



## JAMES POLLOCK BOOK PUBLICATION & READING: *DURABLE GOODS* By Madailein McCabe ('23)

On November 2, 2022, Dr. James Pollock read at Loras College from his new poetry publication, *Durable Goods* (Vehicle Press, 2022). Madailein McCabe ('23) offered these insights and posed an interview question to Dr. Pollock:

As I load my laundry to the dryer, look in a mirror, or use the bathroom, I am now seeing a new image of what these appliances are. There is a new life to them, new details and viewpoints that I had not considered previously. After hearing Dr. James Pollock read some of his works from his book of poems, *Durable Goods*, I find myself looking twice at everyday appliances. *Durable Goods* is a collection of 'thing' poems, or pieces that are written about anything without prompt. In his Loras College reading and presentation, Pollock spoke about how his vision for these poems began with a drinking fountain, or bubbler as some call it. He said he was struck with the idea to think what life might be like from the perspective of everyday appliances and tools, giving readers a whole new perspective on

something they might never consider at such lengths.

**Madailein McCabe:** *Can you talk about the value of writing about everyday objects in these poems?"*



**James Pollock:** First, I'd say it's a way of moving past autobiography in English-language poetry. I've written some autobiographical poems myself, and of course there are a lot of wonderful poems that have come out of this Wordsworthian tradition that John Keats calls "the egotistical sublime"; but I'm interested in finding ways to do something else in poetry. Keats identifies an alternative tradition of the "chameleon poet"—that is, the kind of poet who, like Shakespeare, disappears into

the subject of the poem—and that tradition strikes me as the most exciting way forward in our own time. Of course, there are various ways of doing this: dramatic monologues, for example, or certain narrative forms like the verse novel. For lyric poetry, one way to do this is with the thing-poem, which is descended from, and related to, the riddle. This is the approach that excited me when I was writing *Durable Goods*.

Another way to answer your question has to do with the value of engaging imaginatively with technology. When we use the word "technology" today, we tend to mean recent computer technology—blockchain, smart phones, quantum computing, artificial intelligence—and we forget about all the older technologies we use all day long, so that they have become almost invisible to us as technological: umbrellas, mirrors, teaspoons. It's all just hardware, appliances, "products," and before long, junk. In other words, most of us live immersed in a thoroughly disenchanted world of objects that we use and then throw away. Even though these things often help us, and sometimes hurt us, and require our care, we tend not to think of ourselves as having relationships with them. The poems in *Durable Goods*, in adapting the thing-poem tradition to tools and appliances, bring an imaginative animism to these things, so they become enchanted subjects in their own right, not just disposable objects. When William Blake writes, concerning a thistle, that "With my inward Eye, 'tis an old Man grey, / With my outward, a Thistle across my way," that's a Romantic thing-poem, a visionary animism of Nature. There's a whole tradition of thing-poems in modern poetry, too, including poems by Eduard Mörike, Rainer Maria Rilke, Marianne Moore, D.H. Lawrence, Francis Ponge, Eric Ormsby, and others. In *Durable Goods*, I'm innovating on that tradition by writing, not about plants or animals, or even works of art, but tools and appliances and machines.

## ERIN VANLANINGHAM NETVUE PODCAST

Dr. Erin VanLaningham shares this exciting news regarding her podcast interview with the former Archbishop of Canterbury regarding "vocation." You will find it to be a fascinating conversation!

"My work with NetVUE has allowed me to learn from many insightful and inspiring people. Recently, I had the great gift of speaking with Rowan Williams, the 104th Archbishop of Canterbury, the senior leader in the Church of England and the ceremonial head of the Anglican Communion worldwide. It was nothing short of incredible. I encourage everyone, regardless of religious identity, to listen to this conversation."  
-- Dr. Erin VanLaningham, Professor of English.



Dr. Erin VanLaningham co-hosts the podcast "Callings"—available on all major platforms (Apple, Spotify, and others) and also here: <https://netvue.buzzsprout.com/> The podcast includes conversations on college, career, and a life well-lived, exploring what it means to live a life defined by a sense of meaning and purpose. It focuses on the process of exploring and discerning one's vocation, with particular emphasis on mentoring and supporting undergraduate students as they navigate college, career, and a life-well lived. This past season, guests ranged from the actor Rainn Wilson (of *The Office* fame) to Thema Bryant (president of the American Psychological Association) to Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury.



## HEATHER JAGMAN ('92) DISCUSSES CENSORSHIP AT 2022 ENGLISH HOMECOMING BREAKFAST *By Delaney Powers ('26)*

The attendees of the 2022 Homecoming English Breakfast had the pleasure of hearing from Heather Jagman ('92). She is the 2022 President of the Illinois Library Association and coordinator of Research, Instruction and Academic Engagement at DePaul University.

Jagman explained how libraries have evolved over time to not just provide books but also resources such as research help, printing services, free Wi-Fi and even a Starbucks in some places. It is important to have a strong library because it leads to a strong community. Reading books helps people to connect with each other. Libraries do not have any expectations for visitors, almost no one is turned away. Whoever you are, you belong in a library.

Books have a way of making people feel like they belong because they feel accurately represented in a book. Those books are mirrors where people see themselves in one of the characters, most commonly the main

character. Other books people read that do not share the same points of view serve as windows. The readers get to observe another point of view and gain a different perspective on life.

"Books are sometimes windows offering views of worlds, familiar or strange," Jagman said, paraphrasing the words of Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop, a scholar of multicultural literature. "These windows are also sliding glass doors. Readers need only walkthrough imagination and be a part of whatever world was created by the author. Literature transforms human experiences. When it is dark, windows can act like mirrors. And in that reflection, we can see our own lives and experiences as a part of the larger human experience."

Jagman pointed out the rise in banned books in the recent past. There is a difference between challenging and banning of a book. A challenge of a book is when people try to restrict access to that book in a school library or public library. The book is banned if the school board or town council agree that the book should be taken from the library shelves. As of August 31st, 1,651 books had been banned in 2022 alone. According to PENN researchers, 41% of banned books had main characters that identified as LGBTQ+ and 22% had a person of color as the main character. School and public libraries are trying to limit book censorship across the country. But there are certain groups who disagree and threaten them for still having banned books on their shelves.

