



Between *the* Lines

Department of Literature
and Languages

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Taking the English Major to D.C.

Elaina Gonzalez | Current ENGL Major

When I first considered applying for the Bill Archer Fellowship Program, I wondered if I was even qualified. With little experience in politics, I was uncertain if I could succeed in Washington, D.C. Beginning to fill out the application, I realized that I did not need to be a policy expert – I had to utilize my research and writing skills to communicate my interests and competencies.

Just like in my English assignments, I utilized scholarly databases, analyzed reliable sources, and created an intentional narrative throughout my application materials. When I interviewed, I used the vocabulary and verbal articulation learned in the classroom to talk about my goals. I was (and still am) ecstatic that I was accepted into the Fall 2023 Archer cohort; I am thankful that my support system in the College of Arts and Sciences largely contributed to my success.

While in D.C., I again found my English major skills being put to use. Solid writing became a recurring requirement in both academics and professional work. While an understanding of politics was necessary, political knowledge was almost useless without the ability to communicate those ideas to varying audiences. I learned how to draft short but accurate policy documents despite wading through challenging legal material surprisingly similar to analyzing complex themes in literature. To my surprise, I was no less prepared for the program than my fellow government majors. Policymaking is wholly dependent on research and writing, as is the field of public affairs.

As a Public Affairs Intern at Cornerstone Government Affairs, I recognized how my academic career helped me transition into the professional world. Instead of papers, I wrote memos and pitched content. For research, I compiled media lists in clean, easy-to-read spreadsheets and documents. I worked independently and alongside other interns on heavy tasks while building relationships with my colleagues – just like at UT Tyler.

Getting to use my experience in English and my passion for creativity has been a dream; I am now continuing my internship remotely as I finish my last semester in Tyler. As I move from undergraduate studies to the next phase of my life, I am confident that I have the necessary skills, experience, and support to thrive.



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An English Major Chameleon in the World of HVAC

Mary Wyscarver | 2019 English BA

After I completed my English degree at UT Tyler, I was hired as an account manager for an HVAC manufacturer headquartered in East Texas. The main objective of my job was to maintain positive relationships with our customers, which was difficult at the time due to severe supply chain issues the industry was experiencing due to COVID-19. While my buyers didn't appreciate the bad news that I was often sharing, they liked the fact that I kept them updated with emails that were clear and concise. I like to think that the professionalism of my writing helped to assure them that they were in good hands and helped us to sustain their trust in such a difficult period.

My role expanded shortly after I joined when I was asked to write new procedural manuals for customer service as our company replaced our ERP software with a more robust program. Once those were finished, I was drafted into writing updated documents for our production and logistics teams as well. My participation in this project put me on the radar of other departments, which led to new opportunities for me.

In addition to the technical writing I'd done, our director of finance was impressed with the communication savvy she'd seen from our emails, and when a position opened in our accounting department, she invited me to apply for it. Our marketing director was also seeking someone at that time to assist with social media and represent the company at trade shows. They collaborated to create a new hybrid position for me: marketing & accounts receivable specialist.

In the year I've spent in this new role, I've appreciated how varied the duties are that make up my day. I bounce between my number-driven, detailed tasks processing payments and more creative work, writing copy for our social media posts and marketing campaigns. I love that I get to visit new places as I travel to attend retail expos around the country.

I'm grateful that my English degree has given me the chance to fill so many diverse roles in my career so far. When I graduated, I was nervous that the skills I'd gained would only be applicable in a handful of careers related to literature and education. The truth is that interpreting and conveying written communication is vital in so many jobs, and a mastery of language & writing can be an advantage that can open so many doors.



Writing New Chapters

Amy Skipper Souza | 2012 English BA | 2017 Library Science MS

From the time I was young, I was surrounded by books, fascinated by etymology and spelling, and writing backstories for characters before ever getting to the start of the story and writing those famous words, "Once upon a time..." Beginning college, counter to my intrinsic strengths and interests, I chose another field as my first major before, ultimately, switching to English. (Every character needs a good side adventure.) This decision to lean into my strengths and embrace my passions turned out to not only be a chapter in my life that I look back on positively but impacts me each day.

