

Our direction and motivation for the flagship issue of The Medial Caesura lies at the heart of its very name. As with most programs, it is the time spent between classes that registers most of the fun, anxiety and friendship that constitute the graduate experience. This liminal space of sorts resembles the empty gap between two alliterative lines that calls out to be filled. We must work hard in grad school to ensure that each week becomes more than the sum total of the research papers due at the end of the quarter or the mounds of books weighing down our backpacks. Grad school should be all about the adventure that is, well, postbaccalaureate life. If you are new to the scene, you will find out at some point that the students of the English M.A. program are exceptional always working toward that next practical joke or enjoying dress-up movie nights together. We want the magazine to reflect all that is unique about our program: serious-minded individuals who enjoy great books and excellent company. Whether you are a new Teaching Associate (TA), an incoming first-year student, or an alumni from cohorts past, you'll find the program filled with the spirit of collaboration and fun. We have some of the best professors around (trust us), and you are never far from a sympathetic ear or a helping hand. So while some may think of the Medial Caesura as an empty space, we consider it a place that connects us alliterative line by alliterative line.

- Bek and Cait

INSIDE

WELCOME

01: A Letter from the Director

02: A Letter from the Editors

•

FEATURE

04: Kickin' it with Kauffmann

by Cait Emma Smith

•

GRADUATE SPOTLIGHT

07: The Teacher by Bek Maples

08: The Writer by Cait Emma Smith

•

REBUTTALS

09: Susie Kopecky vs. Dr. Regulus

Allen

•

THE ARTISTS' PAGES

11: OUR TALENTED COHORTS AT THEIR

CREATIVE BEST

AROUND OUR TOWN

GREAT PLACES TO GO IN

SAN LUIS OBISPO

21: On the Road

22: The Spirit of San Luis

23: Brewing up a Good Time

24: Let Loose at the Rec Center

24: Spa Salvation

•

CONFERENCES

25: Jump on the Craze

27: Conference Tips from Carly

•

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

28: Catch up with Beloved Alumni

•

THE YEARBOOK

30: Our Academic Year in Images

KICKIN' IT WITH Kauffmann



In any department at any university a new professor's arrival generates plentiful ruminations. Students and faculty alike wonder how this latest addition to their community will fare. Where did she come from? What will she bring to the table? (Or, if you're a student, you ask the really important question is she a hard grader?) As questions like these buzz through the hallowed halls of our community, it becomes clear that everyone is excited about one of our newest additions, Dr. Krista Kauffmann.

This year Kauffmann relocated to the warm sands of the West Coast from the

chilly Midwest, having earned her B.A. at Goshen College in Indiana and her M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and having taught briefly at the University of South Florida. Although some might have a hard time adjusting to San Luis Obispo's grocery tote-bag requirements, its proscription against drive-throughs, and the town's pervasively optimistic atmosphere, Kauffmann is fitting in quite nicely. My fellow graduate students join me in appreciating her kindness, approachable attitude, and thorough lectures.

But wait, fellow San Luis Obispan, don't let the sweet demeanor fool you Kauffmann will be adding a little edge to our intellectual lives, too.

Soon after some quick banter about frustration with campus traffic and our love of "Buffy the Vampire Slayer," I realized that her academic interests aren't as light or

as easy to digest as stop signs and girl power. As her dissertation attests, she involves the violent, the visual and the tensions between war and culture.

As students in her 20th Century British Literature course can testify, the material in her syllabus is soaked in heavy themes. Covering an array of novels, from the post-colonial violence of J. M. Coetzee's "Waiting for the Barbarians" to the World War I heartbreak of Pat Barker's "Regeneration," her course examines novels that have shocked several of our experienced graduate students. (One student mentioned having nightmares about trenches and bodies following class). But Kauffmann isn't here to present our graduate students with violence for violence's sake. With each text, Kauffmann incorporates an interdisciplinary examination of the history, art and social assumptions addressed by these novels. She reflects, "I hope my inter-disciplinary approach helps students consider new forms of interdisciplinary scholarship." It's not always easy to teach violence without making one extremely uncomfortable (certainly, shock regularly informs at least 20 minutes of in-class discussion time), but however it happens, her graduate students leave campus

at 10 p.m. every Monday, intellectually filled to the brim.

This passion for interdisciplinary work was not born out of a casual hobby. Torn between studying art history and literature, Kauffmann found herself equally excited by the richness of both fields. Ultimately, however, she did have to privilege one over the other, and aren't we glad she chose literature? Smiling, she notes, "Literary studies allows me more flexibility intellectually and pedagogically, opening itself to ideas and perspectives from a host of disciplines that challenge me." We know this passion for intermixing art, history and literature will continue to enrich her courses at both the graduate and undergraduate level in the years to come.

Indeed, it was comforting to hear her perspective on our field. Entering a master's program in English isn't always an easy decision: many prospective students worry about time, money and ahh, yes career options. But Kauffmann's own journey provides inspiring proof that literary studies can cater to a multitude of interests and skill sets. Admittedly, the increasingly interdisciplinary nature of the field makes it



rather amorphous. As Kauffmann observes, "Our field is hard to define sometimes. People outside of it think you are correcting grammar." Fortunately, what she is doing extends far beyond commas and semicolons; she is showing her students that scholarship is beneficial in innumerable ways.

Avila Beach may not be Lake Michigan, but we sure hope Kauffmann feels as at home here in San Luis Obispo as we do in her classroom.

Make sure to check out the next issue of The Medial Caesura to meet another addition to our community: Dr. José Navarro.



Recently Graduated...

THE TEACHER



Imagine it's your first day on the job — you're teaching junior-level English at a high school when, all of a sudden, sirens pierce the air and echoes of a bomb threat reach your classroom. What do you do? If you're Casey Woods, you immediately realize that no one at your new job has bothered to train you in the fine art of emergency procedures. Luckily for Casey, when this happened last fall, her students kindly walked her through the steps of securing the classroom, and she locked everything down in record time.

