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### The Broadsheet- Issue 14

Merrimack College

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# THE BROADSHEET

## English Career Night 2015

### Panel Presentations by Jessica Bruso

This year's Career Night panel featured four alumni panelists, three of whom are recent graduates of the Merrimack English program.

Anastasia Gallardo serves as a Marketing Coordinator for RCN Telecom Services. She works on a team of three and oversees advertising, event coordination, and marketing. She has earned a Master's degree in Communications through an online program offered by Southern New Hampshire University. In this program, she often wrote as many as three papers per week, she said, and she credits her English degree for her ability to tackle that challenge during the fifteen month degree process. She said she likes the fact that her current job allows her to use her creative, "English-side" and work on projects in which she manages the creativity of her colleagues.

Trisha Prevett was the second panelist to speak. She currently works at Southern New Hampshire University as a research librarian. While a student at Merrimack, she double-majored in English and Secondary Education, but after graduation enrolled in the Master's of Library Science program, choosing the Academic Librarian Track, at the University of Rhode Island. She took her first job in Fort Lauderdale and worked as a public and university librarian. She eventually returned to Massachusetts, accepting the job she currently holds as an Assistant Professor of Information Literacy. She is now pursuing a second Master's degree in Instructional Design, a field she finds very exciting. She attributes her skill at thinking critically to her training in English.

Diana Le, the third Career Night panelist, was selected for the Manager-in-Training Program at Hollister Corporation. She graduated from Merrimack in the Spring of 2015 with a major in English and minors in Women's and Gender Studies, European History, and Law Ethics. Her first job out of college involved working as a nanny, but she said it was not the right fit. She found out about the management program at Hollister through a friend and enjoys it thoroughly. She originally wanted to work in Entertainment Journalism, but she is currently, in her words, "doing what life throws at [her]".

Allie Lynch, a graduate of the class of 2013, is currently teaching English at Reading Memorial High School. She started her undergraduate career at Northern Essex Community College, earning an Associate's Degree, and then enrolled at Merrimack. She said that, at first, she kept to herself because she did not know anyone at Merrimack, but became involved in a number of extra-curricular activities during her senior year, which included participating in student writing groups at the Writers House and accepting two internships, one through the English Department working with Professor Vatalaro's New England Shore pilot course and one working with the Andover Breadloaf program through an internship funded by the Writers House. She said that at this time she also immersed herself in her reading and she emphasized that these commitments have helped her remain passionate about what she teaches. When she applied for the Fellowship Program at Merrimack, she (continued on p. 2)

### This issue:

English Career Night

Nordic Noir

Windy and Cold  
New England Shore

Alice Sebold Interview/Reading

Writers House Informal Writing Sessions

*An official publication of the Merrimack College English Department, The Broadsheet is published four times during the academic calendar year. Its mission is to celebrate the English Department's role in promoting the literary arts on campus, to acknowledge the accomplishments of faculty and students, to profile students and alumni, and to create a forum in which issues relevant to English studies can be discussed.*



Anastasia Gallardo

was originally placed on the waiting list, but, after mentioning this to the instructor with whom she was doing her practicum, that teacher recommended her for the Merrimack fellowship program and she was accepted. Upon graduation, she applied to many schools and finally landed the position in the Reading school system. Allie said, “You don’t choose to be an English major because it’s what everyone is doing. You do it because you love it.”

### ***Student Perspectives by Marisa Auger***

As a senior English major attending Career Night this year, I found that my perspective on the event was drastically different than it had been during previous Career Nights. This is my senior year, the stage during which the pressure to find a job, recognize clear options, and catapult yourself into the “real world” hits you harder than you ever imagined as a freshman. When I attended this event sophomore year, I learned that I can use my English major for more careers than teaching.

Though this information was helpful, the poignancy of this insight escaped me until now, as my nervousness regarding what lies ahead in the great unknown after college can become especially high. The feeling of complacency vanished and now Career Night meant more than just an extra credit assignment or a chance to meet new people.

In the past I recall feeling intimidated by the panelists, who worked as professionals in the real world while I was merely earning a college degree. This year was different, though, because I had known and I had taken English courses with Allie Lynch, one of the panelists for Career Night. The atmosphere was different this time around, too; not only did it feel more real, but I felt comfort as well. Here was a former Merrimack student whom I knew that was doing very well as a working professional.

