Spring 2020
Volume 2
Issue 2

(NOT) INSIDE TUCKER HALL

(and without the assistance of the Printing Office!)

A LETTER FROM OUR CHAIR

By: Suzanne Raitt

This has been the strangest semester any of us has ever experienced – alums, staff members, faculty and students alike. I feel as if we have all suddenly been pushed off our planet into another world, one that up until now, we had encountered only in our nightmares. Yet this is our world now. We have to own it, take responsibility for it, grieve its losses and shortcomings, and continue to find joy wherever we can find it. To all of you reading this newsletter who have lost family, friends, co-workers and community members, we are holding you in our hearts. To those of you who are sick or know someone who is sick, we join with you in hope of recovery. To everyone in our community, we thank you for your companionship, your comfort and your generosity. We have lost so much: last-day-of-classes parties, celebrations of friends and colleagues,

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2020 GRADUATES!

Joseph Kellogg Allan
Kathryn Mary Anderson
Quinn Monica Arnone
Maggie Elaine Aschmeyer
Katherine Elizabeth Baisa
Samantha Renee Boateng
Devon Elizabeth Bortz
Ailish Clare Bova
Bianca Claire Bowman
Susan Brady
Cameron Michael Bray
Katharine Maureen Brownfield
Julia Bullard
Joel Stuart Calfee
Aida Esmeralda Campos
Katherine Susan Carris
Benjamin Christenson
Maxwell Mason Cloe
Rachel Penny Coombs
Isabel Grace Cullinane
Katherine Lee Dawkins
Rebecca Catherine DeVore
Kathryn Donati
Sarah Virginia Elam
Kaelyn Grace Eleuterio
Zachary Allan Ellis
Danielle Kathleen Greene
Ethan Maxwell Grove
Brooke Elizabeth Guidash
Diana Leigh Haemer
Hunter Bruce Hall
Jiwoo Han
Katherine Robbie Hansen
Zacharay Michael Hassan
Aaron Carter Higgins
Alexander Miller Hubbard
Norah Monroe Hunt
Kathy Keqian Jiang
Mary Elizabeth Kasputis
Calvin Richard Kolbe
Karis R. Lee
Shannon Mary Lewis
Charlotte Elizabeth Madson

stimulating conversations around a table at an Honors defense, to mention only a few. And we have all been affected, whether we are teachers, graduating seniors, parents, or recent alumni who have just embarked on their dream jobs. We have had to confront our shared frailty and our shared mortality.

But I want to write also about what remains. Books remain. Language is still with us. In the absence of a vaccine or a cure, words are what can still save us – reminding us of our fundamental connection as loving, mortal creatures, taking us out of our sad world, and bringing us to a new kind of beauty. It has been a profoundly moving experience to be on this journey with our students, our colleagues, and with our staff – not just Jeanne and Shanay, but the housekeeping staff Tamarrie and others who, while faculty, students and staff stayed home, continued to come to work and keep our building safe and clean. Our students departed for spring break and never came back. Their dorm rooms and apartments are exactly as they left them: food in the fridge, clothes tossed on the bed, papers scattered on the desk, signs of lives suddenly brought to a halt. But our students are not the same people who left those rooms behind. They have confronted frustration, fear, disenchantment, anxiety and sorrow. Some of them have rejoiced in returning to their family homes. Some have struggled to stay motivated to do their schoolwork away from the environments that usually support their efforts. Others have embraced the chance to work independently and away from social distractions. Faculty have tried our best to give our students the same excitement and sense of shared discovery that they experience in the classroom. Whether we were creating new and different research and writing assignments, or recording our lectures, or engaging with a grid of faces on Zoom, we have always kept in mind that different modes of teaching offer challenges, but opportunities too. We have learned to be flexible in what we expect, to be open to new ways of learning, to value the process of discovery over the perfect outcome. We will take our new knowledge back into our classrooms when we finally return, and our students will take a new understanding of themselves and what they value, forward into the reborn world in which we will one day all live together again.

Virginia Woolf wrote of her childhood after her mother's death: "The shrouded, cautious, dull life took the place of all the chatter and laughter of the summer." And there was chatter and laughter in Tucker Hall, even this semester. After all, we had six weeks together before we had to leave. Allison Titus, our Writer in Residence, was with us throughout the semester teaching an advanced poetry workshop, and she enthralled us with her reading in February. Paul Stevens, an early modern scholar, gave a wonderful talk later that same month. We had to cancel readings from alumna Laura Sims, former poet laureate Tracy K. Smith, and Susheila Nasta MBE (the Cloud Lecturer), but as soon as we can, we will bring them to campus. The spring Tack Lecture by our own Hermine Pinson was postponed but we eagerly anticipate it as soon as it can happen. We look forward to welcoming Garth Greenwell and Terrance Hayes as part of the Patrick Hayes Writers Series in the fall. We invited Juana Maria Rodriguez to be next year's Cloud Lecturer, and we are excited about her visit.

2020 GRADUATES (CONTINUED)

Evelyn Marie Mazloom
Christina Marie McBride
Kate O'Connell McGeehan
Samuel Michael McIntyre
Brooke Anne Miller
Edward Joseph Millman Pelin Monroe
Gabriela Alexandra Montesdeoca Rivera
Margaretha Evohe More
Joseph William Moriarty
Colin Patrick Murphy
Mia Langley Naples
Evelyn Grace Nims
Grant Hunter Nuttall
Nicholas Elias Oviedo-Torres
Rebecca Alicia Paulisch
Cameron Jean Poland
Clara Grace Poteet
Austin Rackett
Elizabeth Grace Radcliffe
Daniel Alberto Rosa
Yasmine Isabella Samereie
Sophia Margaret Shealy
Alyssa Renee Skvarla
Corinne Rose Southern
Jenna Spille
Jonah Glenn Sweeney
Kate Alyssa Taylor
Leonor Galeana Taylor Grave
Noah Joseph Terrell
Jessica Gabriela Urgo
Elizabeth Garrett Vanasse
Eleanor M. Vaughn
Kelsey Jordan Vita
Angela Rose Granados West
Sarah Grace Wilkowske
Sarah Williams
Michael Henry Williamson
Kathryn Willoughby
Joshua William Zinger

We also hired two new Assistant Professors, though in fact, neither of them is really new at all. Brian Castleberry, author of the soon-to-be-released debut novel *Nine Shiny Objects*, has been a colleague for many years, and we are overjoyed to embrace him as a colleague in his new role. Chima Osakwe, scholar of African and African diaspora literature, joined us in August last year, and has made himself so indispensable that, with great satisfaction, we decided to keep him. We are delighted that both Brian and Chima will be with us for a long time to come.

