

WORDHORD

Fall 2015

Northwestern College
English Department Newsletter

Volume 14, No. 1



Word Game Party

October 4, 2015

Besides a love of words, many English majors also like food, movies, and games. On the afternoon of October 4, an assortment of faculty and students gathered for some competition at the Sioux Center home of Professor Van Es. Gamers could pick their station: The kitchen table saw rounds of Apples to Apples and Catch Phrase; players in the basement tried their hand at Munchkin and Exploding Kittens. Supposedly, Dr. Fynaardt was the King Munchkin even though he had no idea how the game worked (beginner's luck). Both winners and losers topped off the afternoon with Oreo ice cream sundaes.



Back row: Lucas Fratzke, Keith Fynaardt, Michael Kensak, Kim Van Es; Middle row: Kendra Burmester, Carissa Tavary, Carrie Bouwman, James Rucker; Front row: Kaleb Mortenson, Amie Adams, Megan Cummings, Erin Vande Vegte, Whitney Jorgensen, Peirce Jordan



In This Issue

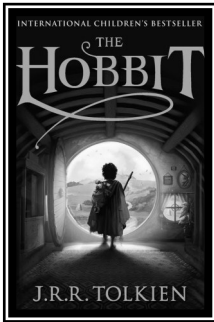
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HONORS RESEARCH - SPRING 2015

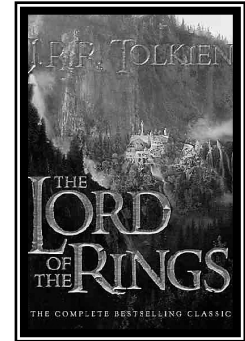
Megan (Walhof) Kischer - Literature '15

The Aesthetic of Loss in Tolkien's Works

One of the aesthetics that moves the reader and draws out emotion in Tolkien's works is loss. Loss permeates the world of Tolkien's works. Middle-earth constantly suffers declines and loss through mortality and evil. The aesthetic of loss, rather than a nostalgic remembering the past with undue fondness, recognizes the



inevitability of change and doom, the fading of what was once great and beautiful, lost in the accomplishment of good. In my honors research, I argued that loss represented the primary aesthetic in the *Silmarillion*, *The Hobbit*, and *The Lord of the Rings* because in the most notable moments of loss experienced, the characters so greatly desired some good that they find sweet the inevitable loss that is its cost. Throughout my research, I not only read the works previously mentioned, but numerous other writings by Tolkien, such as "Leaf by Niggle," and "On Fairy Stories." I also read and researched the *Prose Edda* for background information.



I particularly enjoyed researching with Professor Westerholm because it gave us both the opportunity to explore an author and works that we both love, as well as learning together. My honors research allowed me to come to a better understanding of what searching for knowledge is, as well as what education beyond an undergraduate degree might look like.

Allison Mulder - Writing and Rhetoric '15

What I liked most about my Honors Research project last semester was that so much of it was self-determined. When I foolishly (but determinedly) decided to write a novel, revise as much of it as possible, and analyze ten books for my project as a Writing & Rhetoric major, no one tried to dissuade me. I was able to set my own deadlines and accomplish the various stages of my project at my own pace, yet I still had the support of my supervisor, Dr. Martin, whenever it felt like I'd taken on too much.

In planning my own Honors Research project, I was able to focus on my passions and dig deeper into areas I'm truly interested in, such as creative writing for a young audience. The project also helped me learn to strategize how I'd complete major tasks, how to prioritize work and meet deadlines, and how to frame my academic work in ways that show its value to people beyond myself. Writing a novel is a pretty solitary activity.

Crafting a formal presentation about my process while writing that novel, on the other hand, required consideration of audience, tone, and analysis of the process itself. What's more, writing with the knowledge that a panel would be reading portions of my finished product pushed me to polish my work more than if I'd been writing for myself alone.

No one twisted my arm to make me accomplish so much in one semester. But everyone involved *did* support me as I strived toward these accomplishments. It wasn't easy, but I wouldn't have benefited so much if it had been. And in the end, if I had to choose, I'd do it again.



SPECIAL TOPICS - SPRING 2016

ENG 480 Tolkien

Dr. Joel Westerholm

Wednesdays 7:00 - 10:00 pm

Come Visit Middle Earth!



