

The Whisperings of an Old Pine:
More-Than-Human Histories at the Bread Loaf School of English

Ashlynn Wittchow

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
under the Executive Committee
of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

2024

© 2024

Ashlynn Wittchow

All Rights Reserved

Abstract

The Whisperings of an Old Pine: More-Than-Human Histories of the Bread Loaf School of

English

Ashlynn Wittchow

Informed by post-humanism, my research examines the entanglement of more-than-human forces at the Bread Loaf School of English. The oldest professional development institution of its kind, the Bread Loaf School of English has invited teachers to spend six-weeks each summer studying at its mountain campus since the summer of 1920. When the physical campus was forced to close indefinitely on the eve of its one-hundredth anniversary at the start of the pandemic, the loss of this physical space prompted meditations on over a century of institutional tradition as teachers shared their stories of the mountain campus. Bread Loaf's landscape is teeming with narrative—stories that blossom like wildflowers each summer before fading with the coming winter. Within those narratives, like the Deleuzoguattarian “orchid and wasp,” the human and non-human transform one another in an intra-active entanglement of bodies. What happens when we pause and attempt to follow the threads of these entangled narratives in order to better understand how more-than-human bodies meet, collide, and contaminate one another over time to constitute the assemblage of the Bread Loaf School of English? The rich tapestry that begins to unfold offers a model for more-than-human storytelling well beyond the mountain, spanning the manifold landscapes teachers return to at the end of the summer.

Table of Contents

List of Figures	v
List of Tables	vi
Acknowledgments.....	vii
Dedication.....	ix
Introduction.....	1
Chapter 1: Founding the Bread Loaf School of English.....	16
1.1 Joseph Battell and the Bread Loaf Wilderness	19
1.1.1 The Whisperings of an Old Pine	23
1.1.2 The Last Will and Testament of Joseph Battell.....	29
1.2 The School of English Arrives at Bread Loaf.....	31
1.2.1 Putting Together the Picture Puzzle.....	35
1.2.2 The Davison Directorship	40
Chapter 2: More-Than-Human Theories	43
2.1 <i>Ellen</i> as Entanglement.....	44
2.1.1 Beginning with Humanism	45
2.1.2 Poststructural Responses.....	46
2.1.3 Posthuman Entanglements	48
2.2 <i>Ellen</i> as Refrain.....	52
2.2.1 Repetition with Difference.....	53
2.2.2 Diffractive Ripples.....	54

2.3 <i>Ellen</i> as Haunting	57
2.3.1 Material Hauntings.....	59
2.3.2 Making-With the Specter	60
2.4 The End of the Pond Reading	63
Chapter 3: More-Than-Human Methodologies	65
3.1 Narrative Inquiry.....	66
3.1.1 Methodological Foundations	66
3.1.2 Poststructural Narratology	69
3.1.3 More-Than-Human Narratives.....	72
3.1.4 Haunted Historiographies	80
3.2 The Haunting in the Meadow	83
Chapter 4: The More-Than-Human Refrain	87
4.1 Arriving at the Meadow	91
4.2 The Meadow Begins to Speak	95
4.2.1 <i>Ellen</i> Returns to the Mountain	100
4.2.2. Field-Mouse Week.....	101
4.2.3 Grazing Herds of Sheep.....	104
4.3 Disrupting the Pastoral.....	109
Chapter 5: The Ghosts of Gentle Folk	111
5.1 Listening at the Threshold	114
5.2 James Moffett at Bread Loaf.....	117

5.2.1 The Beginnings of the Program in Writing.....	118
5.2.3 James Moffett Arrives at Bread Loaf.....	120
5.3 The Evolution of the Program in Writing.....	123
Chapter 6: Beyond the Green Shade.....	129
6.1 The Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network.....	134
6.1.1 The BreadNet Telecommunications Network.....	137
6.1.2 New Visions for the Bread Loaf Teacher Network.....	144
6.1.3 Repetition with Difference.....	146
6.2 Miles to Go Before I Sleep.....	148
Chapter 7: Returning to the Valley.....	150
7.1 Voices from Bread Loaf Teachers.....	151
7.1.1 The Journey to the Mountain.....	151
7.1.2 Stories from the Barn.....	155
7.1.3 Learning Beyond the Barn.....	158
7.1.4 Points of Tension.....	161
7.2 There and Back Again.....	164
7.2.1 Resolving Moments of Tension.....	165
7.2.2 The Traveler Far from Home.....	168
7.3 Beyond the Rearview Mirror.....	169
Epilogue: Invocations.....	172
References.....	175

Appendix A.....	187
Appendix B.....	188

List of Figures

Figure 1: A Satirical Map of the Bread Loaf School of English.....27

List of Tables

Table 1: Enrollment in the Bread Loaf Teacher Network.....	145
--	-----

Acknowledgments

There are countless individuals who have supported me in the creation of this manuscript. I am indebted to the mentorship of my dissertation chair, Dr. Sheridan Blau. When I was plagued by self-doubt, his enthusiasm for the project inspired me to continue. I am also deeply indebted to the mentorship of Dr. Ruth Vinz. Several portions of this dissertation were written in her guest house in the Catskills, where I was serenaded by the frogs as the sun started to set in the west. It was the perfect retreat from the concrete labyrinth back in the city. Moreover, the mountains were the perfect backdrop to write about the Bread Loaf School of English, although the Green Mountains remained several hundred miles further north. I would also like to thank the remainder of my dissertation committee, Tom James, Beverly Moss, and David Schaafsma, for their support in getting me over the finish line.

In terms of my peers, I am thankful for Meg Davis Roberts. Early in the project, we spent countless hours talking through ideas side-by-side in Butler Library. Her support and encouragement helped motivate me during various writing slumps. There are numerous other peers who deserve special mention, including Patrick Sitzler, Carrie McAuliffe, Rashida Mustafa, and Diana Liu, who have been there since the beginning as we supported each other in our graduate studies. I am also indebted to Shannon Potts, who was able to share her insight about James Moffett as I researched his ongoing relationship with the Bread Loaf School of English.

Speaking of the Bread Loaf School of English, I must also thank several individuals associated with that particular institution. The first and foremost is my old mentor teacher, Anne Shealy, whose gentle nudge set me on the path towards doctoral studies in the first place. Her support has been invaluable throughout the process of writing my dissertation. I must also thank the indefatigable Dixie Goswami, who features prominently in the history of the institution. Her

support as the Director of the Bread Loaf Teacher Network helped connect me with the wider field of English education.

Last but not least, I thank my family members, who have all supported me at various points during my time as a doctoral student. First, I thank my grandparents, who pushed me towards pursuing my doctoral degree in the first place. Then, I thank my sister, Carrie Wittchow, for her encouragement. Finally, I thank my parents, who not only offered support, but also a place to write during the final year of my doctoral studies. However, their support spans over three decades, dating back to my childhood, when we visited the library each summer to fill an old laundry basket to the brim with books. I am forever grateful for those sunlit hours of reading picture books.

