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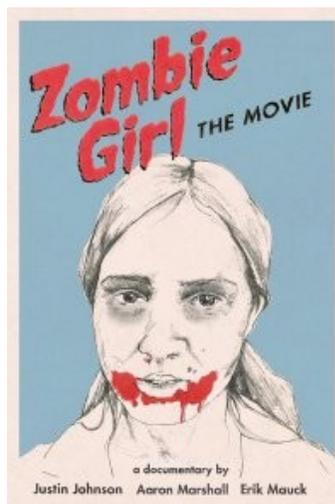
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## English Alumnus Uses Journalism Experience in Documentary Film

Alex Wiles '09

It's encouraging to know that someone in the same major as you has been successful after college. Plymouth State University alumnus Erik Mauck has shown that with a little creativity and a lot of hard work, it's possible to create something truly worthwhile. Mauck, who graduated from Plymouth State in 1996 as an English major with a writing option, has recently been working on a full length movie titled *Zombie Girl*.

*Zombie Girl* chronicles the efforts of 12-year-old Emily Hagins as she makes her own feature length zombie film, "Pathogen." Erik's role in the filming of *Zombie Girl* was that of co-producer. He also provided feedback



and helped to shape the look and story of the movie.

Erik explains how his time at Plymouth State helped him throughout the movie-making process. "Although I wanted to get

more experience in journalism, at the time it was only offered through one course and by volunteering for *The Clock*. So, that experience writing and reporting for the school paper got me interested in journalism, which stayed with me through film school at Southern Illinois University. As a documentary filmmaker, I am a visual journalist." His interest that was sparked here at PSU helped him to produce *Zombie Girl*.

*Zombie Girl* has been shown lately at numerous film festivals such as Fantastic Fest and Slamdance, where it won the 2009 Spirit Award. Readers are encouraged to visit the Web site [zombiegirlthemovie.com](http://zombiegirlthemovie.com) which includes a trailer, dates for upcoming screenings, and more.

## 2009 English Department Scholarship Winners Announced



Scholarship winners Jaime Bianco, Robert Feeney, and Lisa Riley

Each year, members of English department faculty select recipients for three student scholarships based on combinations of merit and need. This year's recipients are examples of the excellent work being done by English majors. Jaime Bianco received this year's Sally Boland Memorial Scholarship, Bob Feeney received this year's Carole Ann Soucie Memorial Scholarship, and Lisa Riley received the Dow Family Trust Scholarship. If you would like to contribute to the funds that make these scholarships possible, please contact the PSU Advancement Office at (603) 535-2589.



Carrie Waldron

*“My real plan was to be rejected from both and to have to move back to Jordan to teach English until something better came my way.”*

# Making the Big Choice

Carrie Waldron '09

I love school. I love it. The problem is that I also love dance, and the two activities are not always compatible. They are both incredibly demanding, but in ways that contradict one another. With dance, for example, I have to make sure that my body is rested, that I'm eating well, and that I'm exercising frequently. With school, I have to make sure that papers are written, that books are read, and that the campus literary magazine has no typos—no matter how many boxes of cheez-its, bags of chocolate chips, oversized buckets of coffee, and all-nighters it takes.

When I started thinking about graduation last fall, I got stuck. I imagined myself in two situations: (1) me, in a deep, dark closet of a TA's office, grading undergraduate theory exam after exam after exam in order to pay the bills at a hugely expensive school that, thanks to my job as a TA, I wouldn't have enough time or energy to take advantage of, or (2) me, skipping from audition to audition, hoping for a job in some obscure modern dance company while waiting tables at some obscure restaurant in some obscure part

of town. Unable to choose, I decided to pursue both options, applying to the University of Chicago and auditioning at the Ballet Theatre of Maryland. My real plan was to be rejected from both and to have to move back to Jordan to teach English until something better came my way.

Ironically, I received offers from both the University of Chicago and the Ballet Theatre of Maryland—and teaching English in Jordan, the idea of which had grown on me, was suddenly out of the question. Granted, neither offer was EXACTLY what I wanted — I was accepted into a masters, and not a PhD, at Chicago, and I was offered an UNPAID apprenticeship at the Ballet Theatre of Maryland, instead of a paid company position—but I had a choice to make. Unable to think about it on my own, I sought the advice of everyone I could find ...