J. R. R. Tolkien's greatest accomplishment was his creation of an entire world: imagined creatures, histories, and, especially, languages. Next semester we shall visit that world in our own imaginations, reading some of the stories that influenced him, a couple essays in which he explains what he believes about story and imagined worlds, but mostly, the epic sweep that he managed to create across three separate genres in *The Silmarillion*, *The Hobbit*, and *Lord of the Rings*. Tolkien's imagination was saturated with his Christian faith, so we shall meet him there, finding his works, not allegories, but realizations of the power of a Christian aesthetic.

Deepsong Reading Series

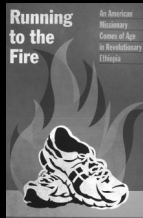
Guest Presenter Tim Bascom



Spring Deepsong will feature Tim Bascom who has recently published his memoir *Running to the Fire*:

An American Missionary Comes of Age in Revolutionary Ethiopia with University of Iowa Press. Bascom will also judge entries to this year's edition of *Spectrum*.

Tim Bascom is the author of the novel *Squatters' Rites*, the essay collection *The Comfort Trap*, and the memoir *Chameleon Days: An American Boyhood in Ethiopia*, which won the Bakeless Literary Prize in Nonfiction. Excerpts from *Chameleon Days* won the Editor's Prize from *The Missouri Review* and were included in *The Best American Travel Writing*. Bascom is an MFA graduate of the Nonfiction Writing Program at the University of Iowa and has published in an array of literary journals and commercial magazines. He is currently the Director of Creative Writing at Waldorf College and lives in Forest City, Iowa.



Running to the Fire focuses on the turbulent year the Bascom family experienced living in revolutionary Ethiopia. The teenage Bascom finds a paradoxical exhilaration in living so close to constant danger. At boarding school in Addis Ababa, Bascom bonds with other youth due to a shared sense of threat. He falls in love for the first time, but the young couple is soon separated by the politics that affect all their lives. Across the country, missionaries are held under house arrest while communist cadres seize their hospitals and schools. A friend's father is imprisoned as a suspected CIA agent; another is killed by raiding Somalis. Throughout, the teenage Bascom struggles with his faith and his role within the conflict as a white American Christian missionary's child. Reflecting back as an adult, he explores the historical, cultural, and religious contexts that led to this conflict, even though in doing so he is forced to ask himself questions that are easier left alone. Why, he wonders, did he find such strange fulfillment in being young and idealistic in the middle of what was essentially a kind of holy war?

English Teaching Majors Take on English Education Conference

by Nicole Montgomery - English Teaching '17

Methods of Teaching Secondary English/Speech presenters

Back row, left to right: Courtney Sandbulte (NWC English Alum '10), Sarah Morren, Savannah Sheets, Caleb Vander Baan, Nicole Montgomery, Professor Kim Van Es, and Whitney Jorgensen

Front row, left to right: Danielle Cupp, Brianna Darling, Erin Vande Vegte and Sharla De Bruin



On October 8 and 9, Ms. Van Es's Methods of Teaching Secondary English/Speech class took on the Iowa Council of Teachers of English (ICTE) to present their current class project called *Units from the Next Generation*.

For the first half of the semester, Van Es's students worked on unit plans for an English IV class at LeMars Gehlen High School. They were instructed to create units that followed the Iowa Core standards, fit with Gehlen's context, and engaged students in 12th grade English.

After each pre-service teacher selected a topic and drafted the unit overview, the ICTE presentation preparation took off. Each student had roughly four minutes to present their ideas about their units to teachers attending the conference. "By putting together a presentation, I found that even the smallest presentation can take much practice to perfect," Whitney Jorgensen, a senior English Teaching Major said while reflecting on the presentation process.

Even though the session was delivered by pre-service teachers, new and veteran teachers alike were able to take valuable information away from the session and even discussed different pedagogical strategies for teaching units. "I can't tell you how impressed I was," one teacher wrote to Ms. Van Es. "If you would be willing to share the units when completed, I would be very grateful."

The session led by NW students was only one component of the conference in Des Moines. NW students also had the opportunity to attend one-hour sessions led by other literacy professionals. Topics ranged from Shakespeare to classroom management to the program Poetry Out Loud.

Our majors especially enjoyed one unique session led by Valley High School's drama director as part of a keynote address. "There were some drama exercises to loosen students up and relax that I would like to use in my classroom," said Sarah Morren, a senior English Teaching major. "School isn't all about business. Sometimes it's helpful to students to just let loose and have some fun."