Jagman mentioned several steps people can take to stop censorship from happening. People can write letters to local school boards and library boards in opposition to censorship when challenges are made. In addition, people can follow local libraries on social media to find out what events are going on. They can show their appreciation of librarians. And, most importantly: Keep reading.

"People truly believe that books are powerful, that reading is a powerful practice," Jagman said. "That reading can change who you are. Reading can make you a kinder and more empathetic person."





## 2023 HOMECOMING SPEAKER ANNOUNCEMENT: TOM McNAMARA



Tom McNamara, Ph.D. ('07) is Assistant Professor of English and Writing Center director at Lewis University in Chicago's southwest suburbs. At Loras, Tom majored in English Literature and minored in Catholic Studies and Music Performance. After Loras, he did an MA in literature at Loyola University Chicago, taught writing courses at DePaul University, and completed a PhD at the University of Illinois Center for Writing Studies. He has published articles in *Literacy in*

*Composition Studies* and *Journal of Basic Writing* on his ethnographic study of Chinese international student writers, and he has an article forthcoming in *Journal of Writing Assessment* about equitable design for first-year writing placement. After his first faculty job at California State University Fresno, Tom is happy to be back in Chicago, where he lives with his wife, two sons, and two rescue dogs.

## TOM MONTGOMERY FATE MEMOIR-WRITING WORKSHOP

On March 21st, guest author Tom Fate led a Memoir-Writing workshop for Loras College Creative Nonfiction Writing students and members of the Dubuque and local community. It was great to have everyone from 20-year-olds to 70-somethings listening, talking, and writing together in one place. Tom Fate is author of 6 creative nonfiction books, including his most recent memoir, *"The Long Way Home: Detours & Discoveries."* Loras College co-sponsored Tom's visit with the Dubuque Carnegie Stout Public Library, where he did a reading from his book the prior weekend.



## MICHAEL THEUNE POETRY LECTURE



The Loras English program hosted poet Michael Theune on March 1 for a presentation titled "Poetry's Fitting Surprise." Theune explained that poetry often works by bringing together disparate images that are related enough to be "fitting" but different enough to evoke the element of surprise. He invoked the analogy of a spark plug gap. If the spark plug ends (or images) are too distant, there's no connection made. If they are too close, there's no spark either, no

surprise. At just the right distance—just the right degree of similarity and difference...it's explosive! Theune's presentation ended with an interactive exercise in which participants collaborated to write two-line poems based on single lines supplied by individuals.

Theune is Robert Harrington Endowed Professor of English and Chair of the Department of English at Illinois Wesleyan University.

## LITERATURE CAPSTONE PRESENTATIONS

Loras College English: Literature seniors presented their Capstone projects on November 15: Emily Ingles, Marianne Gleason, Abigail Vito, and Ivana Pernell.



## DES NATIONAL UNDERGRADUATE WRITING COMPETITION WINNERS

The Loras College English Program is pleased to announce that four of our English majors have earned the following honors in the Delta Epsilon Sigma National Undergraduate Writing competition for 2022-23. Please join me in congratulating:

- Calasandra Spray ('22): 1st place, Creative Nonfiction, "Soldier Sisters"
- Ellie Coleman ('25): 2nd place (Tie) Poetry, "Demeter's Fall"
- Coy Pederson ('22): Honorable Mention, Critical/Analytical Essay, "Artistic Anti-Mimesis: 'The Domestic Interior'"
- BethAnnie Hartman ('24), Honorable Mention, Short Fiction, "Wife"

These student authors join a long line of accomplished Loras writers. This is the 30th straight year that at least one Loras College writer has been awarded first or second place, or Honorable Mention, in at least one genre of the DES National Undergraduate Writing Competition! And it is the fifth time in the last seven years that we have placed in four genres! Congratulations again to our student-authors!



Calasandra Spray ('22)



Ellie Coleman ('25)



Coy Pederson ('22)



BethAnnie Hartman ('24)

## ENGLISH STUDENT AWARDS

The Loras College English Faculty are pleased to announce this year's student award recipients:

- Matthew Williams, Bauerly-Roseliep Scholarship for best literature scholar and creative writer;
- Dakota Church, Lehner Award for Future English Teachers
- Dominic Mailloux, 1st annual recipient of the Andrew J. Auge Scholarship for a Promising Literature Scholar

Congratulations to these fine students!



Matthew Williams



Dakota Church



Dominic Mailloux

## SIGMA TAU DELTA STUDENTS PRESENT NATIONALLY

Loras College English majors, Ms. Ellianna Stine and Mr. Dominic Mailloux presented their scholarly writings at the annual Sigma Tau Delta (National English Honor Society) Regional Conference sponsored by the University of North Georgia on Saturday, October 22nd. Early in the day, Elli presented her insightful literary essay, "Male Gaze in Two Renaissance Poems," and later in the afternoon, Dominic shared his fascinating rhetorical analysis, "The Timeless Nature of Love or the Loveless Nature of Time? Shakespeare and Marvell on Authentic Love." After their presentations Elli and Dominic gave poised responses to on-the-spot critical questions about their scholarship posed by other honors students and Sigma Tau Delta advisors from many of the 17 participating colleges.

Special thanks, too, to Dr. Susan Stone, Professor of English, who serves as the Faculty Moderator of the Loras chapter of Sigma Tau Delta.



Ellianna Stine



Dominic Mailloux



Dr. Susan Stone



## LIT SOCIETY/SIGMA TAU DELTA DISCUSSION OF BANNED BOOKS



On October 2nd, the Loras Literary Society and Sigma Tau Delta officers held a fantastic discussion for Banned Books Week, after which they watched a movie based upon a Banned Book: *The Hunger Games*. We had 15 students and three faculty present and can't wait for our upcoming fall events, which include a literary scavenger hunt, book club conversations around Brenda Peynado's *The Rock Eaters*, a trivia night, an internship and resume workshop, a holiday party/fundraiser with Santa and storytime, fundraising and a school supply drive for "The Give Back Project," and the participation of two outstanding Sigma Tau Delta officers, Elli Stine (President) and Dominic Mailloux (Scholarship Chair) in the upcoming Regional Undergraduate Conference. We'd love to have involvement from our English alums, so if you're interested getting involved, please contact Dr. Susan Stone at [Susan.Stone@loras.edu](mailto:Susan.Stone@loras.edu)

## CREATIVE THESIS READING

On Wednesday, Dec 7, Loras English Creative Writing majors read from their creative thesis works-in-progress, with fine examples of poetry, fiction, screenplay, and creative nonfiction. Pictured below: Emily Lemire, Marianne Gleadson, Matthew Williams, Reis Ginter, and Thesis Seminar Instructor William Jablonsky, Associate Professor of English.