Casey has successfully made the leap from hard-working grad student at Cal Poly to hard-working teacher at Shasta High School in Redding, Calif. Guiding her students through American literature, she has already experienced the excitement and drama of high school teaching, which has obviously led to participating in a flash mob. "During one of our rallies the Associate Student Body adviser roped a bunch of us into participating. We danced to 'Gangnam Style' and 'Call Me Maybe' among other things," says Casey flashing her trademark grin.

When she's not busy busting moves, Casey enjoys the enthusiasm and inventiveness her young students bring to her desk. "I assigned a detention to a student the other day for excessive tardies, and he wanted to know if there were another option besides giving up his lunch, to which another student responded, 'What are you talking about? Serving detention with Miss Woods is a privilege. Darn it, I don't think she heard me. Serving detention with Miss Woods is a privilege!'"

Student snarkiness aside, I know firsthand that working with Casey really is a privilege. Having shared anxieties over our 134 classrooms and tackled difficult writing assignments with her, it's apparent that Casey is a gifted instructor and scholar. She has a knack for phrasing an argument or noticing subtle themes in a text that has always astounded me. I'm sure this sharpness translates to her current classroom while she discusses the intricacies of "The Great Gatsby" or "The Waste Land."

Moving from college-level to high school instruction often provides new challenges, but Casey has met them with confidence and finesse. Even her colleagues who have observed her classes have marveled at her advanced ability to keep her students engaged and learning. Casey notes, "I feel like teaching 134 prepared me for this experience. Simply being comfortable in front of a group of people as well as that experience of facilitating discussions has helped me work confidently through the struggles of learning the ropes at a new school and establishing myself with students."

Fortunately, Casey's exciting new life in Redding has not completely erased fond recollections of Cal Poly. "I miss writing papers. I also miss getting lost in ideas. I miss being around other people who lose sleep over books. But let's be honest — I also miss snack time," jests Casey, recalling Professor Hampsey's epic mid-class breaks.

Casey advises those who will follow in her footsteps to remain confident because according to Casey, "You know what you're talking about." Lecture notes and annotated copies of the classics have aided her current lesson planning and carried her enthusiasm from grad school to high school.

Her last suggestion concerns CD mixes labeled "Confidence," apparently an integral part of the job search. Graduating students looking for work should check out edjoin.org while listening to said mix. Press play on your "power playlist . . . check postings often, apply widely, and be willing to travel at a minute's notice," says Casey. While we miss Casey here, I'm sure she'll raise her wholesome, down-to-earth attitude to new heights in the academic world.

- Bek Maples



THE WRITER

A recent alumna, Julia Bluff, isn't at risk of being forgotten. Instead of speeding away from the San Luis Obispo area and bidding farewell to the Cal Poly community, Julia has stayed local, putting her graduate writing skills to good use. Forgive me, not good use — fantastic use. As a collaborative writer for the local company iFixit, Julia and her co-workers promote recycling by creating at-home electronic repair instructions made available online.

Originally Julia had considered entering a Ph.D. program after graduation, but has instead found herself researching computers and phones instead of T.S. Eliot and Allen Ginsberg. However, that doesn't mean her powers of persuasion aren't being utilized daily. Julia admits she's not practicing the same style of composition found in her college papers, but the writing skills so prized by iFixit were honed while earning her M.A. in English. Reflecting, she notes, "Cal Poly made me a much better writer. I became a more critical judge of my own writing while learning how to outline and organize my thoughts so as to deliver them effectively."

Hear that, guys? The practice of critically judging your writing isn't going anywhere, no matter your professional destination. So that means all the sweat, blood and tears we cry over our graduate papers will help us out one day, right? Indeed.

Talking about her writing experiences at Cal Poly, Julia laughs and recalls the time a paper was returned that she thought she had aced, only to have her work questioned and criticized. "The first time I was ever called out on my writing was by Dr. Marchbanks. I had just worked on a short essay response for some Dickens novel. I felt good about my response and didn't edit carefully. I thought I had, but obviously did not — not as much as I should have. And it was the first time, I think, that anyone has ever called me out on being sloppy: it was mortifying. But I learned to be meticulous about my writing style and have remained so ever since." Luckily for her, that early mortification helped Julia become one of the top collaborative writers at iFixit today.

One of the most important facets of her job requires writing alongside and in conjunction with other writers, one of the hardest tasks out there. But she plows through, offering productive criticism and receiving criticism en route to a



"I blushed, I got over it, and became a much better writer."



concise and accessible product ready for public viewing. Despite the challenge of earning her master's Julia recalls her experiences with aplomb: "I blushed, I got over it, and I became a much better writer."

See more of Julia's work and find out about the iFixit team at www.ifixit.org.

- Cait Emma Smith

REBUTTALS

THE LOOOONG *Eighteenth Century*

VS.

The Defense *of the Eighteenth Cenutry Novel*

The other night, a question vexed me: where had I heard that absolutely spot-on description of the early British novel before? I Googled “big baggy monster.” To my surprise, I found it was revered novelist and critic (and writer of his own baggy monsters) Henry James, who wrote that slightly different and very apt description of long novels, “loose, baggy monsters.” (When reading some novels, I sometimes wonder just how many of the authors were spurred on by friends who dared them to keep writing and never stop.) I’m not saying that every single baggy novel is also monstrous; I’m just saying that we should not have to read some of these early British baggy monsters such as “Tristram Shandy,” “Pamela,” “Clarissa” and “Joseph Andrews” for the M.A. exam.

The early writers should be revered because they tried something new — indeed, bravo to them for trying something new. However, as is widely recognized, some of these early attempts at the novel, such as “Joseph Andrews” and “Tristram Shandy”, are most noteworthy, not for their actual content, but for the fact of their existence. (Oh snap — “Shamela” and “Joseph Andrews” were Richardson’s early novel snipes at fellow novelist Fielding? Oh ... um ... cool story, bro, but how does that help advance my knowledge of English literature as a whole?) These are early sketches of the models, which later writers would perfect.