Another session favorite covered student teaching, a presentation led by Dr. Calle Friesen of Buena Vista University. In this session, students gained the knowledge they need to be successful in student teaching.

Overall, the ICTE conference had a great impact on NW students. Students appreciated gaining insight from teachers in their own field of study. "These conferences help English Teaching Majors join in the group of English teachers and gain knowledge from their advice," Jorgensen said.

ICTE is a way to not only gain knowledge from one another--it's a way to connect teachers from across the state. "You learn techniques that teachers are using all across Iowa," Morren said. "It's great to glean from their ideas and make them your own."

Though the ICTE conference may be over for this year, English teaching majors can take the knowledge gained from this year's conference and use it in their classrooms.

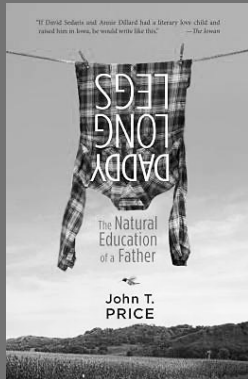
AUTHORS IN THE FIELD

JOHN T. PRICE AT AUGUSTANA UNIVERSITY

by Amie Adams - Writing & Rhetoric '17



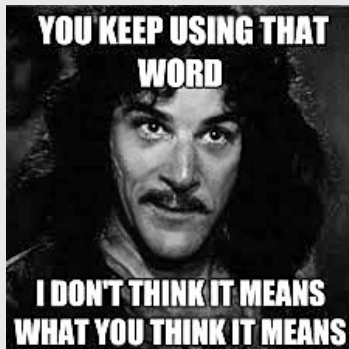
On September 29, I traveled with Lucas Fratzke, Whitney Jorgensen, Dr. Ann Lundberg, and Dr. Keith Fynaardt to Augustana University to hear author John Price speak. Price is an Iowa native who combines memoir and nature writing to explore themes such as family, the environment, and spirituality. Price began his presentation with some comments on the importance of memoir. He described it as a genre that not only helps writers and readers to understand themselves but also to understand the communities they are a part of. Price then read a mixture of humorous and thoughtful selections from his collection of essays as well as an excerpt from his latest memoir *Daddy Longlegs*. He ended the night with a question and answer time where he gave some insights into the incorporation of humor in writing. After the reading, we took the opportunity to briefly meet with Price. Dr. Fynaardt and Price even reconnected from their days in graduate school together. For Lucas and me, what we learned on this trip corresponded with our Creative Nonfiction class taught by Dr. Fynaardt. We were inspired to continue our own experimentation with these genres of writing. The trip was well worth it and enjoyed by everyone involved!



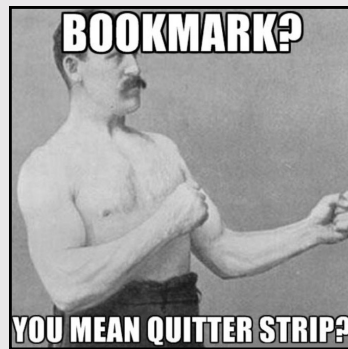
Words on the Web

Your Favorite English Meme

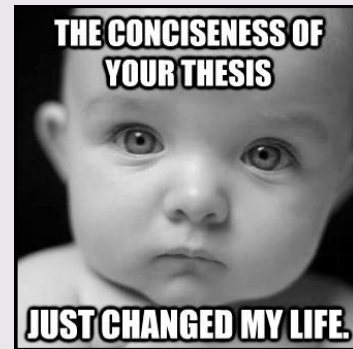
Savannah Sheets...



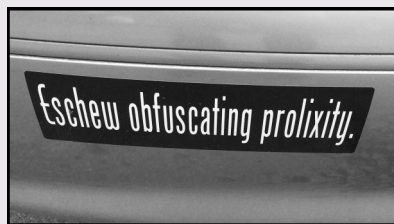
Erin Vande Vegte...



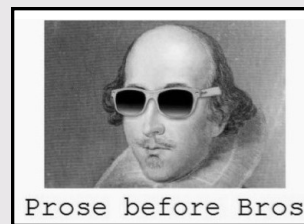
Nicole Montgomery...



Chris Nonhof...



Marie Jeppesen...



