Friday, Oct. 14

12:30 - 1:30 p.m.  Registration
Lower Level

1:30 - 1:50 p.m.  Opening Plenary
Conference Room D
Welcome
Linda Guyette Hamell
and Michael Mancini
Opening Remarks
Gary Lacy, Dean, Hudson Valley Center

2 -2:50 p.m.  Concurrent Session I

Pelham  Yikes, Strikes: A Manager's Tale of Three Labor Disputes
Matthew Coffey
School for Graduate Studies
This slide presentation draws on the presenter's experiences in three different strikes in the telecommunications industry, including one in Europe. This presentation covers the causes, issues and settlements reached with lessons learned.

Yorktown  A Matter of Perspective: Engaging Young Readers in Historical Fiction Through Literary Narrative
Elizabeth Selig
Metropolitan Center
Historical fiction, geared towards young readers, is fun, highly entertaining and ultimately no different from reading a book intended for adult audiences. The reaction of the reader will vary from person to person, however, the perspective from which the book is written dictates the reaction of the audience. The use of first person narrative presents the audience with an inside view of the character and their experiences. The use of third person narrative – omniscient or limited omniscient – provides the reader with detailed information about the setting, character and the scenes in which the novel takes place. Authors examined for this presentation include: Karen Cushman, Laurence Yep, Avi, Elizabeth George Speare and Esther Forbes.

Briarcliff I  Women and Goddess Culture in the Neolithic British Isles
Janice Van Buskirk
Hudson Valley Center
This presentation will be about research on Neolithic women and Goddess culture in the British Isles. Neolithic women’s role as sustainers of their society through their formidable contributions – especially as agriculturists and food providers – will be examined in relation to a possible Goddess cosmology. Many aspects of Neolithic life also will be examined, including food and its preparation, with some recipes. This turning point in prehistory (4400 to 2500 BCE) will be examined, touching upon recent archaeological findings which dispute the origin of the Neolithic Revolution, demonstrating that ancient history is malleable, not ossified.

Briarcliff II  Public Speaking Without Tears
Bill Robins
Outreach and Recruitment Specialist
Hudson Valley Center
Public speaking – standing up in front of a group of people – to make your case has been a fundamental means of communication throughout history. If it hasn’t already, the need to be an effective public speaker almost certainly will touch you sometime in your life. When it does, you want to be ready. This seminar will discuss how to overcome your fears, avoid some of the common public speaking mistakes, and make the most of your time at the podium.

Sprainbrook  The Classification of Homo Floresiensis and Its Implications for Human Evolution
Justin Bourgeois
Center for Distance Learning
This presentation will summarize the debate that has surrounded the classification of “Homo Floresiensis,” hominin found to have gone extinct approximately 12,000 years ago, which was discovered in 2004 on the island of Flores, Indonesia. The primary focus will be on the various hypotheses set forth by experts in several fields, to decide if the species should be classified as part of genus Homo, thus making it the most recently extinct member of the genus. This will be presented as an example of the complicated and lengthy process of developing any scientific consensus.
3 - 3:50 p.m.  Concurrent Session II

Briarcliff I  Mindfulness Practice and Transforming Negative Emotions
Mary Farel
Hudson Valley Center
The presentation will look at the different components to mindfulness and discuss how each plays a role in the process of transforming a negative emotion. It will explore the origins of negative emotions and how they can shift when using mindfulness practice. The difference between a formal mindfulness meditation practice and the everyday practice of being mindful will be discussed.

Yorktown  Academic Integrity and Avoiding Plagiarism
Mildred VanBergen and Samantha James
Long Island Center
This session will help students understand the parameters of academic integrity.

Sprainbrook  African Nights and Witch Doctor Dreams
Katrina Colvin-Stilts
Genesee Valley Center
This presentation will be about the presenter’s internship at a safari camp outside Windhoek, Namibia. Observation of a traditional Himba village will be discussed, as well as other related research and experiences.

Pelham  Exposed, Invisible or Empowered?
Female Athletes in the Media
Ivy Stevens-Gupta
Central New York Center
Do the media play a role in the construction of gender in sports and in hegemonic representations of athletes? This presentation explores the ways in which the sexist portrayal of, and discrimination against female athletes occurs in contemporary sports media. Examples from print, television, Internet and nontraditional communication forms will help to illuminate the more insidious trickling-down effect of this understudied phenomenon on the cultural politics of everyday social relations.