Depending on where students are in their search for a career path, they come to Career Night for various reasons, harboring different expectations. I sat down with a handful of students just prior to the formal presentations to ask them why they came and what concerns they had regarding career prospects after graduation.

Carey, for example, is currently a freshman, and, though she might not view Career Night as a career service, she does see it as a chance to meet new people in the department and find a sense of belonging. She remarked, “I’m a freshmen so I came to try to meet other people in the English major. Currently, I am thinking of becoming a teacher or a writer, but I want to see what else I can do with my major.” Other students said they attended for the atmosphere and excitement that comes with the event; for example, Brad told me that he “wants to see the various speakers...and see who else is here. Career Night is really a time to have fun and get loose.”

However, some students, especially seniors, were having similar thoughts to my own. Alyssa Zahoruiko said “it feels more real this year than when I came last year because I am a senior. I also am looking to see how you can apply the English experience to grad school.” Jason told me: “I need to start looking into post-grad stuff. Career night last-year was great, so I wanted to check it out again this year.”

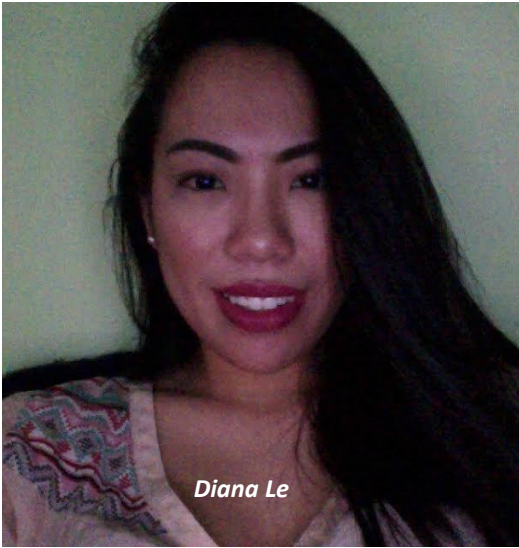
After the formal program concluded, I asked the same students if they could share with me what they took away from Career Night, and see if they felt better or worse about the future. It seems that students gained a good deal of insight. Carey said she now understood that “there is more to the major than just learning about English: you have to love it,” and Jason pointed out, “you’re not locked down to one specific thing. There are so many options because of the skills we gain, such as critical thinking and communication. The Career Night helped immensely.” Brad came away appreciating the value of the limitlessness of the major’s potential, as he enthusiastically declared that Career Night “was great! If you’re not sure what you want to do, take opportunities, try different things, and other possibilities may come. I feel better about the future after coming.” And finally, Alyssa offered that she “really liked what Allie said about not being afraid to fail at the first thing that you try, and this feels so relevant about what you want to do in the future.” It seems that students feel overall more relaxed after attending Career Night, especially the seniors who, like me, may have originally felt a sense of anxiousness and uneasiness about the future. Though Career Night may not eliminate all career worries, it does ease these tensions and demonstrates to students the wealth of opportunities for which the English major can prepare you.

### ***Preparation by Rosemary Morton***

Professor Steven Scherwatzky is the driving force behind the English Career Night, which he created over ten years ago. He works hard every year to make sure that this event goes smoothly. When we sat down to talk, I asked what is really involved in organizing the event. He indicated that English Career Night requires a four month plan that begins in June. The first step involves reaching out to the alumni (continued on p. 3)



Trisha Prevett



Diana Le

many of whom Professor Scherwatzky has remained in contact with since they graduated. Each year he seeks alumni who have yet to participate as event panelists, but he also invites back past panelists and other graduates to sit in the audience and participate informally. He also emphasized the contributions made by the O'Brien Center for Student Success, which co-sponsors English Career Night and expressed appreciation for Career Advisor Sarah Mackler, who attends the event and presents an overview of O'Brien Center services.

Professor Scherwatzky said he was pleased that the panelists represented a range of different kinds of careers and seemed especially eager to help current students, specifically by supplying them with solid career advice and sharing the valuable lessons they have learned. Once again, he found that some of the panelists have met career goals they established as undergraduates, while others have found themselves in careers that they hadn't anticipated.

Students regard Career Night as an occasion that is as much fun as it is practical. It shows them what they can achieve with a degree in English and provides a chance to meet and network with successful professionals. "What is gratifying to me," Professor Scherwatzky said, "is to see how much the alumni want to

stay in contact with the department and do everything they can to share their stories with the current students and help generate awareness of a wide range of occupations and options."