We also have some sad goodbyes, and even more sadly, we cannot say them in person. Emily Fine has been an extraordinary teacher of early modern literature, and we are deeply sorry to see her go. Will Clark brought a much-needed expertise in LGBTQ literatures and cultures to our classrooms, and we congratulate him on his new appointment as Assistant Professor at the University of California in San Francisco, though we will really miss him. The spate of retirements in recent years is not letting up, either. Christy Burns, Susan Donaldson, Mary Ann Melfi and Robert Scholnick have all announced their retirements. The loss of four such beloved and accomplished scholars and teachers will be deeply felt. We look forward to celebrating their retirements in style when we are able to come together again.

Till then, we wish you the healing and hope that a new season brings. May you stay well, may you stay safe, and may we see each other again.

- Suzanne Raitt

SENIOR ENGLISH MAJORS

REFLECT ON THEIR FINAL SEMESTER AT WILLIAM & MARY

Mia Naples ('20)

"I never doubted that I'd be an English major. What I did not expect was how much the English department of William & Mary would become a home to me over my four years here. Though Tucker Hall has one of my favorite porches, I know that feeling of belonging has come primarily from the wonderful faculty I've had the privilege to know. I've still haven't gotten over the fact that I got to spend hundreds of hours talking about my favorite books (a whole class on the Brontës?!), finding new favorite poets (in every class I took with Professor MacGowan), and being opened to genres I never would have felt confident enough to dive into on my own (I still don't fully know what postmodernism is, but I like it!). If I never came to your office hours, it's because I'm anxious, but I always wanted to!"

"I've had so many "magic classes" in the English department, classes that, for some reason or another, just gelled perfectly: students and professor both delighted by the subject material and bubbling over with excitement about class discussions, conversations that pour out into the hallways and stairwells for an extra half hour after class has ended. My first "magic class," though, was my first English class— my COLL150, Englishwomen Artists, with Professor Deborah Morse. Everyone who's known me for more than ten minutes has heard me wax poetic about this course and how it impacted my college trajectory. Because of this randomly chosen class, I met some of my best friends, decided to become an English major, and started my four year streak of only writing about artists, women, and God. Most importantly, I met Professor Morse, who is my biggest advocate and cheerleader, a dear friend, and someone who consistently makes me reach further as a writer and scholar. Her vast knowledge of the Brontës & Victorian culture, her generous and welcoming spirit, and her readiness with a cup of tea have been some of my favourite parts of being an English major, and I am endlessly grateful to her and this department that became my home."

Clara Poteet ('20)

"The English Department and the Creative Writing program have been my academic homes while at William & Mary. When I came here, I was looking to develop my writing skills, have small class discussions, and develop close relationships with my professors. I could never have imagined the support I was going to receive from this department - my confidence in my writing abilities has grown so much in such a short time! I always tell everyone that English has been my "passion major," but the support from my classmates and professors has shown me that it could be so much more than that if I just keep putting myself out there. So thank you, English department, for not only teaching me how to write but for teaching me how to believe in myself as a writer."

Devon Bortz ('20)

Joel Calfee ('20)

"When I first arrived as a student at William and Mary, I purposefully avoided English classes because everyone told me that it was silly to get a degree in English. So, I found myself exploring every other major in the world, until eventually, I returned to my one true love: English literature. I am eternally grateful that I made the "silly" choice because my English courses have been the most formative part of my college experience by far. It is hard for me to imagine who I was as a person prior to coming to William and Mary because I have grown so much, and that is all thanks to the English Department. I have been able to take courses that challenged me in ways I could have never imagined, whether it was "Major African-American Women Writers" with Professor Spencer, or "Studies in Milton" with Professor Webster. Meanwhile, I have been able to pursue independent work through the guidance of Professor Joyce, who let me center an entire paper around my obsession with *Call Me By Your Name* and Professor Putzi, who led a group of 8 students through a course dedicated to a love of book history and print culture. Although I am sad my final semester as a college student was cut short, it has made me reflect on everything I have gained. Now, I feel as if I can approach the world with a critical and thoughtful eye, while also feeling unafraid to present myself creatively. The faculty and students in the English Department have provided me with nothing but love and support since the moment I arrived, and while it breaks my heart to leave, I know I will always have a home in Tucker Hall."

Spring 2020 Reflections: Growing Roots at William & Mary

By: Alicia Andrzejewski

For my second semester as an Assistant Professor at William & Mary, I was assigned two COLL courses: COLL 150, a freshman writing seminar, and ENGL 475, a capstone course for seniors. I themed the former around dream interpretation and the latter around race, science, and reproduction.

I was absolutely terrified to teach the senior seminar.

The first year as an Assistant Professor is notoriously hard. In my case, the move from New York and the City University of New York to Colonial Williamsburg and William & Mary—a "public ivy"—was an absolute shock. I loved my CUNY students, and couldn't help but be sad even when my sister kept saying: "I got rejected from William & Mary's law school!" So, I walked into my course full of freshmen believing they must know *almost* everything about academic writing. This was William & Mary, right? The school that rejected my sister! These students' AP teachers probably taught them what I was teaching my CUNY students. I might not have learned internal punctuation until I had to teach it, but I didn't have the elite training these students did. As it turns out, my freshmen were brilliant, and funny, and had things to learn about writing.

