



English Matters

Working for Student Success

Winter 2016

A Word from the Chair

Merry Christmas from Samford’s Department of English!

Fall semesters are always busy at Universities, but this one has been especially full of activity.

Here are few of the highlights you’ll read about in this newsletter: we celebrated our 175th birthday, along with the University, as the longest-running field of study at the University, through Film Club and Sigma Tau Delta events; we hosted two internationally-known writers—poet Kim Addonizio, as a part of the BACHE visiting writers series, and novelist-filmmaker Margaret Wrinkle, as the inaugural guest presenter of the annual Charles Workman lecture (named after long-time professor, former chair, and continued sponsor of the department)—and our students and faculty won awards and published journals, articles, and books (Dr. Steven Epley’s new book was published in November!). At this time of year, we realize just how blessed we are, and we thank you, our supporters, for your generous financial support over the course of the semester!

We hope that you are inspired by all that we’ve been up to, and we invite you to join us. The Spring semester is right around the corner, and we would love to have you visit a class or come to one of our upcoming events. We want you to be part of our thriving community!

Dr. M. Brad Busbee, English Department Chair



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Study Abroad Scholarships

Five fortunate English majors received a surprise scholarship to help fund their spring semester to study in London. Juniors Sydney Berry, Ben Crabtree, Amy Haupt, and Emily Van Dyke; and sophomore Holly Moore each received \$2,000 to help defray the costs associated with studying abroad. The funds were made available via the larger Nancy Terrell Scholarship Endowment.

“I am excited to be able to study abroad and stay at the Daniel House while there. This scholarship is the icing on the cake!” stated Crabtree when asked about his reaction upon learning he was a recipient.

All five students expressed their gratitude for the help that the monies will provide them while studying abroad.

Alumni in Action

Paula Hovater ('69, cum laude) retired last year from a decade of service to the Atlanta Press Club as Director of Corporate Relationships. She and her husband, Rod ('67) were 2008 Alumni of the Year. They were also co presidents of Samford Alumni Association (1999-2002). Over the years they have hosted 3 Samford presidents at their home: Dr. Wright, Dr. Courts, and Dr. Westmoreland.



Paula notes, "Our graduation dates would make you think we are retired. However, we are both working and enjoying

every moment of our careers. We adore our university and just spent Homecoming with three of seven grandchildren." In fact, their grandson Jordan, is a junior here at Samford. "Samford is a family tradition," says Hovater.



Destiny Soria ('12) just published her first novel, *Iron Cast* (out October 11, 2016). She also produces *Weird Sisters*, a webseries based on Shakespeare's *Macbeth*.



John Mac Kilgore ('01) is Assistant Professor of English at Florida State University (Ph.D. University of California, Davis, 2012). He specializes in American literature and culture before 1900, especially from the American Revolution to the Civil War. Kilgore has published *Mania for Freedom: American Literatures of Enthusiasm from the Revolution to the Civil War*. The book was published in October 2016 and is available from the UNC Press.



Margaret Frymire ('13) passed the MA exams at University of Kentucky in the spring and began her PhD in English this fall at University of Kentucky. She specializes in 20th and 21st century American literature.



Katie Ormsbee ('12) recently published her fourth novel *The Doorway and the Deep* (Chronicle Books, October 4, 2016). She is out touring for the book now.



Anne Marie Shipley ('10) has recently begun teaching an English grammar composition course at Faith Bible College in Norfolk, VA. Shipley obtained her M.S.Ed. in Secondary English Education from Old Dominion. Last year, she wrapped up her 3-year teaching commitment in Norfolk, VA. Currently she is teaching literature at her own alma mater Christian Academy.

Margaret Wrinkle: Author/Filmmaker Visits

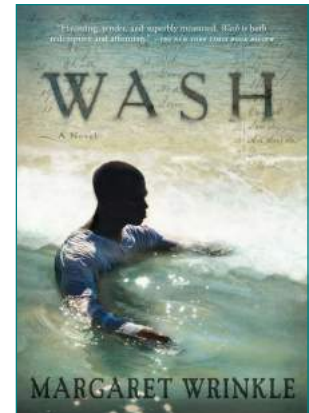
In October, the English Department hosted our inaugural guest presenter of the annual Charles Workman lecture (named after long-time professor, former chair, and continued supporter of the department)—Tuesday, October 25th, Margaret Wrinkle, award-winning author and filmmaker met with department faculty as the beginning of her two-day series of events. She met with three classes, gave a reading of *Wash*, her award-winning book, and led a discussion open to the public after a viewing

of her film, *broken\ground*.