Speaking for myself, English Career Night supplies me with a sense of peace about where my future can potentially be heading. The event provides a sense of comfort to the English majors who may have some vague idea of where they see themselves headed professionally, but do not have a clear idea yet. The event demonstrates to this group of students that it is okay that even those on the panel did not realize their future careers immediately after graduation. As a current junior, English Career Night, for me, offers illumination involving what future careers could be out there for someone holding a degree in English, and it also heightens anticipation concerning what life can offer me.

#### *Atmosphere* by Rachel MacKelcan

A unique atmosphere emerges when you have a room full of English scholars—a comforting and homey energy that comes with a place so loaded with intellectual and literary curiosity, a place filled with individuals that think the way you do. Maybe this occurs because we breathe different air (thriving on the smell of old books and a warm cup of tea or coffee), or because we self-consciously analyze everything, but there is an almost inexplicable feeling that comes with a gathering like this.

As an attendee at this year's English Career Night, I can firmly state that it was, as I had expected it to be, a hit. From the beginning the room teemed with energy, most likely because those of us who attended last year were eager to see if Professor Scherwatzky would arrive unharmed. As many of you know, last year he almost had to miss the event because a broken tea cup ruptured an artery in his hand. This year he arrived in good health and in one piece; however, he opened the event by retelling the story of last year's accident, something everyone thoroughly enjoyed.

My first Career Night was a good experience; I found the panel presentations and ensuing discussion dynamic, and I had fun joking around with friends, listening to some amazing speakers and thinking about what my destiny would be as I try to tackle my dreams. As a freshman, I remember being focused exclusively on identifying the one person who might know someone who could introduce me to someone who would help me achieve my goals. I suppose I missed the point: I fell victim to the idea that you get that dream job by knowing the right person, but it's not just about knowing a name.

Don't misunderstand me. Career Night *is* about making connections, but not in the way someone who does not understand would think, not in a casual, purely pragmatic way. Career Night is about celebrating membership in a community. It is on this night that we take pleasure in joking around with old friends, finding the courage to make new acquaintances, speaking to former professors and reflecting on the times and the classes that helped us find our way. It's not about knowing the right person, but about being a person that contributes to a tradition of English majors helping English majors.

#### *Generosity* by Professor Vatalaro

The English faculty recognized years ago that our students need something more than program innovation. We understood that a good English department should also create a culture dedicated to mentorship, in which faculty and graduates help young people find the paths that are right for them after commencement. We wanted to find a way to make this a reality at Merrimack. (continued on p. 4)



Allie Lynch (Photo courtesy of Kevin Salemme)

Professor Steven Scherwatzky continues to move us in that direction. He gathers and archives contact information on our graduates and communicates with many of them regularly. He secures new panelists every year and extends an open invitation to all of our former students to attend the event. Numbers continue to grow. Over the last two or three years I have noticed, in fact, that many alumni sitting in the audience are recent graduates, indicating that this event is fostering the kind of continuity we have been trying to develop. I left this year's festivities—which included food, a cash bar, and robust conversation—impressed by the spirit of generosity that infused this celebration of what we do at Merrimack.

For example, two recent graduates offered without my prompting to help students in any way they could—by creating opportunities for majors to shadow them at work, or by corresponding with them by way of email. Professor Scherwatzky told me the next morning that he fielded similar offers, in addition to requests for greater social involvement between faculty, alumni and current students, perhaps in the form of book clubs, or participation in special class discussions. We'll begin exploring these ideas in the spring. Furthermore, current students said they feel as though they belong to something greater than just a program of course work and are thrilled that alumni are so willing to help guide them. It would seem we are on our way.



Professor Scherwatzky introduces Professor Plunkett

## **NORDIC NOIR: “Detective Fiction with a Social Conscience”**

### **DR. KEVIN PLUNKETT LECTURES AT THE WRITERS HOUSE**

**By Marisa Auger**

It was an unusually sunny and warm seventy-degree November afternoon as I made my way over to the Writers House to attend a lecture given by Professor Plunkett, who spent his year-long sabbatical leave studying European cinema. The summer-like weather evoked feelings of happiness and content. Inside the Writers House, however, I could sense something dark, intense and cold. *Nordic Noir*: the term itself connotes grimness and (continued on p. 5)