Studying English as my undergraduate major didn't just train me for one singular job but prepared me for a future career and my many roles along the way. With this degree, I learned effective written and verbal communication skills, information literacy and research skills, and valuable critical thinking skills that challenged me to look beyond the written text and dive into what's beneath the surface. These skills stand the test of time, and I have found that they are not only transferable to new roles I have taken within my career but promoted my growth by encouraging curiosity, fostering imaginative problem solving, and emphasizing the importance of the written and spoken word.

As a public youth librarian for the last five years, I utilize these skills along with my graduate studies in Library Science to design educational programs and services for children and families. The goal of which is to provide all children in our community with access to opportunities focused on enhancing language and literacy, the building blocks upon which they will build their stories. On the average day, this looks like selecting books for an emerging reader, leading children's programs, connecting families to resources and services, grant writing, crafting engaging social media posts, writing webpage content, leading a team of other youth staff, and communicating with stakeholders and partners in our community.

This current chapter of my career has been incredibly rewarding with each new page I get to help more families and children, and with each new page, I am able to use the skills I have learned from my studies to make these positive impacts. Majoring in English was a pivotal decision for me and my career trajectory, and I encourage others to dive into what's beneath the surface of this excellent career path.



Jump Start your Writing

Becky Johnston | 2017 English MA

The biggest obstacles for English majors who want to write and publish creatively are time, distractions, and lack of connections. What helped me overcome these obstacles for my second novel was a Writers Residency. I wrote my first novel, *Not to Keep*, mostly over the early months of COVID. I was working from home and the island town I live in had effectively closed the bridge so no visitors were allowed in town. I had very little to do but sit on my porch and wonder what my neighbors were up to. The novel practically wrote itself. My second novel stalled at the first chapter as life went back to its normal demanding pace.

Not long after finishing one chapter, I sent a shot out into the dark and applied for a Writers Residency with the Key West Literary Seminar. The KWLS is run by a very accomplished board including individuals such as Judy Blume and Katrin Schumann. The residency was for one to four weeks, and while the application said it was for “accomplished and emerging writers,” I didn’t figure I was either.

The months passed, and I assumed I was right; this was out of my reach.

Then to my surprise, I was awarded a residency over Spring Break 2023, while I would be off from teaching my college classes.

The residency was held in a one-bedroom apartment on Love Lane in the historic part of Key West, right above the KWLS offices. I had an entire apartment to myself with some snacks in the fridge, ocean views a walk away, and no obligations. I had a week to write. That week I was inspired by the vibe of Key West and wrote 25,000 words, a boon after months of nothing. Ten months later and my novel is done.

The residency was a great way for me to overcome obstacles and finish the novel I had in my mind, and it can be for you, too. To find a residency, try websites like [submittable.com](https://www.submittable.com). Look for a residency that fits you. Some residencies are free, as mine was, and others are not. Read carefully and give it a shot. The worst that can happen is a denial, and the best could be finishing your novel and making new connections in the publication world.



The Unseen Power of English: A Principal's Perspective

Sarah Foster Arbaiza | 2015 English Curriculum & Instruction M.Ed.

As a high school principal, my journey through academia has been formidably propelled by the skills I developed during my time in UT Tyler's Graduate program. Education is an ever-changing field, and I have found that communication, research, and analysis are the skills I use the most.

As a high school principal, it is imperative that I communicate effectively to the staff and students I serve every day. Whether I am conveying ideas, inspiring action, or fostering a sense of community, I know that my proficient communication is due to those countless hours in the writing lab! The feedback I received while at UT Tyler helped me to articulate ideas clearly and persuasively. My M.Ed. came with an emphasis in English that has allowed to hone my analysis skills in the everyday situations I find myself in as a school leader.

But my path to principalship isn't just marked by my mastery of the English language, but also by the broader skills that I developed as a graduate student at UT Tyler. At its core, a Master's degree is an exercise in time management, organization, and perseverance. Between juggling the complexities of being a full-time teacher, a mother, and a full-time graduate-level student, my ability to manage competing priorities and maintain a disciplined approach to responsibilities has been a direct transferable skill that ensures the smooth running of daily operations within a large high school.

The research-intensive nature of a Master's English program has honed my problem-solving and analytical-thinking skills. These have been invaluable to me in addressing the myriad challenges faced in school leadership. My ability to critically analyze and evaluate information at a fast rate has allowed me to develop effective school policies and implement evidence-based practices.

