

ENGLISH SYMPOSIUM 2025

Exemplary Student Work

Day/Time Room Panels & Participants Thursday

Chair

9:30-10:45

B150

Happy 250th Birthday, Jane Austen!

Madison Maloney

If you heart all things Austen, this roundtable is for you. Six students will speak briefly about their Austen research and writing, and they they'll turn the bulk of the time over to a discussion of some of the most pressing scholarly Austen questions, things like "Which Darcy is the best Darcy?" Come join the conversation.

- **Julia Koncurat**, "Playing Man: Domination and Literary Queerness in *Emma*"
- **Gillian Carter**, "Absent Mothers and their Effects on the Heroines' Self-Actualization in Jane Austen's Final Three Novels"
- **Ella Memmott**, "Wentworth, Catharsis, and the True Heroism of Emotional Openness"
- **Hannah Swenson**, "Persuasions and Proposals: Female Agency in *Pride and Prejudice*, *Mansfield Park*, *Emma*, and *Persuasion*"
- **Esther Lay**, "'Call it gossip if you will': Gossip as Community Building in *Persuasion*"
- **Avery G. Lloyd**, "Dear Future Husband: Jane Austen's Role in Shaping the Modern Female Gaze Through Film Adaptations and Influenced Works"
- **Hollynd Bowler**, "Don't Hate the Player, Hate the Game: Contrasting Fanny Price and Anne Elliot by their Success in using Austen's Game Theory"

B105

(Creative Writing) Reading Across the Genres: What Writers Learn by Reading Outside their Genre

Michael Lavers

Love a particular genre? Write primarily in this genre? Come join us for a conversation about what writers can learn by reading outside of the genres in which they write.

- **Kate Romney**
- **Noah Hickman**
- **Christie Gardiner**

- **Amelia Scott**

4186

A Poetics of Faith

Matthew Wickman

What if learning to understand poetry could also attune us more deeply to the nuances of spiritual experience? Students in this roundtable will share what they learned in ENGL 357R, in which they studied the work of some extraordinary contemporary Christian poets, all of whom address the wide range of experiences we associate with spiritual life.

- **Madeline Davis**, "Postures of Reverence: Everyday Gestures in Poetry and Practice"
- **Hyrum Johnson**, "Nothing Save Imprint of You: Mother Teresa and the Absence of Christ"
- **Kaden Nelson**, "The Faith Crisis as Death: Grief in Gerard Manley Hopkins's 'Terrible Sonnets'"
- **Starly Pratt**, "Doubt as Devotion: A Look at Anya Silver's 'Saint Agnostica'"
- **Henry Purser**, "A Kenotic Apophasis in 'His Emblem Over Me'"

B101

Our Goodreads: Books You Shouldn't Miss

Brice Peterson

Looking for your next read? Perhaps something fun to binge during Spring Break (day)? Come hear the reading recommendations of some of our faculty and students.

- **Dr. Trent Hickman**
- **Dr. Brice Peterson**
- **Lucy Draper**
- **Bekah Gull**
- **Sydney Gant**

B135

Stump the Professor

Ryann Wilks

Ever wonder just how much English professors DON'T know? Wonder no more. We've collected old exam questions from across the department and roped some of our best and brightest into participating in a contest of knowledge. But we need you, too. Audience members will be encouraged to supply questions of their own once we run out, and anything you learned while at BYU--anything--is fair game. If the students manage to stump the professors, you win. If the professors rack up more points than the students, you lose. Prizes will, obviously, be awarded.