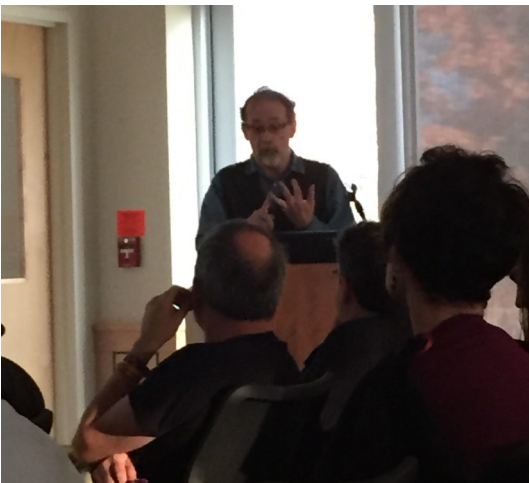
mystery, which is what intrigued me prior to attending the lecture. When I first heard the phrase Nordic Noir, images of longboats and Viking menace came to mind. These were the thoughts brewing within my mind, and, because I had never studied the topic, I did not know what awaited me; the suspense began to build.

Professor Plunkett opened the presentation by describing his sabbatical activities, revealing that his main goal involved searching for the reality behind Nordic Noir. To discover the answers, he traveled to Denmark and to Reykjavik, Iceland. Professor Plunkett explained that he experienced an epiphany when he saw *Jar City*, a movie that “thrust him into the middle of Noir.” There is much more to Noir than gloom and darkness; Noir exposes the parts of society that are kept in the shadows. These detective, or crime, stories deal with issues concerning violence, racism, immigration and serve as “detective fiction with a social conscience,” Professor Plunkett pointed out. Political underpinnings buttress the genre. One popular topic of focus has been the welfare state in Sweden, once considered a model for others, which is now plagued by a number of problems, primarily because of economic circumstances. “Nordic Noir reflects the issues of welfare, contemporary issues, but also deals with the primal,” remarked Professor Plunkett. Many Noir films concentrating on the individual’s mental and physical issues symbolize the state’s problems.

To demonstrate his point, Professor Plunkett supplemented lecture and commentary with Noir movie clips. This strategy helped me visualize what he had been talking about. The clips consisted of scenes that incorporated multiple layers of shadow that amplified ambiguity and generated suspense. Each film clip was captivating and intense, but one image that lodged itself in my mind was a grim picture from *The Bridge*, a Scandinavian television program that became widely popular throughout Europe and the U.S.. Professor Plunkett explained the central concept of the show that centers on a body found between the border of Sweden and Denmark. The audience learns that there are actually two different bodies: the bottom belongs to a Swedish judge, and the top to a Danish prostitute. Professor Plunkett clarified that the mutilated body resulted from an unusual murder that gained attention because of the various boundaries it crosses: class, cultural and national. The concept shows “the globalization of contemporary television and film,” he noted. From this one clip, one can see the multifaceted impact Noir generates.

Professor Plunkett’s final clip I found particularly forceful; it came from a Danish film called *The Pusher*, set in the drug underworld of Copenhagen. The scene portrays an ex-convict with the word RESPECT tattooed on the back of his head holding his son. To escape the world of crime, he saves both himself and his child by running for their lives. As the man moves, the music builds. The juxtaposition of this tough-looking man running with an innocent child riveted the audience’s attention. The room went completely silent. I found myself holding my breath, waiting for something terrible to happen to him and the child. The communal anxiety amongst members of the audience was palpable. The film clip demonstrated the uncertainty and paranoia for which Noir is acclaimed. The suspense and intensity that caught the audience’s attention are particular characteristics of Noir, and it seemed appropriate for Professor Plunkett to end the lecture with this selection. The clip “captures the essence of Nordic Noir. A light to be found within the darkness of the stories: a primal human need and desire stripped free of the complexities of contemporary life”, Professor Plunkett stated.

Noir deals with issues that remain shrouded in darkness, but raises them up to the surface, issues involving disillusionment, paranoia, suspense, and the grimness of life. It also confronts social problems that involve gender roles and expectations. Professor Plunkett talked about Sarah Lund, a complex, working class woman featured in Nordic film, prompting a person in the audience to ask, “How do you see gender playing a role in these films?” He answered that “gender is always present in Noir. It is implicit, just as issues of immigration arise in other films, but adds an interesting twist. There are often strong, female characters in some instances or in others the female is presented as the victim.” Some might wonder why anyone would bother to study Noir. Professor Plunkett says that “the people of Denmark consider darkness to be a legitimate part of life. There is a degree of philosophical centering as well as humor.” In other words, they do not run away from the darkness, but embrace it and find its importance as being a part of everyday life. (continued p. 6)



Many misconceptions encumber Noir as a mode of expression, but learning something about the purpose behind this genre eliminated them for me.