I talked to people in the English department, and most of them said I would be crazy not to go to the University of Chicago. I talked to people in the Dance program, and most of them said I would be crazy not to take the apprenticeship with the ballet. My mom screamed, “The BAL-

LET!” My dad muttered, “How much does THAT pay?”

On Facebook, Robin DeRosa said that the “little girl in her” was happy I got into the ballet, but....

And Scott Coykendall probably had the best advice of all—“Carrie,” he said, “No matter which path you choose, you're going to look over your shoulder and wonder what your life would have been like if you had chosen the other option”—but then he cracked, and, red-faced, blurted out, “But, Carrie, IT'S THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO!”

“Well, can't you defer your acceptance to Chicago?” someone asked. “No,” I replied. “Not an option.”

“Well, can't you just do the Masters and dance on the side?” someone else asked. “Ha!” I laughed, while imagining the recycling bin of my deep, dark closet of a TA office filling up with empty boxes of cheez-its, bags of chocolate chips, and oversized buckets of coffee. Not gonna happen, I thought.

Finally, I made up my own mind, though. My conclusion? Transcripts are set in stone; bodies grow flaccid with time.

**To learn more about Carrie's next adventure, visit:**  
[balletmaryland.org/](http://balletmaryland.org/)

# Alumni Updates

**Cindy Dickinson '77** has "graduated" after 31 years as an English teacher and guidance counselor at ConVal High School. She is now working as a health management representative for the New Hampshire Local Government Center. Cindy works with 70 public schools and a number of municipalities throughout the state, speaking on health-related topics and helping teachers and town employees develop wellness programs. She is also an ACE-certified personal trainer and works with

clients at the Bond Wellness Center in Peterborough. Her daughter, Emily Smith (UNH grad) has had the honor of being published in Tom Newkirk's new book! Her son Dan is reading Kerouac while he tours the country with his pop punk band.

**Erik Mauck '96** has been promoting his first feature-length documentary called "Zombie Girl: The Movie" which has played at Fantastic Fest and Slamdance, and will show at AFI-Dallas and Hot Docs in

Toronto within the next couple of months. The Web site is: [zombiegirlthemovie.com](http://zombiegirlthemovie.com). He also just finished his first narrative feature and is working on a feature-length documentary about a woman whose brother is on death row in Livingston, Texas.

**James Smith '07** is back in South Korea, teaching English to business people and university students. He is also doing some volunteer work teaching North Korean refugees who can't afford the \$40 an hour that most private English tutors get.

**Alumni and Majors:**  
**Check out the English department Facebook group, PSU English Majors.**

## English Department Faculty Updates

**Liz Ahl** was a keynote speaker at the Poetry Pedagogy Forum of the 2009 Association of Writers and Writing Programs (AWP) conference in Chicago. In April, she participated in a group poetry reading as a part of [Jazzmouth](#): The Seacoast Poetry & Jazz Festival. She also gave a reading in April from her chapbook, [A Thirst That's Partly Mine](#), at the Lincoln Public Library. Her chapbook was named as one of four "Best Chapbooks of Spring 2009" by the *Montserrat Review*.

**Robin DeRosa** chaired a panel called "S(t)imulated Realities" at the Northeast Modern Language Association conference in Boston in February. In March, she presented a paper on her Salem witchcraft research at the Society of Early Americanists conference in Bermuda. She also recently gave talks on her Salem work at libraries in East Kingston and Milford and for the MFA program at Boston University. Robin's students from "The 'F' Word: Feminism in the U.S." are doing service learning projects with a

number of local organizations, including the Concord Feminist Health Center, the PSU Child Development and Family Center, and Voices Against Violence.

**Bob Garlitz's** "Signorelli Says," a review-essay on David Kirby, was published in [Stride Magazine](#). His one-man exhibition of paintings, "Lost Places" was on display during February at Café Monte Alto in Plymouth. His blog, [bobgarlitz.com](http://bobgarlitz.com), is averaging 20-30 hits a week.

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## Traveling with Members of Sigma Tau Delta: Benefits of Conferences and Student Travel

*Naomi Foshier ('09)*

This March, four Plymouth State University English majors traveled to Minneapolis for the 2009 Sigma Tau Delta International Convention.

The four students who traveled to the convention, Lauren Tiner, Mallory Carter, Justine Berry, and Naomi

Foshier, went to the conference as representatives of the PSU chapter of the Sigma Tau Delta English honor society.

