Welcome to the second issue of English Unbound, which is being sent out as I begin the second year of my second term as Chair of the Department of English. Last year was certainly an action-packed adventure, with thousands of students coming to English for general education classes, hundreds of undergraduate majors, and more than 40 masters students in our two graduate programs (not to mention, although I do here, the collaborative relationship the English department has with the College’s Rhetorics, Communication, and Information Design Ph.D. program). We hosted many visiting speakers, and organized several different multi-day events—as you will see, below, the Clemson Collective on Race and Memory held a conference on Race, Memory, and the Present, and a team-taught year-long undergraduate course organized the 7th Annual Clemson Literary Festival. The former brought Professor Lisa Guerreo from Washington State and Professor Lisa Woolfork from the University of Virginia for lectures on the first evening, and faculty from across campus and the University of Georgia for morning presentations and a seminar workshop with Professors Guerrero and Woolfork on the second day. The Literary Festival brought novelists and poets, including Poet Laureate Natasha Tretheway, for readings on campus and throughout downtown. At the end of the Spring semester, we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the MA in English program, a graduate degree as old as Clemson University itself (because the MAE started the same year Clemson changed from College to University). MAE alum and best-selling author Ron Rash came back to talk about what the program has meant to him.

As all that was going on, the department also worked together to vet applications in 5 different tenure-track searches, all of them successful, as we hired 3 new tenure-track faculty in a Digital Rhetorics, Comparative Media, and Civic Culture, and one each in Creative Writing and Medieval Literature. More about all of these new faculty in our Spring newsletter. In the interim, take a look at the student-written updates about these departmental developments over the last year, and, as always, check in with us via email, the department’s webpage, Facebook, and/or Twitter. We’d be happy to hear from you, and are always amenable to a little help from our friends.

- Dr. Lee Morrissey

Upcoming Events

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New Faces of the Department

Dr. Cameron Bushnell, Director of Undergraduate Studies

Dr. Cameron Bushnell was juggling night classes and working full time for a nonprofit in Washington D.C. in 2000 when she realized that she wanted to reenter academia. “I said to myself, ‘You belong on the campus,’” she recalls. She earned a PhD in English from the University of Maryland and has been a faculty member at Clemson for seven years, where she is now an Associate Professor of 20th century Anglophone post-colonial literature and the English Department’s new Director of Undergraduate Studies.

One of Bushnell’s main goals in her new position is to develop more interaction between Literature and Writing & Publication Studies, without forfeiting the specialization of either concentration. Her other duties involve supporting undergraduate students, faculty, and administrative staff, which she carries out with her signature bright smile and calm demeanor. “It's like keeping the lights on in the English major,” Bushnell said of her responsibilities, “I’m making sure the infrastructure of the major works.” As a teacher, her favorite undergraduate classes are Post-colonial and World Literature and Critical Writing About Literature.

If she could offer any educational opportunity to students outside the classroom, Bushnell would like to take a group abroad to Tunisia. She also serves as book review editor for the South Carolina Review and enjoys playing viola with the Clemson Symphony.

- Alyssa Glazener, Junior English Writing and Publication Studies Major, Writing Fellow, and Intern in the Pearce Center for Professional Communication

Dr. Jan Holmevik, Associate Chair

Originally from Norway, Dr. Jan Rune Holmevik received his Ph.D. in Humanistic Informatics at the University of Bergen, Norway and has traveled across the world to Clemson. He is an Associate Professor at Clemson, teaching courses in Visual Communication, Advanced Business and Technical Writing, and Computer Game Studies.

More recently, Holmevik taught “The Walking Dead”: Transmedia Storytelling and Literary Convergence, a senior seminar class. In the summer of 2013, Holmevik was appointed the Associate Chair of the Department where he is “involved in course scheduling, mentoring and supervising non-tenure track faculty, as well as overseeing office assignments.” This year, he participated in hiring both new lecturers and tenure-track faculty members. Day-to-day issues are resolved in collaboration with both the Chair, Lee Morrissey, and Program Coordinator, Jessica Dean.