## SIGMA TAU DELTA INDUCTEES



Congratulations to all of the members of Loras chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, the International English Honor Society, especially our new inductees.



Current officers Elli Stine, Matt Williams, and Dominic Mailloux helped initiate seven new members: Megan Basten, Elizabeth Coleman, BethAnnie Hartman, Daniella Jarrell, Jacob Klaung, Titus Mullen, and Karly Weiss. In order to be invited to join, they each had to maintain a 3.5 GPA in the English major, as well as overall, and they had to exhibit strong campus leadership and service.

# ALUMNI INTERVIEWS

## HORST FAMILY - SISTERS & MOTHER

***In 1986, Marcy Jessen (later, Marcy Horst) graduated from Loras College with a degree in English: Writing and History. Turn the clock ahead a generation, and three of her daughters— Clare ('11) Megan ('14), and Emma ('16), likewise studied English at Loras College. We checked back with the three sisters and their mom to hear their Loras English story.***



### EMMA HORST ('16)

After graduating from Loras in 2016 with majors in English and secondary education, Emma taught at Western Dubuque High School for three years before moving to Chicago to pursue her master's and Ph.D. in nineteenth-century British and American literature. Emma is currently in her 5th year at Loyola University Chicago, working on a dissertation project

that she developed from a paper she wrote on the Victorian novel *Lady Audley's Secret* in her Loras capstone class back in 2015. She has served as the Associate Director of Loyola's Writing Center, has taught college classes ranging from first-year composition to literature courses on aesthetics and sensation in the nineteenth century, and regularly attends academic conferences in the U.S. and abroad.

***How did the study of literature—and specifically Loras College English—become a common thread among you?***

I grew up watching my mom read and write. She read novels constantly and wrote children's plays, Christmas cards, and articles for the local paper. Before I knew what a "flow state" was, I witnessed it whenever my mom was typing on her Mac desktop. I always had such positive feelings about creativity, drama, and writing specifically because of my mom. Aside from my mom's influence, I looked up to my older sisters, so it's no wonder I followed them to Loras and Hoffman Hall. Clare once spent her college spring break helping me with a high school English assignment about a Christopher Marlowe poem. I also remember visiting Meg at Loras and sitting in on Dr. VanLaningham's Romanticism class. I was so impressed with the collaborative and critical discussion that took place in the classroom and left that experience with such respect for Loras literary studies.

***Each of you studied English at Loras, but have gone in very different career directions. What personal interests, influences, and experiences led you in the direction you pursued?***

My Loras English professors fostered in me a love and respect for the

subject through their passionate and charismatic teaching. I still remember running to my friend Katie's apartment after one of Dr. Auge's World Literature classes with my notes in hand, attempting to repeat the lecture to her so she could feel the high I felt. I know so many Loras students felt this way about the Loras English classes. The English faculty were passionate above all else and that passion led me to become a high school English teacher, and then eventually to Loyola to pursue a Ph.D. so I could teach like them.

***How has the undergraduate study of English at Loras benefitted you in your post-Loras career and personal life?***

My pedagogy has always been influenced by my Loras English professors. Still, to this day, when I'm lesson planning, I will think back to how my undergrad professors taught certain texts and I plan from there. There are so many classroom moments from Loras that are impressed in my memory as moments of my personal and academic growth: memorizing and reciting an excerpt of Eliot's "The Waste Land" in front of Dr. Pollock's poetry class, leading class discussions in Dr. VanLaningham's Victorian novel course, sharing my research of early twentieth century African American newspapers and periodicals in Dr. Stone's class—all of these experiences prepared me for my current position as an English graduate student, researcher, and professor at Loyola.

***Is there a certain experience from your study of English at Loras that particularly stands out for you?***

The English capstone class and oral defense was such a memorable and rewarding experience, as was the Loras Legacy Symposium, where I shared my senior literature capstone on Mary Elizabeth Braddon's *Lady Audley's Secret* a second time to a broader academic audience. The experience of preparing an article-length paper—particularly the process of doing research for the paper—helped me determine that graduate school, where I could continue research of that sort, was right for me. The oral defense unlocked a new anxiety in me, but it introduced me to the types of academic environments and situations I find myself in today at conferences and in the classroom. The Symposium was the first conference I'd ever attended, and I was so excited to take part in 2016 after watching Meg present her literature capstone on Wilkie Collins' *The Moonstone* at the first Loras Legacy Symposium in 2014.

***We talk a lot about "vocation" at Loras these days, of bringing one's individual talents and passions to meet the world's needs, whether big or small. How do you do that in your life?***

This is something I am currently grappling with as I begin my research in

race, sex, gender, beauty, and aesthetics in nineteenth-century literature and culture for my dissertation. While I think my research interests are relevant today, the answer to your question about vocation is probably the clearest to me when I'm in the classroom teaching. When I teach, I do my best to use literature to widen students' worldviews and, in our discussions, I encourage them to share their unique perspectives. I aim to model critical thinking for my students and always try to be kind in my interactions with them with the hope that they will go out into the world with these particular skills and traits.

***How might the study of English–Literature and/or Writing–still benefit today's students in an increasingly digital world and in a world that increasingly views college only as pre-professional training?***

Something that my Loras education helped me understand and appreciate is that literature study is an engaging way in which students of all disciplines can explore and interrogate current societal issues as well as a means through which students can understand perspectives and experiences that are different from or similar to their own. Anyone who wants to be an active thinker and productive citizen can benefit from taking the time to understand other perspectives, to reflect on and clarify their own perspective, and to think critically about societal issues. The cool thing about literature is that it explores a range of topics and perspectives in a way that is often creative and engaging to its audience—whether the reader is an English major, a business major, or someone outside the academy.