The conference, held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Minneapolis, is an annual event open to all active and registered chapters of Sigma Tau Delta (chapter available

at four year colleges), Sigma Kappa Delta (two year colleges) and the National English Honors Society (high schools). Sigma Tau Delta members from PSU have attended the international conference for the past four years.

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## *New Fall Courses:*

### **Genre: The Novel (Advanced Study in Literature)**

Novel: New, different from anything seen or known before. From the epistolary to the erotic, from realism to the hyper-real, this course will explore the origins of the novel in English ranging from the early eighteenth century through post-modernity. Texts will be read in context of contemporary theorizations on the novel and its history.

### **Shakespeare's (St)age (Introductory Course)**

How did William Shakespeare and his contemporaries craft, advertise, and perform their plays? How did Queen Elizabeth, Puritans, and finances affect drama? This introductory literature course studies select plays and sonnets by William Shakespeare and his contemporaries as well as modern adaptations of these works.

## *Change in Requirements*

Starting with the 2009-2010 catalogue, English majors will only need to take ONE introductory English course (currently, you must take TWO), and the number of credits required to graduate will be reduced from 122 to 120. Discuss with your advisor whether it would be a good idea (it probably will be!) to fill out a Change of Catalogue form in the fall, so you can take advantage of this change.

LL3100: The History and Structure of the English Language (This course is currently required of all Teacher Certification English majors. If you are a Teacher Certification English major and haven't taken it yet, talk to your advisor about changing your catalogue year to 2009-2010 in the fall—then you don't have to take LL3100 and can take 3 credits of free electives instead!)

## *Useful Advising Links*

Curriculum planning guides:

[plymouth.edu/undergrad/curriculum/index.html](http://plymouth.edu/undergrad/curriculum/index.html)

(These handy, one-page checklists, which coordinate to specific catalogue years, can help you keep track of which courses you have taken and which courses you still need to take.)

Course descriptions:

[plymouth.edu/english/courses.html](http://plymouth.edu/english/courses.html)

(Often, a course title doesn't provide all the info you need to make a decision about whether or not to take it. All the English department course descriptions can be found at this link.)

Teacher certification information:

[plymouth.edu/teachercertification/index.html](http://plymouth.edu/teachercertification/index.html)

## Joe Mealey Selected 2009 Distinguished Adjunct Teacher

Joe Mealey, an adjunct English instructor and skills application teacher at PSU, was presented with the 2009 Distinguished Adjunct Teaching Award. Mealey earned his bachelor's at Plymouth State and joined the faculty in 1996, teaching literature and general education courses. Joe previously served as the director of the English Department Writing Center. He has presented at the NCTE National Conference on tutor training and peer mentoring.

Joe teaches many courses for the English department, including Studies in English, The Outsider, Decades, and Composition, to name just a few. He accepted the award at the May PSU faculty meeting, sharing the following remarks:

I'm delighted and honored to receive this award. I was an undergrad here at Plymouth, so this really is very special to me. If you had told me thirteen years ago, when I returned to Plymouth, that I would be recognized in this way for my teaching, I would most certainly have thought you were crazy. Back then, when I

first took an adjunct position here, I felt more than a little trepidation about teaching. I knew I'd have stand up in front of a room full of students and not waste their time. That's a lot of responsibility. As an inexperi-



enced new member of the teaching community, I have to say that I was pretty scared.

But I was also very fortunate. I was teaching at Plymouth State. My students were patient with me. And my colleagues helped me more than I can say. I was very lucky to have

some wonderful mentors, and I learned from them how to do it.

And along the way I discovered a wonderful thing: I love teaching. I discovered that being in the classroom was the most rewarding thing I had ever done. It is incredibly inspiring to see people in class as they struggle through some difficult concepts, and then realize that they can master the material. It has been inspiring to watch the students start to realize just how capable they are and gain confidence in their own abilities. Plymouth State students have a real desire to learn and grow, and it has been a privilege to learn and grow with them.

So, I just want to thank everyone who has helped me to discover the tremendous joy of teaching. To the English department and my colleagues, thanks for all the support and mentoring you've given me. To my family for supporting me with love and understanding, thank you. And most importantly to my students, you are the reason I am here at Plymouth State. Thank you.