In addition to working on behalf of the Department and teaching his students about transmedia, Holmevik played an integral role in working with Adobe to make the creative suite available to all Clemson students, faculty, and staff. He noted, “[students] need tools that can produce professional quality presentations … because that’s probably where you’re going to be producing media in the future.”

- Whitney Rauenerhorst, Junior English Writing and Publication Studies Major and Intern in the Pearce Center for Professional Communication
A group of twelve students led by two English faculty members organize, execute, and participate in the Annual Clemson Literary Festival, which recently celebrated its seventh year. Being a part of a Creative Inquiry, a class for credit, gives students the opportunity to, not only, plan an event, but to plan something that they are passionate about and want to see succeed. All the planning for the Literary Festival is done from the back of the 1941 Studio in Daniel Hall, and sometimes at Nick’s downtown. The events take place both on campus and in restaurants and bars throughout downtown Clemson.

John Pursley describes the role of the faculty involved as facilitators rather than instructors, reasoning that it is their responsibility “to bring the students together, remind them of our shared purpose, and keep the train rolling.”

The process of identifying and selecting writers to invite to the Literary Festival begins with a discussion of each writer’s style and content, including reflective pieces, ekphrastic or art inspired poetry (like Natasha Trethewey’s latest collection of poetry), and even supernatural works such as Benjamin Percy’s Red Moon. Settling on 30 authors, each student is then paired with a writer with whom they correspond about the Literary Festival. Contacting and communicating with well-respected authors is an opportunity for students to see what the professional life of a writer involves.

When the United States poet laureate, Natasha Trethewey, accepted her invitation to attend and read at the Literary Festival, the Student Directors and faculty were thrilled.

“The best part of Literary Festival was, hands down, getting the opportunity to meet so many great authors and poets. The feeling you get rubbing elbows with people that have made a living from their work is inspiring for those trying to break into writing, like myself,” Senior English major Seth Christmus says. Though many of the Student Directors are English majors, junior Emily Meeks studies Communications and uses her “knowledge about interpersonal communication, writing, marketing, and public speaking” to work with the Literary Festival.

Junior Whitney Rauenhorst describes the experience as rewarding, citing “working in a team and creating a festival from scratch” as her favorite part. “You start from nothing […] and create a weekend-long event for the entire community. You’re also not only learning how to create an event, but you’re communicating with authors and building a relationship with them,” Rauenhorst says.

For many students, this is the first time they have been involved with a large event. As a result, they learn to adapt and develop critical skills throughout the process “Lit Fest is a great way to challenge yourself, get real world experience […], and really immerse yourself in the literary world,” Meeks says.

For the Seventh Annual event, which took place March 26-29, 2014, Student Directors were responsible for coordinating a variety of traditional events over the course of three days, including a South Carolina Review “Authors Showcase” reading by Clemson professors, a roundtable discussion with several visiting authors, and a popular literary trivia night.

In order to encourage more members of the Clemson community to participate, the Literary Festival hosted its inaugural Family Day, where Children’s author, Melinda Long, and Young Adult writer, Tommy Hayes, performed two readings while children created their own book covers at a pirate-themed event.

“The literary festival brings students and community together, gives us an opportunity to interact with authors whose work we study, and brings Clemson national exposure outside
Beth Kapopoulos, Senior English Literature Major

Walking in the Footsteps of Our Greatest Authors

While studying abroad in Florence, Italy, I literally walked in the footsteps of authors whose works I read and analyzed in classes at Clemson. I knocked on the door of the house where Percy and Mary Shelley lived. I lit a candle next to the tomb of Beatrice, Dante's guide in The Inferno, in a tiny, cold church 30 steps from my apartment. I read The Prince and visited Machiavelli's tomb in the same day.