Despite feelings of looming creepiness the audience and I might have experienced as we got ourselves seated in the Writers House, the room was bubbling with enthusiasm and lively chatter after the lecture. I sat pondering the issues discussed and the video clips continued to replay over and over in my head. I left with a feeling of heaviness after listening to the issues discussed, a darkness, but also (oddly) a desire for more. Perhaps, as Professor Plunkett pointed out, I was left to ruminate over “dark levelling, which cannot be escaped, outrun, or outthought.” I cannot wait to discover more about Noir.



White Crest  
Beach, Wellfleet



Race Point ,  
Provincetown

*The New England Shore Seminar students (listed alphabetically): Chealsey Giatrellis, Taylor Inman, Eric Janowski (course photographer), Charlie Lewis, Elizabeth McCullom, Bill McCullom, Rosemary Morton, Nicole Sheehan, Brittany Sullivan, Micaela Trent and Alyssa Zohoruiko. Also pictured: Sandy Vatalaro.*

## ***Windy and Cold New England Shore***

***Rosemary Morton***

Both of these photographs were taken during the same excursion, our first trip to the outer beaches of Cape Cod as members of The New England Shore seminar. My classmate Eric Janowski captured these shots. The Wellfleet group-shot was taken in the morning and the second was captured a little later in the day at Race Point Beach in Provincetown, the very tip of the Cape. We were lucky to avoid the summer crowds, because we traveled in October. In the first picture, the class group perches right near the cliff edge. It was really cool but terrifying, as the sand shifted underneath our feet and it was windy that day. Eric snapped the second photograph at the Old Harbor Life Saving Station. We learned about this landmark in class. Such structures housed the early coast guard watchmen, or “surfmén,” who dedicated their lives to rescuing drowning men from shipwrecks in the Outer Cape’s treacherous shoal waters. This location illuminates the dangers of the ocean, despite its resounding beauty on the day we visited.

Exploring the Cape was not a new experience for me or some of my classmates; however, this course made these visits seem different. Seeing the Cape now as an adult and in borderline-frigid weather put many of us in a mood we hadn’t experienced before, especially because we were accustomed to being on the Cape during the summer months. However, despite the unfamiliarity, it was nice. The New England Shore is definitely an interesting class to check out, because it introduces you to people whom you might not communicate with outside of those few minutes before class. In a strange way, I felt myself becoming more connected to the overall Merrimack community. Classes such as this one are why I picked Merrimack to begin with. The professors do not just teach us about their subjects; they teach us about ourselves and our classmates as well.

## WRITER-IN-RESIDENCE ALICE SEBOLD READS FROM *LUCKY* AT THE MERRIMACK WRITERS HOUSE

By Jessica Bruso

Alice Sebold exhibits intensity and humor in both her demeanor and her writing. As the bestselling author of *The Lovely Bones* and *Lucky*, she handles sensitive and disturbing subjects with grace and is able to speak openly without reservation. On November 16<sup>th</sup>, she gave a talk at the Merrimack College Writers House as the fall semester Writer-in-Residence. Her presentation featured *Lucky*, a memoir of her rape and the aftermath of dealing with physical injury, social stigma, and mental trauma. She opened by reading directly from the first chapter: “This is what I remember. My lips were cut. I bit down on them when he grabbed me from behind and covered my mouth. He said these words: ‘I’ll kill you if you scream.’”

When Sebold began reading, heads in the crowd slowly dropped, many of us staring at the floor. As she described the assault in graphic detail, intensity permeated the auditors and the physical atmosphere of the room. It was not until the conclusion of the rape scene that individuals sitting in the audience looked up, came back to reality, and saw that the woman in front of them not only survived, but was able to retell this incredibly personal story to a group of strangers.

During the question-and-answer period that followed, Sebold responded to questions that varied from when she started writing to how she felt about *The Lovely Bones* being made into a movie. During the course of this part of the presentation, she revealed that she started writing when she was eleven and wanted to become a novelist. She initially began composing *The Lovely Bones* as her debut book; however, she felt that she had so much to say about her own experience, which inspired her to write a memoir. She also spoke about her writing process when dealing with dark subjects and about her writing environment. When she wrote *Lucky*, for example, she was living in southern California and could see a palm tree outside her apartment window. Looking up from her work occasionally and seeing the palm tree helped her keep her past separate from the present. She compared writing about difficult subjects to being underwater; looking outside was like taking a breath.