I’m not saying that these early novelists didn’t have valid concerns — they did have valid concerns; they took on the mammoth task of “constructing appearances” and having to convince readers of the realism of their worlds, rather than simply “record[ing] reality,” as scholar George Levine points out. However, most of the early modern novel selections on the M.A. list are wordy, boring and awkwardly weighted in terms of actual plot/purpose versus description. Since the novels of this era were in the experimental stages, they should be respected, but students should not have to read these literary yetis, unless they offer ideas that stand the test of time and are still relevant.

Reverence for these early novels should be promoted, but said reverence must be tempered with a more limited list of required early novel readings. Two or three of the best representations of early novels should be selected and turned into required reading for the M.A. program.

This streamlined list could include the good, the bad, and the ugly of modern fiction: one or two novels that exemplify the problems of length, balance and focus, that typically characterized this genre, and one or two works that still remain relevant and pedagogically useful today. This list would allow students to understand the era of the early novel by understanding a few texts very well. Two of the early modern novels from the M.A. list which do indeed stand the test of time are Jonathan Swift’s “Gulliver’s Travels” and Defoe’s “Robinson Crusoe.” Swift’s novel is still successful as a cutting social and political statement and serves as an excellent model of satire. Swift’s writing comes across as funny and relevant, and he makes it easy to identify with Gulliver — in other words, dude’s got style and, to this day, modern satirists can’t touch him.

Some argue that we should continue to read the same canonic selections we have been reading for the past few hundred years simply out of tradition and reverence, but that is a misguided notion. That would be like having pilots spend exhaustive amounts of time studying the Wright brothers’ amazing yet primitive airplane designs, rather than promoting reverence for their innovation in flight while focusing much more time and energy studying superior modern designs. Tired tradition without tangible utility of purpose is no reason to keep requiring students to read ambling early English novels. Sit and read through 300+ pages of loose, baggy monster just for the sake of it, just because of tradition? In the words of a popular meme, “Ain’t nobody got time for that!”

Most Sincerely,
Cornelius P. Huffington, Esq.

- Susie Kopecky

While novels bore the brunt of your attack,

I choose to use a form that’s more compact,
To show Augustan wit can still engage
In just two lines or “three-hundred-plus” page.

It seems the longer form can scarce compete

In this our present age of text and tweet,
But ev’ry modern novel that you see

A debt must owe the eighteenth century.

And while respect for this you might concede,

Can one truly respect what one won’t read?

You ask for novels, two to three, no more:

But of true novels our list asks just four.

(While Swift’s great satire shall not be forgot,

A novel Gulliver’s great tale is not),

And one book each seems not too much to learn

From Richardson, Defoe, Fielding and Sterne.

As for our list, some schools would call it spare

To find no Lennox, Burney, Smollett there;

They’d say that just four novels are too few

To show from whence all realism grew.

Portraits of poor, middling and elegant,

Class-conscious readers still find relevant.

Although a long and quite unwieldy medium

Will cause some people bouts of trying tedium,

And strange digressions might bring on some strife,

You’ll find, my dear Cornelius, such is life.

And life, with which these books aim to comport,

At times is dull, but few would wish it short.

And those who find in these books little lore,

Can learn to hone their patience if no more.

And learning patience is a goal to reach,

Especially by those who hope to teach.

For future students will someday submit

The “loose and baggy monsters” they have writ.

A teacher then would go indeed amiss

To cry, “I should not have to read all this!”

To whine and moan would surely be a crime:

For that response, ain’t nobody got time.

- Dr. Regulus Allen

•THE ARTISTS' PAGES•

This celebratory tour of the graduate program now pauses to explore our students' creative talents outside of the classroom.

Apparently, skill at parsing a phrase and applying new theories to old novels complement hidden finesse at framing surfers and punctuating the poetic line.

This edition's submissions include works from alumna Carli Sinclair and new graduate student Dani Schirmer.

ROLL
A
BEAT

Novel Hill Studio
- Carly Smoot

THE RUG

- Cait Emma Smith

The little glass pieces that
you step on
wedge into your sweaty
skin.
I promise I cleaned up
the mess,
but I suppose pieces crookedly
stabbed
deeper into this worn weaved cloth.
Perhaps
you'll buy a new
one.

TO DANIELLE

- Erika Pedersen

In an old van, heavy and fat
with luggage and family,
down a vacant road
in the heart of Spain,
I listen,
not to the heated, parental
fighting of the night before,
but the low humming of the engine.
And in the quiet of late afternoon,
miles behind and miles ahead,
legs and arms flop
easily and useless.
My arm contorted from the front seat
back to yours,
our pinkies interlocked,
and tight like matching hooks,
slowly swinging to an unsung rhythm.
Nothing ever spoken,
the Van Gogh sunflowers passing by us
through the heated glass
of the windowed walls.

PRAESENTIA EN ABSENTIA - Emily Olson

Poetry tells me love feels like a fire;
In Beatrice's ears it burned in iambic pentameter.
Poetry tells me love is our last hope
When we're ruminating over Dover's white cliffs.
Poetry tells me love means comingling-
Sometimes in the guts of a flea, if you're John
Donne.

But what I would say about love-
If I put it into verse, with a semblance of rhythm
and flow-
It's not a fire (that will eventually extinguish
itself)
It's not our last hope (even if it keeps us hopeful)
It's not always a comingling (which is better than
being alone).

Love is the reminder that I exist.
I love, therefore I am?
But the best love means shared love-
We love, therefore we are?

We know it in the contraries:
That which is was never not.
That which is here
Displaces not to there.

You are he who has kept me
Still in the ever-present moment
We like to call love.
Past, Present, Future, Here and There
Bound up together-
Love means stability.