Briarcliff II  Faculty Panel Presentation
Celest Woo (Hudson Valley Center)
Jeff Lambe (Long Island Center)
Amanda Sisselman and Kevin Woo (Metropolitan Center)
Richard Wells (The Harry Van Arsdale Jr. Center for Labor Studies)
Deb Amory, Vice Provost, Moderator
This panel discussion features SUNY Empire State College mentors talking about their scholarly work and research interests. The presenters are engaged in a wide range of research interests, including literature, human services, Native American studies, animal behavior and media studies. Speakers include Richard Wells on “TV’s Deadliest Catch: Man vs. the Sea or Labor vs. Capital;” Amanda Sisselman on “Doing Research in the Community;” Kevin Woo on “The New York City Laboratory: Seals and Bees in an Urban Environment;” Celeste Woo on “Shakespeare and Sci Fi” and Jeff Lambe on “Their Arms are Linked Together: Understanding Relationships from an Ongwehonwe Perspective.”

3:50 - 4:30 p.m.  Affinity Group Break
Pelham  Business
Briarcliff I  Cultural Studies
Briarcliff II  The Arts
Yorktown  Social Theory
Sprainbrook  Human Development

Take a break and enjoy some refreshments with other students, faculty and staff within your academic area of study or interest.

4:30 - 5:20 p.m.  Concurrent Session III

Yorktown  The Boxing Ring as Sacred Territory
Malissa Smith
School for Graduate Studies
The realm of the boxing ring and the boxer as an iconic figure can stand in for a myriad of constructs of the sacred and the profane. The boxing ring itself – with its felted canvas, glistening ropes and exclusivity – further exemplifies the boxing experience as framed within bounded space. Such a territory is an example of a sacred place, existing as a pocket book of experience bounded by a pastiche of longings, desires and enactments of long-standing rituals and
dynamically moving perspectives. For this presentation, the presenter will focus on the boxing ring as exemplifying that case.

**Briarcliff I**

**Social Life in the Great Sahara through an Ottoman Officer's Eyes**  
*Humeyra Bostan*  
*Center for Distance Learning*

This presentation aims to discuss an Ottoman officer's observations of the social life in the Great Sahara during the 19th century by examining his travel book, “A Travel in the Great Sahara of Africa.” The officer, as a modernized townsman, finds life in the Sahara very difficult and strange from his own life in Istanbul. However, although Saharan people at first sight seem to be “uncivilized” in physical appearance, he comes to the conclusion that the marks of being civilized and highly developed are not material possessions, living environment and formal education, but their sense of humanity and their unique characteristics.

**Pelham**

**Making a Difference One Break at a Time**  
*Laurie Mold*  
*Genesee Valley Center*

The presentation will discuss the opportunity for students, faculty and staff to participate in an Alternative Break Program that the presenter started to help out areas in New Orleans and the Southern Louisiana bayous, working with an agency for rebuilding post-Katrina and wetlands restoration and recovery. Also, opportunities to help the people that have become sick post-BP oil spill will be discussed. Many of these types of activities function as a great service learning, clinical and internship, possibly with leadership potential.

**Briarcliff II**

**Kate Chopin and Aimee Bender: The Story of a Century**  
*Kimmaries Lynch*  
*Metropolitan Center*

Kate Chopin’s “The Story of an Hour” was written in 1894, and Aimee Bender’s “The Rememberer” in 1998. The stories are alike in that they both explore the extinction of the male in a relationship and what the ensuing freedom might taste like to the two women who are left to carry on. The passing of a century allows for extensive historical differences between the quality of life for each of the women, yet the struggle for equality within a relationship can be as much of a quandary now as it was in 1894. This presentation explores what independence and dependence mean for two very different women in two very different centuries.

**Sprainbrook**

**Alumni Student Panel**  
*Shelita Birchett-Benash and Heidi Feichtinger (Hudson Valley Center)*  
*Moderated by Maureen Winney, Director of Alumni and Student Relations*

This session is a conversation with Empire State College alumni, with thoughts on academics, degree planning and career advice.