Dedication

*To the Unknown Chronicler of 2044,
Whose duty it will be to write the
History of the Bread Loaf School of
English in Middlebury College for
The celebration of the 125th session of the school.
Never forget to listen at the threshold
In pursuit of the specter beneath your skin.*

Introduction

“Not those whose vivid power and beauty burn / White as my soul — but ghosts of gentle folk / Who sit in shadowy form beside the flames.”

—Hazel B. Poole, “Summer Sessions (Bread Loaf School of English)”

The first time I turned onto Route 125—traversing the crest of the Green Mountains towards the Bread Loaf School of English at Middlebury College—I was already desperately lost. I had started my journey the day prior, departing from the marshy coastline of South Carolina before driving nine hours to collapse on a friend’s couch outside of Philadelphia. The next day I continued an additional seven hours into the unfamiliar landscape of Vermont. Sometime during the final hour of the road trip, my lagging navigation system flickered with an ominous warning: “GPS signal not found.” As the map blinked out of existence, leaving the icon of a car free-floating amidst a pixelated void, I found myself driving off the metaphorical edge of the map. I traveled deeper into the wilderness, increasingly anxious as the roads narrowed and the dark press of trees seemed to close in around me. Later, when the ceaseless stretch of forest finally gave way to the yellow-paneled buildings and sunlit meadows of the Bread Loaf School of English, I felt my tight grip around the steering wheel begin to loosen, relieved to find myself located once more on the map.

On that early summer afternoon when I first made the left-hand turn onto College Cross Road towards the Barn, I wasn’t yet aware just how large the mountain campus would eventually loom in my memories—the way I would watch the mist roll in over the mountains to the east of Tamarack in the groggy hours of the morning, a dog-eared copy of *The Iliad* pressed into my lap; the way I would lean my head back, basking in glimmering starlight as a professor read poetry on the banks of John’s Pond; the way I would gasp as I lowered my bare legs into the frigid

waters of the Middlebury River, surrounded by spirited song and drunken laughter in the dark of the night. No, in those first travel-weary moments, I wasn't yet aware of how much I would eventually miss that stretch of mountain wilderness when I finally journeyed back home at the summer's end.

The Bread Loaf School of English, one of the oldest professional development institutions of its kind, has invited English teachers to spend six weeks each summer studying at its mountain campus for the past century. Students attending the school, many of whom are classroom teachers, earn their graduate degrees in English literature over the course of several summers while simultaneously continuing to teach their own students during the school year. This focus on teacher education has been part of the mission of the graduate school since its inception. Nearly a decade after the first summer, Director Wilfred Davison briefly revisited the principles that inspired the founding of the school. These foundational beliefs included the desire “to have something real going on at Bread Loaf, and then have those high school teachers who have been at Bread Loaf go back to their schools and start something real going on there” (p. 6).¹ The Bread Loaf model for the professional development of English teachers—which hinges on learning how to *teach* literature through an *enactment* of literature—was innovative for its time. Alongside programs like the National Writing Project, it remains innovative today. However, what sets the Bread Loaf School of English apart from similar programs extends beyond the traditional classroom, stretching into the surrounding wilderness. Since its inaugural summer, the Bread Loaf School of English has been embedded in the landscape of the Green Mountains. In the same pamphlet published on the tenth anniversary of the school, Wilfred Davison wrote:

To stand on Pleiad Lookout or Silent Cliff and gaze out over the unbroken wooded hills is an experience that teaches perhaps greater lessons than we learn in our classes and in

¹ Bread Loaf School of English. (1929). *Bread Loaf*. [Brochure]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

our informal contacts. The silent influence of the great outdoors is a real part of the Bread Loaf plan. (p. 13)

This attention to the landscape, characteristic of most literature surrounding the institution, pervades the archival materials from the graduate school. For example, many of the earliest volumes of *The Crumb*, the daily student newsletter, chronicle frequent forays into nature, including weekend hikes along the Long Trail. These early accounts of wilderness hikes offer the barest glimpse of how the mountains have shaped campus life, particularly given how the landscape often shapes the curriculum in subtle—and occasionally not-so-subtle—ways.

The profound influence of the Bread Loaf wilderness is all the more apparent when compared with the school's various satellite campuses, programs which started to take root like far-flung dandelion seeds, dispersed by favorable winds, in the late 1970s. For instance, when the school added the Oxford campus in 1978, the curriculum of the new campus adjusted to reflect the affordances of the surrounding university city. In the years since the addition of the campus at Oxford University, Bread Loaf has offered multiple campuses spanning North America, each with its own geographically distinctive academic culture. The Santa Fe, New Mexico campus opened its doors in 1990. The Juneau, Alaska campus opened in 1998. The Asheville, North Carolina campus opened in 2006. Finally, the Monterey, California campus opened in 2022. In 2004, there was even a brief attempt at a campus at the Universidad de Guadalajara in Mexico, though it was short-lived.² Most of these satellite campuses have since closed, with the exception of the Oxford and California campuses.

² Blythe Coons referred to the Guadalajara campus in her 2007 commencement address as the “campus-that-must-not-be-named.” The campus was discontinued following a single summer because of low enrollment. Maddox (2005) alludes to issues that may have contributed to this low enrollment: “Although Bread Loaf’s summer in Guadalajara was a great academic success, we had trouble establishing there a strong sense of community that is the prerequisite for any successful Bread Loaf campus. Students were divided among different locales—a dormitory, homestays, and the academic center, with no space that anyone ‘owned’—and this dispersion turned out to be a much larger problem than any of us anticipated.” In discussing the downfall of the Guadalajara campus, Maddox here hints at one of the relative strengths of the graduate school—the ability to create a strong sense of community.

However, all students are required to spend at least one summer at the Vermont campus. In many ways the Bread Loaf Mountain Campus, formerly a summer resort for the New England elite, remains the thrumming heart of the institution. Historical accounts of campus life in Vermont are all characterized by the same sort of evangelical fervor for the landscape that one might expect from Henry David Thoreau, waxing poetic about the wonders of the untamed wilderness. Take for instance the poem “The Summer Session (Bread Loaf School of English)” by Hazel B. Poole, first published in *The English Journal* in 1930, the tenth anniversary of the school. Remembering her summer on the mountain, the speaker in the poem recalls the “dim, soft glow of candles, and the flare / Of sunset clouds” (ln. 4-5). She longs to return to the long porch, where she might eventually learn to discern which voices belong to the “ghosts of gentle folk” (ln. 13). Miss Hazel B. Poole graduated from Bread Loaf in 1928 as a member of the seventh graduating class.³ I would graduate exactly ninety years later. Nevertheless, her sentiments felt achingly familiar. The poem evokes the nostalgia frequently felt after a summer spent on the mountain. The imagery of “dim, soft glow of candles” acts as an ephemeral reminder of the fleeting, haunted beauty of those “grave and friendly hills” (ln. 4-5). George K. Anderson (1969), historian and long-time Middlebury professor, writes another similarly sentimental account on the 50th anniversary of the Bread Loaf School of English. Lamenting countless untold narratives, Anderson closes his half-century segment of history by mourning the end of the summer: “The people will be gone, a little nucleus of humanity that overnight will explode and dissipate itself in all directions” (p. 153). At the end of each summer, students scatter like flocks of migratory birds, only to settle once more across the landscape each June.⁴

³ Bread Loaf School of English. (1929). *Bread Loaf*. [Brochure]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

⁴ In *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, Deleuze and Guatarri write, “Rats are rhizomes. Burrows are too, in all their functions of shelter, supply, movement, evasion, and breakout. The rhizome itself assumes very

For the past century, English teachers from across the globe have lived and learned together, nestled deep in the cradle of the Green Mountains, before returning home, carrying pocketfuls of knowledge to far-flung classrooms in the fall.