In Italy, I gained a greater respect for the authors who developed the way that we look at the English language by appreciating the historical and cultural contexts in which they wrote. I learned to value these authors by experiencing the Italian way of life. Sitting at a café, sipping a cappuccino and people-watching while reading Aristotle creates an understanding that cannot be replicated in the United States.

Because of the ease of travel in Europe, I was able to experience much more than just the culture of Italy. In Poet's Corner of Westminster Abbey, I walked near the bones of Jane Austen and Chaucer. In Dublin, I saw the Book of Kells, thought to be one of the oldest New Testaments known to man. Being in the presence of greatness reminded me of how awe inspiring it is to read something that many still turn to today for guidance and inspiration. Studying abroad added so much depth to my English major experience. I realized that my degree in English won't just enable me to communicate effectively both orally and textually. I now better understand the legacy of the written word and hope to carry on the great story-telling tradition of the English language.

Ethan Moore, Junior English and Philosophy Major

Creating the World

I was an 18 year-old college freshman when I first heard Nietzsche claim that artists create the world. At the time, I had no idea what he meant by that statement. One particular course in my sophomore year, “Critical Writing About Literature,” taught me about deconstructionism, the prison house of language, and a mobile army of metaphors. Nietzsche's claim started to make a bit more sense.

I always appreciated poetry at a distance—knowing and even enjoying a few of Donne's holy sonnets, Frost's blank verses, Tennyson's meters, and especially cummings'... well, whatever it is that e.e. cummings does. In the same year, I took “The Structure of Poetry” with Angelina Oberdan. I had never taken a poetry class before. I wrote a poem called “Future Ethan” about (what else) unrequited high school love (I think that's what Matthew Arnold was on about, honestly). Shortly thereafter, I got a call for submissions to Clemson's literary magazine, The Chronicle. “Future Ethan” was accepted for publication along with two other poems of mine. All of a sudden, my attitude about poetry started to change.

The next year I took our Poetry Workshop with Jillian Weise and continued my work in establishing a voice as it seemed the most important aspect of poetic writing. When I received a few unfavorable reviews, I decided to try on different hats; maybe voice wasn't the most important thing to grasp in poetry—at least not at the start. I worked on ghazals, villanelles, prose poems, quatrains—a litany of forms and styles that seemed foreign to me for so long.

Poetry, like many other attributes of the major I have come to love deeply, was and is inexhaustible—Paradise Lost is a poem, after all. I still don’t think I'm any good at it, but at least I'm trying, and some people seem to like it. Maybe that's enough to skirt by on Nietzsche's standards. Maybe I have done something to help create the world—or, hopefully, improve at least.
I earned a degree in English Literature, with a minor in creative writing, poetry from Clemson University—and looking back, this is never what I planned on doing. In fact, writing poetry was far from my original collegiate intent, which was to become an architect, and so freshman year, poetry meant procrastination. Scrambling to finish architecture models on time, I would stop hours before they were due to write a poem because I just had to. I was more concerned with not letting the spontaneous appearance of an image escape me than getting good grades. Obviously this meant my major had to change—and so it did change, to English.

One of the first classes I took as an English major was World Literature, and I became fascinated with Dante's *The Inferno*. I pictured two men taking a walking tour through hell, and this bizarre image became fuel for my poetry. The subtleties of everyday images inspire me in this way as well, and my poems serve as artful recording devices of them. Since this class, my work has taken more meditated shapes. I took two poetry workshops with Jillian Weise and through watching her teach, further recognized my own desire to teach creative writing.

This desire was partially fulfilled by serving in the role of Submissions Editor for Clemson's literary magazine, *The Chronicle*. I had the opportunity to read submissions of poetry and fiction from across all majors, from so many different voices. Some of those submitting asked for feedback, and I gladly gave it. This role allowed me the agency to empower young authors to write about whatever they want, to push past their original idea of poetry, and to perhaps take poetry more seriously long term. As a future teacher, I hope to foster an environment that encourages curiosity and skepticism around literature much like that I have experienced as an English major at Clemson.