5:30 - 7 p.m.  
**Art Show and Alumni Reception**  
**for All Students and Alumni**  
*Melissa Shetler performing*

*Come eat and drink and join us for this wonderful reception, with music by alumna and jazz vocalist Melissa Shetler.*

7 - 9 p.m.  
**Open Mic**  
*Deb Falco*  
*Long Island Center*  
*Master of Ceremonies*

All students and alumni are invited to stay for this open mic. Come enjoy the myriad talents of conference participants and mingle with fellow conference participants.
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>7:30 - 8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Continental Breakfast</td>
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<td>8 - 9 a.m.</td>
<td>Registration</td>
<td>Lower Level</td>
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<td>9 - 9:50 a.m.</td>
<td>Concurrent Session I: Body Language, Culture and Meaning Making</td>
<td>Pelham</td>
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<td>Colleen Culley, School for Graduate Studies</td>
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<td>With body language accounting for roughly 80 percent of all communication, nonverbal cues act as a subtle and powerful form of sending and receiving messages. What we say with our bodies and how we interpret others is much more than just action. Body-language involves personal, familial and cultural codes that are meaningful to both mover and observer. This presentation will introduce the basic findings of the presenter’s research on dynamic and diverse aspects of body-based communication, including looking at the messages we send through our own bodies, the process of understanding and interpreting others’ movements and the impact cultural values have on nonverbal communication.</td>
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<td>9:55 - 10:55 a.m.</td>
<td>Plenary: The Face of the Open University</td>
<td>Ballroom A/B</td>
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<td>President Alan Davis with student panel: William Ruvolo, Diane Cosh and Michael Kaufman (Hudson Valley Center) Meagan Nestleroad and Barbara Fischkin (School for Graduate Studies) Anita Brown (Center for Distance Learning) Altina Besimi (Center for International Programs)</td>
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<td>This plenary session will give students the opportunity to hear from other students engaged with the college from across the state in both undergraduate and graduate programs. Also, President Alan Davis will give remarks about the college and where it is going.</td>
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<td>11 - 11:50 a.m.</td>
<td>Concurrent Session II: Proving the Case for Baccalaureate – Prepared Nurses at the Bedside</td>
<td>Pelham</td>
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<td>Mary Beth Tierney-Simmons, Center for Distance Learning – Nursing Program</td>
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<td>It is the expectation that the direct care registered professional nurse provide exemplary professional practice and optimal patient outcomes no matter the level of educational preparation – diploma, associate or baccalaureate degree. This presentation will provide a review of the current research as evidence that there is decreased morbidity and mortality when care is provided by a baccalaureate – prepared nurse.</td>
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Additionally, an explanation of the Institute of Medicine’s Future of Nursing Report will be provided, describing the steps that need to be taken to prepare the nursing profession for the expected changes and challenges for the future of health care.

**Student Panel Presentation**

**Sprainbrook**  
**Reading & Writing: Three Stories**  
*Mark Staub, Eli Case and Lydia Landesberg*  
*Hudson Valley Center*

This presentation will be given by the students of Advanced Fiction Writing with Linda Hamell (Hudson Valley Center). The students will each read an original short story and then answer questions and discuss comments from the audience. This presentation will simulate the actual classroom setting in which the students’ pieces were read and then discussed by the class.

**Larchmont I**  
**The Effect of Media on the Gender of Our Elected Public Officials**  
*Mercedes Turner*  
*School for Graduate Studies*

This presentation will focus on the effect of media on elections and the public’s social and political views regarding the gender of elected public officials. While the Gallup polls in December 2006 showed Senator Hillary Clinton to be considerably ahead of Senator Barack Obama at 33 and 20 percent respectively; just one month after both candidates announced that they would run, the top six circulating papers in the United States ran 59 stories that mentioned Obama in the headline and 36 that mentioned Clinton. Sources such as Woman for President: Media Bias in Eight Campaigns, and its assertion that media continues to be a major obstacle against women running for elected public office, will be cited in this presentation. The presenter will make the connection between how women who run for office are treated by the media and the lack of representation of women running for and being elected to office.

**Larchmont II**  
**Making the Most of Your Money: Best Practices for Obtaining Financial Aid and Tips for Staying Financially Sound While in College and Beyond**  
*Kristina Delbridge*  
*Director of Financial Aid*

Noon - 1:30 p.m.  
**Lunch**

Ballroom A, B and C  
**Defining Your E.M.P.I.R.E. Keynote Speaker**  
*Dr. Penny Jennings ’03, ’06*

Lobby Level  
**live webcast**

1:30 - 2:20 p.m.  
**Concurrent Session III**

**Pelham**  
**Giant Steps: How a Jazz Performance Youth Education Program Benefits Local and Global Communities**  
*Bruce Eisenbeil*  
*Metropolitan Center*

This presentation is based on a research paper that was written for Dr. Mark Miyake’s course, World Music, Culture and Business. This presentation focuses on the Jazz Standard Youth Orchestra as an inspiring example of how a jazz community that fosters music education with a performance component can help the community to expand locally, regionally and globally.