Pam Vlieger...

Let's face it:



English is a crazy language

There is no **EGG** in **EGGPLANT** nor **HAM** in **HAMBURGER**; neither **APPLE** nor **PINE** in **PINEAPPLE**. **ENGLISH MUFFINS** weren't invented in **ENGLAND**. **QUICKSAND** can work **SLOWLY**, **BOXING RINGS** are **SQUARE**, and a **GUINEA PIG** is neither from **GUINEA** nor is it a **PIG**.

And why is it that **WRITERS WRITE** but **FINGERS DON'T FING**, **GROCERS** don't **GROCE** and **HAMMERS** don't **HAM**? Doesn't it seem crazy that you can make **AMENDS** but not one **AMEND**? If **TEACHERS TAUGHT**, why didn't **PREACHERS PRAUGHT**? If a **VEGETARIAN** eats **VEGETABLES**, what does a **HUMANITARIAN** eat?

In what other language do people **RECITE** at a **PLAY** and **PLAY** at a **RECITAL**? We **SHIP BY TRUCK** but **SEND CARGO BY SHIP**. We have **NOSES** that **RUN** and **FEET** that **SMELL**. We **PARK** in a **DRIVEWAY** and **DRIVE** in a **PARKWAY**. And how can a **SLIM CHANCE** and a **FAT CHANCE** be the same, while a **WISE MAN** and a **WISE GUY** are opposites?

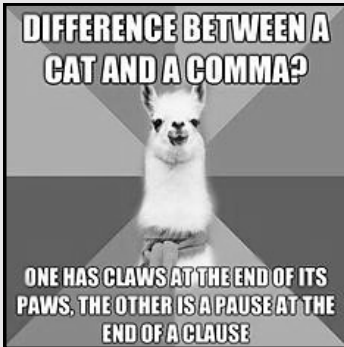
You have to marvel at the unique lunacy of a language in which your **HOUSE** can **BURN UP** as it **BURNS DOWN**, in which you **FILL IN** a form by **FILLING IT OUT**, and in which an **ALARM** goes **OFF** by going **ON**. And, in closing, if Father is **POP**, how come Mother's not **MOP**?

~author unknown

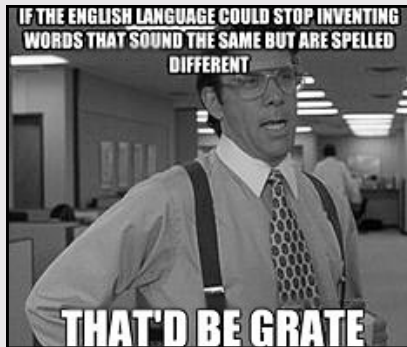
Words on the Web

More Favorite English Memes

Amie Adams...



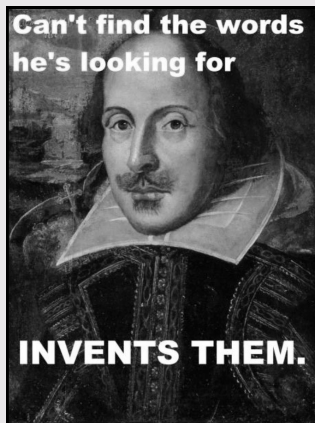
Michelle Simpson...



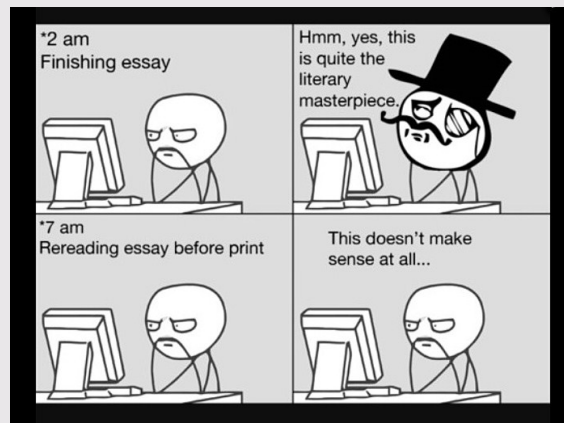
Nicole Montgomery...



Erin Vande Vegte...