**MEGAN HORST ('14)**

Megan Horst is a 2014 Loras College graduate. She received her Bachelor of Arts in English, Politics, and International Studies. After undergrad, Megan attended law school at the University of Iowa College of Law, graduating in 2017. She then commissioned in the U.S. Navy. She is currently serving on active duty in the Judge Advocate General's Corps. Megan began her military career

in Naples, Italy, and is currently stationed in Washington, D.C., working as an appellate criminal defense attorney. She and husband Jack are moving across the country to Washington State in the fall, where she will be prosecuting at the trial level for a few years.

***How did the study of literature—and specifically Loras College English—become a common thread among you?***

For me, it started in high school. Writing my first critical analysis was absolutely miserable! But by the time I finished, I'd never felt so accomplished. I liked that putting my thoughts down on paper preserved them forever, and I often revisited my work to measure my progress. In my first Loras English class with Dr. Raschke, based on my tremendous high school analysis, I thought I had nailed my first assignment. Well...not so. But I stuck with it because nothing was as rewarding as coming up with a clever thesis that developed throughout my paper. I use those same skills today,

except I'm trying to persuade judges, not Dr. Auge—who might as well have been a judge! I took a Shakespeare class with Clare, and an Irish Studies class with Emma. And often called my mom for inspiration.

***Each of you studied English at Loras, but have gone in very different career directions. What personal interests, influences, and experiences led you in the direction you pursued?***

One day during my sophomore year, I stormed out of an English class, slammed down an enormous literary anthology, and accused my Politics professor (today, my great mentor) of perpetrating a lie for which he needed to be called to task. He'd been telling me all year that Politics was the highest and most complete source of insight into the human condition, and therefore, the most important object of study. Well, not according to Wordsworth! Studying English at Loras taught me that it is, in fact, Poetry that can give us the real answers. Regardless, this dichotomy between politics and poetry ultimately led me to law.

***How has the undergraduate study of English at Loras benefitted you in your post-Loras career and personal life?***

Conveniently for me, the English and Politics Departments are both located on the 5th Floor of Hoffman. Because she knew my interests, Dr. VanLaningham invited me to write about political themes I found in literature, and enhanced my analyses by reaching out to my Politics professors to collaborate. At times, it felt like my own personal cluster course. Thanks to the Loras English Department, my default is to search for commonalities between seemingly different ideas. This helps me now as I read caselaw and attempt to convince the court my case is similar. Dr. VanLaningham hasn't let me wander too far from my love of literature. When she learned I joined the military, she immediately recommended *Soldier's Heart* by Elizabeth Samet—a book about a civilian English professor teaching at West Point.

***Is there a certain experience from your study of English at Loras that particularly stands out for you?***

Dr. Auge assigned World War I poems. At the time, I had no interest in joining the military, and truthfully, I hadn't devoted much time to learning about it. We read nationalist poems praised by Churchill, and we read gut-wrenching, grim poems capturing the cruelties of war. I recall writing a paper adamantly disagreeing with the suggestion that Churchill's praise was simply promoting his political agenda. To me, soldiers needed motivation! A leader! Purpose and hope! Well, I'm currently five years into my Active Duty service and respectfully request to revise my paper. What a great memory this is. The English Department allowed me to disagree, challenge, and defend ideas that now Lieutenant Horst would harshly critique.

***We talk a lot about “vocation” at Loras these days, of bringing one's individual talents and passions to meet the world's needs, whether big or small. How do you do that in your life?***

From day one at Loras we learn about the importance of service. I've



spent most of my legal career doing criminal defense work. I enjoy the tremendous privilege of advocating on behalf of my fellow service members who are in trouble and need someone to study and shape their cases.

***How might the study of English–Literature and/or Writing–still benefit today’s students in an increasingly digital world and in a world that increasingly views college only as pre-professional training?***

Nothing can replace sitting with a poem for hours, searching for cryptic messages and meaning. Nothing can replace pushing your desk next to your classmate’s to discuss how you should reorganize a paper to make it more persuasive. Studying English allows you to close your laptop and think for yourself without Google handing you the answer. Studying English prepares you for the day your boss hands you a project and says, “Get creative. The law is not on our side.”



**CLARE HORST CHAPMAN (‘11)**

Clare graduated Loras in 2011 with majors in English Literature and Music. She worked at McGraw Hill for a year after college before deciding to pursue a graduate degree in music. She married Loras sweetheart Drew Chapman in 2012 and they moved to Mankato, MN, where Clare obtained her Master of Music in Piano Performance. She was lucky to return to Loras

in 2015, this time to teach piano lessons as adjunct faculty in the music department. She also taught at Divine Word Seminary in Epworth. Clare and Drew moved back to Minnesota in 2017 when Drew accepted a new job in Saint Paul. They settled in Stillwater, MN, and Clare stays busy running her private piano studio and accompanying at churches and schools in the Twin Cities. Clare and Drew have 5 kids, Nora, Julia, Graham, and twins - Lawrence and Nell.

***How did the study of literature–and specifically Loras College English–become a common thread among you?***

My family is super creative, and we all grew up heavily involved in theater, music, and dance. My dad directed our church choir, and my mom established and directed children’s theater in our community. My family was always performing, and my parents did a great job nurturing our individual talents. I was the piano player, and I was always interested in composing music. I would write a song on the piano and my parents would push me to take it to the next level; my dad set me up with music notation software and my mom entered me in local talent shows. My mom would often write lyrics and ask me to add music. I learned from a young age to create and collaborate, and as I got older, I realized the value of writing in all capacities. I knew I wanted to hone my writing skills and I knew studying English was a valuable and practical decision. When I went to college it was natural for me to choose to study English and Music.