**Larchmont II**  
**Get in Where You Fit in: How Women in Hip Hop Music Choose to Portray Themselves**  
*Mitchell Dobbs*  
*Hudson Valley Center*

This presentation is based on the presenter’s research paper for Mark Miyake’s class, Women and Hip Hop Music and Culture. During the presentation, the evolution and disintegration of female self-portrayal roles in this genre of music will be discussed. Emphasis has historically been placed on male stereotypes of women in this music form. However, this presentation focuses on the avenues that female rap artists have taken to fit into this male-dominated culture. This is important, primarily because the genre is often misunderstood and dismissed as lacking relevant cultural value.
Yorktown  
Film from Folklore, Fantasy and Other Fictions: Exploring Adaptations  
Max Benitez  
Center for Distance Learning  
The presentation draws on the presenter’s research in a recent independent study under mentor Celest Woo. It seeks to illuminate topics in film and literature as they pertain to issues of derivative works. Starting with an understanding of how human beings – at a biological and social level – are masters of adaptation, the presentation provides insight as to how artistic remakes, reinterpretations and the like, have evolved overtime. The session establishes the current conventions and the legal, cultural and academic issues shared in new filmic incarnations from Harry Potter to Shakespeare.

Larchmont I  
Becoming Visible: Community Performances with Mixed Abilities  
Kathleen York  
Genesee Valley Center  
This presentation will highlight the work done in the writing workshops at the 2011 Disability and the Arts Festival in Geneva, N.Y. This festival offered the opportunity to utilize the ideas of community performance and gather a group of people with mixed abilities to conduct a process – based work of art. The resulting sample of “communitas” will be shared both in paper format, as well as video clips of the actual workshops and resulting performances and artwork. The participating college students, community members and individuals served by the Finger Lakes Collaborative of the ARC clearly demonstrate the potential for creating change through art.

Sprainbrook  
Current Career Resources  
Stephanie Schiffer  
Student Services Office  
This presentation will explore the current career resources that are available to SUNY Empire State College students. These resources included our online library, Optimal Resume and SMARTHINKING.

Larchmont I  
Re-examining Roles of Emotion and Cognition  
Paul Jacoby  
Genesee Valley Center  
This presentation will be based on a paper written for the study, Memory and Cognition called “Emotion’s Role in Cognitive Functioning.” The presentation will include clinical applications for identifying these concepts in treatment/counseling, and also would be focused on supporting research, in addition to what this understanding can mean for individuals outside of therapy or clinical practices.

Pelham  
A Socio-Psychological View of Shakespeare’s Tragedies  
Michael Kaufman  
Hudson Valley Center  
This presentation analyzes some of the main characters in Shakespeare’s tragedies from two distinct – though not necessarily contradictory – perspectives. Critic Sidney Finkelstein saw Shakespeare as a great social thinker who delved deeply into the politics of his time. Psychoanalyst Karen Horney developed a theory of neurosis that explains the behavior of characters such as Hamlet, Othello and Shylock. The insights of both Finkelstein and Horney help make Shakespeare more accessible to modern readers.

Sprainbrook  
Disney’s Princess Industrial Complex: The Imagining and Marketing of Femininity  
Amy Patrick  
School for Graduate Studies  
This presentation looks critically at both the animation style and marketing techniques that Disney uses in regard to its princesses, and examines how the animation style and marketing affect the way women and girls of all ethnicities view themselves and the role of women.
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| Larchmont II  | DIY Podcasting: How to Create Your Own Professional or Personal Interest Podcast (a regularly scheduled online audio recording) For No Cost  
   Dana Longley  
   Assistant Director for Library Instruction and Information Literacy |
| Yorktown      | My Childhood Story:  
   An Autobiographical Documentary About Child Abuse  
   Lakiesha Smith  
   Genesee Valley Center  
   This presentation is a continuation of the presenter’s talk at the 2009 conference, which was prior to the completion of the documentary. Participants will view the complete documentary, and the presenter will then lead a discussion. |
| 3:30 - 4:30 p.m. Sprainbrook | Wrap-up and Raffle  
   Join us for this informal debriefing session to let us know your thoughts on this conference, what worked, what didn't, etc. |
Alumni Luncheon Speaker Biography