Walking into a senior seminar as "the Professor" was a whole different ballgame, though. On the first day, for example, a student brought up "terrorist assemblages" as another way to think about Kimberlé Crenshaw's theory of intersectionality. I asked and they sent me Jasbir K. Puar's piece after class. I couldn't believe I hadn't read it already.

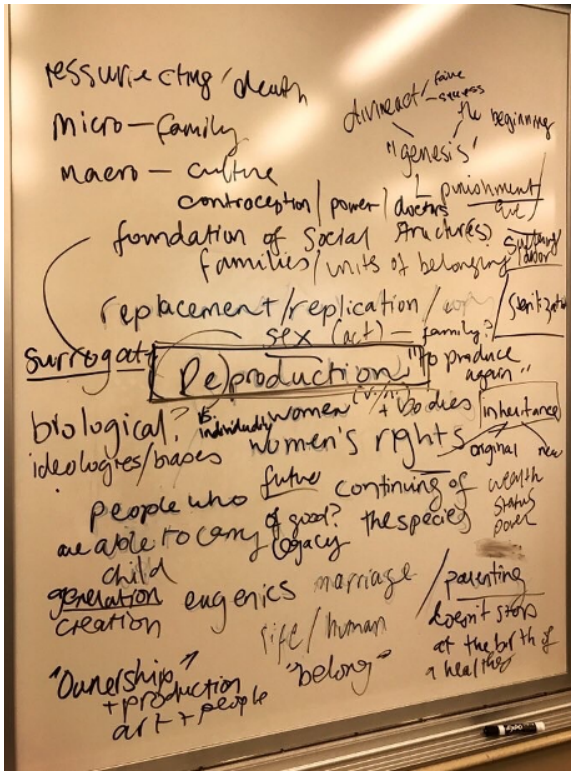
Of course, professors can't read all the things. I've always tried to say "I don't know" in response to a question I don't know the answer to.

I've always believed I have as much to learn from my students—or anyone—as they do from me. I've read Jacques Rancière's "Ignorant Schoolmaster," and believe him when he says the idea that students will "never catch up with the master, nor the people with its enlightened elite" is a lie. I know that knowledge and truths that create structural change, more often than not, come from what Fred Moten and Stefano Harney call "the undercommons," a tribute to the Black radical tradition: riots and anti-colonial uprisings; "practices of refusal," marronage and flight, slave revolts; and anti-colonial uprisings. I know that I'm not a brain in a jar, reciting off my expertise for hours on end.

But these students were so, so absolutely brilliant that I felt they deserved a "master" professor, not a professor straight out of graduate school who would have to make mistakes before finding her footing. I missed the city. I couldn't drive. There were times I felt really, really bad—and a course Monday and Wednesday evenings from 5:00 to 6:20 PM where students asked really smart questions was the last place I wanted to be. I mean, there were students in the class who had already taken a senior seminar—who signed up because they *wanted* to write an article length paper. Again. Voluntarily.

This ignorant schoolmaster made the most wonderful discovery, though, or rediscovery. See, when I got accepted to CUNY's Graduate Center, it was a dream come true, but professors at my MA program warned me I'd be a small fish in a big pond and have to prove myself. As it turned out, though, the professors at CUNY treated me as a colleague. They treated me like I had something to teach them, while pushing me to be a better reader, writer, scholar, and person. I realized that the same could be, and was, true for my seniors this semester. When you are that smart—when you have the preparation, the foundation, of three plus years at a school like William & Mary— maybe you don't need to make a new, young Assistant Professor feel small or prove how smart you are.

In short, that class felt like some of my best graduate classes every session. It felt like we were uncovering threads, stories, and insights that mattered. By the end of the class, it was crystal- clear that you cannot talk about reproduction—reproductive rights; the history of reproductive knowledge; representations of reproduction—without talking about race. My students and I made mind maps on the board around the course's key terms.



We began with "The King of Tars," a medieval text written in Middle English, and ended with Bridget Jones's Baby (for, you know, the whiteness.). We delved into science fiction with Octavia Butler's *Dawn*. We encountered plays upon the page, from Shakespeare's horrifying *Titus Andronicus* to Suzan-Lori Parks' devastating *Venus*. We discussed life-writing with visiting speaker Marcos Gonsalez after reading Cherríe Moraga's memoir about her experiences with queer pregnancy and parenting. All along my students and I had vibrant discussions, both in person and in the class's "GroupMe" chat where we discussed reproductive rights in the time of COVID-19; pregnancy posts from AITA; thoughts that occurred after class ended; and even *Love is Blind*.

Of course, halfway through the semester, I was charged with recreating something like the energy we had together online. Teaching at CUNY for so long, a school with far fewer resources, I just assumed students wouldn't have the space and resources to we wouldn't be able to meet synchronously. I required two Zoom or phone meetings with me about their final projects and limited the class sessions to a few optional online sessions. But when my seniors and I finally got together as a group—I felt like myself again. I remembered that feeling: I'd be scared, tired, and done leading up to 5PM, but at 6:20PM my adrenaline was pumping; I was ready to write; I was ready to keep adapting; I was excited about my new life here.

I tentatively asked them at the end of that first Zoom class if they'd like to keep all of our class sessions. They said yes. And they showed up.

At the beginning of the final class session, trying not to cry, I told them how important the home we created in our classroom was to me—to my sense of belonging at William & Mary. I told them that I felt like I'd never teach another course like the one we fashioned together. In a later one-on-one meeting, I was saying goodbye to one of these seniors and they said, "Dr. A? You know how you said you think you won't have another class like this again? You will." That moment solidified what my seniors had taught me all semester long about William & Mary. The community not only had my back but each other's.