However, those fields sat empty on the hundredth anniversary of the Bread Loaf School of English, yet another victim of the COVID-19 pandemic. As quarantine stretched from one interminable year into another, I felt compelled to revisit Bread Loaf from my cramped campus apartment in Morningside Heights. It was the dead of winter, and the pale reaching fingers of the lone tree visible from my window were obscured by foggy glass. The beginnings of snowfall swirled outside, and those summer fields seemed worlds away. As my radiator clattered and hissed, I closed my eyes and tried to imagine myself back in the Green Mountains of Vermont. Instead, the dull hum of New York City crackled in the background, occasionally punctuated by staccato noises—cars honking, people shouting, tires squealing as they slid across slick ice. Ignoring the wail of sirens barreling down Amsterdam Avenue, I listened for the whispers of summer. George K. Anderson’s slender paperback history rested next to me at my desk, and I reached out to open it, turning the pages until I located the first chapter.

As I read, the ambient noise of the city seemed to fade away. Anderson (1969) opens his history in second person, inviting the reader to wander alongside him as he guides us along an old stagecoach road into the wilderness of the Green Mountains, the traditional homelands of the Western Abenaki people (“Middlebury Land Acknowledgement”). Anderson invites us to attune to the whispers of the more-than-human across the landscape. Although traces of human influence appear in Anderson’s description, assuming the form of “old-cellar-holes where

diverse forms, from ramified surface extension in all directions to concretion into bulbs and tubers.” Lingering on the image of rats swarming, it occurs to me that flocks of migratory birds might fall into the category of rhizome as well—students too.

farmhouses or homesteads once stood” (p.3), he depicts these traces as hopelessly entangled with the *flora* and *fauna* of the Green Mountains. Brambles of wild raspberries stretch over the skeletal remains of old farmhouses, and leaning headstones are “covered with moldy leaves and weeds” (p. 3). The human may reach into the wilderness, but the more-than-human reaches back as well.⁵

As we continue to walk alongside Anderson, he makes it clear that the fields are still wild—unplowed and brimming with “yarrow, devil’s paintbrush, vetch, goldenrod, steeplebush, gentians of many kinds, wild orchids—the list would be enormous—and backed up with stands of various pines, spruce, tamarack, maples, oaks, birches, and occasional sycamores and beeches” (p. 2). Interwoven through this verdant eruption of foliage, Anderson describes the surrounding forest as the “haunt of innumerable birds—robins, swallows, finches, woodpeckers, warblers, cedar waxwings, redbirds, an occasional visitor from south or north, such as scarlet rangers, crossbills and the usual predators” (pp. 2-3). We are invited to “hear the hermit thrush” and the “sweet call of the song-sparrow” (p. 3). A fox disappears into its hollow, and a herd of deer travels—like so many spirits of the forest—just beyond our line of sight. The landscape matters just as much as the people who populate it.

Furthermore, by introducing the history of the Bread Loaf School of English through its landscape, Anderson makes it clear that Bread Loaf is much *more* than an academic institution. Indeed, over the weeks of reading *Bread Loaf School of English: The First Fifty Years*, I found myself following narrative spirals that seemed to penetrate both the human and the more-than-human. The mountains never fade away from the narrative. The landscape of Bread Loaf is *itself*

⁵ Anderson’s description of the Green Mountains reminds me of Barad’s (2007) conceptualization of landscape as an active “time-being” (p. 83). Barad writes, “Land is not property or territory; it is a time-being marked by its own wounds and vitality, a layered material geo-neuro-biography of bones and bodies, ashes and earth, where death and life meet” (p. 83).

teeming with over a hundred years of stories—stories that blossom like wildflowers each summer before fading with the coming of winter. Anderson invites us to look closely, so that we, too, might begin to see the traces of these past lives within the landscape—old stone fences from a bygone era and overgrown paths that vanish into the wilderness.⁶ Wandering a wooded trail, it is easy to imagine the gruff presence of Robert Frost, tottering just out of view, his dog, Gillie, bounding through the undergrowth alongside him. Within these narrative traces, like the Deleuzoguattarian (1977) assemblage of the orchid and wasp, the human and the more-than-human transform one another in a dynamic entanglement of bodies (Barad, 2007; Haraway, 1992). Tree and mountain, pond and stream, dog and man—and sometimes perhaps something more-than-human in the form of hauntings—all of these bodies entangle in Anderson’s history of the first fifty years of Bread Loaf.

In order to better understand the human and more-than-human encounters within this institutional assemblage, my study of the history of the school attempts to pull at the entangled threads of human and more-than-human phenomenon across the century-long existence of the institution. Each summer, Bread Loaf exceeds the four walls of the classroom, spilling beyond the walls of the Barn⁷ and into the surrounding wilderness. The learning process is interconnected in a lively assemblage of all beings. Considering this assemblage, I will invoke a line of questioning offered by Anna Tsing (2021): “How does a gathering become a ‘happening,’ that is, greater than a sum of its parts?” (p. 27). Tsing points towards moments of contamination:

⁶ In *Specters of Marx*, Derrida (1993) suggests that there are sites across the globe where time “bends out of joint,” hopelessly entangling past, present, and future. Building on Derrida’s theory of hauntology, Barad (2010) writes, “The world ‘holds’ the memory of all traces; or rather, the world *is* its memory” (p. 261). Perhaps, Barad’s notion of “memory” can begin to account for such Derridean hauntings in Bread Loaf’s landscape.

⁷ Bread Loaf is somewhat atypical in that all classes are located in a large yellow barn on campus. One half of the building contains three floors of classrooms. The other half of the building is a large space where students frequently gather to study between classes.

“We are contaminated by our encounters; they change who we are as we make way for others” (p. 27). This dissertation attempts to narrate these moments of cross-contamination across the history of the institution. What is *exchanged* in the entanglement of the human and more-than-human bodies over the course of a summer at Bread Loaf? Furthermore, what happens when we pause and attempt to follow the threads of these spatially and temporally entangled narratives? The history of the institution resembles a skein that slowly unravels, not into a single thread, but instead into a rich tapestry, knotted with moments of encounter. Understanding this tapestry suggests additional questions in terms of methodology. In order to depict the more-than-human histories of the Bread Loaf School of English, how might we eschew traditional approaches to historiography in favor of listening to the voices at the threshold? In the art of tapestry weaving, the vertical warp threads, although unseen, serve as the canvas for the image woven into the crosswise weft. Much like these warp threads, many more-than-human voices remain unseen, requiring methods specifically attuned to their present-absence in the archives.