Penny Jennings, Ph.D. was the recipient of the Woman of Distinction Award from the New York State Senate in 2008 and the Distinguished Service Award from Rockland County in 2007. She is the founder, CEO and executive director of A.C.T., Inc. (Adults Caring for Teens) and a newspaper columnist. She received her A.A. in liberal arts and sciences from Rockland Community College, her B.S. and M.A. in social policy from SUNY Empire State College, and her doctoral degree in law and policy from Northeastern University. She serves on the Rockland Community College Board of Trustees, as well as the Dean’s Advisory Board for the School of Graduate Studies at Empire State College. She has won numerous awards and has been profiled in such publications as The Journal News.

Student Presenter Biographies

Max Benitez, Center for Distance Learning, is a community cinema student. He has spent the past three years studying the overlap of the film arts and community building. He has an extensive background in media production and activism. His presentation on cinematic adaptations draws from his interest in the underlying societal issues at play when books become movies. He lives and works in Austin, Texas, where he and his wife co-own an independent production company. He enjoys travel, food and the martial arts.

Hümeyra Bostan, Center for Distance Learning, earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Cultural Studies with a concentration in literature in July 2011. She is pursuing a Master of Arts degree in history at Istanbul Sehir University in Turkey. Her presentation was written with the assistance of Professor Christiane Warren for a historiography class. Her presentation was written as a consequence of her interest in African history and the presence of the Ottoman Empire on the continent.

Justin Bourgeois, Center for Distance Learning, is a Science, Mathematics and Technology student with a concentration in biology, in his final year. His presentation, “The Classification of Homo Floresiensis and Its Implications for Human Evolution,” is a continuation of a paper written for the Evolution: One Long Argument course in 2009. He lives in Schenectady with his wife and has worked in the title insurance industry for the past 11 years.

Andrew Calderaro, Long Island Center, is a Historical Studies major who will earn his B.A. this December. “By Whatever Means Necessary: Black Americans’ Arduous Pursuit of Literacy and Formal Education During American Reconstruction” was inspired by the value American slaves and freed people placed on education and the lengths to which they went to attain it. He will begin a Master of Social Work program next fall and is the founder of Courage Long Island, Inc., whose mission is to raise awareness about mood disorders and provide support for sufferers (Info@CourageLongIsland.org).

Matthew Coffey, School for Graduate Studies, is a graduate student majoring in Labor Policy. He is a retired telecommunications executive who has an interest in how labor and management interact and often misunderstand each other. Living in White Plains, Matt has five grown children.

Donna Colucci, Genesee Valley Center, is a Historical Studies student. Her presentation, “Long-Distance Trade Routes in Pre-Columbian Mesoamerica,” was inspired by a course she took with Professor Adele Anderson. Colucci is the mother of a high-functioning autistic teenager and chose to model the importance of a college degree by resuming her own studies. She is employed as a project manager for a manufacturing plant in Rochester.

Katrina Colvin-Stilts, Genesee Valley Center, is a second year student of international business perusing a bachelor’s degree. Her presentation was inspired by her recent trip to Namibia, where she observed the cultures of Afrikans, Africans and the traditional Himba tribe. Her presentation includes the current and future political, social and economic statuses of these groups. She is studying African History and Culture with Wayne Barr.

Colleen Culley, School for Graduate Studies, is a graduate student in the Liberal Studies program, where she is focusing on the body in the workplace. She has a B.A. from William Smith College where she received high honors for her research on movement and creativity. She also is a Laban Movement Analyst and an International Somatic Movement Educator. She owns her own business, Move Into Greatness, through which she uses movement to teach communication, cognition and athletic performance. She and her husband split their time between Ithaca and New York City.
Student Presenter Biographies (continued)

Michael Drew, Genesee Valley Center, graduated from Empire State College last fall with a B.S. in Community and Human Services, and has a concentration in fire service administration. He is a fire captain with the City of Batavia Fire Department, in charge of fire prevention and public education. He attends graduate school, majoring in mental health counseling where he hopes to work with firefighters experiencing trauma or disabling injuries. He resides in Rochester with his wife Michelle, and three children, Ethan, Amelia and Rory. His mantra is “Make a difference.”