- **Team A Captain: Prof. John Talbot**
- **Team B Captain: Prof. Paul Westover**
- **Team C Captain: Prof. Juliana Chapman**
- **Team members: Prof. Ed Cutler, Prof. Amy Williams, Prof. Jason Kerr, Prof. Steve Tuttle, Prof. Chanel Earl, Prof. Eric Eliason**

11:00-12:15	B099	Folklore Storytelling Swap Join us for a storytelling swap guided by English Department professors and folklorists Christopher Blythe, Eric Eliason, and Jill Rudy. By sharing prompts about mission stories, BYU courtship culture, and hometown hauntings, we'll invite students' story sharing in spontaneous panels. We might even do some analysis along the way. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof. Jill Rudy • Prof. Eric Eliason • Prof. Chris Blythe 	
	B103	Beatlemania! The music of the Beatles provided a soundtrack to the social changes of the 1960s, helping to define the spirit of that decade and leaving an enduring legacy on pop culture. Taking a break from literature to indulge in media studies, this panel explores their legacy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toni Aguiar, "Idealized, Battered, and Sexualized: Women's Objectification in The Beatles' Lyrics" • Lily Jensen, "Selfhood in Joan Didion's <i>The White Album</i>" • Annika Peacock, "Decontextualization and Recontextualization: How (and Why) the 'Jesus Controversy' Became so Out-of-Hand" 	Trent Hickman
	B140	(Creative Writing) Play on Writing: Generative Language Games--Not Your Grandma's Workshop! Come play some literary games, eat some literature-inspired snacks, and inject your writing with new ideas and fresh passion at this activity-based, interactive panel. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avery Dall-Hilton • Maya Hoeft • Noah Hickman 	Joey Franklin
	B037	Teaching in Tongues: A Multilingual Approach to ELA in Secondary Education Although English Teaching inherently privileges the English language, these presentations explore how a multilingual approach can enhance our study of English Language Arts. Even if you don't speak a second language, understanding the language tools that students bring to their English classes and how you can use them will make you a more effective teacher, listener, and learner. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rachel Alger, "No es una Falta: An Introduction to Translanguaging in the ELA Classroom" • Dylan Stuflick, "Young Adult Identity Through English-Spanish Codeswitching" 	Amber Jensen

- **Lauren Proctor**, "The Role of Translated International Young Adult Literature in Creating Global Citizens"
- **Anna Moon**, "Incorporating Diverse Dialects in Writing Instruction"

B150 Beyond *Gilead*: Essays on Marilynne Robinson Makayla Steiner

This panel will focus on the fiction of one of America's best (and best-loved) living writers, Marilynne Robinson. Robinson, whose Pulitzer Prize-winning work is best known for engaging with questions about the role of faith in society, offers us the opportunity to consider the biggest questions about life as well as the tiny experiences that endow each moment with illumination.

- **Hailey Russell**, "'That Great, Sweet Nowhere': Iowan Pastoralism in Marilynne Robinson's *Lila*"
- **Ellie Dana**, "'Old Women Will Make Songs Out of All These Sorrows': Unlearning Silence in *Housekeeping* Through the Law of Ascension"
- **Britney Wells**, "'The Little Stone that Rambles in the Road Alone': Emily Dickinson and Ruth Stone in Marilynne Robinson's *Housekeeping*"
- **Joseph Farnsworth**, "Marilynne Robinson's *Housekeeping* and the American Frontier"

**12:30-1:45 EIZ English + Experiences: English in Action Trina Harding
Frank Christianson**

Come hear students share the experiences they have had on internships, in Applied English classes, and more to learn how applicable your English skills are to different projects and professions. You'll also see different examples of how you might want to fulfill the English+ requirement to help you best prepare for your post-BYU life. In addition to fun presentations, we'll have a Q&A with presenters as well as a quiz game and drawing for English Department prizes!

- **Ellie Cameron**
- **Caroline McDonald**
- **Madeline Miles**
- **Henry Purser**

2:00-3:15 B101 Full Body Chills: Feeling, Fear, and Horror Dennis Cutchins

What makes us fear? Is it mental? Physical? Both? Neither? This panel will challenge our notions of horror, dread, and fellow-feeling in extremis. [Mild content warning: this panel will discuss texts that depict murder, execution, and self-harm.]