Dr. Geoff Wright, acting as host, introduced Ms. Wrinkle on Tuesday evening for the first event.

Wrinkle's award-winning debut novel, *Wash*, reexamines American slavery in ways that challenge contemporary assumptions about race, power, history, and healing.

Wash won the Center for Fiction's First Novel Prize and an American Book Award from the Before Columbus Foundation. It was named the Fiction Runner Up for



the Dayton Literary Peace Prize, a *Wall Street Journal* top ten novel of the year, and a *New York Times* Editors' Choice. Wrinkle's film, *broken\ground* was a winner of the Council on Foundations Film and Video Festival.

To provide a more in-depth experience, Dr. Wright formed a book group of interested students who met for the month in advance of Wrinkle's visit to read and discuss *Wash*. Dr. Wright led the group in these discussions. Wright noted, "We had a sharp group of students all of whom found the book provocative and insightful."



Book Group (above, L-R): Dr. Geoff Wright, Kiani Yiu, Caleb Punt, Ryan Lally, Lauren Morris, Margaret Wrinkle (author), Annie Brown, and Ben Crabtree.

Special thanks to the following donors for their generous gifts:

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(via Razoo Foundation)

These faithful donors continue to support the department's mission to nurture articulate, insightful, and successful graduates. We appreciate their ongoing contributions to this cause.

To make a donation, simply note "English Department Fund" on the memo area of the check.

Thank you!

Hendrickson and Marshburn Win Awards

Congratulations to two outstanding English majors:



Senior, **Stone Hendrickson** (pictured left) received the Dean's Scholar Award from the University of Alabama School of Law. This is a full-tuition scholarship with an annual stipend. His advisor will be Dean of the Law School, Dr. Mark E. Brandon. Hendrickson begins his law studies in the fall.

Sophomore, **Chase Marshburn** (pictured right) won a nomination from the Core Texts Curriculum to participate in Jan Term 2017 Classics course. Only 15 of over 750 students were nominated to receive financial support for this travel and study abroad experience. Students are nominated because of demonstrated intellectual curiosity and academic potential in their spring CP 102 class.



Wide Angle is back after its spring hiatus and is better than ever! Editorial staff worked hard to get the articles ready for the launch date of December 9th.

Wide Angle's Fall 2016 issue features an array of literature and film essays as well as creative writing contributions. This semester, *Wide Angle* publishes its first creative nonfiction piece, entitled "Lesvos, Greece," and includes an essay by Dr. Timothy Sutton, "Easter, 1916: Violence as Symbol in

Ireland." A psychological exploration of "Dover Beach" promises to intrigue *Wide Angle* readers with its unconventional discussion concerning Matthew Arnold's relationship with his mother. The Fall 2016 issue also features an analysis of a poem by BACHE visiting writer Kim Addonizio and a commentary on *broken\ground*, a film co-produced by Margaret Wrinkle, who came to Samford in October to present her book, *Wash*.



Pictured left to right: Assisting Managing Editor, Casey Cunningham; Film Editor, Mack Sexton; Managing Editor, Lauren Morris; Executive Editor, Dr. Geoffrey Wright; Creative Editor, Kiani Yiu; and Literature Editor, Cassidy Bell.

We hope you will support Samford English scholars by searching for *Wide Angle: A Journal of Literature and Film* and reading this semester's issue!

To read *Wide Angle* go to — <https://www.samford.edu/arts-and-sciences/english/wide-angle>

We Want To Hear From YOU!

Please let us know what you're up to. You can also send us your updated email address. Call us at (205)726-2946, write us at English@samford.edu, or just drop by.

Student Activities Photo Gallery

Welcome Event Kicks Off Fall Semester

Department Faculty and over 35 majors attended this year's Welcome Event. Zoe's Kitchen provided the food while the entertainment and conversation launched new friendships.



Sigma Tau Delta Book Sale

The sale moved outside to Ben Brown Plaza this year and the weather cooperated beautifully! Book sales were especially brisk right around lunch time. This year the sale raised over \$200 with hopes of adding to that amount by continuing the sale of books from the student lounge. All proceeds will go to help fund those members who have papers accepted to the National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky. (At right: President, Callie Phelps, and Vice President, Madeline Perkins organize books for the sale.)