## What Do You Do With a BA in English?

### Adam Russell '09

As May approaches and we draw to the close of the year, many English majors may find themselves thinking the same thing: What do you do with a BA in English? It's not just graduating seniors who should be thinking this. Even first-years, who have only just survived their first round of college life, should be thinking long and hard about what to do with an English degree.

The easy answer, of course, is to either teach or write the Great American Novel. Now, writing a novel is a great dream, but not

really a practical gamble for the rest of your life, and teaching isn't for everyone. So what do you do with your BA in English? Lots of things.

But it first comes as an excellent use of time to give a visit to the Bagley center. According to Ruth DeCotis at the Bagley Center, the best thing that you can do to answer this question is to look to your peers: Ask yourself "What can I do with a major in English? What have others who have graduated with this major done when they've graduated?" Look around at some of your friends in the major and ask what they plan to do.

Also, the Bagley Center has excellent resources for preparing graduating students of all majors, including English majors, for finding a good job with their degree. In addition to their well advertised assistance with writing and revising resumes they also have many authors on staff who have written books, including the Bagley Center director's book, *Great Jobs for English Majors*. Along with these sources, English majors can also turn to their peers for advice on what they could do. Sometimes your peers have the best suggestions.

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# English Department Faculty Updates, continued

**Karolyn Kinane** was elected to the Board of Directors of the Consortium for Teaching the Middle Ages. Her collection, *End of Days: Essays on the Apocalypse from Antiquity to Modernity* (co-edited with Mike Ryan) is just out from McFarland Press. The book “explores the idea of the apocalypse and its reception within culture and society,” with essays that “explore both the influence and innovation of apocalyptic ideas from classical Greek and Roman writings to the foreign policies of today’s United States.” Her

book review of Alexandra Cuffel’s *Gendering Disgust in Medieval Religious Polemic* is forthcoming in the *Journal of Medieval Religious Cultures*.

**Joe Monninger** has sold a new novel to Simon & Schuster’s Pocket Book Division. His novel, *Baby*, has just gone into a second edition, and his nonfiction book *Two-Ton* has been optioned for a movie by an executive producer at *Sports Illustrated*.

**Ann McClellan’s** article, “Of Mouse and (Wo)Man? Decoding the Masculine and Encoding the Feminine in Hypertext Theory,” was published in a special issue of *Eureka Studies in Teaching Short Fiction*. She chaired a panel at the 2009 NeMLA conference in Boston: “We Love the ’80s: Nostalgia and Empire in Contemporary British Culture.” Also at NeMLA, she presented the paper, “Hungry Like the Wolf: Duran Duran, Music Video, and Consuming Empire.”

## What Do You Do With a BA in English, continued

Aly Turkos, an English major, says that she intends to attend law school after graduating. “I work as a nanny for one of the top lawyers in the country. She recommended it to me. I took the LSATs [Legal Standard Aptitude Tests] and at the end of next year I’m going to start sending applications out to law schools.” Turkos plans to attend the University of New Mexico at Albuquerque, NM.

“They say that English majors make the best lawyers, which is why I chose it. I don’t want to

waste my English Degree” says Turkos.

And, of course, the greatest resource for anyone needing guidance as to what they plan to do with their English degree would be the professors of the English department. Any professor has a good idea of what can be done with the major as many of them have not been professors since right out of their own college days.

For more information contact the Bagley Center at extension 52336.

## English Majors Can Benefit from Visiting the Writing Center

**Alex Wiles ’09**

The Writing Center, located in Lamson Library, has long been offering writing consultation to students and faculty alike. English majors in particular should take special interest in the center for a number of reasons. First, it offers a place of employment where English majors can use their skills. While the center employs students from all fields of study, according to director Jane Weber, as of right now, more than half the students working there come from the English department.

English majors have also been

reported as using the center more than any other major. The center offers useful services for students who need help writing and editing their papers.

When asked why English majors should take particular interest in the Writing Center, Jane Weber said, “I think there’s a preconception for many English majors that coming to the Writing Center is not beneficial. My staff and I find this ironic. To us, it makes sense that English majors in particular would want the opportunity to hone their craft, work with an interested reader, and communicate

to a wide audience. Talking with someone about writing is stimulating and productive—whether or not your reader is a fellow English major.”

Sitting down with someone to talk about their writing is a great way to get better, and English majors around campus are encouraged to use the Writing Center any chance they get.