- **Emma Ghiz**, "'With Sudden Horror': Shirley Jackson's Portrayal of the Horrors of Womanhood"
- **Olivia Gagon**, "'Am I Always Supposed to Be Scared?': The Allure of Fairytale Justice in Dimension 20's D&D Actual Play Show *Neverafter*"

- **Wilson Hurdle**, "Exploring the Labyrinth: History and Horror"
- **Toni Aguiar**, "'Painful to Read': Criminal Feeling in Thackeray's 'Going to See a Man Hanged'"

B105	Teaching <i>English</i> or Teaching <i>Students</i>?: Individualizing Reading and Writing Instruction	Rachel Knecht
	<p>When someone asks, "What will you teach?," it's easy to reply, "English." But good teachers know that no matter what you specialize in, you're always teaching <i>people</i>. Come hear students discuss different ways of making students--not subjects--the center of our teaching efforts in this roundtable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abigail Griffitts, "Humanizing Teacher Feedback" • Sophia Wonnacott, "Being a Model of Good Writing for Your Students" • Annika Peacock, "Good Ideas about Teaching Writing" • Alexis Tucker, "Teaching Beyond the Test" • Gillian Carter, "The Application of Occupational Therapy Interventions in Addressing Reading Comprehension in High School-Aged Individuals" • Elizabeth Gamez, "<i>Fahrenheit 451</i> Unit Plan" 	
4188	(Creative Writing) I'm a Creative Writer: Why Should I Read the Classics?	Rachel Terry
	<p>"I'm a writer, not an antiquarian." "I'm writing sci-fi, or fantasy, or a postmodern novel, or creative non-fiction. The classics may be fine for the lit majors; what do they have to do with me?" If thoughts like these have ever crossed your mind, come join this discussion with CW students and faculty as they think about how reading classic literature has impacted their writing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof. John Talbot • Mikayla Johnson • Amelia Scott • Gerrit van Dyk 	
B103	Lord of the Reads: Literary Trivia Challenge	
	<p>Three student teams will compete to be crowned Lord of the Reads in this interactive trivia game panel. But the teams need you! Volunteers from the audience will be invited to come on down and flaunt their knowledge of totally useless literary trivia. Prizes will be awarded--to you?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Captain of team A • Captain of team B • Captain of team C 	Nick Mason

B112 Retelling the Past, Reimagining the Future: Old Stories in New Worlds Aaron Eastley

We're continually telling and retelling, taking old stories and making them new. In this panel, presenters place the old beside the new, pairing texts centuries old with everything from the *X-Men* to *The Mandalorian*, as they think about issues and tropes that continue to intrigue us.

- **Aubrey Charlesworth**, "The Immortal Outlaw Hero: From 'Jesse James's Pledge' to *The Mandalorian*"
- **Corina Flake**, "'A Bundle of Rags': The Justice of the American Dream in *Cinderella* and *Tattered Tom*"
- **Sophie Richards**, "Esther Rogers and Jean Grey"
- **Madison Sacriste**, "'We're Here Too': Women's Humanity and Agency in Feminist Retellings of *The Odyssey*"

3:30-4:45 B106 BYU Student Journals: Getting Published, Getting Involved

Want to get published in one of the department's awesome student journals? Want to get English+ credit for working on the staff? Want to volunteer? Have not clue what a student journal is and just want to know more? Then here's the opportunity you've been waiting for. Join the faculty and student editors of *Inscape*, *Criterion*, and *Whirligig* in this roundtable conversation with Q&A.

- **Inscape**: Prof. Cheri Earl, Kate Romney
- **Criterion**: Prof. Chris Blythe, Gabriella Welling, Brendan Murphy
- **Whirligig**: Prof. Ann Dee Ellis, Mikayla Johnson

4116 Beyond Boundaries: The Unfixed Self in Time, Place, and Memory Brian Roberts

All of the papers in this panel grapple with the question of boundaries, literal and figurative, and the ways life moves in, around, and through them. In the fiction and poetry of skilled authors, time, place, memory, and self become not fixed and stable, but full of potential interconnection.