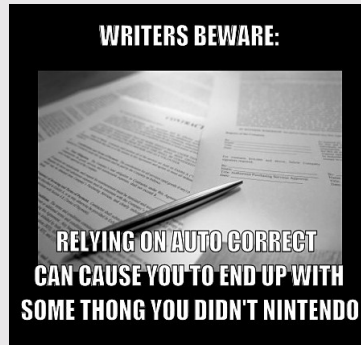
Brianna Mullaney...



Justine Johnson...



Chris Nonhof...



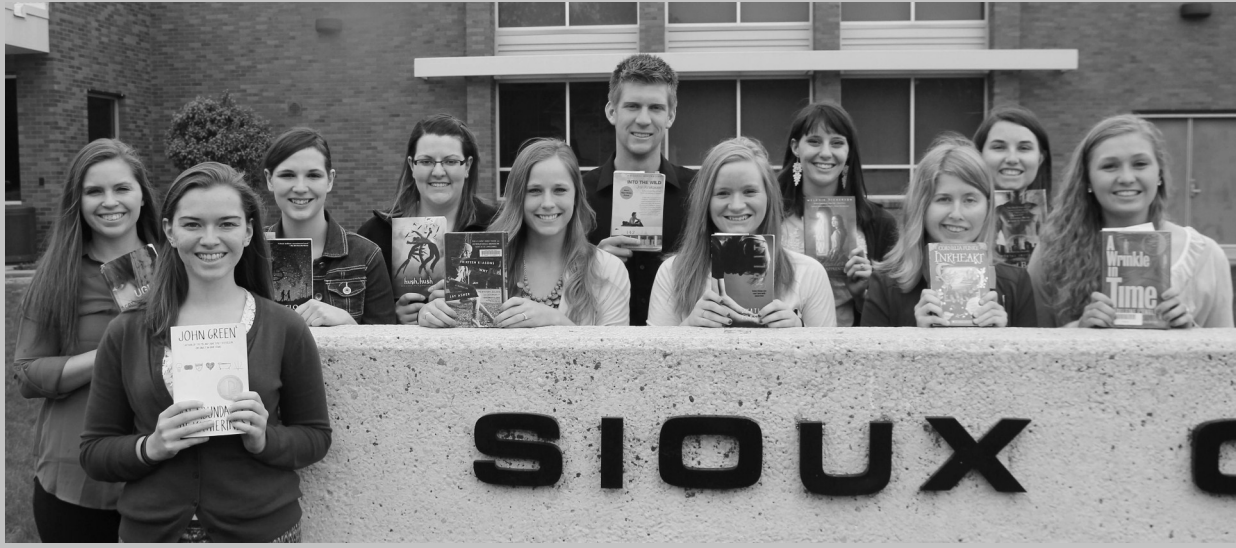
Michael Kensak...



Welcome to the English Language!

Students in Young Adult Literature gave book talks to ninth graders at Sioux Center High School

These pre-service teachers include, from left to right, Danielle Cupp, Brianna Darling, Nicole Montgomery, Tasha Haag, Erin Vande Vegte, Caleb VanderBaan, Abigail Eben, Sarah Morren, Savannah Sheets, Whitney Jorgensen, and Mallory Bjork.



English Camp: Teachers Encouraging Teachers

Northwestern College hosted the annual Iowa Council of Teachers of English (ICTE) Eng-Camp on Saturday, June 6, 2015.

English teaching professionals throughout the state were invited to attend the conference which took place simultaneously in four different locations. In addition to Northwestern College, the conference was held at Kennedy High School in Cedar Rapids, Logan-Magnolia High School in Logan, and Roosevelt High School in Des Moines.

The conference's agenda was created by the participants at the start of the event. Attendees decided the topics of conversation; they were encouraged to bring ideas from their own classrooms to share in the three break-out sessions.

Kim Van Es, Associate Professor of English, co-hosted the event with Northwestern alumna Ashlee (Eisland) Koedam, '13. Ashlee is an English teacher at West Lyon High School in Inwood, Iowa.

"Collaboration with middle and secondary English teachers is priceless for me as an English education educator," says Van Es. "As Northwestern prepares future teachers, we professors need to keep an ear to the ground regarding the rewards, challenges and best practices of this career."

The conference concluded with prize drawings. This year the door prize was a copy of "Notice and Note" by Kyleene Beers and Robert Probst, who were the keynote speakers at the ICTE conference in October.