The Writing Center is open during the school year Monday through Wednesday from 9 a.m. -- 9 p.m., Thursday and Friday from 9 a.m. — 5 p.m., and Sunday evenings from 6 p.m. — 9 p.m.

## Sigma Tau Delta Conference, continued

The main events of the conference are the session panels where students chosen via an application process read their work. Accepted works include literary critical analyses, creative nonfiction, original fiction, and poetry. The selected works are placed into panels organized by theme. An example of a panel is the original fiction session titled Locations that was offered on Friday, March 28. Each of the works of fiction from that panel would highlight and feature details about a specific location.

This year, Carter was selected to read her fiction work titled “The House” on the Locations panel. Her story is a gothic tale of a woman’s struggle to overcome the maddening curse of her new home.

Other PSU attendees Tiner, Berry, and Fosher served as panel chairs for at least one panel each. A panel chair has the responsibility of hosting the session, welcoming the audience, and introducing each of the presenters and the faculty moderator who facilitates the question and answer section at the end of the session.

Along with the session panels, which featured student work from Sigma Tau Delta members all over the United States, there were also keynote speakers at the conference. Speakers such as Neil Gaiman, author of *Stardust*, *Coraline*, and *American Gods*, and Michael Perry, author of *Truck: A Love Story* and *Population 485: Meeting Your Neighbors One Siren at a Time*, were among the authors present to speak.

The conference also included sessions that addressed subtopics of interest to Sigma Tau Delta members. These sessions included: Alumni Reflections: Practical Advice for Getting a Job in the Nonprofit Sector, The Death of Paper, which explored new digital media forms and their implications,

**“It helps you apply what you are studying in college to real life. You visit different places and are able to see different contexts and get out of the college bubble”**

— Lauren Tiner ’09

and Graduate School 101: Looking for, Applying to, and Surviving Graduate School.

Asked what her favorite panel was, Tiner chose the creative nonfiction panel with the theme Feeling Hungry. She said the each of the stories in the panel were well developed, interesting, and focused on a different food-related subject. One story focused on women’s relationships with food and body image issues, while another focused on the experience of bonding with a woman who has multiple sclerosis by cooking meals together. “All of the

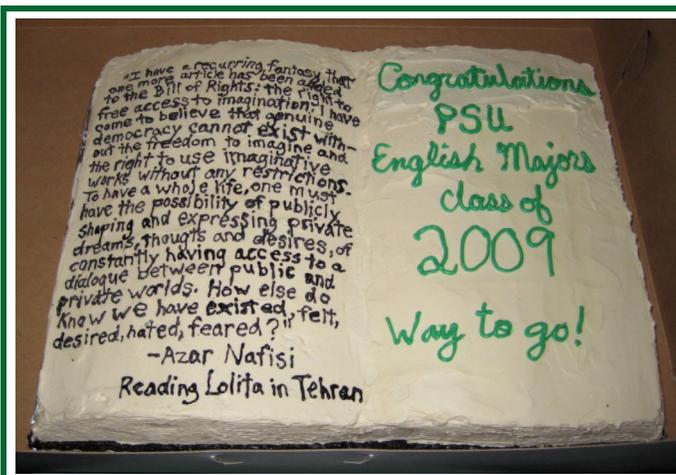
creative nonfiction panels were really interesting,” Tiner stated. “The writer has the ability to take creative license and create something different than a memoir.”

Carter and Berry agreed that the fiction and nonfiction panels were really engaging. Carter said, “The stories really interested me because I wanted to know what would happen next. Although the critical essays were interesting it was hard to follow an argument without having something in front of me to read.”

When asked about the benefits of the trip, Berry stated that she learned more about what interested her because of attending the panels. Tiner and Carter both said the conference made them realize how strong the English program is here at PSU.

All of the attendees talked about many benefits of the trip beyond the conference itself. Each recommended student travel for a variety of reasons. Tiner said that student travel “helps you apply what you are studying in college to real life. You visit different places and are able to see different contexts and get out of the college bubble.”

Berry said her favorite part of the trip was “bonding and spending time with fellow group members.” Carter agreed, saying that in traveling with peers “you will become closer to your fellow classmates and the knowledge and friendships will build character and enhance your own activity in your major.”



PSU English alumna Paris Landry, baker and owner of Pastries by Paris in Hill, NH, painstakingly decorated a book-shaped cake to congratulate the graduating class of 2009 at the annual English Department Senior Reception and Reading. It was literarily delicious.