One unexpected way that my graduate-level experience has helped me in my current role is through human connection and empathy. Analyzing literature allows one to see the human experience in a unique and new way. Whether it is evaluating human connections to navigating intricate details to determine future outcomes, the social dynamics explored through texts have been pivotal in fostering a positive school culture.

In conclusion, my journey at UT Tyler's Graduate program has truly helped me become the school leader that I am today. This is a testament to the enduring power of language and literature. The ways, both expected and unexpected, that my ENGL degree have influenced me as a school leader have proven to be invaluable! They have had a profound impact on developing me into a well-rounded and dynamic school leader.



Anyone Can Cook

Bryson Schubert | 2022 English BA

My name is Bryson Schubert and I am the editor at *Stroll - Lake Windcrest*, a publication in Magnolia, Texas. It's a private publication for a private neighborhood called Lake Windcrest, and I got my job through nepotism, because my wife is the founder and director of that publication.

That's my job; I want to tell you about my career as a filmmaker. For the last year or so, I have been writing and rewriting (and rewriting some more) a screenplay that I conceptualized when I was in high school. During college, I was effectively brainstorming (daydreaming) and doing market research (watching tons of movies) because I had a lot of homework and didn't have a lot of time to write "for fun." Now that I'm employed, I have enough time to sit at my dining room table and work on my silly little dream.

Let me tell you something: it's hard. This isn't California, and you're not applying to film school. This is east Texas, and you're going to UT Tyler. It took me a long time before I was even brave enough to tell people I was writing a movie, because in east Texas, they might laugh at you. I knew, after a little while, that nobody was going to help me make my movie. I had to do it on my own, and every choice I made had to enable me to make my own movie.

One of those choices was going to UT Tyler. I wanted to learn how to be a writer. I wanted to learn about the essentiality of stories and how we require them to express the human condition. Some of the great filmmakers of our time have their B.A.'s in English. Steven Spielberg. Martin Scorsese. Christopher Nolan. That inspires me, because it helps me understand that every person who is great at something has to start somewhere. You have to do the best you can do wherever you are in the world.

UT Tyler was the very best I could do, and it was my choice. It has a choice that has served me very well, and I encourage you to make the choice that will serve your dream. I will leave you with this quote from one of my favorite films, *Ratatouille*: "Not everyone can become a great artist; but a great artist can come from anywhere."



Writing a Book for Children

Hunter M. Cambon | 2019 English MA

About My Book - *Howard the Coward*

After waking up thirsty in the middle of the night, Howard must brave the darkness to fetch a glass of water from the kitchen. While creeping through the house to avoid waking his family, Howard conjures threats around every corner. However, by relying on observation to balance his imagination, Howard overcomes his fears to secure a glass of water and return to his room for a peaceful night's sleep.

For young children, the world can be a scary place, but the medium of fiction can allow them to learn about regulating their fears in a safe and supportive environment.

My Writing Process

While writing a children's book does include creative juices, there are other ingredients required to cook up a successful story.

Discipline - There are times I feel more inspired than others, but maintaining a disciplined writing schedule is essential. I write best in the early morning or late evening when I have fewer distractions. So, rather than simply hoping inspiration strikes, I hold time to write at times I feel most productive.

Product Testing - I sent printed copies of my manuscript to friends with young children. I asked them to record themselves reading my story aloud to their kids. This approach allowed me to hear the snags in cadence, rhyme, and delivery. Sure, I read it aloud many times, but hearing others read it aloud was a big help.

Knowing When to Stop - I could tweak a story indefinitely, but I'd remind myself to take a step back and decide when and why I'd declare the project complete. If I don't keep a loose "finish line" in mind, there's a chance I'll overthink and overwork the story to its detriment.

My Publication Process

I worked closely with my publisher, IOM Publishing, and illustrator, Patrick Laurent, to bring Howard to life. I started by sharing Howard's detailed backstory so Laurent could get a better feel for who Howard is. From there, we created many versions of Howard and edited him from hair to toes until we had a character we loved. We then transferred the manuscript to a storyboard to work through pacing and illustration ideas. We continued with rough illustration ideas on each page and placed the text boxes where we thought they belonged. From there, Laurent worked for months on creating each scene before we brought it all together for final edits.

Howard the Coward (2023) can be found on Amazon or wherever you buy books.