Earlier in this introductory chapter, I described the flowers that dot Bread Loaf’s landscape—yarrow and devil’s paintbrush, vetch and goldenrod, steeplebush and gentians—all blossoming across the expanse of the meadow. If our stories do, in fact, blossom like wildflowers, what does it mean to pause and gather them? As I have gathered stories across over a century of institutional history, I have often wondered what it would mean to place them in a vase, perhaps arranging the petals for others to contemplate on some sunlit expanse of an imaginary windowsill. Would this bouquet transform into its own artful assemblage? Holding this picture of flower arranging in my mind, in this portion of my introductory chapter, I briefly outline the methods used to gather the historical narratives interwoven throughout my study.

The Middlebury College digital archives have served as my primary source for the archival component of my research. Included in these archival materials are issues of *The Crumb*, the daily student newsletter. According to Anderson (1969), *The Crumb* was first published during the summer session of 1921. The expansion of the graduate school to campuses in Oxford, Asheville, and New Mexico inspired several related publications—*The Paniculum*, *The Biscuit*, and *La Miga*—to name a few. Although *The Crumb* has varied “in both study and content” over its century of publication, some things have remained the same. As Anderson observes, “the constant factor was its function as a conveyer of general information pertaining to faculty and students” (p. 38). During my own summers at Bread Loaf, I always looked forward to my daily copy, which often appeared as though by magic at the entryway to the dining hall right before the lunch bell each day. When mealtime conversations ran dry, I could always retreat into the pages of *The Crumb* until our waiter arrived with a plate of dessert.

Chronicling everything from the weather to upcoming lectures, *The Crumb* certainly lives up to its name, offering bite-sized morsels of student life that echo through the decades—lectures in the Music Hall, group hikes along the Long Trail, gentle reminders of how noise travels after hours, and sideways hints at campus scandals. Before honing my research questions, I read through decade after decade of articles from the school’s earliest years. The descriptions of campus life from the 1920s are jarringly familiar, as though the campus has somehow always existed outside of time. The voices from those worn, yellowing pages are warm and familiar, the voice of an old friend.

In addition to these intimate snapshots of student life, the college archives include detailed records from each summer session. These records include general statistics, teacher loads, degree candidates, undergraduate colleges represented, class schedules, commencement

addresses, and records of assorted lectures. These records offer valuable insight into the shifting demographics of the college. They are a vital source of information for determining historical informants as potential interview participants, who will play a role in fleshing out narratives from the recent history of Bread Loaf. These campus records also occasionally point to an assortment of primary documents elsewhere in the archives, including correspondence between university officials and other stakeholders.

My approach to working with these archival materials is informed by methods borrowed from hauntological historiography, which includes the practice of writing history from the threshold. Ballif (2013) suggests that by positioning historical work within liminal spaces—both temporal and spatial—we open up the possibility of “listen[ing] precisely to that which is excluded, to that which our modes of understanding have excluded, to that which—therefore—lies at the threshold of our understanding” (p. 152). Although this can take many forms in archival research, Ballif offers several possibilities. The first attends to “the foundations of already written histories,” including paratextual information drawn from metadata, footnotes, and endnotes (p. 140). She examines the footnote, specifically, as an example of the repressed in historical writing: “What has been buried, for example, in a footnote? How does this burial haunt—irrepressibly—the text?” (p. 140). She suggests “lending an ear” to the voices that haunt the “supplement” as a means of listening in the threshold (p. 142). In terms of archival research, this might manifest as conversing with the footnotes of sources referenced, but not explored, in officially written histories of the Bread Loaf School of English. These methods have implications for the rendering of historical narratives as well; paratextual elements, including footnotes, may be better suited to depicting the rhizomatic nature of more-than-human histories than linear approaches to historical narrative.

Furthermore, Ballif (2013) explores another method for listening at the threshold—the notion of hauntological address. Hauntological historiography requires attending to our metaphorical ghosts—the silences in the archives—but this is easier said than done. Bailiff explains that although rhetoricians have long attempted to speak both to and through the dead in the form of dialectal arguments, these dialogues fall short of hauntological historiography: “Plato resurrects Socrates, animating a corpse in another use of *prosopopeia*, but to not to hear what the dead might say, but rather to use Socrates, once again, to condemn the Athenian people” (p. 145). In other words, this one-sided dialogue is insufficient as a method of addressing archival silences. Nevertheless, if we have an ethical obligation to listen to our ghosts, then how does one address the present absences haunting the threshold of the archives? Ballif argues that conversing with ghosts necessitates the willingness to continuously “unsettle” not only history, but the haunting, through moments of apprehension (p. 153). Therefore, hauntological historiography might refuse to render the “other” legible, instead allowing these present absences to persist, resisting the impulse to exorcize our ghosts by filling those silences with conjecture.⁸ The historian acknowledges the silences while resisting the urge to fill it unnecessarily.

There are clear limits to the affordances of archival research particularly when we move beyond the human protagonist to acknowledge the role of the more-than-human. Furthermore, many stories of more-than-human phenomena manifest most clearly in campus folklore. However, Bronner (1990) argues that much of campus folklore “arises from the kind of learning we might call informal, typically outside the formal instruction of the classroom and published

⁸ Saidaya Hartman (2008) would propose an alternative approach to addressing these archival silences: critical fabulation. In “Venus in Two Acts,” Hartman addresses the troubling silences in the archive of Transatlantic slavery. Hartman offers critical fabulation as a means of writing “with and against the archive” (p. 12). The use of storytelling draws attention to the ghosts haunting the archive instead of merely exorcizing them, thus providing an avenue for redressing the archival silences.

text” (p. 22). My early investigation of archived copies of *The Crumb* revealed just how much falls through the cracks. There are marked silences in the archives, particularly regarding the origins of several more-than-human rituals that have become central to campus folklore in the present. Howell and Prevenier (2001) describe this phenomenon in historical research, likening archival research to an archaeological excavation. Sometimes an archaeological object is “little more than the trace of a former settlement, a scar left on the landscape” (p. 23). The silences in the archive offer the opportunity to dwell in hauntings. Richardson (2003) writes that ghosts “emanate from and embody the blank spaces between words in historical narratives,” including the “erasures and oversights” (p. 394). Our ghost stories attempt to explain away these present absences.

However, unlike an archaeological excavation, there are still living people who remember the summer sessions from the past fifty years at Bread Loaf. Since there are still living alumni who remember the recent history of the institution, the final chapter of this study attempts to address the silences in the archive by including narrative interviews with recent alumni of the graduate school (Seidman, 2006). These narrative interviews followed the three-part movement designed by Dolbeare and Schuman (1982) in *Policy Analysis, Education, and Everyday Life*. Each component of the interview, conducted with alumni of the Bread Loaf School of English, has been designed to prompt narrative reflections about their experiences as students. According to Seidman (2006), the first portion of the interview should ideally establish context. How are the participants affiliated with the institutions? Therefore, the first portion focused on their teaching experiences prior to returning to school for graduate study. The second portion invited “participants to reconstruct the details of their experience within the context in which it occurs” (Seidman, 2006, p. 17). As such, the second portion in the series prompted participants to share

narratives from their time as Bread Loaf Students as elicited by the archival record. The final portion in the series turned towards reflection. In this final portion, participants were invited to share the lasting impact of the Bread Loaf School of English on their careers.