***Each of you studied English at Loras, but have gone in very different***

***career directions. What personal interests, influences, and experiences led you in the direction you pursued?***

When I was at Loras, I planned to pursue a career using my English degree; maybe something in writing or editing. I loved music, but I always thought of it as more of a talent or hobby. I had great experiences in my English classes and felt confident as a writer. However, I was always passionate about music, and I have Dr. Glenn Pohland to thank for encouraging me to consider grad school for piano. He sent me a post for a graduate assistantship in Minnesota State’s music department and told me I should consider it. He saw potential in me and gave me the push I needed to continue pursuing music. When I went to grad school, I found myself in a cohort with students who had been strictly music focused in undergrad. I was pursuing a performance degree, but because of my well-rounded liberal arts background, I felt confident in my piano pedagogy and music literature classes.

***How has the undergraduate study of English at Loras benefitted you in your post-Loras career and personal life?***

Writing and thinking critically are foundational skills that I have continued to use in all aspects of my life. As I market my piano business, I use my writing skills to create my website and communicate with families. I undoubtedly spend too much time making sure my communications with families come across just the way I mean them, but it is so important to me to maintain a friendly and professional relationship. When engaging students, I often need to find multiple ways of explaining things. I find my ability to communicate to be almost as important in my teaching as my knowledge of music.

***Is there a certain experience from your study of English at Loras that particularly stands out for you?***

I remember once that I was learning about Romanticism in one of my English Lit classes, and I had just studied the same time period in Music History that week. It was so cool and eye-opening to be learning the same topic in the context of each of my disciplines. That overlap in my studies deepened my understanding of the movement as a whole.

***We talk a lot about “vocation” at Loras these days, of bringing one’s individual talents and passions to meet the world’s needs, whether big or small. How do you do that in your life?***

I have spent a lot of time considering my vocation over the years as I balance motherhood with my career. I had my first daughter right out of grad school, and instantly began doubting why I had worked so hard on a degree I now worried I wouldn’t use. But oh, how my studies have paid off. Right now, I’m in the thick of raising young kids, but as we have grown our family over the years, I’ve been so thankful for the flexibility working in the arts provides. I’ve been able to teach, accompany, collaborate and perform depending on my capacity for work. Once my kids started school, I got involved by offering to play piano for their school musicals and concerts. I am able to use my education to help our community and teach my children.



This feels like the very best use of my passion.

***How might the study of English–Literature and/or Writing–still benefit today’s students in an increasingly digital world and in a world that increasingly views college only as pre-professional training?***

I was involved in some of the most beautiful discussions in my English Literature classes. So often, I would come to class thinking I had the text all figured out, only to hear vastly different interpretations from my peers. Having educated conversations, digging deep and listening to other opinions is so important. Literature immerses us in other worlds and helps us develop understanding and empathy.

In such a fast-paced world, it is important now more than ever to slow down and reflect. We are inundated with way more information than ever before, and we need to be able to think critically and sort through the noise.



**MARY (MARCY) JESSEN  
HORST ('86)**

Mary Marcel Jessen Horst is a 1986 Loras College graduate. She received her Bachelor of Arts in English Writing and History. After graduation she married fellow Duhawk Gerald Horst and began work at Perfection Form company in Des Moines, editing social studies text books. She took a long hiatus beginning in 1987 to raise Duhawks Erin

(2009) Clare (2011), Megan (2014), Emma (2016), and Lily (2020), as well as Patrick (UNI 2013) and Grace (St. Ambrose University 2022). Marcy reentered the professional world in 2003 as director of Vinton Unlimited, Vinton’s Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Group. At that time she also began coaching speech and drama and Vinton-Shellsburg High School, which led to her favorite job - directing the Little Vikes Summer Drama Camp. In 2006 she became the managing director of the Palace Theatre in Vinton, where she currently works. Marcy is fortunate to have received her liberal arts education at Loras College, and looks forward to a new generation of Horst Duhawks.

***How did the study of literature–and specifically Loras College English–become a common thread among you?***

I followed two childhood babysitters to Loras, fully intending to major in Spanish and become a translator. I was placed in Critical Writing my first semester with Don Knefel, and that was it for me. I have a vivid memory of grappling with panic and doubt in that Hoffman classroom, and later, at my desk in Binz - What am I doing here? I am not a writer, I’m a reader. I have no idea where to begin. But as Mr. Knefel instructed, I just, started. With a pen and notebook - it was 1982. And then scratched and scribbled, and wrote, and rewrote, and rewrote.

Before the end of that first term, I’d changed my major from Spanish to

English Writing (and thanks to David Salvaterra, History). Those writing classes, the professor and peer reviews, have shaped my life. While I left the world of editing sooner than anticipated to become a stay-at-home mom, it has been a parenting priority for me that all my kids become readers and writers. I believe, no matter one’s vocation, it is imperative you cultivate the ability to communicate.

***Each of you studied English at Loras, but have gone in very different career directions. What personal interests, influences, and experiences led you in the direction you pursued?***

I was fortunate to participate in three extracurriculars - music, speech, and theatre - at Loras. I met my husband, Gerald, freshman year in the Loras Concert Choir, where we discovered we both lived in Binz and were in the chorus of The Pirates of Penzance. We’ve raised our children with music and theatre.

In the late 1990s, I stepped out of my SAH mom role to organize an annual summer drama camp for kids. I utilized my English Writing degree often to create skits and other tools for those sessions. This endeavor led to a position at Vinton-Shellsburg High School, where I relied on my Loras literature background to coach speech and drama for 17 years.

***How has the undergraduate study of English at Loras benefitted you in your post-Loras career and personal life?***

As my experience in theatre expanded, my family and I also became more involved in ACT I of Benton County, our area community theatre. I used my writing background to create press releases and advertising materials for shows. Eventually I became the managing director of the Palace Theatre in Vinton, where I’ve worked since 2006. Through that position, I’ve written and secured multiple grants, written weekly columns for our Web site and local newspapers, and have used my communication skills daily to connect with our volunteers and the community. As a non-profit organization, the Palace relies on patron support, and it is my job to convey that need.

***Is there a certain experience from your study of English at Loras that particularly stands out for you?***

As mentioned earlier, I found the professor and peer review sessions to be most beneficial. I have utilized that technique with speech and drama students I’ve worked with over the years, and my own children as I edited and encouraged their developing writing skills. The ability to work together to create the best product, to give and accept constructive criticism, and to communicate effectively are life-long skills with considerable applications. My three STEM kids value and use those skills as much as their sisters working directly in the arts.