Robert Hillary King visited Clemson at the request of senior English major, Joshua Kulseth, who was inspired by Dr. Angela Naimou’s Fall 2013 course, “Ethnic American Literature” or “Taxonomies of Liberty and Captivity: Race, Ethnicity, and Imprisonment in U.S. Literature.”

Although he spent nearly three decades isolated in a small cell in Angola Prison, Louisiana, the worst two years of his life were years from before prison, a time preceding any of his sentences growing up in New Orleans during the Civil Rights Movement.

King believes discrimination is what landed him in jail not once, but twice, and led to his confinement to a 6 x 9 x 12 foot cell after being accused of involvement in the death of prison guard, Brent Miller.

“I became angry. I had only one right, and that was the right to rebel,” King says of the time he spent in what some refer to as the ‘Alcatraz of the South’—the same right that drives King to continue his fight against the inhumanity of solitary confinement today, and what he credits as helping keep him sane amidst the terrible conditions.

“I just want to change things,” King says. And he certainly has tried.

- Marissa Kozma, Junior English Writing and Publication Studies Major
Clemson conducted its First Annual Conference on Race, Memory, and the Present thanks to the tireless work of Dr. Cameron Bushnell, Dr. Kimberly Manganelli and Dr. Angela Naimou, as well as the sponsorship of the College of Architecture, Arts, and Humanities, the Department of English, The Pearce Center for Professional Communication, and the Graduate Student Government. Keynote speakers included Dr. Lisa Guerrero (Washington State University) and Dr. Lisa Woolfork (University of Virginia).

Dr. Guerrero’s presentation, “Always keep ‘em laughing’: 21st Century Popular Satire as Racial Rememory,” included an analysis of Spike Lee’s 2000 satirical film *Bamboozled*, and explored black minstrelsy as an everyday occurrence versus the use of actual blackface. Guerrero presented the idea that to have the privilege to perform blackness as an African American in the 21st Century is to be valued whereas merely being African American alongside those charged to perform is to be devalued. However, even the performance of blackness under the conceit of satire results in both the liberation and subjugation of African Americans.

Dr. Woolfork’s presentation, “Walmart and Its ‘People’: Race, Class, and Spectacle in the Digital Age,” discussed social media website The People of Walmart as a means of lateral surveillance, making the point that the Walmert site has become a mechanism of social control that narrowly defines what is “appropriate” appearance in public.

**Richard Tillinghast**  
*“Finding Ireland”*

Poet, translator, and essayist Richard Tillinghast presented and read some of his works on Monday, March 10th from 4 p.m. until 5 p.m. in the Academic Success Center. The event was sponsored by the Clemson Department of English and the Willson Center for Humanities at the University of Georgia. Tillinghast is the author of eleven books of poetry and a book of essays, *Finding Ireland: a Poet's Explorations of Irish Literature and Culture*.

Tillinghast opened with the poem “Winter Funerals,” then followed with “His Days,” a poem that describes his fictionalized view about himself. The poem uses colorful imagery, such as “…the clear green tea: green like water at the bottom of the ocean, but hot as a bowl of soup,” which brings further depth to his work.

Furthermore, in between each poem, he shared a short description about the poem as well as a short analysis and insights into Irish culture. For example, he told a joke about an Irish-American visiting his Irish cousin's farm, and seeing how the Irish farmer feeds the pigs, carrying each one at a time to an apple tree, where he holds the pigs up to eat as many apples as they like. Asked what he thought of how the Irish farmer treated the pigs, the Irish-American said, “It’s great, but doesn’t it take a lot of time?” “Ah, sure,” said the Irish farmer, “but what’s time to a pig?”

He also presented the poems, “The Immigrant” and “Cabbage,” poems that integrate his travels, and then led into an excerpt from his book. He closed with a final poem, “A House in the Country,” and ended his reading with a short discussion with the audience, where audience members asked him about how he became a writer and what drew him to Ireland.