Now, I turn to an overview of the chapters that follow. In the hopes of understanding the more-than-human history of the Bread Loaf School of English, each chapter of this dissertation will examine the history of the school by attuning to the human, non-human, and more-than-human protagonists that make up the institution. Each successive chapter will eschew traditional linear approaches to historiography in favor of narrating key turning points in the history of the school as it moves in narrative spirals. By narrativizing key moments across the history of the Bread Loaf School of English, I hope to better understand what happens when a gathering becomes a happening, more importantly, when a happening becomes a haunting.

The first several chapters of my dissertation focus on developing an understanding of the role of the more-than-human in the history of the Bread Loaf School of English. The first chapter of my dissertation attends to human histories during the early days of the institution. It briefly outlines the early history of the founding of the school. Drawing on traditional historiographical methods, this chapter will narrate the history of the school's founding as officially outlined in college records. But first, the reader will read a dream-like encounter between the researcher and the archive. This narrative interlude is the first of many. It attempts to foreground the "spiraling" nature of time at the Bread Loaf School of English. The history that follows moves backwards and forwards in time, starting with Joseph Battell before ending with him once more. This chapter lays the groundwork for considering the importance of the more-than-human across the history of the Bread Loaf School of English.

The second chapter of my dissertation outlines my theoretical framework, situating hauntology within a posthuman theoretical framework. This chapter is hopelessly entangled within the narrative of the pond reading—a narrative that eventually leads me into the snarl of poststructuralism and posthumanism. My journey into the bramble begins with my first encounters with one of the most important books on the mountain: *Ellen or The Whisperings of an Old Pine* by Joseph Battell. My theoretical framework grapples with the curious choice of *Ellen* as an invocation at the pond reading, thinking with the novel through various theoretical concepts including entanglement, refrain, and hauntology.

The third chapter of my dissertation outlines my methodology alongside the *flora* and *fauna* surrounding the school. It will discuss the challenges of narrating how more-than-human protagonists have shaped both campus life and the curriculum throughout the history of the institution. Drawing on both *The Crumb* and archived course bulletins as an archival resource, the chapter will include several more-than-human narratives—including narratives featuring the meadow and the pond—before examining what we learn about teaching and learning at Bread Loaf through those narratives. This discussion will continue to be framed by references to *Ellen or the Whisperings of an Old Pine*, a text that serves as a conceptual metaphor for the ongoing exchange between the human and more-than-human at Bread Loaf.

The fourth chapter continues in the tradition of *Ellen*, envisioning the entanglement of the more-than-human on campus *through* the voice of the meadow. In an act of *sympoiesis*, this chapter replaces the old pine tree with the meadow, imitating the opening passages of the novel while simultaneously transforming them. This chapter is narratologically playful, experimenting with the possibilities outlined in the previous chapter. Beginning with a brief history of the surrounding landscape, the meadow enters into an ongoing dialogue with one of the many

students who frequent its fields, narrating the more-than-human history of the campus across the past century of the institution's history. The chapter ends with the necessity of moving outwards, considering how students carry the mountain home with them.

Considering this question of how the mountain returns home, the latter portion of my dissertation returns to human concerns, narrating the stories of several key figures in the history of Bread Loaf, including Robert Frost, James Moffett, and Dixie Goswami. The fifth chapter focuses on James Moffett and the Program in Writing. Meanwhile, the sixth chapter focuses on Dixie Goswami and the Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network. These chapters examine how their influence continues to “haunt” the curriculum. Furthermore, these chapters attempt to account for their present absence across the curriculum by listening at the threshold of the recent history of the institution. Drawing upon the image of the refrain, these chapters will begin to examine how the mountain exceeds its boundaries in order to better understand how the influence of the mountain has spilled beyond its geographical footprint into the surrounding academic landscape.

Finally, the seventh and final chapter includes narratives from alumni of the Bread Loaf School of English. Inspired by the dialogue between Ellen and the Old Pine, this chapter attempts to return to the research questions at the heart of this dissertation: How does a gathering become a ‘happening,’ that is, greater than a sum of its parts? What is exchanged in the encounter between the human and more-than human bodies within the campus assemblage over the course of a summer at Bread Loaf? These teachers were invited to dialogue with the Bread Loaf wilderness, sharing stories of their own encounters with more-than-human natures—including the mountains themselves—reflecting how their experiences may have been shaped by lively encounters with the landscape.

Chapter 1: Founding the Bread Loaf School of English

“It has been said that Bread Loaf is a mountain, an inn, and an idea.”
—Wilfred Davison, “The Bread Loaf Idea.”

“In the meantime, Ellen wandered in the fields, and long distances down the road. The old pine saw her and loved her.”
—Joseph Battell, *Ellen or The Whisperings of an Old Pine*.

In *Specters of Marx*, Jacques Derrida suggests there are sites across the globe where time “bends out of joint,” sites where multiple temporalities meet and cross, hopelessly blurring the lines between past, present, and future (p. 7). Our ghosts wander familiar haunts, tracing well-worn paths, before fading from the corner of our vision. Blanco and Peereen (2013) suggest that these ghosts are often geographically fixed: “Haunting has been classically conceived as attached to *where*, from the proverbial haunted house to the ghost town” (p. 396). But if these sites are geographically fixed, they are also temporally unmoored, “simultaneously living and spectral” (p. 396). Derrida embraces these temporal entanglements by examining the manifestation of the spectral in *Hamlet*. When the ghost of Hamlet’s father appears, the audience doesn’t just glimpse the past; they also glimpse the future, and the play is set in motion. Derrida reminds us to listen to our ghosts. In haunted spaces we have an obligation not only to listen, but also to attune to the voices that whisper through the winds of time.

We have an obligation to commune with the spectral.

My specter first appeared on that bleak winter’s day when I first cracked the spine of George K. Anderson’s (1969) thin volume of institutional history: *Bread Loaf School of English: The First Fifty Years*. Thumbing through the pages, I breathed in deeply, inhaling the faint

vanilla scent of decaying lignin, before returning to the title page. But I found myself pausing at the prefatory material. Printed on the dedication page were the following words:

*To the Unknown Chronicler of 1994,
Whose duty it will be to write the
history of the Bread Loaf School of
English in Middlebury College for
the celebration of the 75th session of the school.*

I stared at the words, tracing the ink with my fingers along the page. George K. Anderson passed away in 1980. This was a little over a decade before I was born. Yet, as I read the words over and over again, I felt that somehow, improbably, he was speaking directly to me, although I had received the message over a quarter of a century too late.

I can still feel the tug of the spectral beckoning me....

George K. Anderson is sitting across from me near the fireplace of the Blue Parlor. The fire from the grate casts shadows across the faded wallpaper. He regards me for a moment before pressing a worn leather-bound book into my hands. I reach out to take it. When he speaks, his voice is gravelly from disuse, like stones scraping as they tumble, one over the other down a mountain ravine.

“Take it,” he commands.