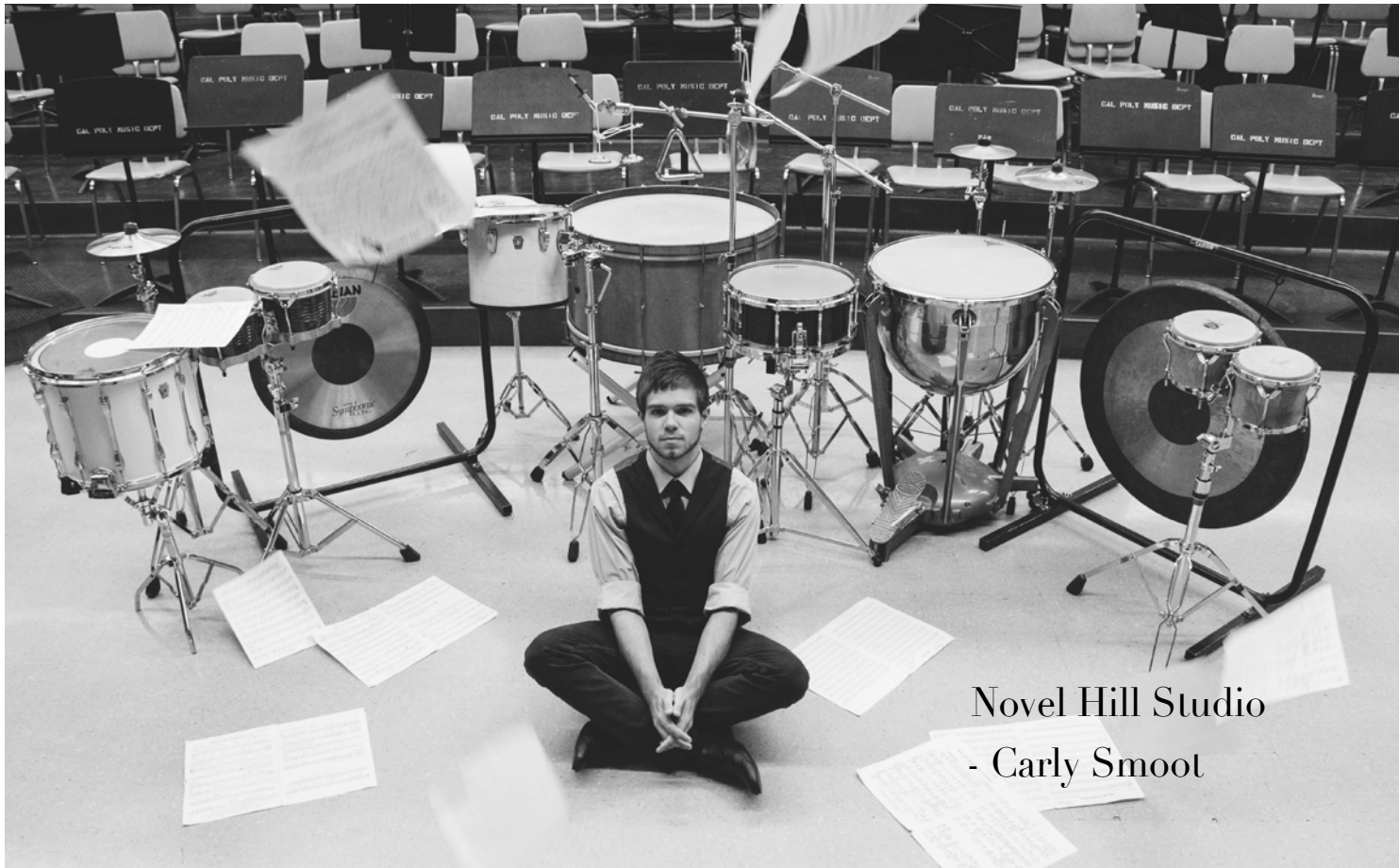
It is the green and
White in a quiet space and
Long conversations and
Staying up to see the sunrise and
Now love is letters and
Deferred desire. Now,
Love is the Past retained and
Remembered in the Present.

But the dismal autumn morning after you left
I died and slept for twelve hours,
Body and brain refusing
To consciously suffer
Your new absence.