Bruce Eisenbeil, Metropolitan Center, is pursuing a B.A. in music studies. Based on a research paper written for Dr. Mark Miyake’s course, “World Music, Culture and Business,” Eisenbeil will present, “Giant Steps.” This lecture focuses on The Jazz Standard Youth Orchestra, an inspiring example of how a jazz community that fosters music education with a performance component helps the community to expand locally, regionally and globally. A guitarist, composer and improviser on the cutting-edge of contemporary music, Eisenbeil has released 12 CDs, toured throughout the world, and has been recognized as one of today’s truly original creative voices by national and international publications.

Mary Farel, Hudson Valley Center, is a yoga and psychology student at the Newburgh Unit, where she is in her last semester before completing a Bachelor of Science. Her presentation, “Mindfulness Practice and Transforming Negative Emotions,” was inspired by her commitment and interest in cultivating our inner resources for personal growth and evolution. She has taught hatha yoga since 1998.

Paul Jacoby CASAC, Genesee Valley Center, is a Human Development student. After obtaining an Associate of Applied Sciences for alcoholism and substance abuse counseling through Tompkins Cortland Community College, he has spent the last year studying at Empire State College, focusing on psychology. His presentation, “Re-examining Emotion’s Roll in Cognition,” was inspired by a paper written for Study Memory and Cognition, which he took with Professor Gayle Stever. He is married and lives and works in the Central New York area as an addiction therapist. He has worked in both residential and outpatient settings, with teen and adult populations for the last seven years.

Cynthia A. Julian, School for Graduate Studies, is a graduate student from the Albany area who is in her final semester in the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies program and is pursuing a graduate certificate in public history. Cynthia is a certified elementary and art educator, and an a vocational mixed media artist. She is studying visual culture and the effects of the digital communication revolution on cultural practices, particularly as they pertain to teaching, learning, creativity and public history. Her presentation on visual journaling gained inspiration through Professor Marianne Arieux’s Psychology of Art course. She blogs at cjulian01@wordpress.com.

Michael Kaufman, Hudson Valley Center, is a fourth-year Cultural Studies student. He has been a sportswriter, investigative reporter and medical writer for more than 30 years. His writing has appeared in Sport, Crawdaddy, Health, Jewish Currents and other periodicals, and in several anthologies and sociology textbooks. He has interviewed the tallest man in the world and the oldest living dwarf for the National Enquirer. More recently he was a writer for Reader's Digest’s best-selling books, Extraordinary Uses for Ordinary Things and More Life For Your Stuff. He currently writes for the Zest of Orange website (www.zestoforange.com). His presentation, “A Socio-Psychological View of Shakespeare’s Tragedies,” is derived from work in the Shakespeare’s Tragic Heroes class taught by Steve Lewis.

Lydia Landesberg, Hudson Valley Center, has been studying for a creative writing major since January of this year. She has considerable prior experience writing nonfiction. She has chosen to focus on writing fiction, a new and exciting challenge for her. She is a mother of four and active community member who has held a number of volunteer leadership positions.

Kimmie Lynch, Metropolitan Center, is in her fourth year and is on track to graduate this spring. She has worked as a teaching artist in New York City public schools, conducting social and emotional learning workshops using drama as a teaching tool, and as a professional actor. The confluence of these two careers led her to her concentration in theater and educational studies. Her love of the short story led her to her presentation, “Kate Chopin and Amiee Bender: The Story of a Century.”

Timothy Minahan, School for Graduate Studies, is an MBA student. He has worked in the banking industry since 1985, with extensive experience in management, sales and relationship banking. In his current position, he is responsible for managing the relationships of the government banking clients throughout the New York Capital Region, Adirondack Region and Northeastern New York. He also is the 2011 - 2012 student co-chair for the Student Affairs Committee (SAC). His poster presentation “The Student Affairs Committee at Empire State College” is designed to provide the student body with information regarding the committee’s charge, membership and information about how to get involved.

Amy Patrick, School for Graduate Studies, is halfway to receiving her M.A. in Liberal Studies with a focus on popular culture and its relationship to gender, race and sexuality. Her presentation on “The Princess Industrial Complex” is part of her on-going research in her field
of study. She has a B.A. in creative writing from Ohio University and an M.S. in information science from the Pratt Institute. She is based out of Brooklyn with her husband and 4-year-old daughter. She writes and speaks regularly on popular culture and publishes the blog “Thirteenager” (http://thirteenager.wordpress.com).