What a wonderful place to begin to grow again, to set down roots.

for Leonor, Willa, Renata, Sam, Maxwell, Bryce, Sydney, Amelia, Jack, Jake, Kelsey, Meagan, and Rayna

How I Became A Dog Professor

By: Brian Castleberry

After my last class before spring break, I rushed home to pack for a conference trip that would stretch over the weekend. In the days leading up to that conference, there had been some Twitter drama about holding such an event in a pandemic. The conference organizers waffled, people dropped out, and then it went ahead. For reasons I no longer understand, I went.

Within a week everything was different: businesses shut down, everyone home from work, an inexplicable run on toilet paper. The darkness of these times flowed into our general decline as a democracy. Sleep was lost. I was impressed early on during this debacle that many of our students banded together to take a stand regarding their needs, tuition and housing, and semester grades. In really no time at all they put together a petition and delivered it to the administration with thousands of signatures. At the same time students were organizing, several were also thrown into unexpected circumstances that put classwork on the back burner. I started getting emails from students who now had to move out of state, out of the country, or back into a home where they weren't necessarily welcome. Others just didn't have any books.

Turning my classes into online versions was informed by all this, as well as by what I knew to be the general stress my students were going through. I replanned my classes to function asynchronously, setting up discussion boards for twice a week, posting video lectures they could watch anytime, and cutting back on outside readings. I aimed to zero in on the key things we still needed to learn and discuss for the semester. Of course my students—even those who reached out with more trouble in their way, or missing books, etc—immediately threw themselves at the work. I was again impressed by the quality of students we're so used to here at W&M. They are driven, enjoy learning, and they're endlessly creative. In the advanced workshop, we still had a complete new story to write and share after the transition to online. It was amazing watching these students react in real time to the crisis around them, their stories tinged with something apocalyptic, and yet wholly their own, still aimed at finding some truth in the analysis of character. My honors students knocked it out of the park. All three were just getting their revisions off the ground when everything was disrupted, and they have awed me with the incredibly hard work they've done, transforming their projects and shining them up to publication quality.

The panic of these times has made me a far less productive writer, and often days just swim by without any sense to them. I don't think I'd realized just how important it was to be around people all the time. I'm coming to understand the mental health benefits of being in a classroom, talking to people who are interested in what you're talking about, watching them get just as excited about that stuff as you are. Pretty soon I'll be giving lectures on the advantages of free indirect discourse to my dogs. Given how yesterday's discussion of Ralph Ellison went, I'm not hopeful. I'll look forward to getting back into Tucker, and to seeing and hearing from my creative writing students, whether they're back in the fall or jettisoned off into the "real world."

Reflections Upon Spring Semester 2020

By: Deborah Morse

I find myself wanting to write the beginning of this essay in the form of Gratitudes:

Thank you for the passion and brilliance of my students. Most of this essay will be about them and what they have done for me this semester. But a few other expressions of gratitude are in order before I write about what young scholars have meant to me in the precarity of this term.

Thank you for my husband of many years, who is here with me in this quiet time—and whose technical expertise has been invaluable as I navigate the treacherous waters of Zoom. (We are listening to Moby-Dick on Audible, so nautical metaphors come to mind unbidden.)

Thank you for our son Evan; for Sarah, his wife; and for our daughter Lucy and her partner Dan. The photographs of the new puppy in Richmond and of excited children in London remind me of the future beyond this pandemic.

Thank you for my friends near and far away, for voices and images that sustain me while I cannot touch.

Thank you for our rescued dog Rafe, who occasionally barks his opinion while I am teaching classes on Zoom, and who made one requested appearance to the Brontë class.

Thank you for the sturdy calm and dry wit of my English Department colleagues (and their alacrity in coming to Happy Hours, martinis and wine in hand). Thank you to our Department Chair Suzanne Raitt, who has created a sense of community through this dark hour.

Thank you for the beauty of Nature, which I have never had as much time before simply to look upon. I watch the birds—a robin ecstatically at the birdbath as I look up from my Zoom session for a moment, a flash of scarlet as a cardinal swoops by to distract me from its nest in the azalea bush next to the back porch where I am reading; a brown hummingbird, a Tinkerbell impossibly poised in front of our window for long seconds, excited by the light and promise of something we cannot see.

This semester I taught three courses, one on the Brontë sisters' novels, one on Fallen Women in Victorian Literature and Culture, and one honors tutorial with Sam McIntyre on Robert Louis Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. Even after decades of teaching, I was a bit nervous about trying to create an intellectual community on Zoom. I needn't have worried; my students were urgent, passionate, and insightful. Nearly every student appeared in each class session, even in the early morning seminar. Only at first glance were we all talking heads in "gallery view"; within moments, we were deeply engrossed in the complex beauty of *Wuthering Heights* or *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. The classes were vibrant—and with a slightly different valence—as if we all needed to do something significant in the face of disaster elsewhere, others' heroic lives and tragic deaths.

At the same time, there was inevitably a more personal quality to the meetings, as each of us appeared in our living rooms or bedrooms or basements. I learned from the purple ribbon on the wall of one student that she was a prizewinning visual artist; from another student's roaming ginger cat that she was an animal lover; from a third student that she kept her closet in admirable order, ironed shirts in a row—small revelations.

The lives in the books we read became our worlds during those hours of conversation together. Our fervent response to the novels' representation of emotions was quite possibly influenced by our intermittent despair, tempered with the joy and guilt at simply being alive.