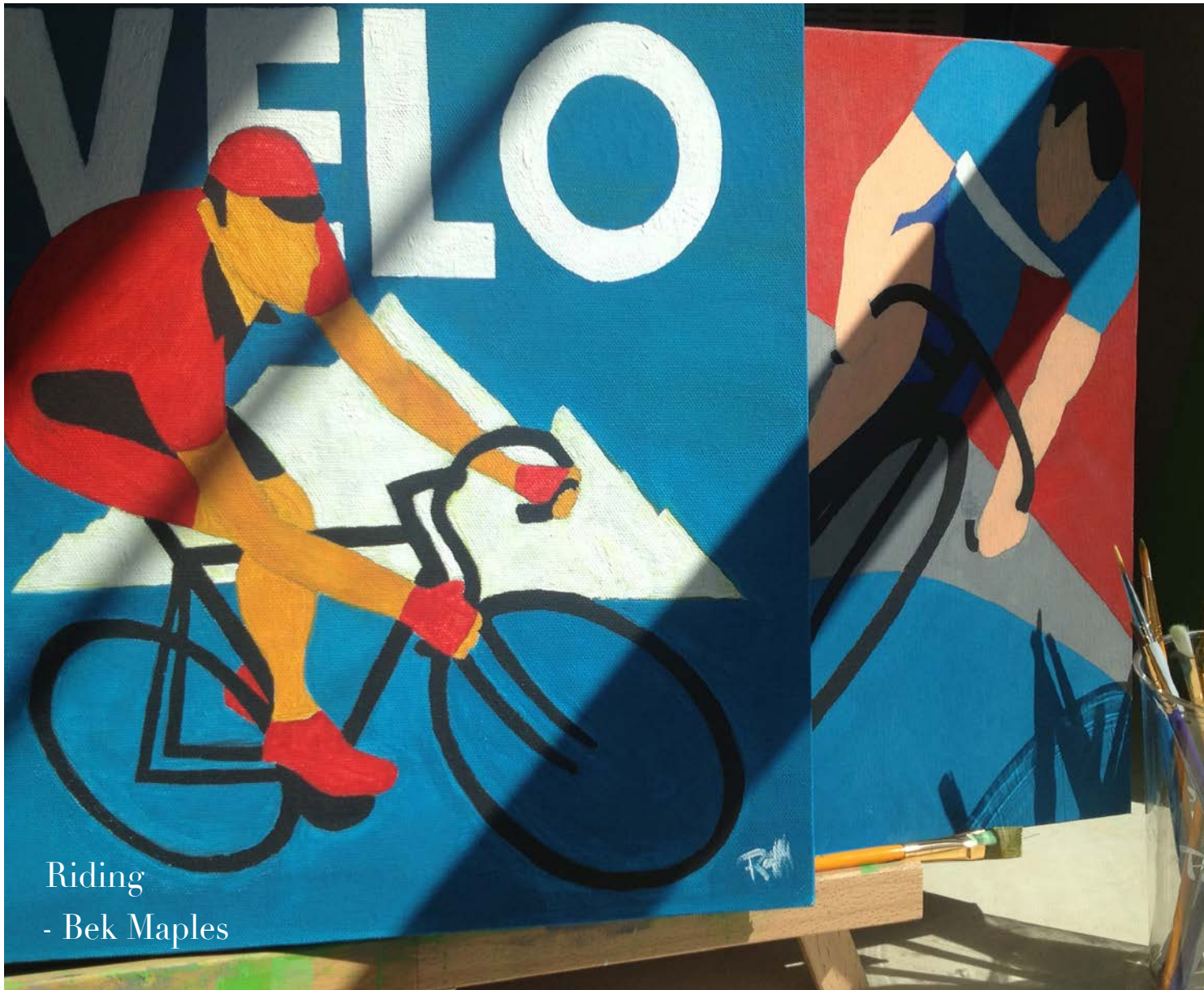


In the Airport
- Carli Sinclair





Novel Hill Studio
- Carly Smoot



Riding
- Bek Maples



MY GENDER EDUCATION –
LESSON TWO: THE DIFFERENCE
BETWEEN BOYS AND GIRLS
FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF A
NAIVE 18-YEAR-OLD SPENDING
SUMMER BREAK IN YOSEMITE

- Julia Bluff

The darkness was oppressive. It felt heavy, like a physical burden distilled through the very air, pressing down on me, its opaque vapor hands reaching for me through the blackness.

I should have known before the fear started crawling up my back that walking home on the first day of the new moon was going to be a stupid idea. But I was late that night. It had been busy at the tourist trap restaurant I worked at that summer, and I had spent more time than usual scraping half-eaten tourist cake and congealed tourist mashed potatoes off of their tourist plates. I was tired and pissed off, and, I was pretty sure, covered in grease from head to toe. The night air was a relief. I wasn't even mad that I missed the last bus of the evening – the shuttle that transported the very last stragglers back to the warm safety of a campfire – or in my case an employee house filled with 11 other female college renegades.

It was only one-and-a-half miles, after all. One-and-a-half miles on a little path through the fragrant, verdant pines and redwoods that I had loved since I was a child. One-and-a-half miles in the crisp, open air. One-and-a-half miles of beautiful silence that would punctuate the period in between the chaos of work and the chaos of my temporary home. One-and-a-half miles of freedom. But, as it turned out, that freedom was as feeble as the light cast by the new moon, which sputtered and stuttered and was eventually choked out altogether by the grasping, gnarled fingers of the looming trees.

The darkness blanketed me, cradled me, enclosed me. I couldn't see; I was blind and alone, feeling my way along a path in the middle of the forest and I couldn't see. But I could hear; God, I could hear everything. In the absence of sight, every sound became magnified. Every creak. Every snap of a twig. Every rustle, impossibly amplified by fear, froze me in my tracks, conjuring up the image of something waiting, lurking, stalking its prey in the shadows. My breath held itself instinctively; the scared animal that none of us ever really evolve past listened hard into the darkness, just waiting for the least reason to run. But I shook it off, told myself to stop being a scared little girl and felt my way further into the darkness – one-and-a-half terrifying miles. Finally, I tumbled into my front door with a perverse sense of triumph. The conquering hero returns! I told my story to my compatriots with relish – detailing my fumbling steps, the terrifying moans and snaps and screams of the woods in the darkness. Hanging at the edge of the group, Blake listened and smiled and nodded. He had been working in the woods longer than I had. He'd been down that path before. "Yeah," he laughingly commiserated with me, "Every single noise in the woods becomes some blood-thirsty bear that's going to jump out and eat you." I turned to him, the question evident on my face. Bear, I thought. What bear? It hadn't even occurred to me to be afraid of a bear – or a mountain lion – or the outside chance of a rabid squirrel with vendetta. It never entered my mind; I've been taught to fear other things.

OBSERVATIONS

- Matt Carroll

•

The family leaves.
The stray cat stays.

You will never hear:
Beethoven play live.

If aliens find Twitter
They'll never understand.

Never wore sandals in 2012
Because of the Mayans.

If it was Global Cooling
We'd still bitch.

I hope the next iPhone
Prevents drunken texts.

Gay marriage can:
Save the economy.

I'd prefer if:
Kids were not seen.

If Christmas was a man
It'd still be news if it came early.

Disneyland welcomes you
To the Dark side.

Bartenders do not allow
Drinks to go.

Arizona is the largest
Gated community.

The deeper the cave
The better vision in darkness.

She was:
A lesson.

When a man glitters:
Vampire.