***We talk a lot about “vocation” at Loras these days, of bringing one’s individual talents and passions to meet the world’s needs, whether big or small. How do you do that in your life?***

I have been privileged to work with children of all ages and socio-economic

backgrounds throughout my life, and I am passionate about the mental and physical well-being of today's youth. Literature and the arts uplift. Some of my fondest memories outside of my own home are those of young actors on stage, laughing, crying, growing, and performing with abandon. Kids deserve security and joy.

***How might the study of English–Literature and/or Writing–still benefit today's students in an increasingly digital world and in a world that increasingly views college only as pre-professional training?***

We live in a world that teaches us to chase money. My husband and I have always encouraged our kids to use their gifts to do what they love, for the glory of God. We must always reevaluate and adapt for the future, but riches should never be the goal. Literature and the arts are the very soul of education. Colleges and universities, especially those liberal arts institutions, have a responsibility to fully educate and enrich students. Instead of making their existence smaller by cutting the arts, I believe we have a duty to enlighten and broaden the lives of every student.





# ENGLISH FACULTY NOTES



## NAOMI CLARK, PH.D., ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH

Last fall my Writing for New Media students produced podcasts spotlighting Loras English alums, researched career opportunities for digital writers, and learned how to conduct usability testing on websites. This spring I taught two sections of College Writing which prompted us to pilot a collaboration with the Writing Center by embedding tutors in these two sections. Students met with tutors in small groups outside of class to work on writing assignments, adding a collaborative and social element to their writing process. Other English faculty have expressed interest in embedding tutors in their courses next year which would extend this support to even more students.



## WILLIAM JABLONSKY, MFA, ASSOC. PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH

Professor William Jablonsky is busy marketing his new novel, *The Air Swimmers*, a work of literary-speculative fiction that's taken up far too much of his life, and furiously typing out a first draft of a new manuscript, a Midwesternized fractured fairy tale version of *Beauty and the Beast*, which he hopes to finish before *Hollow Knight*: Silksong is released because this will eat up a great deal of his time.

Knight: Silksong is released because this will eat up a great deal of his time.



## WILLIAM KANYUSIK, PH.D., ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH

The 2022-2023 academic year was a busy and fruitful one for Dr. Kanyusik. In the fall, he taught a new course, ENG 468: *Literary Criticism: Thinkers, Critics, and Public Intellectuals*, in which students applied various schools of literary theory to the study of literature, focused in particular on the relationship between literary criticism and the role of the public intellectual in contemporary public life. Spring semester also brought with it the opportunity for Dr. Kanyusik to teach another new course, ENG 327: *Postcolonial Irish Literature*, a campus-based course Kanyusik adapted from an Irish literature course he taught in spring of 2020 while directing the Ireland Study Abroad semester. A highlight of the 2022-2023 academic year for Dr. Kanyusik was learning that he had been awarded a sabbatical leave for spring of 2024 to work on two new scholarly articles focused on modernist literature and the Harlem

Renaissance, respectively. This coming summer, Dr. Kanyusik will be completing final edits to his current book project: *The Illegible Man: Postwar Narratives of Disability and Masculinity in Midcentury America*.



## KEVIN KOCH, PH.D., PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH

Dr. Kevin Koch, Professor of English, completed and submitted his manuscript for his forthcoming book, *Midwest Bedrock: The Search for the Soul of Nature in America's Heartland*. The book will feature one region from each of the 12 Midwest states that is particularly rich in natural beauty and human story. It is scheduled to be released by Indiana University Press in March 2024. Inside—or maybe outside—the classroom, Dr. Koch continued to march his students around the countryside: his Mississippi River students explored Lock & Dam #11, the Mines of Spain, and Effigy Mounds National Monument; Writing the Midwest Landscape students did winter hikes at Swiss Valley, Mines of Spain, and Lost Canyon; and his Monastery Voices students toured New Melleray Abbey near Dubuque.



## JAMES POLLOCK, PH.D., PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH AND CREATIVE WRITING

James Pollock, Ph.D., Professor of English and Creative Writing, published *Durable Goods* (Véhicule Press/Signal Editions), a critically-acclaimed book of poems, in September, 2022. The book won the Edna Meudt Poetry Book Award from the Arts + Literature Laboratory, and made *The Miramichi Reader's* list of the best poetry books of 2022. To promote the book, he did live readings in Montreal, Toronto, Madison, and at Loras, along with several radio, podcast, and online readings and interviews. In the Spring of 2023, Dr. Pollock taught a new course in ancient Latin literature in English translation—including works by Catullus, Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Sulpicia, and Apuleius—and a new creative writing course called *Poetry Workshop: The Magic of Myth and Metaphor*. Next year, he will offer a new first year seminar called *Happiness and Authenticity*, and another new creative writing course called *Poetry Workshop: Love & Other Dangerous Emotions*.

# ENGLISH FACULTY NOTES



## SUSAN STONE, PH.D., PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH

Dr. Susan Stone entered into her 21st year at Loras by teaching major courses in American literature and writing and working with her 21 amazing English major advisees!! Along with her programmatic teaching and mentoring, she continued to contribute actively to the Gender Studies and Racial Justice minors, as well as the newly revised Ethics minor. In addition to this and to her weekly meetings with students in the Loras Literary Society and Sigma Tau Delta (the International English Honor Society), Dr. Stone had two essays published as book chapters in 2023. "Her Own Creed of Bloom": The Transcendental Ecofeminism of Mary E. Wilkins Freeman" appeared in *New Perspectives on Mary E. Wilkins Freeman: Reading with and against the Grain from the University of Edinburgh Press*, and "The Tenderness of One Woman for Another": Female Friendship and Revolt in the 20th-century Works of Mary E. Wilkins Freeman" was published in *Navigating Women's Friendships in American Literature and Culture from Palgrave MacMillan Press*. In addition, Dr. Stone worked with the Faith and Values group to raise awareness about Indigenous people and tribes around the region, and she was also honored to be chosen both as a Guest Editor and contributor for the "Western and Native American Literature" issue of *TALTP (Teaching American Literature: A Journal of Theory and Practice)*. As in years past, Dr. Stone served as a Reader/Reviewer for both TALTP and the Tulsa Women's Studies Journal and continued learning as a member of the Technology Committee. This summer, she is excited to be presenting an essay as an invited speaker at the American Literature Association meeting in Boston and she will also Chair a panel at this international conference.