In the Brontë course, we reveled and sorrowed in the passion of Heathcliff and the poetry of Cathy Earnshaw in Wuthering Heights; the anguish of Jane Eyre as she leaves Rochester; the mourning of repressed Lucy Snowe in Villette. In the senior seminar we immersed ourselves with equal passion in the aesthetics and politics of fallen woman narratives—intense stories of desperate struggle against terrible odds. We suffered with Gaskell's Christ-like Ruth and cheered when Hardy's Tess finally hits her seducer Alec with her heavy work glove. We marveled at the sophistry of seducer Fred Neville in Trollope's *An Eye for an Eye*, at Moore's Esther Waters and her heroic devotion to her illegitimate son; at Grace Marks's trauma and its criminal repercussions in Atwood's *Alias Grace*. The honors tutorial with Sam McIntyre was by its very nature an intense intellectual and emotional experience. As we thought about the intricate meanings of homosexual architectures in Stevenson's iconic *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* for three hours each week, we talked about everything from *A Child's Garden of Verses* to the poem "Requiem," in which RLS asks to be buried under "the wide and starry sky." We had world enough and time to read aloud and explicate a single passage for an entire session, to discuss the resonances of one word for hours.

"Only connect" is the epigraph of E.M. Forster's great novel *Howards End*, which some students read with me in the Rural England seminar. I think that this semester we were able somehow to connect trauma and love, fragility and endurance, vivid desire and the fear of death. For me, this journey of exploration with young scholars has made me think about their creativity, brilliance, and resilience—and has also led me to reflect upon the beauty and significance of the great art that brought us together in a troubled era.

Doing Book History—Remotely

By: Jennifer Putzi

As an experiment this spring, I decided to teach a one-credit course on "Book History and Print Culture Studies." I've incorporated issues of Book History into other courses; last semester, for example, I asked students in my "American Renaissance" to read each text once in their anthology and another time in the periodical or book in which it was originally published. Other classes have researched the publication history of Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* and read Emily Dickinson's poetry in manuscript (digitized, of course). My one-credit class this semester is made up of students who have expressed interest in these sorts of assignments in the past and have been eager to learn about how books were produced, circulated, and consumed.

The class met every Friday for an hour. We combined classroom discussions of texts with trips to Colonial Williamsburg's Printing Office and Bindery and the Swem Library Special Collections Resource Center (SCRC). We watched a demonstration of letterpress printing, talked with a reenactor about eighteenth century book buying habits, and handled everything from a late 18th-century almanac to a 19th-century handwritten Quran to a scrapbook by a young woman about her trip to the 1933 Chicago World's Fair (and her massive crush on Italian pilot Italo Balbo). Part of what made the class so exciting was that the students were all self-selected. They took a geeky delight in debating the relative merits of papyrus and parchment or figuring out how printing type was made. Each one of them wanted to be there and they had ideas about what they wanted to learn and where they wanted to go for their final projects.

Their assignment was to use items held by the SCRC to create a case study of a text (a particular book or newspaper), a genre (the gift book or the art book), or a person (an author, a publisher, or a printer).

And then came the coronavirus and the closure of campus.

One-credit classes usually meet for five or six weeks out of the semester, discussing texts and completing some sort of writing assignment. By spring break, these students had already done enough work to earn the single credit and I told them that I was willing to turn them loose, allowing them to focus on their other classes and their mental health. But they told me that they wanted to keep going. For some, it was about maintaining a schedule; senior Marriya Schwarz told me, "It's hard to keep a schedule when I'm the only one holding myself accountable; literally, I barely know what day of the week it is, it just feels like Day." But, she adds, looking back, "I think there's an element of closure: we started this class, we dedicated time to it, we were passionate about it, and I at least wanted to see it through. It wouldn't feel right to just abandon it." Others shared her sense that we had unfinished business. So we set up our first Zoom meeting for a Friday at 11:00 and grinned from ear to ear when we saw each other's faces.

I reconfigured the syllabus, cancelling some readings and adding others, depending on what the students had access to. We also listened to podcasts and recorded lectures from the University of Virginia's Rare Book School. We talked about the printing of Shakespeare's plays, the establishment of libraries, and the impact of digital reading practices, among other things.

And now they're preparing for their final projects—different, in most cases, from the ones they had planned six weeks ago, but fascinating none the less. Senior Maggie Aschmeyer is studying four Little Free Libraries within walking distance of her home, cataloguing their contents and attempting to make sense of which materials are taken from the library and which remain over the weeks. Cameron Poland, also a senior, is working on "a mini-history of miniature books. Minature books started by being a practical way to carry around prayer books easily, but now we see them as a form of art." If she can find the materials, she says, she will be putting together a miniature book of her own. And Schwarz's project will focus on a 1775 almanac, owned by a Revered Jacob Cushing of Waltham, Massachusetts, which she discovered in her parents' attic. "I've been going through and transcribing both the printed material of the almanac," she explains. "Slowly, I'm getting used to his shorthand and there's actually a lot of fun material, like there's a whole section of printed jokes. (Why is a good Sermon like a Plumb-pudding? Because there are Reasons in it.) Once I finish transcribing fully, I think I'm going to focus my research on almanacs and how they were used."

It is not an overstatement to say that this class has kept me going this semester. I have looked forward to every meeting with these students and I may have more to look forward to, as several of them have decided to keep meeting over the summer. Yes, that's right, over the summer! Our plans include reading Geraldine Brooks' novel *People of the Book* and watching the new documentary *The Booksellers*, recently available to stream via Virtual Cinemas screenings, which helps support local theaters while they are shut down due to COVID-19. It is classes like this that remind me how special William & Mary students are—how smart they are, how engaged, how intellectually curious. Also, and just as importantly, how kind, how generous, how funny, they are, and how lucky I am to be a part of this community.

Alum Interview: Carol Garrard (Class of '69)

By: Joel Calfee ('20)

As we all know, this semester has been anything but ordinary. For those of us who are seniors, it has been especially hard to cope with the fact that we were unable to spend our last weeks of college on campus. Yet, although this moment feels surreal, I have been trying to use this time to reflect on all that I love about William and Mary.

Prior to classes transitioning to a virtual format, I had been put in touch with an alum, named Carol Garrard ('69), and I was inspired by her story and what she experienced during her time at William and Mary. As a way to reconnect with the campus, but also to understand how it has changed throughout the years, I reached out to her.