AROUND OUR TOWN

ON THE ROAD - Bek Maples

Looking for an adventure? Get your daily dose of Vitamin D, and recharge those book-drained batteries on a scenic ride to one of our local beaches. Whether you've got a classic Bianchi hanging in the garage or a shiny new Cervélo, this ride is tailored to your skill level.

Route A:

If you're up for a workout, leave campus via Grande Avenue to Johnson, and hit the rolling hills of Orcutt Road (be mindful of fast-moving traffic). A little jog at Tiffany Ranch, and you're headed toward the coasts of Pismo. Soak in the view and grab a snack at Old West Cinnamon Rolls before hopping on the bike and speeding back toward campus.

Distance: approximately 30 miles

Route B:

Maybe you're not really feeling the muscle-burning voyage of the rolling hills. If not, take the flatter route to Avila Beach from campus. Head out California to Foothill, and make your way to the 227 (Broad Street) via Higuera St. Take a right at Ontario Road and either head straight toward Front or grab the Bob Jones Trail entrance off of Ontario. Enjoy the view through the wooded landscape and golf course along the bike path. Take it easy, though, as there is often a great deal of slow-moving walkers and joggers sharing the trail.

Distance: approximately 25 miles

Route Easy:

Of course, you can always park your car near the Bob Jones Trail and strike a leisurely pace down to the Avila pier and back. Walk, run, or ride — it's worth the visit!

Distance: approximately 5 miles



THE SPIRIT OF SAN LUIS AT SALLY LOO'S - Megan Lancaster

It's likely that you've succumbed to the wonders of caffeine if you've been to grad school. That's when I started my own love affair with lattes. My quest for the perfect specimen eventually brought me to Sally Loo's (located near the Amtrak Station at 1804 Osos Street). In addition to making the most delicious latte I've had in San Luis, Sally Loo's offers a delicious array of salads, sandwiches, pastries — and their famous acai bowls (pictured). Acai's growing popularity rests on its audacious claim as the Amazonian superfood. It's chock full of antioxidants, a great way to counteract the inevitable stress that comes with managing a grad school schedule.

Because I love the acai bowl, I like to visit Sally Loo's with a friend. That way I can get the best of both worlds — split the acai bowl and the daily salad special. Even then

it's a tough call because everything I've tried on the menu or specials board tickles the senses. Imagine lemon crème and browned butter on crepe-like blueberry pancakes. Or the Bitchin' BLT (with brie) — which features another specialty item found frequently on the specials board: fried green tomatoes. All proof that Sally Loo's sets itself apart with its unique creations and quality staples.

You should also know that Sally Loo's provides outstanding customer service and does its best to use local, fresh, organic ingredients whenever possible, keeping in line with the true spirit of San Luis' farmers market and friendly disposition. Whether you're in the mood for a comforting bowl of vegan soup, a simple caffeine boost, a decadent breakfast, or a hearty sandwich, Sally Loo's is the spot.



BREWING UP A GOOD TIME

- Carly Smoot

The sweet smell of spilled drinks, bar food and sweat greets you in the doorway of SLO Brewing Company, one of the premier music venues in downtown San Luis Obispo. If music is your cup of tea or, more fittingly, your stein of beer, you might find yourself here. If you do, expect to find tunes pumping, people dancing, an aloof group or two perched in the corner watching the bands on stage through thick rimmed, Ray-Ban inspired eyewear, all in a rather small space (think a shoebox that exudes a cool quaintness with lots of trendy, exposed brick walls). This venue hosts concerts frequently and features many different types of music: rap, indie, reggae, folk — you name it. SLO Brew also hosts bigger concerts at the Madonna Expo Center (Snow Patrol and Modest Mouse are two of the big names coming soon), so you can hop back and forth between small and massive venues just to keep things interesting. Another perk of SLO Brew: if you get hungry from all of that crowd surfing (I know I do), you can pop upstairs and treat yourself to some good eats. Still not sold? Let me reiterate, this music venue is a bar and a brewery. Even if your girlfriend/boyfriend drags you to a concert in which you're less than interested, you can grab yourself a beer or cocktail and let liquid courage transform your evening. Is that a purple elephant on stage? If you like music, drinks, mostly cool people and food, SLO Brew is your place. Check out their events calendar on their website, www.slobrewingco.com, but please, don't forget your Ray-Bans.



LEARNING TO LET LOOSE AT THE REC CENTER

- Erika Pedersen

We all know that graduate school can be a bit time consuming — to say the least. Back in undergrad, we participated in dorm activities and went to school football games. We hung out in common rooms and watched late-night movies or joined a random group of school buddies to grab “fro yo.” But this is grad school. And in grad school, campus events are likely to take a back burner to late-night reading groups and study sessions.

But don't let those study sessions become ALL consuming. There is one place on campus worth checking out: our new state-of-the-art recreation center. Completed just last school year, this facility is nearly \$72 million of recreational paradise which may sound less appealing if you're not one that enjoys lifting weights or running marathons (I, for one, do neither.) But Cal Poly's rec center really does have a ridiculous number of options — from racquetball to sand volleyball, and swimming pools to group fitness classes (including yoga and spin). As an amenity funded by student fees, it's definitely a facility worth exploring. So, next time you are buried by reading, think about taking your books to the pool. Enjoy a late-night yoga class or two. Swap that fifth cup of coffee for a spin class with other stressed-out, graduate-student friends. It may be in one of those endorphin-crazed moments that you have your epiphany.

SPA SALVATION

- Cait Emma Smith

It's a fine thing to be a graduate student. Your mind is expanding frequently, your intellect is complimented regularly by family and friends, and your bedroom is shared by roughly 40 men, likely with the last names of Hemingway or James. Indeed, life is great when you are a graduate student ... as long as you don't care about your appearance.