- **Gabbie Schwartz**, "'Everything that he sees': Placing the Egotistical Wordsworth in the Yarrow Poems"
- **Holden d'Evegnée**, "'The Truth of Our Historic Encounter': Curating Networks of the Past in Colson Whitehead's *The Underground Railroad*"
- **Zerin Biehn**, "Paradise Gained: Beyond Biopolitics in Toni Morrison's *Paradise*"

B101 Story Slam Jamin Rowan

Storytelling and storylistening are at the heart of the English major, which encompasses readers, writers, teachers, and folklorists. And sometimes telling--and listening--can be transformative. Learn how to craft a great story and then try it out in this interactive panel, which will give audience members the chance to participate in some story-making fun.

- **Kennedy Kleinman**
- **Emma Osguthorpe**

B105

Bearing Witness: Grief, Trauma, and Identity in Literature

Ansalee Greenwood

Readers are witnesses, in a sense, listeners who have the opportunity to practice empathy while hearing the stories of others' happiness--and pain. This panel explores the latter and the ways that different people navigate the very worst moments of their lives. No trauma voyeurism here; just attempts to sit with the grief of others and extend fellow-feeling as we learn.

- **Miriam Hiltunen**, "An Analysis of Art Spiegelman's *Maus*: Portraying Trauma Through the Comic Medium"
- **Alexis Johnston**, "Transatlantic Trauma in *Wieland* and *Frankenstein*"
- **Emma Shobe**, "Isolation, Assimilation, and The American Dream in Jhumpa Lahiri's 'Mrs. Sen's'"
- **Elsa Heath**, "Post-Traumatic Growth: Navigating Relationships in Lahiri's 'A Temporary Matter'"
- **Jennifer Tenney**, "The Shape of Sorrow: The Role of Grief in *Sir Orfeo* and *The Book of the Duchess*"

Friday

10:00-10:50

B132

Unraveling Ignorance: Conscious Resistance and Liberation Through Knowledge in the Work of N. K. Jemisin

Jill Rudy

- **Sarah Wessman Pratt**, "Chosen Versus Forced Immigration: A Study of Jemisin's 'Red Dirt Witch'"
- **Keeley Gibson**, "Do You Know Your Enemy? The Roots of Division in N. K. Jemisin's 'The Trojan Girl' and 'Valedictorian'"
- **Bryce Rosengren**, "Ignorance Unraveled: The Path to Conscious Decision-Making in Overcoming Oppression in Jemisin's 'The Trojan Girl' and 'Valedictorian'"
- **Jackson Johnson**, "'The Obedient Must be Slaves': Jemisin's Portrayals of Slavery and Rebellion in 'Red Dirt Witch' and 'Walking Awake'"

B101

Professional Writing Showcase

Amy Williams

Come check out how fellow students have used professional writing and rhetoric to do things in the real world!

- **Case Study 1**, "Murals of Provo: Art, Community, and Identity" (Breann Eardley, Desirae Rees, Elizabeth Van Ness)
- **Case Study 2**, (Julia Waters)

B103 The Bard Versus The Songstress: Shakespeare or Taylor Swift? Sharon Harris

You know you've been dreaming about this for years. Now's your chance to see it happen, live.

- **Prof. Jarica Watts**
- **Prof. Jason Kerr**
- **Rachel Gouff**
- **Hallie Hilton**
- **Annalisa Gulbrandsen**

B142 Gorgianic Games: The Art of Impromptu Persuasion Jarron Slater

Think you can talk your way out of anything? Channel your inner sophist and put your rhetorical skills to the test in this fast-paced session of impromptu persuasion. Inspired by Gorgias himself, this game challenges you to speak fast and think faster! Come ready to have fun and compete for prizes!