Publishing as an Undergraduate

Melissa Lopez | Current English Major

As an undergraduate English major, I spend a lot of time reading literature and crafting ideas to turn into research papers. One thing English majors should consider is how to turn these research papers into published articles in undergraduate research journals. Why should undergraduates try to get their papers published? Simple. To gain experience in the world of academic and professional research and to build a reputation for themselves in their field. When an undergraduate turns their research paper into a published work through a journal, professionals in their chosen field are more likely to hire them because they have experience. Not only does getting published let students get their name out there, but they can add to their resume that they have been published in their field, increasing their chances at getting hired. But getting published is not so simple.



After writing the paper for a class, the student now needs find an undergraduate journal taking submissions. Luckily, the Council on Undergraduate Research has an entire webpage dedicated to various undergraduate journals taking submissions.

[<https://www.cur.org/resources-publications/student-resources/student-journals/undergraduate-research-journal-listing/>] Each one has a certain specialty and submission requirements, so it does take a bit of research to find the right journal for submission, but it is an important step.

Maybe the paper focuses on the history of a certain piece, and it is larger historical fact based. In this case, the student would want to submit their paper to a journal specializing in history. Maybe the paper deals with intersections of various aspects of politics, society, and history. It would be better to find a journal that specializes in that area. A student might have an easier time trying to meet the qualifications of a specialized journal over an interdisciplinary journal, depending on their topic and interest.

When finalizing papers for submission, students should think about their target audience, submission requirements for the journal, and how their paper and research fit into what is already established for the literary works and time period their paper covers. It is important to edit the paper as necessary to fit these criteria. There might be requirements regarding paper length, works cited, or something else, and keeping this in mind may help in the process. The process may be unfamiliar and intimidating, but what do you have to lose? Go for it!

Dr. Beebe's Right: Teaching Is Not Your Only Option

Raquelle Langlinais | 2019 English BA | 2020 M.Ed. in Curriculum & Instruction

There's a running joke in my current place of work: No one plans to become a recruiter. I laugh when I hear this sentiment because of the weight of its truth in my own life. Dr. Beebe often shared with us in her treasured weekly emails that English Majors brought a lot to any industry because of our interpersonal skills and refined ability to make connections. It took me years and stumbling into the ambiguous role of recruiting to realize the depth of her freely given truth.

My first year as a teacher included lots of post-grad coursework, scrambling to learn how to manage the tumultuous behavioral patterns of 12–13-year-olds, crying in defeat at the end of many days, and finishing the school year on Google Classroom instead of the traditional setting due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Between my lack of mental fortitude and declining health, I lasted 2.5-year in public education.

I would like to say I landed in my current role as a Technical Recruiter with intentionality and a drive to develop a business acumen, but the truth is that I fell into the role as a last-ditch effort. Referred by a friend, I was simply grateful to be a part of an organization that allowed me more than a frantic 20-minute lunch.

As an English Major with a passion for writing and research, I confess I looked down on recruiting as a legitimate career path – how entirely off-base were my assumptions. In my 2 years at this job, I have interfaced with executives of Fortune 500 companies, connected hardworking professionals with companies they could only dream of joining, and implemented organization to ambiguity.

English Majors are uniquely positioned for recruiting. In my day-to-day, I research and stay up to date on the regional, national, and global markets, as they all impact the IT industry and my business within this company. I use this information to educate the current workforce. I meet with leadership for status reporting, search for the common thread across resumes, and streamline the application-to-offer pipeline.

I write a clear story of my candidates, complete with logistical facts and list of relevant experience that purposefully lands in the email inbox of hiring managers. I help candidates prepare for interviews; I assist in onboarding once they receive offers. I get to work vertically and horizontally across a large organization. In a world where I felt no direction, and held a deep inability to choose, recruiting in a technical environment told me that I didn't have to choose. I can do it all, and my background helps me do that.

If I could offer any unsolicited advice to current English Majors who are feeling directionless in their career goals and approaching graduation, I would tell them to try recruiting. Avoid the headspace that tells you education is your only choice.



Why Not English?

Nadia Hall M.Ed., Ed.S. | 2007 English BA

The decision to major in English has not only been instrumental but vital throughout my career as an educational leader. After receiving my B.A. in 2007 from The University of Texas at Tyler, I have had the opportunity to serve as an ELA instructor, Assistant Principal, District Coordinator, and High School Principal.