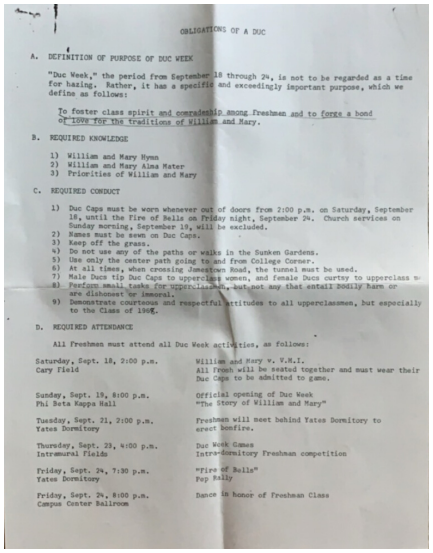
Carol Garrard was a student at William and Mary from 1965 to 1969 - a time of social and political evolution at the college, and in the U.S. as a whole. I was amazed by the thoughtful ways in which Garrard was able to reflect on the context of her time at William and Mary.

Regarding the introduction of African-American students to the college, she says "I don't remember ever even seeing any of the three African-American students whom the alumni magazine claims were there. They must have 'walked invisible.' It was all lily white, and shame on all of us for our collective blindness to that fact."

Garrard talked not only of the ways in which "unconscious and overt racism was ignored," but also about her experiences as a woman. Back when she attended William and Mary, there were "in loco parentis" rules in place for women at the college. Garrard recalled one moment where she was ten minutes late returning to her dorm on a Thursday night, and said she was given a house trial, where she was told how badly she behaved and was "grounded" for the next weekend.

The administration took the virginity of its female students very seriously," she says frankly. However, in the classroom, Garrard never felt like she was looked down upon. She says: "everybody knew the girls who went to William and Mary were intelligent and there was nothing held against you for being a girl."

"While we had an engaging discussion about the dynamic between men and women and the sexual revolution of the next decade, we also discussed the topic of sexuality at William and Mary. Garrard said, "I'm sure now students who are gay have support, but when I was there, I'm not sure that most girls at William and Mary knew what being gay was." She believed one of the girls in her sorority may have been gay, and said: "I realized everything must've been so lonely being in the closet. William and Mary forced its gay students into the closet. I think people turned inward and it caused great loneliness and unhappiness."



OBLIGATIONS OF A DUC

A. DEFINITION OF PURPOSE OF DUC WEEK

"Duc Week," the period from September 18 through 24, is not to be regarded as a time for hazing. Rather, it has a specific and exceedingly important purpose, which we define as follows:

To foster class spirit and comradeship among Freshmen and to forge a bond of love for the traditions of William and Mary.

B. REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE

1) William and Mary Hymn
2) William and Mary Alma Mater
3) Priorities of William and Mary

C. REQUIRED CONDUCT

1) Duc Caps must be worn whenever out of doors from 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, September 18, until the Fire of Bells on Friday night, September 24. Church services on Sunday morning, September 19, will be excluded.
2) Names must be sewn on Duc Caps.
3) Keep off the grass.
4) Do not use any of the paths or walks in the Sunken Gardens.
5) Use only the center path going to and from College Corner.
6) At all times, when crossing Jamestown Road, the tunnel must be used.
7) Male Ducs tip Duc Caps to upperclass women, and female Ducs curtsy to upperclass w
8) Perform small tasks for upperclassmen, but not any that entail bodily harm or are dishonest or immoral.
9) Demonstrate courteous and respectful attitudes to all upperclassmen, but especially to the Class of 1969.

D. REQUIRED ATTENDANCE

All Freshmen must attend all Duc Week activities, as follows:

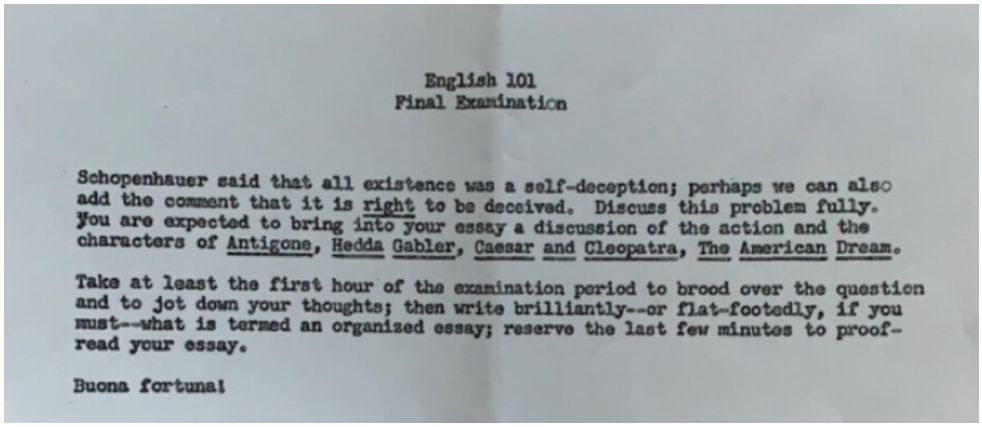
Saturday, Sept. 18, 2:00 p.m. Cary Field	William and Mary v. V.M.I. All Frosh will be seated together and must wear their Duc Caps to be admitted to game.
Sunday, Sept. 19, 8:00 p.m. Phi Beta Kappa Hall	Official opening of Duc Week "The Story of William and Mary"
Tuesday, Sept. 21, 2:00 p.m. Yates Dormitory	Freshmen will meet behind Yates Dormitory to erect bonfire.
Thursday, Sept. 23, 4:00 p.m. Intramural Fields	Duc Week Games Intra-Dormitory Freshman competition
Friday, Sept. 24, 7:30 p.m. Yates Dormitory	"Fire of Bells" Pep Rally
Friday, Sept. 24, 8:00 p.m. Campus Center Ballroom	Dance in honor of Freshman Class

As we discussed how things were harder for students during this time, we also touched on the former culture for freshmen. Mrs. Garrard talked about "Duc Week" (short for introductory), a period during the beginning of the fall semester where freshmen were given a set of rules they had to follow, facts about the college they had to learn, and beanies they were required to wear. She ended up mailing me the sheet she had kept, which detailed all of the rules of being a "duc" and all the ways in which upperclassmen had control over the freshmen during this period. "Can you believe it?" she asked me.