He turns his attention back to the fireplace. There the flames continue to leap and dance across the logs. I study him in the flickering light. Inkblots stain his fingers and mar the crisp white cuff of his shirt sleeves. As my eyes travel upwards, he begins to blur around the edges. The hard lines of his coat spill into the surrounding space like a water stain spreading across unfinished wood. Against the backdrop of the ornate wallpaper, his profile fades in and out of existence even as his eyes glimmer with grandfatherly warmth. A small, wry smile pulls at the corners of his mouth, and he speaks, still turned towards the hearth.

“You know, when I was writing, I met Dr. Charles R. Gaston at this very fireside,” he begins in his rock-salt voice. “I found his copy of *The Bread Loaf Book* lying in some forgotten corner of a little used bookshelf in the library, along with some files of *The Crumb* and some other Breadloafiana. But there were countless others there as well—the voices that fill the silence.”⁹

His gaze breaks away from the fireplace before nodding towards his own book, now clutched tightly in my hands. His ink-stained fingers drum a tattoo against the arm of his high-back chair, beating in time with the clatter of old heating pipes banging from within the wall.

“Though I am excellent company,” he says, “I *do* hope you will have the opportunity to speak to some of the others gathered here.” He nods the boxes behind me. They are piled high with books, archival materials, long consigned to dusty shelves. Their pages are untouched, forgotten. Turning back towards him, I notice that his own skin is papery, fragile, as though worn thin by time. The creases of his face are as delicate as brushstrokes of ink across faded parchment. “And you *could* speak as well, you know. But this is a start, I suppose.”

With a sudden *pop*, the log in the fireplace gives way, collapsing in a shower of sparking embers. Something shifts inside me. The armchair next to me is empty. For a moment, I think I hear other voices as well, whispers, just beyond reach. They, too, gradually begin to fade as the everlasting din of New York City rises to take its place. I listen for a moment longer, eyes still shut, clinging to the moment, but the spell has been broken.

I was back in the present, improbably alone, in the middle of Morningside Heights. From outside my window, I could hear someone shouting on the street corner. There was a dog

⁹ This passage makes reference to the acknowledgements in the prefatory materials of *Bread Loaf School of English: The First Fifty Years* (1969) by George K. Anderson. Anderson credits *The Bread Loaf Book*, compiled by Dr. Charles R. Gaston of Richmond Hill High School as one of his primary sources for studying the first five years of the Bread Loaf School of English. I have been unable to track down a copy of this particular book in the archives.

barking, and my radiator rattled, steam hissing like dragon smoke. *Bread Loaf School of English: The First Fifty Years* was still resting on the desk before me, open to the dedication page.

Slowly, I turn the page until I find *Chapter One*—

Beginnings.

1.1 Joseph Battell and the Bread Loaf Wilderness

The history of the Bread Loaf School of English begins long before the first summer session with the birth of the man who would eventually come to haunt campus folklore. Joseph Battell was born in Middlebury on July 15, 1839. His father graduated from Middlebury College in 1826, settling in the village a decade later. Joseph Battell followed in his predecessor's footsteps, entering Middlebury College in 1856.¹⁰ But, unlike his father, he did not finish his degree because his poor health ultimately prohibited him from graduating. George K. Anderson (1969) writes: “[Battell] had ‘weak lungs,’ and so dropped out during his junior year and took a trip to Europe, which, with the concomitant sea-voyages, was something of an educational and therapeutic panacea for all pains” (p. 4). Following the aristocratic tradition of the grand tour of the continent, Joseph Battell spent several years traveling across Europe. These voyages are partially accounted for in his semi-autobiographical novel, *The Yankee Boy From Home* (1865), which follows his journey through Switzerland, the South of France, and the Rhine, as well as his tour of Scotland and Ireland (p. v). Near the end of this book, there is one particularly strange interlude involving a pine tree that will merit discussion in far greater detail in a later section of this chapter. However, for the most part, the novel offers a relatively unremarkable glimpse into his grand tour of the continent, written in a series of somewhat meandering journal entries.

¹⁰ Joseph Battell Dead. (1915, March 10). *The Middlebury Campus*, 11(2), p. 3.

Following this brief interlude abroad, Joseph Battell returned to the Green Mountains in 1865. At the behest of his friend, Ezra Brainerd, Battell retired to the Parker farm in Ripton, hopeful that the mountain air would improve his health (Rougeau, 2023). During his time on the 300-acre farm, Battell fell in love with the mountain wilderness. The moment is mythologized in the poem, “Mountains and a Man: A Glimpse of Joseph Battell” (1939) by Charles Malam,¹¹ excerpted below:

“Bad cough you’ve got there. Fill the dipper up.
It’s half an hour to breakfast yet, and home.”
“The cough’s inside. I talked with Mr. Brainerd:
He says the hill air ought to do it good.
He spoke to me of Ripton. That’s good milk.”
The farmer grunted. “Raised the cows myself.
I was in lumbering up Thetford way.
The trees got spindly, and the camp broke up,
And so I turned to cows.”

A thread of smoke
Drifted above the pines a mile beyond.
From where they stood, they almost looked down hill.
“Fine view here.”

“So it is.”

“Well, thank you.”

“Sure.

Come back sometime and have another dipper.
If you go to Ripton, see Arn Atwood.”¹²
“I shall. I’ve heard of him from Mr. Brainerd.”

One mile of wagon ruts and slippery clay.
Down hill, then up hill, then another down hill.
This was a country mostly of horizons.
Young Joe Battell leaned on the snakerail fence.
Perhaps it would be Ripton after all.¹³

¹¹ Charles Malam attended the Bread Loaf School of English from 1927 to 1930 before attending the Writers’ Conference in 1927 and 1928. He published multiple books of poetry as a protege of Robert Frost.

¹² Arn Atwood owned the farmland before it was eventually purchased by Joseph Parker. Joseph Battell would eventually purchase the land from Parker.

¹³ Although the *Bread Loaf Anthology* was originally published in 1939, it entered into public domain in 1968 through the renewal trapdoor. The period between 1929-1963 is tricky in terms of copyright law. All works published before 1929 have entered into public domain due to expiration. Furthermore, all works published after 1963 had their copyrights automatically renewed. Any work published in between these dates had to file a renewal with the copyright office during the 28th year following publication. There are no renewal records on file for the

Following this initial excursion into the mountains, Joseph Battell purchased the Parker farm as well as an extensive tract of mountain land, “out of which grew the well-known Bread Loaf Inn and his extensive holdings of mountain and forest land.”¹⁴ When he first purchased the property, it was little more than a four- or five-bedroom farmhouse (Anderson, 1969). However, the complex quickly grew under his proprietorship. He hired locally famed architect, Clinton Smith, to construct both the Inn and cottages (Perlman, 2019, para. 11). In the years that followed, the property attracted well-to-do guests from across New England. Battell ruled over his utopian domain during the summer, often going as far as to erect a barricade on Route 125 to keep unwelcome visitors, and eventually motor vehicles, off the mountain. He was a noted luddite on this front, known for “waging incessant war on the invasion of Vermont by a machine age” in editorials penned in the *Middlebury Register* (Storrs Lee, 1939, p. x). His scorn of modern technologies makes an appearance in the following excerpt from the persona poem, “Joseph Battell Replies to a Southern Correspondent,” by Viola C. White (1939):¹⁵

I am no modern, Sir; the Morgan herd
Still feeds upon my pasture. Horses draw
My carriages. They shall not find themselves
Turned to museum pieces, while I steer
A horseless carriage, reeking gasoline
Instead of fragrant breath, with ominous horn
Like cries from someone it has flattened out,
And grim disaster running in its train.
The newspaper I own, the *Register*,
Is kept informed of all accident,
Death and destruction brought by motor cars.
I spread the facts, allowing a full page,

Bread Loaf Anthology (edited by Lee, W. Storrs) with the US Copyright Office. Therefore, although the Middlebury College Press is now defunct, it is safe to treat these excerpts as part of the public domain.