- **Prof. Sam Dunn**
- **Prof. Nicole Clawson**
- **Maryn Perschon**
- **Lena Rice**
- **Natalie Roberts**

11:00-11:50 B135 English Fair

12:00-12:50 B190 English Reading Series: Scott Russell Morris

1:00-1:50 B042 Professors Show and Tell: A Research Showcase Amber Jensen

Ever wonder what your professors are up to? Now's your chance! Come listen to three stellar professors give lightning-fast talks about current research projects that they're working on!

- **Prof. Amber Jensen**
- **Prof. Aaron Eastley**
- **Prof. Christopher Blythe**

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| B060 | <p>(Creative Writing) You May Already Be a Winner: Submitting to Literary Contests</p> <p>Have you ever wondered what it takes to win a literary contest? In this panel, featuring writers who have both won and judged contests, you'll get advice about best practices for submitting your work to contests and journals!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof. Lance Larsen • Prof. Stephen Tuttle • Kate Romney • Samantha Sorenson | Steve Tuttle |
| B103 | <p>Reading Between the Lines: Community, Identity, and the Unwritten</p> <p>Words tell a story—but so do the silences. This panel explores hidden meanings, unspoken connections, and the reader's role in making sense of it all. Come check it out!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sophie West, "The Duality of Communities in Claudia Rankine's <i>Citizen</i>" • Noah Hickman, "To Read What Was Never Written: The Reader as Flaneur in Gertrude Stein's <i>Tender Buttons</i>" • Brooke Farnsworth, "Death and the Divine: Elizabeth Barrett Browning's Grief and Spirituality" | Emron Esplin |
| B105 | <p>Wit, Wonder, and Belonging: Katherine Philips and the Bonds of Verse</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grace Soelberg, "Sacrifice and Grief in Katherine Philips's Soul Unions" • Washington Pearce, "Embracing the Whole World: Katherine Philips's Friendship Theology and the Platonic Soul" • Annalisa Gulbrandsen, "Religiously Conservative, Radically Religious: Katherine Philips's Theological Engagement with Jeremy Taylor's <i>Discourse on Friendship</i>" | Jason Kerr |
| B106 | <p>Wonder & the Supernatural: Myths, Fairy Tales, and the Boundaries of Reality</p> <p>You know you're curious. Who could resist a panel about magic, wonder, and the fine line between human and animal? I know I can't.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jenna Topham: "Neither Man nor Beast: Moral Complexity in <i>Bisclavret</i>" • Caroline McDonald: "The Power and Magic of Names in 'Rumpelstiltskin' and <i>Spinning Silver</i>" • Amelia Webb: "Abandoning Disney for Brontë: The Transformative Wonder of 'Wundermärchen' in Realist Novels" | Joe Darowski |

2:00-2:50	B042	Y-Writing Roundtable: Effective Student Writing Join us for a roundtable discussion about how curiosity and inquiry can inspire the writing process. Panelists will read a short portion of their contest-winning work and share perspectives about writing! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants TBA 	Tyler Gardner Shannon Stimpson
	B060	Seeing and Believing: Vision, Symbols, and Redemption in Flannery O'Connor's Stories O'Connor's world is full of strange symbols and even stranger revelations. This panel dives into the sometimes messy nature of grace, the tension between sight and blindness, and the unexpected ways redemption takes shape. See you there! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jorja Webb: "Redeemable Swine: Biblical Allusions to Pigs in Flannery O'Connor's 'Revelation'" • Olivia Flynn: "Literal Versus Figurative Sight: An Examination of Vision in 'Parker's Back'" • Eliza Wynn: "'Revelation' and the Messy Nature of Grace in Flannery O'Connor's Works" • Sally Bradshaw: "'A heap of vanity': Tattoos as Symbols of Sin and Grace in 'Parker's Back'" 	Keith Lawrence
	B103	Illuminated Minds and Disturbed Cosmos: Blake, Glück, and the Poetics of Transformation From Blake's prophetic imagination to Glück's lyrical introspection, come explore with these panelists some poetry that unsettles, disrupts, and redefines the world around us. Come check out illuminated utopias, allegorical tensions, and the meeting of Romanticism and modern identity. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becca Goodson: "Blake's Visions: A Prophetic Disturbance of the Allegorical Mode" • Anna Sampson: "Utopia in the Illuminated Manuscript: A Criticism of William Blake's <i>The Marriage of Heaven and Hell</i>" • Avery G. Lloyd: "New Romantics: American Narcissism Meets British Romanticism: Louise Glück's 'The Wild Iris'" 	Annalisa Gulbrandsen
	B105	(Creative Writing) Writing for Younger Readers You know you're interested in this panel. Come and learn from some of the best about how to level up your writing for younger readers! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof. Ann Dee Ellis • Prof. Chris Crowe • Mikayla Johnson • Natalie Tate 	Ann Dee Ellis