It's far too easy, post-B.A., to forget to keep up appearances. Heck, I was a yoga-doing, swimming jogger until I got to graduate school. So giving all of that up to make it to four-hour night classes was the price I assumed I had to pay. So if I'm giving up my workouts would I care about my appearances? Hair care? Nope. New clothes? Ha. Pampering? Heck no. My two best friends, taxes and loans, would love to hear about all the ways I want to treat myself. However, Cait's going to be honest with you, sometimes you need a break from the bombardment of mental stimulation. This is my call to action. I am forcing you to get out of hallway 35 and join some of the grad students at a heavenly place called Day Nails and Spa.



Jump on the Craze: Going to a Conference

Experiences with Presentations: Talking with Bek Maples



Bek: Where did you find your conferences? Which ones did you attend? What did you present?

Cait: I went to the University of Texas (UT) at Brownsville, and I presented my work called “The Appeal of Appearances: Mapping Baudrillard’s ‘Simulacra’ in Christopher Marlowe’s ‘Dr. Faustus.’”

Emily: Southwest English Symposium at Arizona State, where I presented “Physical and Metaphysical Spaces in ‘Pearl.’”

Bek: How was the atmosphere?

Cait: Very welcoming, and since I was the only one from out of

state, everyone was very excited wondering why anyone from California would go to Brownsville, Texas.

Emily: If I had to describe the atmosphere, it would be disorganized and poorly attended. Don’t freak out expecting a huge crowd to show up to your panel, and be flexible with your schedule so you can move freely between presentations.

Bek: Why did you choose to present out of state?

Emily: It was a good opportunity to do something

different than we’re used to doing here at Cal Poly. It was a great chance to network and meet people with whom we could potentially work with in the future or who could help us get accepted in Ph.D. programs or into journals, etc.

Cait: I wanted to go somewhere that I had not been before. UT had a theme that really interested me, so I guess it was a sign.

Bek: What advice would you send along to students who have yet to attend a conference?

Emily: If I had advice for

anyone, it would be to go in with a positive attitude because the academic community at conferences is very welcoming of your input. They were really glad to see that a grad student came. And there were other grad students there as well. Also, there was swag!!! I got a tote bag, mug, pen and notebook.

Cait: What?!?! All I got was a pen that didn’t work!

Emily: My compensation for not having many people attend my panel was getting swag. I’m really glad for the experience.

Bek: What time did you arrive?

Emily: The evening before, to check in, when I listened to a keynote speaker. The next day I didn’t present until 3 p.m., so I showed up to a morning panel, stopped for lunch, and went to a few more panels before I presented. It ended at around 4 or 5 p.m. on that day. It’s okay not to get there right away, but you have to get there in time to register.

Bek: How snazzy did you dress?

Emily: I wore an outfit appropriate for teaching in the classroom – which would include a blazer, dark jeans and heels. But I don’t recommend walking around a lot because you’ll be uncomfortable. Wear comfy shoes.

Bek: How did you present your material? Did you just sit and read your paper, or did you have a more detailed presentation?

Emily: I did a combination of reading my paper and stopping to explain and speak extemporaneously.

Bek: How did networking go?

Emily: I met up with Sarah Grieve (class of 2007), who is thinking of coming back here to teach as soon as she finishes her Ph.D. It was really neat to see a Cal Poly graduate, and to know that Cal Poly prepares us for so many opportunities and opens lots of doors whether they are in the private sector or the field of academia. I didn’t attend her paper panel, but I’m sure it was amazing because she’s getting her Ph.D.

Bek: Any last tips?

Emily: Take a notebook!

Cait: Yes, take notes with the other conference papers. They’re all usually pretty cool.

- Emily Olson, Cait Emma Smith and Bek Maples





TIPS FROM THE BOSTON COLLEGE CONFERENCE

- Carly Smoot

On March 9, 2013, I attended a graduate paper conference at Boston College in Boston, Mass. (yes, we did get stuck in a blizzard, and it was awesome). The papers presented at this conference dealt in some capacity with health and mental health in literature. I presented a paper titled “The Damned Spot: Blood, Gender Difference and the Renaissance Body in Christopher Marlowe’s ‘Doctor Faustus’ and William Shakespeare’s ‘Macbeth’” that dealt with reading how blood functions in these texts, specifically for Dr. Faustus and Lady Macbeth. Overall, it was a wonderful opportunity for professional development, and I got to enjoy a place I had always wanted to go snow notwithstanding! That said, here are some tips for others who want to present at a paper conference in the future:

1. FIND A CONFERENCE IN A PLACE YOU REALLY WANT TO GO AND MAKE A LITTLE TRIP OF IT. IF YOU ARE GOING TO PAY TO TRAVEL THERE, IT MIGHT AS WELL BE SOMEWHERE YOU WANT TO VISIT.
2. FIND WAYS TO MAKE YOUR PRESENTATION ENGAGING. STOP AT MOMENTS AND CLARIFY POINTS TO THE AUDIENCE, MAKE EYE CONTACT WITH THEM, HAVE A HANDOUT OR A VISUAL, AND/OR TRY TO READ WITH GUSTO.
3. DON’T FEEL LIKE YOU HAVE TO PRESENT EVERYTHING IN YOUR PAPER. TAILOR YOUR PRESENTATION TO STAY WITHIN THE ALLOTTED TIME LIMIT, AND PRESENT YOUR STRONGEST POINTS AND IDEAS.
4. PRACTICE READING YOUR ABRIDGED PAPER OUT LOUD AND TIME YOURSELF. IF YOU CONSTANTLY GO OVER TIME, CUT BACK SO YOU CAN PRESENT CLEARLY AND CONCISELY. OTHERWISE YOU RISK LOSING THE AUDIENCE AND RUSHING THROUGH THE PAPER.

Where are they now?

Check up on past Cal Poly English grad students. From teaching to Ph.D.s and weddings to new pets, our alumni have been busy with post-M.A. life.