Elizabeth Selig, Metropolitan Center, is a student in the Masters and Liberal Studies Program, where she has spent the past year exploring the history of the 19th century immigrant working class and young adult fiction. Prior to enrolling in the M.A.L.S. program she completed two years in the Masters of Arts and Teaching program studying adolescent education. The presentation “A Matter of Perspective: Engaging Young Reader’s in Historical Fiction Through Literary Narrative” was inspired by a Young Adult Historical Fiction Class, with Professor Celeste Woo. She currently works as an anthropologist in the field of cultural resource management.

Lakeisha Smith, Genesee Valley Center, is a current student and a recent graduate. She received her associate degree in business administration in 2010 and decided to return to the college in the fall semester to pursue her bachelor's degree in the same concentration. The topic, Child Molestation: Before and After, is the focus of her presentation for the 2011 Student Academic Conference. She decided to make this her focus for the conference, due to her personal experience and her will to tell her story to help others.

Malissa Smith, School for Graduate Studies, is a M.A.L.S. student pursuing her master’s degree on how borders and boundaries have come to be defined as an integral part of identity for groups and individuals. Her presentation, “The Boxing Ring as Sacred Territory,” explores the meaning of place and space in the context of post-modern expressions of the sacred. She received her B.A. degree in Historical Studies at Empire State College in 2008. She lives in Brooklyn with her husband and their delightful 11-year-old daughter. She works at the NYC Fire Department and writes a popular blog called Girlboxing.

Mark Staub, Hudson Valley Center, enrolled in Empire State College last year to complete his bachelor's degree in English. He and his classmates chose this topic, Reading R Writing, to demonstrate the benefits of classroom participation in creative writing. He lives in northern Westchester with his wife and two teenage sons, and is a principal of The Cardinal Rose Group, an entertainment marketing firm.

Mary Beth Tierney-Simmons, Center for Distance Learning, is a full time student in nursing. Her presentation, “Proving the Case for Baccalaureate Prepared Nurses at the Bedside,” is the culmination of her review of research in this area during her studies with Professor Balko. She is in her 29th year of practice as a Registered Nurse, her clinical expertise being in emergency and critical care.

Mercedes Turner, School for Graduate Studies, is enrolled in the Master of Arts in Labor and Policy Studies with a concentration in human resources. She is working on her final project along with taking the final required course, “Sociology of Work.” She chose the topic of How Gender Effects our Election Decisions because it, in her opinion, is the most interesting component of her final project paper. She is married with four children. Two are grown and two are teens at home, and she is the proud grandmother of a 2-year-old boy. She graduated from Empire State College with a bachelor's in HR management and is an HR generalist for Harlem United Community AIDS Foundation.

Janice Van Buskirk, Hudson Valley Center, joined Empire State College as a junior last January, after a 37 year hiatus, to finish her B.A. in women's studies at the Nanuet Unit. Conversations with a friend about possible ancient Goddess worship in the Orkney Islands, where she has been, sparked the idea for her presentation, “Women and Goddess Culture in the Neolithic British Isles.” A late bloomer, she received a black belt in Tae Kwon Do two years ago. She also is an accomplished pianist and avid foodie. She freelances as a personal assistant and chef in Palisades, N.Y.

Laura Williams, School for Graduate Studies, was led by her interest in history and literature to achieve a bachelor’s degree in Cultural Studies with a concentration in literature from Empire State College in 2010. She is in first semester of the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies program at the college. Her ultimate goal is achieving a Ph.D. in literature and to teach at the university level. She has worked for the past 10 years in graphic design, and has a background in interior decorating, textiles and visual arts. She also is the mother of two girls and an active member of her community. It is her interest in her community that led her to presentation on Historic Main Street in Elbridge. She lives in one of the homes featured in her presentation.

Kathleen York, Genesee Valley Center, is preparing to graduate with a human services and the arts degree in April 2012. “Becoming Visible” is a product of many facets of her current life coming together. She had the opportunity to lead two inclusive writing workshops for students, community members and individuals served through the Arc Finger Lakes Collaborative at Hobart William Smith College’s “Disability and the Arts Festival” in April 2011. A Disability and The Arts study with Adele Anderson gave her the information and guidance to create a unique learning experience for all festival participants. Kathleen is an academic and visual arts instructor at the Arc of Monroe.
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