English as a foundational degree nurtured my ability to synthesize information, write curriculum and comprehensive frameworks to improve all aspects of education, and provide exceptional insight related to the dissection and explication of all types of literature. As an educational leader, I have created and developed a multiplicity of written information for the purposes of professional development for faculty, staff, students, and community partners. I regularly analyze data as well as develop and execute aligned action plans that promote student behavioral and academic success.

Majoring in English has cultivated the art of strategic communication which promotes effective articulation and listening skills. These talents are paramount when working closely with parents and educational stakeholders. The study of English ultimately enhances an individual's holistic understanding leading to more thought provoking and educated responses. In essence, choosing English as a major has embedded a sixth sense regarding the process of thought. It intently deepens understanding while simultaneously provoking creativity leading to layered levels of knowledge and comprehension. A degree in English lays the foundation from which all other frameworks are built. It is essentially the heartbeat that gives all other academic disciplines life.



From Beowulf to Benefits: An English Teacher Career Change

Jenny Ryan | 2009 English BA

My bookshelves filled with textbooks and classic paperbacks are now empty. The walls once covered with student projects are bare. In May 2023, after 12 years as a public educator, I packed up my classroom and braced myself for a major career change. I was leaving behind a world of lesson plans and research papers for a corporate career in benefits communications.

In the fall of 2006, I selected my major with the goal of being a lifelong educator. I did not even consider alternative careers for an English major because I did not anticipate needing an escape hatch. However, for a variety of personal and professional reasons, this change became necessary. When I began the process of revising my resume and searching Indeed, LinkedIn, and Glassdoor, I felt overwhelmed and wondered what career opportunities could possibly be available for someone with a B.A. in English Literature and a minor in Public Communications. What did I learn? Plenty, plenty of job opportunities are available for us.

While our passion may lie in analyzing the continued relevance of themes in *Beowulf*, there are an abundance of industries seeking our communication skills, creative minds, and attention to detail. After hours upon hours of updating my resume and filling out job applications, I am now a Benefits Communications Specialist for Insperty, an HR company headquartered in Kingwood, Texas.

Outside of my own benefits enrollment, I had little experience with the world of benefits where a myriad of acronyms – GHP, FSA, HSA, HDHP and more – reign supreme. After I was hired, my supervisor told me, they were not concerned with my lack of familiarity with benefits. What they did want was someone who could write, someone who paid attention to detail and would closely proofread our client deliverables, who could provide support on our training and design projects, and someone whose critical reading skills would help them learn about the benefits products along the way.

So, to the past, present, and future English majors, your skills are a valuable asset in education and in the corporate world. Your strong oral and written communication skills and your keen view of the world around you are in high demand. Your English degree will be much more sought after than you realize.



A Dream Come True

Aimee McAllester | Current English Minor

As I am writing up this column for the people and place that completely changed my life, it occurred to me that I very nearly died just a few days before the writing of this piece. To go from four white walls of a hospital to telling the world more publicly about my very near/dear to me poetry chapbook is a bit of shock (*The Gods Are Arguing in My Head*, 2023). But I am continuing forward with this because if there is one thing to be learned from the extensively qualified English Department professors, it's that it is okay to feel exposed and scared, but to keep going in spite of whatever you're going through.



While I may not be a full graduate of UT Tyler yet, it is clear that it my life has fundamentally changed my life for the better because of this place. I, in spite of so very many circumstances going wrong while I was earning my degree, have managed to publish a poetry chapbook of my very own. Not only that, but I have the sheer luck of knowing that, most likely after this is published to an audience, a nationally acclaimed spoken word poet/performer is going to come to my tiny hometown, about an hour away from the school that gave me marketable skills, to host a slam poetry event featuring me.

If someone were hesitating on deciding to earn their degree from here, I hope that last sentence makes them jump the fence to take the chance to apply the same skills I learned. I truly do. I would never have imagined that my wildest dream would literally come true, but, especially in light of the world feeling thrown into chaos for years by a sneeze, it's possible. Despite the negative, I still believe in taking risks, taking the chance, and it would never have been reality had I not had the support system I had here.

Am I your typical English major? No. My future career is to be a psychiatrist, and I currently have had to sideline my plans to graduate to work full-time as a pharmacy technician. And yet every single day I use something that I learned from pursuing an English minor.

This is your sign that it's okay to be atypical, to take a chance on that dream you once had before real life tore your enthusiasm to shreds, to say "what if" instead of "impossible".