¹⁴ Joseph Battell Dead. (1915, March 10). *The Middlebury Campus*, 11(2), p. 3.

¹⁵ Viola C. White (1890-1977) worked as the curator of the Abernethy Collection of American Literature at Middlebury College. She was the author of several volumes of poetry. However, even more notably, she recorded her daily walks in the Vermont wilderness. There are over 50,000 pages of those diary entries in the Special Collections of Middlebury College.

And solidly they fill it every week.
I plan a countryside unmechanized,
Secure for woodlands and for horses still.

As these poetic excerpts illustrate, Joseph Battell continues to loom large in the mythology of the Bread Loaf wilderness. James Maddox (1992), Director of the Bread Loaf School of English from 1989-2010, characterizes Battell as “an American megalomaniacal type, a milder Thomas Sutpen, a landbound Ahab, all that Gatsby has always wanted to be” (p. 8). Despite Battell’s many eccentricities, the property grew under his proprietorship. Thirty years following the purchase of the farmland, Battell advertised the Inn as “having grown to be one of the largest and most completely equipped of the summer resorts of Vermont.”¹⁶ Anderson (1969) offers a brief account of the expansion of the Bread Loaf Inn in the 1870s and 1880s, which included the construction of several of the cottages as the estate expanded. Each of these cottages still stands along the highway today, the older cottages distinguished from the newer cottages by the color of the paint on their wooden slats.¹⁷

By the time the final expansion had been completed in 1894, the property had grown to include approximately fifty guest rooms. In addition to the guest rooms, the large dining room could accommodate around two hundred and fifty dinner guests (Rougeau, 2023). Many of the vegetables were cultivated in the extensive gardens on the property. Furthermore, the estate operated as an active dairy-farm, processing the milk from a herd of “some hundred head of Jersey cattle” (Anderson, 1969, p. 7). In addition to cattle, the property housed a breeding facility for the Morgan horse. With Brandy Brook as its main water supply, the Bread Loaf Inn

¹⁶ Battell, J. (1895). *Bread Loaf Inn*. Library of Congress.

¹⁷ Maddox, J. (1992). Opening Night Address [Speech], Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 1992, Bread Loaf School of English, F7, Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.

was largely self-sufficient during this era of its history (Perlman, 2019). Maddox (1992) suggests that this self-sufficiency was intentional:

The place was a resort, but I think it was also a faint echo of the American nineteenth-century utopian communities. It was the great good place, the green world in the heart of Nature, the place, precisely, to escape the clamor of the nineteenth century—so why not barricade the road? Bread Loaf as Joseph Battell ran it was a totally characteristic American blend of entrepreneurial genius and Nature worship. (p. 8)

Much of this self-sufficiency has been long since lost. The barn, which once housed dairy-equipment, operates as an academic building today, the home of an assortment of classrooms. The cows are, sadly, long gone. The property has evolved in other subtle ways since its years as an operating summer inn. Larch Cottage was built to house the Hoi Polloi, the dining hall waitstaff, during the early years of the Bread Loaf School of English. The Hoi Polloi have long since been disbanded, replaced by student waitstaff, and Larch Cottage currently operates as additional student housing. There are also notable absences from the original landscape. Large portions of the original property were destroyed in an electrical fire in 1931. The music hall, the bowling alley, and the newly dedicated library were all lost to the flames. The main building of the Inn was saved due to a fortunate wind out of the southwest. Due to this favorable wind, much of the original Bread Loaf Inn remains standing, largely unchanged save minor renovations, to this day.

1.1.1 The Whisperings of an Old Pine

The Bread Loaf Inn will, naturally, feature prominently in the history of the School of English. Joseph Battell had no way of knowing it, but he left an indelible mark on the future of English education when he bequeathed the property to Middlebury College upon his death. However, the bequest of the property was not his only contribution to the graduate school. His literary legacy is also worth mentioning. In an article published in *The Middlebury Campus* on

the occasion of his death, Joseph Battell was described as an “indefatigable writer,” best known for his “philosophical” novel, *Ellen, or The Whisperings of an Old Pine*, first published in 1901.¹⁸ Robert M. Gay, Director of the Bread Loaf School of English from 1930-1936, describes the novel poetically in the following excerpt, first published in the *Bread Loaf Anthology*:¹⁹

His book, the only child he had,
Seemed to the thoughtless almost mad:
But it was only a groping, stumbling
Search of an ardent spirit, fumbling
In darkness for the truth—poetic,
But still (who knows?) perhaps prophetic.

Prophetic is, perhaps, a generous reading. Weighing in at over eight-hundred pages, the intrepid reader must prove similarly indefatigable if they hope to read *Ellen* from cover to cover. In *Fads and Fallacies in the Name of Science* (1952), mathematician Martin Gardner notes: “Few odder works than *Ellen* have ever appeared in the United States. All three volumes are in the form of a Platonic dialogue between a sixteen-year-old girl named Ellen and the narrator who happens to be an old Vermont pine tree” (p. 70). The novel answers the question that none of the transcendentalists dared to ask—what would happen if a pine tree took up an interest in Euclidean geometry?

Indeed, the old pine frequently waxes poetic about an odd assortment of esoteric topics, including the fundamental truths of religion, trigonometry, acoustical physics, and the modern applications of electricity. *Ellen* was heavily advertised as a scientific treatise. Perhaps unsurprisingly, one such advertisement appears in *The Dial*, the chief publication of the

¹⁸ Joseph Battell Dead. (1915, March 10). *The Middlebury Campus*, 11(2), p. 2.

¹⁹ Although the *Bread Loaf Anthology* was originally published in 1939, it entered into public domain in 1968 through the renewal trapdoor. The period between 1929-1963 is tricky in terms of copyright law. All works published before 1929 have entered into public domain due to expiration. Furthermore, all works published after 1963 had their copyrights automatically renewed. Any work published in between these dates had to file a renewal with the copyright office during the 28th year following publication. There are no renewal records on file for the *Bread Loaf Anthology* (edited by Lee, W. Storrs) with the US Copyright Office.

transcendentalists in the latter half of the eighteenth century. In this advertisement, Battell (1901) takes a rhetorical stance, defending his novel as “thoroughly and entirely scientific, placing science upon a permanently firmer, truer, and sounder basis.”²⁰ The editors of *Printer’s Ink* suggest that there might be more to this advertisement than meets the eye. In a brief column covering the novel, Shaw (1901) hints at the necessity for such frequent reassurances: “Probably no author who ever claimed the Green Mountain State as the place of his nativity ever received such sarcastic, poignant press notices, or to whom the old adage, ‘A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country,’ could be better applied than to Mr. Battell.”²¹ This press coverage might suggest that *Ellen* likely proved just as baffling to audiences at the turn of the century as it remains for modern readers. Indeed, in his address to students at the opening of one summer session at the turn of the century, Jim Maddox noted that “only a rich man willing to put up his own money could possibly get such a book published” (p. 38). It is hard to imagine that any contemporary publishing house would take the risk on such a publication, but then as now, money speaks.