The photo above shows Northwestern folk who joined area English teachers to raise questions and share ideas. From left to right, Cortney Sandbulte (NW '10; teacher at LeMars Gehlen), Lisa Wiersma (NW '09; teacher at Sioux Center), NW professor Kim Van Es, and Ashlee Koedam (NW '13; teacher at West Lyon).

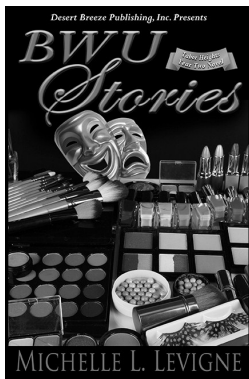
Alumni Feature

Michelle Levigne '83

Majored in
Theatre & English

Writing is a solitary occupation and a long, weary road. Fortunately, the worlds of my imagination are fun to explore or I would have given up long ago.

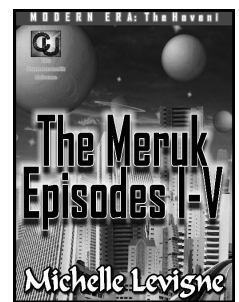
I started writing in high school. In college, I switched from accounting to theater, so I could (Ha!) have control when my books became screenplays. Well, Hollywood wasn't buying. The closest I got was proposing a sitcom to Northstar Productions, and getting 'this close' to selling to "MacGyver." After graduating from NWC, I wrote fan fiction, novels and scripts, and entered competitions. Gradually, novels took over. The sitcom and script turned into two books, *Behind the Scenes* and *Wheels*, in my inspirational romance series, Tabor Heights.



Other scripts and SF fan fiction have morphed into many novels in various series that I write in SF, fantasy, and romance. Nothing is ever wasted. Even the lamest idea can eventually be rewritten into a cohesive, entertaining adventure.

My time at NWC even contributed to Tabor Heights. The stories focus on members of one congregation, some of whom teach at the university. Several books feature ... you guessed it, theater students, faculty, and writers. Pieces of Butler-Williams University and Tabor are borrowed from NWC and Orange City. Don't look for any resemblance between NWC faculty and BWU faculty though...

My first published stories were in fandom: Star Trek, Highlander, Stingray, Starman, Beauty & the Beast, and Stargate. In 1990, after twelve entries, I won first place in the Writers of the Future contest. We were told at the awards ceremony that for some of us, this would be the pinnacle of our writing careers. I promised myself it would be the launch, not the pinnacle. In 2000, my first full-length novel was published. *Heir of Faxinor* combines fantasy, romance, and faith -- and tough chicks with swords! After a hiatus of several years, I'm adding to the series, writing Book 4, *Sword of Faxinor*, with six or seven more planned.



Individual novels include such titles as *The Dreamer's Loom*, the story of *The Odyssey* from Penelope's point of view. I've been a finalist in the EPIC Awards competition thirteen times, with two wins: *Lorien* (Faxinor 2) and *The Meruk Episodes* (Commonwealth Universe anthology).

Writing is solitary but it doesn't always have to be. Join writing groups such as American Christian Fiction Writers (www.ACFW.com) or EPIC (Electronically Published Internet Coalition) and go to conferences. My "day job" is as a freelance editor. It gives me flexibility to devote more time to my writing. Being able to spend the day in sweats and barefoot doesn't hurt, either!

Want to contact Michelle?

Connect with her at www.Mlevigne.com; www.MichelleLevigne.blogspot.com; or at www.Tabor-Heights-Today.blogspot.com

Want to read one of Michelle's books?

Several of her novels are available in the NWC DeWitt Learning Commons.

Candace Boerema '99

English Teaching Major

I am entering my 15th year of teaching 10th-12th grade English in Litchfield, MN. Five years ago I completed my Master's degree and added two University of Minnesota courses to my teaching schedule. Teaching these courses have become highlights of my day. My students receive college credit for taking them and I am privileged to take part in some fantastic staff development opportunities offered by the University of Minnesota. I love my job but I continue to look for ways to improve as an instructor. This fall I will supervise a student teacher and I love the opportunity to teach a young educator how to teach. My husband Adam and I have three children: Owen (14), Maggie (11), and Gideon (7) all of whom love to read. I remember NWC fondly and always speak highly of my alma mater to my students.