## ERIN VANLANINGHAM, PH.D., PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH

It's been a really rewarding year, culminating in my submitting the manuscript for *Called Beyond Our Selves: Vocation and the Common Good* (forthcoming from Oxford University Press). In my role as the director of the NetVUE Scholarly Resources Project, I have been working on the volume with scholars from around the country on that initiative. I continue to co-host the NetVUE podcast *Callings: Conversations on College, Career, and a Life well-lived*, and we had a few amazing guests this season, including Rainn Wilson (actor and comedian best known for his role on *The Office*) as well as Rowan Wilson, the former Archbishop of Canterbury. My oldest son is beginning his junior year of college, and my

youngest is embarking on his senior year of high school. We all enjoyed a big day in New York City this summer biking around Central Park, walking the Highline, and seeing a Broadway show. We also spent time at our family cabin at the lake. Every chance we get we play the boardgame Wingspan—if you haven't played it, do it. Reading recommendations: *The Latecomer* (Jean Hanff Korelitz), *Hannah Coulter* (Wendell Berry), and *Demon Copperhead* (Barbara Kingsolver).





# ALUMNI NOTES

## LOUIS BASSLER ('71)

Last year one of my 3 daughters gave me a Christmas present from Storyworth. Every week for 52 weeks I got an email on Monday. The plan was to write a story or answer to each weekly question. I sent the weekly essays back to the website. After the 52 weeks, the website printed a book of my 52 essays. Last week the hardback book arrived. It's great. I suggest this for anyone who wants to capture history or stories from the previous generation.



## VALORIE (BROADHURST BREYFOGLE) WOERDEHOFF ('82)

Valorie (Broadhurst Breyfogle) Woerdehoff ('82), currently fully retired, had micro poems of hers published in 2021 issues of Autumn Moon (awarded Best of Issue), Prune Juice, Modern Haiku, Daily Haiku, Haiku Society of America Member Anthology, Mayfly, Hummingbird, Heron's Nest, Frogpond, Cattail, Acorn, tinywords, Haiku Canada Member Anthology, and Failed Haiku. One of her pieces was posted on the streets of downtown Washington, D.C., as part of the Golden Triangle Haiku Contest. A haibun received an Honorable Mention in the San Francisco International Haibun Contest, and long poems of hers appeared in publications of the Center for the Arts, Galena, Ill. She continues to serve as a member of the board of the Loras Women's Leadership Alliance (LWLA) and the LWLA Scholarship Committee.

## JOE SULLIVAN ('89)

Joe Sullivan ('89) is a professor at Marietta College in Ohio and also serves as an associate dean, leading their accreditation and academic assessment efforts. Last fall he published the article "Kaleidoscopic Witches: Streaming the Folger Theatre's Macbeth" in the journal Borrowers and Lenders. He has two book chapters forthcoming. One of them is on audience reactions to the "Kill Claudio" scene from Much Ado About Nothing. The second is on a graphic novel adaptation of Macbeth heavily influenced by Isaac Asimov's Three Laws of Robotics. Joe misses reading William Wordsworth and Alice Walker in the Loras Library, where he was one of the student workers who put barcodes in every book after the school bought a computer. He also misses dancing to Cameo and Depeche Mode at the Brass Ring. Most of all, he misses taking classes from Dr. Bauerly, Dr. Auge, and Dr. Wilson.



## PETE MORRIS ('93)

After a (mostly) wonderful 30-year career of working in football and sports, I finally graduated to a more normal and sane lifestyle. In July 2022 I started my new role as Director of University Relations at the University of Northern Iowa. Essentially that means I'm leading the public relations and marketing team at UNI. Fortunately, my experience at Loras already established the fact that purple and gold work well for me. However, I did have to promise President Collins that I won't try to poach any potential students from Loras. I'm currently trying to pry them away from going to Iowa, Iowa State, Wartburg, Luther and other schools around the state!

While it's been a busy transition, ultimately one of the biggest parts of the job is storytelling, which is right up my alley. It's been fun meeting folks from across the state and getting back to my Midwest roots. Working at UNI has also enabled me to spend more time at the family farm in Mt. Hope, Wisconsin to scratch my agricultural itch. And hopefully it will allow me to make more frequent visits back to Loras!



## RACHEL KRUBSACK ('93)

I was promoted to editor on the Environmental, Safety, and Health (EHS) editorial team at J. J. Keller & Associates in August 2022. I write on a variety of safety-related topics - including hazard communication, hearing conservation, and OSHA safety training - for our online services. I also write and present webcasts and short safety videos. Outside of work, I do a lot of hiking and nature photography around Wisconsin.



## PAULA NEUHAUS ('95)

Paula Neuhaus ('95) joined the executive leadership team of the National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium (Dubuque, IA) in 2022 as Director of Grants. In this role, she leads the strategic direction of this Smithsonian affiliate's grants program by cultivating expansive relationships with local, state, federal, and foundation program officers. Ms. Neuhaus was recently appointed to a second term on the City of Dubuque's Arts & Cultural Affairs Advisory Commission and continues to explore creativity as a poet and collage artist.

# ALUMNI NOTES

## KATHLEEN (KENNEALLY) MCLENAGHAN ('95)

Now Chief of Staff to Italian born designer, Alessandra Branca. Based in Chicago and Palm Beach, FL.



## LISA HIGGS ('97)

Lisa Higgs was thrilled to curate a special "Heart of Our City" art and poetry exhibition at the Historic Chateau Theater in Rochester, Minnesota as part of her 2022 Minnesota State Arts Board grant this past September. The exhibition ran through the end of the year and also included an outdoor poetry walk through Rochester's downtown area. She continues to write and publish poetry and to review poetry collections for The Colorado Review. In her spare time, Lisa can be found on the sidelines of a soccer field as assistant coach for one daughter's soccer team or outside the rails of a horse show ring as horse mom & groom for her other daughter.