We also discussed the English department and the difference between our experiences as English students. A devoted archivist, Garrard had also kept the question she was given on her first English exam, sending a copy of it to me. The essay question, which asked the reader to discuss the idea that "all existence is a self-deception" was unlike anything I had encountered during my time as a student in the English department. Garrard jokingly said, "We all just sat there and looked at it. That was the most nebulous thing I had ever looked at until I got my PhD."

After two hours had flown by, Carol Garrard and I started winding down our conversation. Throughout the phone call, she had asked me all about the current culture at William and Mary and the ways in which it has changed since her time as a student. I had told her about my positive experiences being a queer person on campus and the ways in which many students try to have a hand in activism and making change at William and Mary. Garrard was extremely pleased to hear this. "I'm so glad that William and Mary is changing for the better, and it sounds like you've had some wonderful experiences as a student there. It's great to hear that the students are so involved."

Once I had hung up the phone, I began to think about how right she was. I was lucky that I had joined a campus community where the students were so active and dedicated to changing things they thought were wrong in the world. Hearing Carol Garrard's stories made me miss my campus even more, but also feel grateful for the time that I've had and the people I've been able to meet. We may not be able to finish this semester exactly the way we wanted, but it's encouraging to think about how future students will make this campus even better in the years to come.



English 101
Final Examination

Schopenhauer said that all existence was a self-deception; perhaps we can also add the comment that it is right to be deceived. Discuss this problem fully. You are expected to bring into your essay a discussion of the action and the characters of Antigone, Hedda Gabler, Caesar and Cleopatra, The American Dream.

Take at least the first hour of the examination period to brood over the question and to jot down your thoughts; then write brilliantly--or flat-footedly, if you must--what is termed an organized essay; reserve the last few minutes to proof-read your essay.

Buona fortuna!

"You Don't Need a Weatherman to Know Which Way the Wind Blows": A Conversation with Professor Arthur Knight

By: Leonor Taylor Grave ('20)

This year, Professor Suzanne Raitt is stepping down from her role as Department Chair and current Associate Chair Arthur Knight is set to replace her. I talked to Professor Knight about his global, multidisciplinary vision for the English Department, the uncertainty of the future under the COVID-19 pandemic, and the role of literature in times of crisis.

I had a feeling it would be a good class when Bob Dylan was on the syllabus.

When I took Professor Arthur Knight's Contemporary Literature class in the spring of 2017, I was hoping to learn how the very concept of literature has evolved in the last century. In Professor Knight's class, that's exactly what I got.

We combed through line after line of "Subterranean Homesick Blues" as we talked about the controversial decision of the Swedish Academy to award Dylan the Nobel Prize for Literature. We read Claudia Rankine's *Citizen* alongside the audiovisual materials on the book's website. That semester I happily slugged a copy of Alan Moore's graphic novel *Watchmen* around campus, hoping people would ask me about it so I could tell them, 'Oh, it's for my contemporary lit class,' and use it as an opportunity to talk about Professor Knight's course.

The questions being addressed in that course echo the questions being asked of English departments everywhere. If literature can encompass so many things, the discipline's core tenets become difficult to determine. When I sat down with Professor Knight in his office in early March, I asked him how he defined the role of an English department.

"Broadly," Knight said, resisting too narrow of an answer, "the charge of English departments are the study of expressive work done predominantly in the English language."

The study of "expressive" work emcompasses a whole lot. Historically, this has meant primarily close, detailed textual analyses of print works. Think: *The Faerie Queene, Jane Eyre, Mrs. Dalloway*. The second aspect of studying literature is what Knight called "historicizing," i.e. how literary texts change in relation to larger cultural trends.

As he transitions into leading the department, he has this framework firmly in mind.

"We want to keep those two axes alive and give students a good and thorough introduction to those things and frame a curriculum that allows them to get grounded in those two axes, those traditions of study," he said. "And then make space for their own interests."

A radical shift

After our initial meeting, the semester took a turn. William & Mary announced that classes would resume completely online, and students and professors alike had just over a week to adjust to the complete overhaul of the term.

When I followed up with Professor Knight in late April (his Zoom background as we spoke was a still image from Barry Jenkins' film *Moonlight*), he spoke about how the shift to online learning affected his classes. His Film Studies class, World Cinema Since TV, adapted more easily to remote instruction. His Williamsburg Documentary Project section was another challenge entirely.

The Williamsburg Documentary Project, which Knight helped establish in 2005, focuses on large questions of American social, cultural, and political history through the case study of Williamsburg. Every semester that it's taught, it narrows in on a different theme. As part of the class, students have conducted oral history interviews, built physical and digital archives, and even created online exhibits.

This semester, Knight's Williamsburg Documentary Project class focused on the idea of commemorative landscapes, with a special focus on campus-specific sites, like statues, plaques, memorials, and buildings.

A crucial part of the WDP is encouraging students to physically go out into the Williamsburg community to conduct their research. With his students forced to leave campus and quarantine elsewhere, this requirement became a lot more challenging.

He did his best, encouraging students to explore commemorative landscapes in their own environments, but the fact remained that the class was fundamentally altered.

Knight was not alone in this problem.

The entire department simultaneously had to figure out how to adapt their individual classes designed with a physical classroom in mind, to a remote learning environment, while a global pandemic continued to ravage the world and threaten people's health and livelihood.

While dealing with something as unprecedented as the coronavirus, what is the value of continuing to study English?