- *Whitney Rauenhorst, Junior English Writing and Publication Studies Major and Intern in the Pearce Center for Professional Communication*
Alumni Corner

From English to Journalism:

Lauren Sausser

As the hospitals and health care reform reporter for Charleston’s The Post and Courier, Lauren Sausser has had an impressive career in journalism. In April, she visited Clemson as part of the Career Paths Lecture Series, hosted by the Pearce Center for Professional Communication and the Department of English, to share her story with current students. While other journalists were jockeying for a prime spot at the Legislature in Columbia, Sausser patiently sat several blocks away in the office of the Department of Health and Human Services. Her colleagues and competitors were eagerly waiting to gather the facts of the state’s opposition to the Affordable Care Act; she was having personal conversations with the real actors of the story, which enabled her to write award-winning articles that put a human face to health care coverage.

She credits developing the skill to find an alternative center of a story, even when the topic is unfamiliar, to her undergraduate classes in literary criticism at Clemson. “It’s my job to ask hard questions, but not necessarily to find answers. It’s not something that you can tie up with a bow,” Sausser said. Rather than merely reporting what happens, she focuses on exploring the intricate complexities that make each story worthy of analysis.

“I love going to my job every day, because I’m constantly learning, I’m constantly challenged, I’m constantly tackling problems,” she said.

Alyssa Glazener, Junior English Writing and Publication Studies Major, Writing Fellow, and Intern in the Pearce Center for Professional Communication

Now, share yours

- Connect with Clemson English on Facebook, Linked In, and Twitter
- Complete the Alumni Update Form on our “Alumni & Friends” Website
- Let us know when you have exciting news (academically, personally, and professionally)!
- Send us your business card (attn: Brennan Beck)
- Engage with current students at events such as The Literary Festival, English Hour, and the Career Paths Lecture Series
- Suggest ideas for events geared specifically toward alumni
Dr. Michael LeMahieu

Dr. Michael LeMahieu is an Associate Professor of English, and serves as director of the Pearce Center for Professional Communication and editor of Contemporary Literature.


For literary scholars, logical positivism sheds an interesting light on the relationship between science and literature. In the modern era, the perceived subjectivity of literature places it in opposition to science. Yet the writers that LeMahieu examines were influenced by the claims of scientific philosophy, even when they questioned them. Rather than seeing a division between science and literature, these authors represent an overlapping set of concerns.

LeMahieu wrote much of the book in 2010 while in residence at the University of Texas's Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center. He credits its development to his work at Clemson, where he led a Creative Inquiry research project on logical positivism with an interdisciplinary group of undergraduates. LeMahieu said his class discussions influenced how he addresses the audience in his book: “I set a goal of articulating my argument, so that students who are interested in this material could participate in the discussions of the subject.”

- Alyssa Glazener, Junior English Writing and Publication Studies Major, Writing Fellow, and Intern in the Pearce Center for Professional Communication

Dr. Sean Morey

Dr. Sean Morey is an Assistant Professor of English.

Morey has studied new media, rhetoric and composition, professional communication and more. His new textbook, *The New Media Writer*, teaches students about writing while using different media. He originally wanted to make the book web-based, so people could use it on their cellphones or tablets; however, he learned that “print is still 80 percent of the market.”

As a result, Morey and his publishers integrated media technologies within a print book. Like using hyperlinks and QR codes, a picture taken of an image or section of text in the book takes the reader to the video, website article, or image that the passage was referencing.

Writing technologies are always changing, and those who are interested in writing and publications studies can “learn how to write with these kinds of platforms and incorporate them into their own projects,” Morey said. It is unknown as to whether *The New Media Writer* will be incorporated into the curriculum on Clemson’s campus, but it is receiving a lot of buzz.

- Whitney Rauenhorst, Junior English Writing and Publication Studies Major and Intern in the Pearce Center for Professional Communication