## TOM McNAMARA ('07)

Tom McNamara ('07) is Assistant Professor of English and Writing Center director at Lewis University in Chicago's southwest suburbs. At Loras, Tom majored in English Literature and minored in Catholic Studies and Music Performance. After Loras, he did an MA in literature at Loyola University Chicago, taught writing courses at DePaul University, and completed a PhD at the University of Illinois Center for Writing Studies. He has published articles in Literacy in Composition Studies and Journal of Basic Writing on his ethnographic study of Chinese international student writers, and he has an article forthcoming in Journal of Writing Assessment about equitable design for first-year writing placement. After his first faculty job at California State University Fresno, Tom is happy to be back in Chicago, where he lives with his wife, two sons, and two rescue dogs.



## LIZ (ELSBERND) KRUSE ('08)

Liz Kruse ('08) started working as an IT project manager at Grinnell College in October 2022. In March 2020, she released a children's book called What's a Duhawk: A Loras College Alphabet. Liz currently resides in Dubuque, Iowa, with her husband and three little boys and loves to take them to cheer on the Duhawks at sporting events and music/theatrical performances.



## ANDREW RYAN ('99)

Andrew Ryan ('99), an investigative reporter for The Boston Globe, has been named a 2024 fellow at the Nieman Foundation for Journalism at Harvard University. Nieman Fellowships brings journalists from around the world to Harvard for a year. Ryan will study how reinvigorated accountability reporting at the local level could be used to establish fresh footholds in news deserts. This will include examining whether artificial intelligence might help augment local investigative reporting.



## MELANIE DEVANEY ('00)

After years of performing as a full-time independent singer-songwriter, I went back to school from 2021-2022 and earned an Associates Degree in Paralegal Studies from Greenville Technical College in Greenville, South Carolina. I am currently employed at Tonnsen Bach, LLC where I work as a litigation paralegal.



## MICHAELA (GRAY) ENSWEILER ('11)

Currently, I am in my second year of a PhD at UCLA in the department of Social Sciences and Comparative Education. I joined after receiving my M.S.Ed from Johns Hopkins University, teaching with DISD in Dallas, Texas, living abroad in China for about 3 years, and working at the IBM in downtown Dubuque. My research includes challenging dominant forms of education and food production while supporting food sovereignty, holistic educational systems and ecopedagogies. I am a Program Officer for the Paulo Freire Institute at UCLA, an Assistant Editor for the Global Commons Review Journal that can be found at: <https://www.globalcommonsreview.org/>, a Graduate Student Researcher, a TA, and the Lead Division Representative for our department. A colleague and I just finished our first presentation at AERA this year that covered deconstructing neoliberal paradigms using ecopedagogies and critical media literacy. I live between LA, Chicago, and Dallas currently but am in the process of settling in Chicago with my husband.



# ALUMNI NOTES



## SHANSHAN (ZHU) THOMPSON ('12)

After 11 years as a stay at home mom while at the same time I was finishing various classes, getting professional certificates and gaining experience through part time jobs and volunteering, I just landed a job this month as an administrative operations coordinator with the Schools of Architecture and Design, College of Architecture, Arts and Design, Virginia Tech.



## LAURA IUNGHUHN ('20)

Laura Iunghuhn ('20) graduated in the midst of COVID hiring freezes, jumpstarting a nontraditional post-college career path. She spent two years as a part-time donut chef, transitioning into married life and developing a career as a freelance writer. Working remotely on a self-determined schedule has allowed Laura and her husband to spend a year as digital nomads, exploring Europe and parts of Turkey. Though post-nomad plans are uncertain, Laura aims to increase her freelance clientele and is in the process of editing a full-length creative nonfiction manuscript.



## MONICA SHAFFER ('14)

Monica Shaffer ('14) graduated from Mitchell Hamline School of Law in May 2023 with highest honors. While she awaits her results from the bar exam, she is clerking for the Honorable Judge Sarah I. Wheelock on the MN Court of Appeals. In the past year, Monica was honored to be published by the Legal Action Center as an author on two issue briefs for harm reduction programs, one relating to syringe service programs and another about overdose prevention centers. She also wrote an article that was published in the Vol. 49 of the Mitchell Hamline Law Review, entitled "Constitutionality of Reparations for Native Americans: Confronting the Boarding Schools," which also won the Equal Justice Award, Honorable mention, in June 2022 from MN Women Lawyers.



## AVERY WICKERSHAM ('21)

I graduated from Loras College in December of 2021, and my life has been nothing short of eventful since. I landed a job with Teacher Created Materials, an educational publisher based in Huntington Beach, California, in April 2022. I actually just celebrated my one year anniversary with the company! I am an Assistant Editor, and my job includes copyediting, proofreading, and lots of collaboration to produce products that live up to our motto: created by teachers for teachers and students! Not too long after starting my job, my fiancé and I found out we were expecting! Our son, Ezra, was born on February 14th, 2023, at 7 pounds, 12 ounces and 20 inches. He's such an alert, amazing boy, and we love him dearly! In my spare time, I continue to write (as a graduate in Creative Writing) and have a few behind-the-scenes projects that I intend on pursuing.



## ASHLEY (PUDIL) OSBORN ('18)

After graduating from Loras five years ago (dang, time flies!), I found a perfect-fit job at the Marion Public Library that combines my love for marketing, reading, and building relationships with people and organizations. I spend my days showcasing library programs and services that go beyond checking out books, which include cooking demonstrations, recording studio sessions, 3D printing classes, and everything in between. Outside my role at MPL, I volunteer with several nonprofits, travel whenever possible, and spend quality time with my husband, Eric ('14), and dog, Ollie.

My house in Marion is a short, one-hour drive away from Loras' campus; I cross the intersection that takes me to Dubuque every day on my way to work. I think often of the lessons and memories that encouraged me to chase my dreams and push beyond what I thought was possible for myself. Thank you for all you do to foster the passions of the students you work with - your impact creates a ripple effect across many lives, including mine.