ERIN GALERIA / 2012 : I am currently teaching ninth grade English at Santa Maria High School. Since I had a little free time, I also planned my June 2013 wedding.

CARLI SINCLAIR / 2012 : This summer I moved my life to the Midwest in the pursuit of a Ph.D. in 19th century American lit at University of Missouri (and already missing San Luis Obispo).

MEGAN SLOCUM LANCASTER / 2012 : Since completing the M.A. program, I’ve been enjoying teaching freshman writing courses here at Cal Poly. I am also excited to be married to my husband of almost one year, Matt Lancaster.

LUKE HAWKINS / 2011 : After completing the M.A. program at Cal Poly, I was fortunate to be hired by Cuesta College as a part-time English instructor. I also continue to work as a technology education consultant, writing curriculum and providing professional development for elementary and secondary schools throughout California.

JESSICA DAVIS / 2011 : I am currently teaching English Language Development at Santa Maria High School and teaching English classes at Santa Barbara Business College in Santa Maria. I also taught tenth grade English for Upward Bound summer 2013 at Cal Poly.



BRINN STRANGE / 2011 : Since graduating, I have been teaching freshman composition at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg home to Brett Favre and just a short drive from the The Big Easy; I have a newfound love for jazz, shrimp and grits, and gators. My favorite pastimes are swimming, biking and running (it helps that it is so flat here) and I have placed among the top three in my age group at the three

triathlons which I have competed in since arriving in the South. While I miss San Luis Obispo terribly, especially when the humidity rolls in, life is good post-Cal Poly, and my education is serving me well!

ZACH DREW / 2011 : After graduating from Cal Poly, I was accepted into the Stanford Teacher Education Program where I have been working toward a teaching credential and an M.A. in education. I am on the verge of graduating, and I will begin working as a full-time English teacher in the fall.

KYLE KAMAIOPILI / 2011 : I am finishing up my Ph.D. coursework at Tuft's University

(one more semester until orals and all but dissertation!)

LIZZY GILBERT / 2010 : I've been living in Germany for nearly two years now, teaching English to everyone from professional athletes to scientists and businessmen and -women. I enjoy being able to travel around Europe and see many of the places I read about in the M.A. program and pursuing a Ph.D. in the future is not out of the question!



ELIZABETH CHAMBERLAIN / 2010 : I just finished the first year of my Ph.D. in rhetoric and composition at the University of Louisville, Kentucky. In my free time, I like to hang out with my pet rabbits, play board games, and garden (rather poor planning on my part, I guess, because one of my hobbies likes to eat the other two).

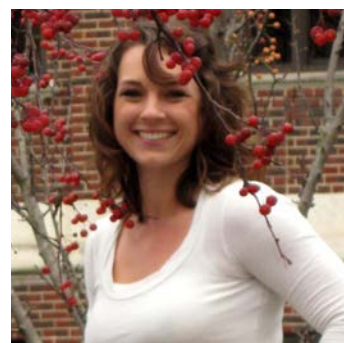
CHELSEA LYNN / 2010 : In addition to teaching and tutoring, I have explored Mayan ruins, swum in cenotes, driven a 4x4 on Fraser Island, road-tripped for three months solid, backpacked to natural hot springs, and made some amazing friends from around the globe. At the present moment I am happily embarking on several writing projects, including non-fiction travel narrative and a novel loosely based on some of my exploits.



ALISSA MAGORIAN / 2010 : I work at UC Davis in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions, where I assist with administrative duties, executive communications, and reviewing freshman applications. I also recently bought a house in Sacramento, where I am planting a large vegetable garden, and enjoy creative writing courses through UC Berkeley.

SARAH GRIEVE / 2009 : I am fourth-year Ph.D. candidate at Arizona State University. After graduating from Cal Poly, I attended Florida State University to earn an MFA in poetry. I am currently writing my dissertation on late modernist American women poets and their representations of environmental justice.

HELEN KNIGHT / 2009 : I am currently ABD in literary studies at Purdue, focusing on American literature to 1865. I am working on a dissertation about female sexuality in the early American novel (by which I mean until 1820 yes, obscurity is my friend!). My dissertation adviser is Dr. Christopher Lukasik.



THIS YEAR IN OUR DEPARTMENT...



CAL POLY WOMEN GOING TO SEE THE GREAT GATSBY MOVIE



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2012 - 13 GRAD REPS ERIKA PEDERSEN AND MORGAN LIVINGSTON

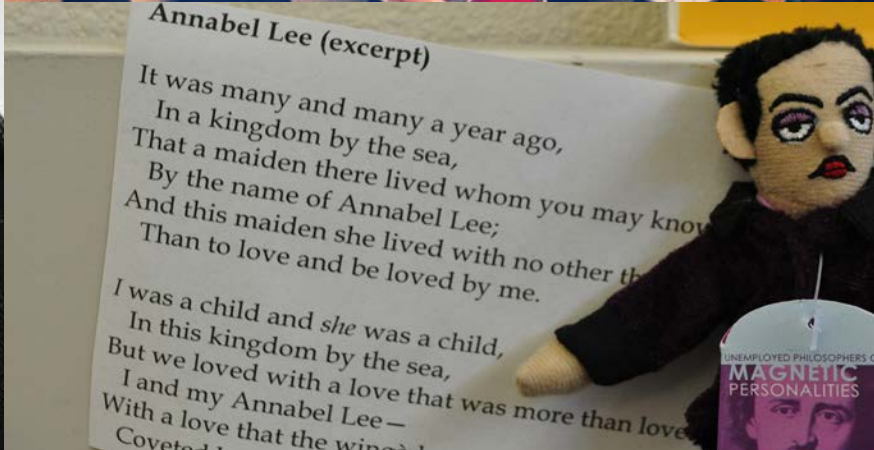


DR. FITZHENRY AND THE 17TH CENTURY BRITISH LITERATURE CLASS



CARLY SMOOT STUDYING HAMLET







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