Film Club Fun at Halloween-and More

Samford Film Club has had a busy fall. The group was an integral part of the English Department's first annual Workman Lecture by hosting the author/filmmaker, Margaret Wrinkle's documentary, *broken\ground*. Other films screened this semester included *It Follows*, *The Revenant*, and *Fargo*. Pictured below are the contestants at the Halloween screening. Winning costume was 'The Joker' (frightening person in the purple jacket below).



Student Activities con't from page 3

BACHE

Visiting Writers Series

Poet Kim Addonizio Reading

The first writer featured in this year's BACHE Visiting Writers Series was poet Kim Addonizio.

Ms. Addonizio read from two of her most recent publications, *Bukowski in a Sundress* and *mortal trash poems*. Over sixty students, faculty, and alumni attended.



The next writers up on the schedule Ralph Eubanks (March) and Teddy Wayne (April).

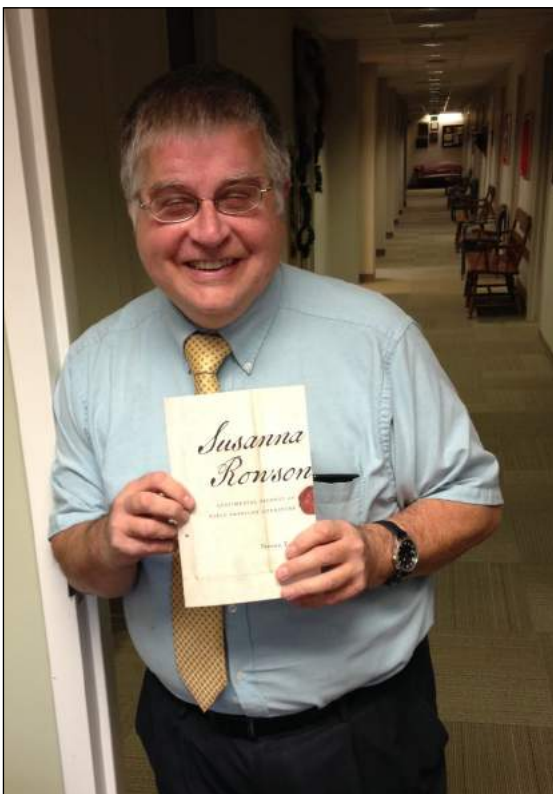
"We are proud of Samford's leading role in making these events a success," stated BACHE chairperson, Dr. Keya Kraft. "They enrich the entire communities of Samford and Birmingham."

Majors Fair Big Success

Not only did over fifty English majors show up to support the department at the annual majors fair held on Ben Brown Plaza, but the English Department also earned the second place award in the "Participant Table Display Contest!" The English Department lost by only one vote to the School of the Arts. Consolation was had in the form of the best T-shirt, hands down! The event provided a wonderful opportunity for students and faculty to chat, and to offer those considering an English major answers to their questions.

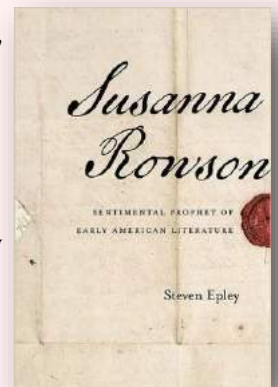


Pictured above: (left) discussion groups formed as students gathered during the fair. (right) Seniors Riana Lonquist and Brittany Stevens showing off this year's Department T-shirt.



Dr Steven Epley's New Book: *Susanna Rowson*

The Northwestern Press description begins, "*Susanna Rowson: Sentimental Prophet of Early American Literature* opens the early American writer's works to new, provocative interpretations based on the theory that her responses to social issues incorporate notions of righteousness, justice, accountability, and loyalty drawn from prophets in the Hebrew Bible. Steven Epley argues that Rowson's sentimentalism..." Dr. Epley has been studying 18th Century literature since graduate school. *Susanna Rowson* (ISBN 978-0-8101-3381-5) is available in paperback, hardcover, and as an ebook. The Department is proud of Epley's work. The book has been well received thus far. Renown scholar Philip F. Gura, writes, "This is an impressive and impeccable work of scholarship; one that pushes us far toward acknowledging how much we still need to know about this major early American author."