"That's a question most academics, and especially academics in the humanities, ask themselves all the time," he told me. "Because a lot of what we do is in some ways explicitly anti-instrumental."

"Nobody, I don't think, ever died because they didn't have a poem or a novel. At the same time, I think lots of people have suffered greatly because they didn't have ideas, aesthetic beauty — however it was defined or experienced in their moment — or because they weren't permitted to engage in serious or reflexive thought. Any individual instance of what we do is like 'Yeah, OK. Take it or leave it.' But I still think there's no question that the overall project [of studying English] is absolutely vital. And history makes that abundantly clear. It's not like people stop making expressive artifacts when there's famine and war and plagues.

"So whenever I'm tempted to think, 'Oh yeah, we should call it a day. We've got other fish to fry' — well, wait a minute. Whenever there have been enough bare resources for people to exist beyond just keeping breathing, they have made the effort to communicate and convey what they're experiencing, to try to understand and teach other people about it, to try to leave evidence of it."

Expanding English

Professor Knight arrived at William & Mary in 1993, originally hired to teach in both the English and American Studies departments. Since 1993, the English department and its interdisciplinary course offerings have become much more robust. Knight has been an integral part of that process, having served as Director of both the American Studies and Film & Media Studies departments over the years.

Now, the English department's multidisciplinary work sets it apart at William & Mary.

"English is probably, if not the biggest, one of the biggest contributors to interdisciplinary programs across the university," he said.

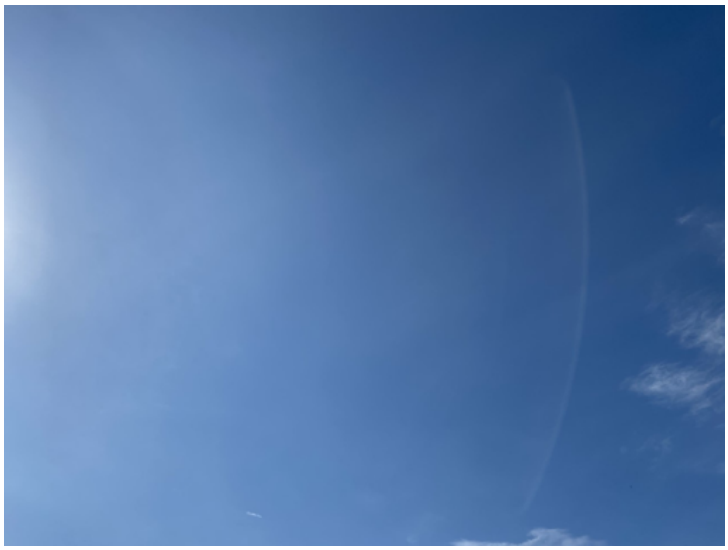
The interdisciplinary approach at the heart of Knight's work goes back to his undergraduate days at the University of Chicago.

He really liked some of his classes, and detested others. When it came time for Knight to declare a major, he stepped back and asked himself which classes he found stimulating and fulfilling, even when he didn't like his professor. "Those were literature classes," he said. "So I decided I would be a English major."

Within the University of Chicago English department, Knight took his first film courses and became interested in film, theater, and drama, doing comparative work between the fields. When he pursued graduate English degrees at the University of Chicago, he continued to incorporate a multidisciplinary approach, and the rest is history.

The book Knight is currently working on — *Black Star: A Cultural History of African American Fame* — represents his multidisciplinary interests: it focuses on how fame and celebrity have historically interacted with American understandings of race through the lens of black biographical film.

His interest in expressive work across mediums bleeds into his social media presence too. If you go on Professor Knight's Instagram, @iaknig, for instance, you'll find dozens of pictures he took of the sky facing southeast. He enjoys using accessible technology, like an iPhone, and recurring motifs, inspired by conceptual artists like On Kawara and his *Today* paintings.



As of late, he has also prolifically churned out memes revolving around "Zoom" wordplay. (Think Virginia Woolf's *A Zoom of One's Own*, or Zoom 237 in *The Shining*.)

As he steps into his role as chair in the coming months, Knight hopes to continue to build on the work of his predecessors, which most recently means outgoing department chair Suzanne Raitt. And that work has focused largely on diversifying department offerings.

"English isn't just the literature of Great Britain or North America or the U.S., but is a global literary expressive language. Continuing to diversify the departmental offerings, especially thinking globally, is probably my paramount ambition of the department," Knight said. "I think figuring out how we want to balance or integrate the literary, historical and analytic aspects of our department and the writing and the teaching of writing aspects of the department will be an important and interesting thing to work on over the next couple years."

Professor Knight also emphasized several times throughout our conversations that he hopes that the English department will continue to grow and become more inclusive, accessible, and approachable as time goes on. And he hopes that accessibility is a staple of students' time as undergraduates, but continues throughout their lives as well.

"I hope that graduating students will keep in touch and will continue to think of us as a place to connect and as a resource," he said. "Sometimes we can be a good sounding board but beyond that just a place to touch base and say hello."

Professor Knight can't predict the future. All he knows is what any of us know — William & Mary will reopen when it is safe to do so. In the meantime, he will be encouraging the English department faculty to spend the summer months planning for both the possibility of remote instruction or in-person classes.

And even as he prepares for the future, he reflects on the abrupt changes, losses, and uncertainties of the last few months, especially for the graduating class of 2020.

"I just can't convey — and I know all my colleagues feel this way — how much we grieve for you all and for ourselves too, to not be able to mark your accomplishments in the usual way at the usual time. It's definitely making me realize something I always knew, but it's giving me renewed appreciation for ritual," he said.

"And beyond that, we grieve for the uncertainty that we're entering into."

Inside Tucker Hall

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Jennifer Putzi, Associate Professor of English and Gender, Sexuality, & Women's Studies
Student Journalists
Joel Calfee
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Stay safe and take care of yourselves! We love you!