- **Alison Hart**
- **Avery Dall-Hilton**

B150	<p>Images of Women, Legacies of Power: Resistance, Freedom, and Belief</p> <p>Come explore with us the ways women navigate power, patriarchy, and freedom across time and cultures in literature.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coleman Numbers, "'A Lotus Flower in the Mud': Woman as Dialectical Image in 19th-Century Japan and America" • Michelle DeWitt, "Waving Goodbye to the Patriarchy: Love's Touching Effect in Shakespeare's <i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>" • Anya Searle, "Zero-sum Religious Freedom within the Context of New England Puritanism and Margaret Atwood's <i>The Handmaid's Tale</i>" 	Meridith Reed
3:00-3:50	<p>B042 Poets' Society</p> <p>Enjoy creative writing? Join BYUSA Poets Society as we discuss the cognitive benefits of collaborative writing groups and workshop a manuscript from BYU's own Michael Lavers. This is your opportunity to connect with fellow writers and catch a glimpse of a professional poet's creative process!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wilson Hurdle • Maddie Kenealey • Clarissa Walker 	Wilson Hurdle
B060	<p>What I Wish I Had Known My First Year of the MA/MFA</p> <p>Thinking about applying to grad school? Or already been accepted but wondering what to expect? Come learn from seasoned grad students about tips and tricks for navigating that exciting but challenging first year!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kath Richards • Shayla Frandsen • Lacey Hamilton • Lacey Hamilton • Holden d'Evegne 	Spencer Hyde
B103	<p>Lost and Found: Grief, Authenticity, and Identity in YA Literature</p>	Zach Largey

You know you have your eyes on this panel. Come listen to fellow students discuss these and other current issues in some great YA lit. You won't be disappointed. [Content warning: Please be advised that the texts discussed in some of these presentations examine difficult topics, including disordered eating, depression, substance abuse, racial violence, and self-harm.]

- **Rachel Baldwin:** "The Impact of Morally Gray Characters in YA Literature"
- **MJ Ferguson:** "Grief and YA Literature: Why Do They Work Well Together?"
- **Thea Manning-Neal:** "The Importance of Middle Grade Novels with Representations of Depression"
- **Skyler Russell:** "Authenticity in Young Adult Literature: A Study of *Wintergirls*"

B105

Sacred Symbols and Temporal Ties: Identity and Religiosity in American Literature

Kylie Turley

What links the past to the present, the sacred to the hidden, or metaphor to meaning? This panel explores intergenerational identity, religious concealment, and the complexities of redemption, revealing the deep, often unseen threads that bind literature and life together.

- **Ilse Eskelsen:** "'Linked' and Unlinked: Temporal Identity and Intergenerational Connection in Zitkala-Ša's 'The Widespread Enigma Concerning Blue-Star Woman'"
- **Aubrey Boyle:** "Holy Concealment: Modern Religiosity in 'The Gardner'"
- **Briley Wyckoff:** "The Problem of Metaphor, Disability, Redemption, and Symbolism in 'The Hidden Hand'"