The Joy of Pursuit of Happiness

Shelby Barnett | 2022 English BA

One of the miscommunications between English Majors and society is confusion about its perceived usefulness. Many people perceive English Majors and the English degree as a study that leans towards education and teaching. While the path of education is a route many students choose to take, it is not one that resonates with all who choose this course of study, including myself.

In truth, I found the value of the English degree in its menagerie of skills it taught me. You learn the nuances of critical thinking, you learn analytical skills that can be applied beyond the source you are analyzing, and you learn the patterns and processes of how to communicate effectively, the art of crafting a well-informed opinion and develop skills in media literacy.

English majors, in my experience, are the creative problem solvers and communicators. Although I am not in an English-related career at the moment, I am still often called upon to speak on behalf of my coworkers to higher ups and am trusted with coming up with solutions to difficult or uncomfortable problems in our day-to-day work.

Right now, I am focused on finding what I want to do in my long-term career. In the meantime, I put my skills to use by writing a research-based humanities-focused blog; it helps keep my writing skills sharp while keeping myself engaged in upcoming topics, like AI, the writing world, and media analysis.

Additionally, with the assistance of the Writing with Technology minor, I was introduced to programs that got me interested in audio and visual communications, so I developed a livestreaming hobby so that I could claim experience in audio and video editing while having fun with my friends.

I have learned through these experiences to take your time and pick up skills that are useful but also enjoyable; I believe that someone developing skills in something they are excited to pursue is more likely to discover a job that will make them happier in the long run.

The current world we live in is one of cynical humor and nihilism, where the online sphere has developed a dramatic cultural shift to all or nothing fanaticism, so I implore incoming students to find something they enjoy first and foremost. I just so happen to have found my joy in the skills of the English degree.



Roman Comedy in Boston

Dr. Anett Jessop | Associate Professor of English

Last summer, 2023, I had the opportunity to participate in my second National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Institute for university faculty, “The Performance of Roman Comedy,” which was held at Boston College. The institute brought together faculty from universities across the country to read, research, and perform the plays of Plautus (c. 254 – 184 BCE) and Terence (c. 195/185 – c. 159 BCE). The participants chosen had wide-ranging expertise in classical and comparative literature and languages, ancient history, classical theater and performance studies, philology and reception studies. My interest in attending the institute was grounded in my book project, *Remediating Antiquity in Modernism: Laura Riding and Robert Graves Restaging of the Trojan War*, under contract with Edinburgh University Press’s Critical Studies in Modernism, Drama and Performance. I was seeking a deeper understanding of the classical period as well as theatrical conventions.

In advance of the Institute we had a good amount of preparatory reading (all of the extant plays by Plautus and Terence in the Loeb Classical Library translations plus T. H. M. Gellar-Goad’s *Plautus: Curculio*, 2021) and viewing of staged performances made during the 2012 version of this NEH institute. You can view some of those scenes here: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmBs1K1ruw2i48CmDku1HrQ/videos>

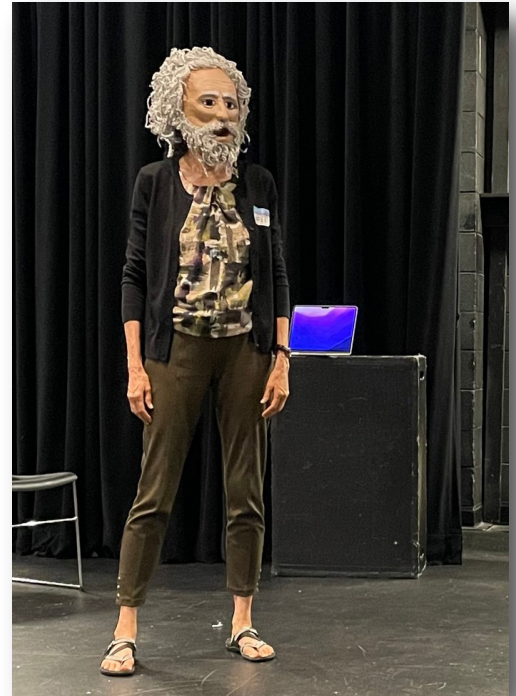
The Institute schedule included morning seminars and workshops led by the visiting experts and afternoon sessions rehearsing scenes. What I hadn’t planned on was this performance part of the institute. The program directors had divided us into troupes: one larger ensemble scene and smaller scenes. Both of my scenes were from the plays of Plautus: *Amphitruo* and *Asinaria*. We were assigned to memorize, cast, and then perform our scenes in the Boston College black box theater for the entire NEH institute in the final week of the institute. Our performances were also filmed for use as educational media.