Faculty Matters

Dr. David Chapman delivered the December 2015 Commencement Address at Samford on the topic, “Know Thyself.” “My Life as Socrates,” an article about his use of monologue in Cultural Perspectives, was published in the *Chronicle Review* in December. He presented “The Story Behind the Statue” at the dedication of the John Howard statue on campus in February 2016. His memoir about his 25 years at Samford (including 15 years as dean) was published as *A Samford Life*.

Dr. Geoff Wright completed two projects while on sabbatical during the spring 2016 semester: “The Iraq War and Postmodern Memory in Kevin Powers’ *The Yellow Birds*” and “The Anatomy of Shame: Combat Trauma and the Undoing of the Self in Iraq War Memoirs.” Both essays are currently under review at academic journals. In October, he presented a version of the essay on shame at the Rocky Mountain MLA conference in Salt Lake City. He is currently working on a third project related to the Iraq War. This is a study of biographies about American servicewomen and their experience with combat. Earlier this fall, he was a panelist at the Walker Percy Centennial Celebration hosted by the Altamont Alumni Association. He also serves as faculty sponsor for the SU Film Club and as General Editor for *Wide Angle: A Journal of Literature and Film*, which is publishing its sixth volume this year.

Rosemary Fisk spoke on behalf of the BACHE (Birmingham Consortium of Higher Education) deans at 16th Street Baptist Church on October 27, 2016, in favor of having the Civil Rights District designated as a National Park. In attendance were Mayor William Bell, the Secretary of the Interior, the head of the National Park Service, Congresswoman Terri Sewell, and many citizens, in particular foot soldiers of the Civil Rights movement. President Obama later used the Antiquities Act to designate this district a National Monument, a move which will bring federal funds and staff in support of the district. Dr. Fisk also served as host for this year’s Davis Lecture speaker, Bryan Stevenson, whose talk “Just Mercy” drew about 2,000 persons to hear about prison reform and human rights.

Steven Epley Steven Epley's book, *Susanna Rowson: Sentimental Prophet of Early American Literature*, was published by Northwestern University Press in November 2016. In the same month he was awarded a \$2,000 Faculty Development Grant by the Provost's office to do research for a modern scholarly edition of two nineteenth-century biblical paraphrases produced by American women writers. In March he participated in a panel presentation by six Samford faculty members on teaching female writers in a core texts course at the annual meeting of the Association for Core Texts and Courses in Atlanta.

Brad Busbee was awarded the William E. and Wylodine F. Hull Research Fellowship for the 2016-17 academic year for his project "Living Wellsprings of Christian Humanist Collaborative Research." This fall, Dr. Busbee completed his third year as co-editor of *Grundtvig-Studier* while also serving on the editorial board for *LATCH: Literary Artifact in Theory, Culture, and History* and on the review board for *Medieval Perspectives*. This November, he published the "Indledning" [Introduction] to *Om Bjovalfs Drape eller det af Hr. Etatsraad Thorkelin 1815 udgivne angelsachsiske Digt* [About *Beowulf* or State Counsellor Thorkelin's Edition of the Anglo-Saxon Poem] in *Grundtvigs-Værker*, the Danish state-sponsored digital corpus of the works of N.F.S. Grundtvig. In December, Dr. Busbee published a translation of an 1815 essay about *Beowulf*: "A few more words about *Beowulf*" in *Grundtvig-Studier*, and a book review of Megan Cavell's *Weaving Words and Binding Bodies: The Poetics of Human Experience in Old English Literature* in *Choice: Current Reviews for Academic Libraries*. On September 22, he presented "'A Little Homer for England and the North': *Beowulf* and the Grundtvigian Enlightenment of Danish Youth" at the *Beowulf for Young Readers* Symposium, hosted by Texas A&M University; and on September 30, he taught "The first English poem: what it teaches and how it works" for Samford's Family Weekend Parent Academy. On October 7, he moderated a panel titled "The Place-Time Conundrum—Orientating College Students to Medieval Culture in Text and Image" at the 55th Annual Southeastern Medieval Association Conference, hosted by the University of Tennessee at Knoxville. On November 2, he gave the "Making Sense of the Middle Ages" lecture for Samford's general education program. And on December 5, he gave the "Faith and Reason" lecture for Theta Alpha Kappa, the Religion Honors Society.



Part of the crew that kicked off the Fall Semester at the annual meet/greet event!

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