She ended the Q-and-A session with the self-deprecating prompt, “Give me one more then I’ll shut up”. This was the tone that carried over when I interviewed her. I asked why she became a novelist and she talked about her background in poetry and love for language. Her writing style is much like her way of speaking: blunt. When I inquired about her reason for opening *Lucky* with a painfully detailed account of her rape without providing background about her life at college, she said that she never liked boring lead-ups and that she shows her trust and honor towards the reader by avoiding those conventions.

During the time we spoke, I was able to see that she was a private person. She would not reveal any information about her current project or talk much about her life now. She indicated that she had no interest in writing another memoir and said that she preferred writing fiction. When I pointed out the difference between the reserve she exercises regarding her life now with the detailed openness that typifies *Lucky*, she explained that she felt her story was so well-known by everyone around her that she wanted to take ownership by telling it in her words; however, she does not feel the need to do that about her life now.

Finally, Sebold shared insight about writing and talked about her process. She reflected that her experience drove her toward prose, because she could not tell her stories with such intensity through poetry. She prefers writing fiction and never writes with an outline. She will work for endless hours working on characters to find their voices, often throwing away over a hundred pages worth of development in order to locate that voice. Her process can be compared best, using her metaphor, to a spider web, because the main ideas are in the middle and branch out from that center. Her hard work has certainly paid off.

Alice Sebold captivated her audience by elucidating the subject of rape and by sharing her compelling story. Her perseverance through the attack and its aftermath demonstrates her strength, and her ability to write eloquently about such an unsettling issue ensures her status as a skilled memoirist. Her life story and work are truly inspiring.



## Unplanned Writing a Key to Composing: Writers House Informal Writing Sessions

By Rachel MacKelcan

Writers often struggle to find time to just sit down and compose, let alone find the time to compel the creative juices to flow freely (they're slippery little beasts, those juices). For some of us it is all too easy to get so caught up in all our daily activities that we fail at preserving that time to write.

This semester, the Writers House has created four new time slots for informal writing sessions on top of the regular Writers Circle that continues to meet every Thursday at 4 pm. These sessions, held Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 1:15-2:00 pm and on Tuesdays from 3:30-4:15 pm, serve as informal opportunities for interested writers to come and get the "creative gears turning" with the help of prompts created by Danielle Jones Pruett, Associate Director of the Merrimack College Writers House. Danielle says that these prompts are an easier, lower-pressure, way to get out and discover something new. "When you throw yourself into something you weren't planning to write, you aren't as invested. That can be very freeing. Prompts are a great way of getting outside your comfort zone and trying something new and crazy with words." To accommodate those individuals who cannot attend the walk-in sessions, the walk-in crew has prepared a prompt book, available to anyone whenever they have free time.

Let me give you an idea of how these walk-in sessions work. After choosing a prompt, everyone participating in the group writes for a very quirky but fitting thirty-three minutes. After this, writers share their work, just for fun. "We don't expect the writing to be good. This type of writing is not about the quality of work produced; it's about self-discovery," Danielle pointed out. Later, they'll begin the process of revision working to produce "good" writing, as they refine what they've done—but on any given day most of the writers just want to see where their minds take them. Here are some examples of prompts Danielle has composed:

- ⇒ **Think about a road trip you've been on. Describe it using sensory details. If one particular moment strikes you, focus on that moment.**
- ⇒ **Choose a poetry book from the shelf and turn to a random poem. Write down the last word of every line, then write a poem making those end-words the first words of every line you write.**
- ⇒ **Begin with the first line: "The lights were still on in the bar by the time Josie got back to the parking lot." (first line supplied by Gail Caldwell)**
- ⇒ **Turn your paper in the landscape position. Write about the universe, or the horizon of the ocean, or something vast, using longer lines/sentences than normal.**
- ⇒ **Begin with the first line: "She found the ring in the grass by the shed. The ring was glistening with morning dew, but the finger was not."**

For me, the Writers House has always been a wonderful place to express myself, to be strange and experience similarly strange people and the conversations they often strike up. Some of my best and worst works have come from the quick-burst writing times I have spent at the Writer House. And though my schedule has not allowed much time to go to all of these write-ins and Writers House events, I am more than grateful for the opportunities I have taken part in.