As I have no background in theater-styled performance, this was a bit unsettling to me (to put it mildly)! Additionally, many groups (one of mine included) were tasked to perform in Latin—and I have never studied Latin. Classical Roman comedy troupes often employed masks as props and we were trained in their use during the institute. The photo I attach to this column shows me in the mask of a *senex* (an old man). Still, for all of its challenges, the institute proved informative and enlightening in unexpected ways.

An additional outcome of the institute was for attendees to create a repository of resources for teaching Roman comedy, which would be made available to the public. To that end, each ensemble and scene group developed scholarly and pedagogical materials to accompany our filmed performance, to include program notes to explain the content, context, adaptation decisions, and staging choices; an annotated bibliography of scholarship pertaining to the specific scenes; and a teaching module and lesson plan for staging scenes in the classroom. You can view the annotated bibliography assembled by my *Asinaria* group here:

<https://romancomedy.pubpub.org/pub/asinaria-bibliography/release/1?readingCollection=3a64b713>
Our filmed scenes are being edited now and will be made available to the public later in the year.

If you are curious to learn more about the NEH institute, and to view a short video by one of the institute directors, access this website: <https://romancomedy.wfu.edu/>.



A Journey Through “A Verse Reaction”

Emily Fry | Current English Major

In the digital age where information is abundant and readily accessible, podcasts have emerged as a powerful medium for sharing knowledge, stories, and perspectives. Among the wide array of podcast genres, Dr. Beebe ventures into the realm of poetry analysis through her new podcast series, “A Verse Reaction.”

“A Verse Reaction” is dedicated to unraveling the intricacies of poetry. The main goal is to encourage people to read more poetry and to provide them with tools to understand and appreciate it better. Dr. Beebe emphasizes the importance of approaching poetry with a toolkit and an awareness of different lenses through which poems can be interpreted, “The best thing would be if someone listens to the podcast and then they Google the poem, and then Google a couple more poems by that author, and they read a few more poems. That’s my goal, . . . for them to start their own journey to discover the poets that speak to them at that moment in their lives.”

Dr. Beebe has been contemplating the prospect of starting a podcast for over a year, engaging in discussions with colleagues, and exploring avenues to materialize her vision. She chose poetry specifically because she felt there was a need for discussions about it in the podcasting space. She believes that poetry is beneficial for mental health and wants to make it more accessible to people who might feel intimidated by it, “We need to read literature. In this [podcasting] space where we’re talking about fun things, where we’re talking about serious things, where we’re expanding on who gets to talk to whom . . . , there should be a place for discussions about literature. So, it was as simple as that. I went with poetry because I think it’s just good for us.”

Each episode consists of three parts: an introduction with a biography overview, an interview portion, and an analysis of the four poems. The eight episodes feature interviews with faculty experts from several UT Tyler departments who provide insights into the context (Puritanism, Jazz, Birds, etc.) through which the poems are later analyzed. The podcasts include interviews with Dr. Matt Stith, Dr. Greg Bock, Susan Doty, Dr. Sarah Roberts, Dr. Elizabeth Lisot-Nelson, Dr. Nate Smith, Dr. Kenneth Bryant, and Jess Coleman.

Through “A Verse Reaction,” Dr. Beebe seeks to demystify poetry and foster a deeper appreciation for its relevance in our lives. Drawing from her experience as an educator, she aims to empower listeners with the tools to engage critically with poetic texts, transcending from mere appreciation to cultivating a nuanced understanding of poetry.

While the series lays a solid foundation for exploration, she remains open to evolving narratives and expanding horizons in upcoming seasons of the podcast. From amplifying marginalized voices to shining light on local East Texas authors, Dr. Beebe intends for this podcast to be an inspiration for poetry enthusiasts and educators alike.

“A Verse Reaction with Dr. Beebe” can be found on these platforms: Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Podcast Index, Amazon Music, iHeartRadio, Podcast Addict, Podchaser, Pocket Cast, Deezer, Listen Notes, and PlayerFM



A Verse Reaction

with Dr. Beebe



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