Emily (Gosselink) Ford '00

English Teaching Major

After getting my BA in English Teaching, I went on to get my MA in Higher Education. I took a job at Covenant College (Lookout Mountain, GA), where I was eventually promoted to Associate Dean of Students. I worked at Covenant for 10 years before choosing to leave and stay home with my two children. I had fun writing a blog post last year, reflecting on ways that I still use my MA degree as a stay-at-home-mom: <http://emilykford.blogspot.com/2014/03/ten-ways-i-still-use-my-mahe-as-sahm.html>

Rodger Dalman '70

English Literature Major

Upon graduation from Northwestern, between 1970 and 1990, I continued my education at Westminster Seminary, Biblical Seminary, and Concordia Seminary. Then for thirteen years I used my ThD in Old Testament to teach at Trinity Newburg Seminary. I enjoyed applying the skill of interpreting literature, which I gained from my degree in literature at Northwestern, to Biblical exegesis. Those skills allowed me to construct a completely different approach to understanding the relationship between the Bible and the ancient Near East.*

*Note: Dr. Dalman's unique approach is expressed in three books he has written: *Is the Bible Really True: Recovering an Ancient Faith with 21st Century Evidence*; *Genesis in the Real World: Seven Keys for Understanding the Biblical, Archaeological, and Scientific Background of Genesis 1-11*; and *Genesis and Israel's Wilderness Generation: How Moses Used History to Teach a Rebellious Nation*. Dr. Dalman's books are considered conservative, original, iconoclastic, and highly controversial.

David Tienter '74

English & Philosophy Double Major

I have retired from work writing legal decisions for the Social Security Department, but I still write. I have three published novels, *Not Done Yet* (2013); *Playing with Fire*; and *Doc Holliday: the Hard Ride* (2014). My books are available on amazon.com.* I fondly remember Barbara Turnwall for teaching me to write creatively and I recall that my years at Northwestern were wonderful. I currently reside in Port St. Lucie, Florida with my wife and three dogs.



*Note: David's novels are also available in the NWC DeWitt Learning Commons.

Ashley (Eiesland) Koedam '13

English Teaching Major



I have been honored to have been chosen as the recipient of this year's Iowa Council of Teachers of English (ICTE) *Barb Schubert Award*. This award recognizes a beginning teacher (0-4 years experience) for excellence in the classroom. I teach English at West Lyon High School.

Allison Mulder '15

Writing & Rhetoric Major

I am having a great time on my Chicago Semester. I just learned that I sold a short story to *Crossed Genres*, which is a fantasy and sci-fi magazine you probably haven't heard of but pays professional rates! I'm excited!

Amy Leigh Lightfoot '07

English Teaching Major

I am no longer teaching in Bahrain. I am presently in my second year at Denver Seminary, pursuing a master's in Counseling Ministries. I have been volunteering with the youth group at my church in Golden, CO for over six years and have decided to pursue that line of work. God willing, I will complete my master's degree in Spring, 2016.

Mandy (Haas) Harris '04

English Teaching Major

I am currently in my 12th year of teaching at Hutchinson High School (MN) which also happens to be my Alma Mater. I love my job teaching the Advanced Placement Literature and Composition course to seniors, a 10th grade American Literature Honors course and a regular 10th grade American literature/composition course. I can't think of anything I would rather do and definitely believe God designed me for this. My personal blessings include marriage to a *wonderful man* and mothering a 15 month old daughter, Annalyn Grace.

Nathan Mastbergen '13

English Teaching Major

After teaching English in Opelousas, LA, I have taken a job teaching English at MOC-Floyd Valley High School in Orange City, IA.

Anna (Pitney) Roorda '12

English Teaching Major

I have accepted an 8th grade English Language Arts position at Central Middle School in Muscatine, IA.

Jaylene (Wiersma) De Vos '03

English Teaching Major

My husband, James (Biology Teaching '03), and I are both doing quite well as high school teachers in Cherokee, IA. Both of us recently completed our Masters of Education programs through Morningside College. James teaches Physics, Chemistry, Advanced Chemistry, and A.P. Biology. I teach a variety of English classes. We have 3 children, our oldest, Julia, is going to be in the 4th grade this year. Every day we continue to feel blessed to have been trained in education at NWC. We've had several student teachers come and go over the past 10 years and it's very obvious to us that NWC does the education program the right way.

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Northwestern College English Department
Compiled & Edited by: Professor Ann Lundberg
Formatted by: Karen VanDerMaaten