As for those of us who can call the Writers House their second home, I think the biggest thing is that the program is gaining momentum. The faculty and staff want to promote it, encouraging new-comers to follow suit and join in on the fun. For a lot of the most frequent regulars, the Writers House was established at about the time they began their academic careers at Merrimack, so as they approach graduation, they really want a good group to carry on the tradition they initiated.

"The "walk in" writing prompts are a lot of fun. It's usually a small group of students, and for about thirty minutes we write based on that day's prompt. At the end, we share if we want to, but either way it's always a good time," said Jacques Denault class of 2016.

In a way these walk-ins provide a chance not only to grow the programs within the Writers House but to expand them and allow a new generation to step up while also keeping the alums and inaugural members close. Hopefully the program continues to evolve, serving not only English majors and minors, but everyone who loves to write. So, why not stop in and see what you can produce in thirty-three minutes?

What follows are student samples written in response to prompt exercises:

**Untitled by Brianna Mahoney**

The lights were still on in the bar by the time Josie got back to the parking lot. She did not think the night could grow darker at 2:30 AM, but the impossible deemed possible as she walked away one last time.

She walked away from her place of solace and salvation. Baldwin's was the bar where she spent so much of her nights, escaping the vapid days that lingered in Cambridge. She walked away from the barstools that help her up when she felt lowest—from both the creepy men with missing teeth and the comforting sound of her Uncle Bill's voice tending the drunken 8-5er's.

She wondered how he could still stand it; how he could bare the tip jars filled with half bitten pretzels, the regulars who waltzed in at 6 everyday and stumbled out with only the moon and headlights to guide them to their cars. Jessie saw her uncle play this game for 18 long years and now that the time she had always wished for to come arrived, the sentiments became all too bittersweet.

As she stood in the middle of the bar, Josie eyed the corners where her life happened. Where people kissed and fought in front of an 8 year old version of herself and where her dad took his last breath at the feet of a 17 year old Josie.

The lights were still on in the bar by the time Josie got back to the parking lot. Saying goodbye to the city of brilliant lonely souls, she did not even think to look back.



Jacques Denault, Koda Corcoran, Sydney Corcoran, and Jason Asman. Photo Credit: Bradley Walsh

**Endless by Bradley Wall**

*after Robert Pinsky*

Hand over hand, the workers made life more convenient for the mass of ignorant and exploitative bigots that destroyed lives without any consequences. Junctures formed when the calloused and reddened hands of the laborers welded two or more cold slabs of metal together and moved on in the line. Worry-sweat dripped from them if one of the managers observed the shifts and looked at them with the trademark icy stare that his light blue eyes could make. Carbon-fed machines plopped out thick fibers for stockings, carpets, and nice and flexible parts for all those who relished the wanton indulgences of having automobiles and needed replacement parts. The wires and internal engines of the machines whirred and hummed and those standing there doing their jobs fell into the rhythm. Hand over hand products were being made and processed and then shipped to wherever the Krauts needed them to go. A bell rings loud; it is one of the only breaks they get. Salts are exchanged if you wanted—iodized salt was the favored of what was offered—and food was eaten heartily and hastily. Clawhead after clawhead hammers were made this afternoon; there seemed to be a need at this time for France. Shaft then more shafts were molded and assembled along with the heads for all of those entitled workers working so diligently on those houses that had to be maintained ever so. Me and the rest, slave over these implements and break our bodies so those in power and exploiting us can enjoy life to the fullest. Working fourteen or more hours to make sure the hungry masses were ready to be fed sickens me terribly. Vilna is dying and nobody but God can save our souls. Machine-soul of the machine that is known as War kills our flesh and blood and uses our non-human selves for its pleasure. No soviets or great humanitarians can bring us an autonomous home or even equality.

**Stories by Jacques Denault**

*after Charles Simic*

Stories seem to pop up from the ground,  
Humbly growing as early June flowers.  
Books are simply the pressings of those stories on paper,  
Pages act as their delicate frames.  
Days come and go, bringing new tales to sprout.  
  
Desire for a story is as useless as catching the wind.  
Sunlight slipping through yet unsteady fingers.  
Afternoon draws shadows over the garden,  
Buttons it up, covering the ripening words  
  
Dressed in the finest silks, peppered with sequins,  
Buttoned and laced daintily onto the soft fabrics.  
Necks kept hushed by jewelry in all the colors of the globe.  
Breasts tucked away where only her writer can reveal.

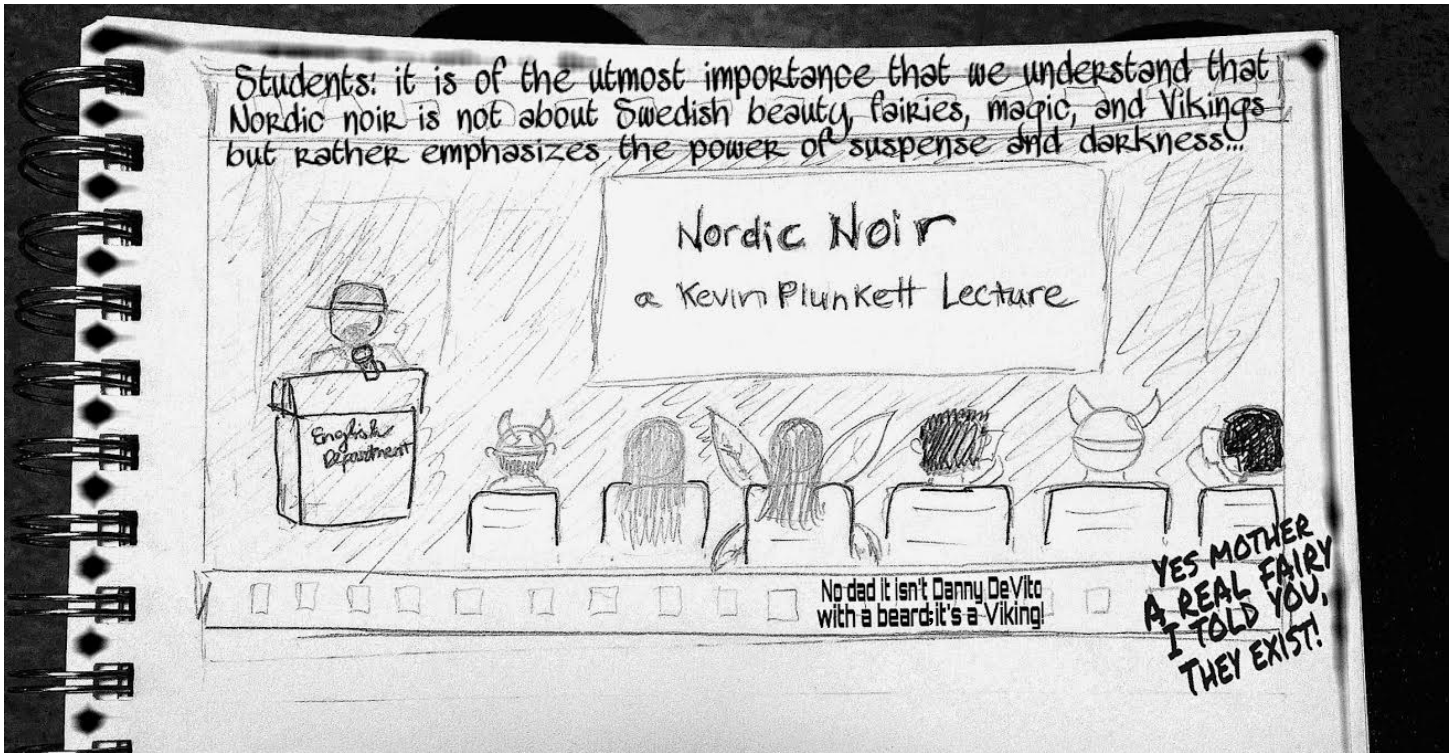


**Christmas At Grandma's by Jason Asman**

I always remember riding slowly past the white exterior of the first buildings in the complex. There was no color, no hue to catch my eye; it was so simple. The lack of any design left room for me to imagine dragons flying from window to window, only to be rejected by those within the condos, and shooed away in search of a home. The hall leading up to my grandmother's door was just as plain. The carpet looked as if it was made up of steel wool and broken glass. The walls were tattered by chips in the sun brazen paint, and the ceiling was no better. The railing on the stairwell was not as sturdy as it once was, but it was still beautiful. Whatever metal it was made of had been turned an almost jade color, likely due to the smoke from cigarettes.



Lecture Notes by Rachel MacKelcan



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Photo by Joseph Pinto

**Rogers Center Christmas Tree**

**Merry Christmas from *The Broadsheet***