Ellen is a bewildering, and at times amusing, read. Therefore, it remains a favorite of students on the mountain campus. When I first encountered the novel, it was during my first summer session at the Vermont campus. We were gathered around a campfire on the banks of John’s Pond for the first pond reading of the summer.²² His acoustic guitar hanging from his neck, the host of the pond reading was reciting a passage from the novel, his voice booming throughout the clearing. In the passage, the Old Pine attempts to explain Newtonian physics:

²⁰ Battell, J. (1901, Oct. 1). *Ellen or, the whisperings of an old pine: A philosophical novel. The Dial*, p. 224.

²¹ Shaw, H.O. (1902, Jan. 1). Yankee Tricks. *Printers’ Ink* 38(1), p. 26. Decker Communications Incorporated.

²² During my years as a student on the mountain, the pond reading had been ritualized in campus life. Each week, the host cabin would invite one of the faculty to read at a bonfire at the edge of John’s Pond. However, those readings each week would begin, without fail, with an elaborate reading from *Ellen*.

And though the body be firm and hard, but every way flexible, since it cannot impel the medium by its tremors anywhere without yielding to it somewhere else, the medium receding from the parts of the body where it is pressed will always come round in a circle to the parts that yield to it. (p. 120)

In the hands of modern students, the passage is rife with innuendo. Our host leaned into the reading exactly where you might expect him to—*firm, hard, tremors*, and eventually, *the parts that yield*. Over the summer, similar quotes were read out of context in lusty voices, the skits growing more and more elaborate, more ludicrous, as each pond-reading host attempted to outdo the others.

These suggestive readings perhaps explain how the book came to be so mischaracterized in a *Boston Magazine* article covering a campus scandal in the early 90s. In that article, McGowan (1991) summarizes *Ellen* as “an account of how the author, Joseph Battell, the wealthy Vermonter who donated Bread Loaf to Middlebury, would take young lovelies from the surrounding countryside into the woods and have his way with them” (p. 62). It is a startling summary, especially since *Ellen* was originally marketed as “an attempt to present certain views in reference to the facts and principles of science under the form of a novel.”²³ While there is no doubt the psychoanalysts would have a field day with many of the potentially suggestive passages from the novel, it is nevertheless a mischaracterization. Maddox (2000) notes that, although it is clear that the old pine tree represents the “thinly disguised Joseph Battell” (p. 38), the text itself is *not* lewd in character, merely suggestive. But perhaps the mistake is understandable given the occasionally salacious reenactments along the banks of John’s Pond, which occasionally include exceptionally well-endowed hand-crafted puppets. Given the source material, the performances relish double entendre. Eventually, after the laughter died away each

²³ The School Journal. (1902, Apr. 4). *Ellen, or the Whisperings of an Old Pine*. *The School Journal*, 64(15), p. 430.

According to local historian David Bain, Battell's only sibling, Emma, found *The Yankee Boy from Home* so distasteful that she purchased the entire first print run. She burned them, each and every copy. I can imagine her now, solemnly throwing each volume into the pyre, watching the handsome leather binding catching fire. The pages curl as the flames consume them greedily, ash catching in the breeze on moth wings. It seems curious to me, knowing this, that Bread Loaf students read her brother's books around an open flame. It is easy to imagine Emma scowling on the periphery of our circle, angry that she was not able to finish the job—not entirely.

Ellen has never disappeared from campus lore entirely. However, it experienced a notable resurgence in *The Crumb* near the turn of the century. The course offerings in the late 1990s may account for this comeback. In the summer of 1999, Giles Barth taught a course almost entirely devoted to *Ellen* entitled *Sermons on the Mountain: A Practicum in Waxing Homiletic*. The course catalog description reads: "This course will consider the life lessons, both explicit and implicit, within the text and utilize these as starting points for the creation of our own homilies." Surely, it is no coincidence there was a renewal of interest in *Ellen* in following summers, as reflected by the novel's place of honor at pond readings following the restoration of John's Pond. In the opening remarks of the subsequent summer session, Maddox (2000) acknowledges how the book is frequently read as ludicrous: "Laughing at Whisperings of an Old Pine is like falling off a log, like shooting fish in a barrel." But he then offers a much more generous reading of the book, discussing the relationship between nature and education. However, contemporary students are rarely so forgiving. The ongoing influence of *Ellen* on campus ritual and lore will be explored at much greater length in chapter two of this dissertation. Rest assured that Joseph Battell continues to haunt the campus to this day vis-à-vis his questionable literary masterpiece.

1.1.2 *The Last Will and Testament of Joseph Battell*

But long before his literary endeavors became the subject of widespread parody, Battell was best known for his generous final bequest to Middlebury College. On February 23, 1915, Joseph Battell died while traveling home from Florida, succumbing to sudden illness at the Georgetown University Hospital in Washington, D.C.²⁴ Local historian, David Bain, suggests that his death was likely the result of a cerebral hemorrhage following a brief stint at the Washington Lunatic Asylum.²⁵ In his last will and testament, Joseph Battell bequeathed large stretches of the wilderness to Middlebury College with the clear intent of protecting the virgin forest from the timber industry:

Being impressed with the evils attending the extensive destruction of the original mountain forests of our country, and being mindful of the benefits that will accrue to, and the pleasures that will be enjoyed by the citizens of the State of Vermont and the visitors within her borders from the preservation of a considerable tract of mountain forest in its virgin and primeval state, and believing that the popularity of Middlebury college will be thereby greatly enhanced, I therefore further give and devise to the president and fellows of Middlebury College in trust forever, all those portions of my wild lands in Hancock that lie within the following bounds... to have and hold all said lands, with their appurtenances, to said president and fellows of Middlebury College and their successors forever, in trust as a park for the benefit of said Middlebury College and the students thereof, subject to much reasonable rules and regulations as the trustees for the time being of said Middlebury College may make.²⁶

On April 7, 1915, *The Middlebury Campus*, the undergraduate campus newspaper, reprinted brief excerpts from the will, offering commentary on the extraordinary nature of the bequest. The article notes that the will was “remarkable for the public nature of the bequests, which are not only made to public institutions but for the use and enjoyment of people at large” (p. 2). The property had *not* been bequeathed to turn a profit, but instead in the name of preservation, not

²⁴ Joseph Battell Dead. (1915, March 10). *The Middlebury Campus*, 11(2), p. 2.

²⁵ Bain, D. (2021, October 28). *Joseph Battell: A life and a legacy* [Lecture]. Henry Sheldon Museum of Vermont History, Middlebury, Vermont.

²⁶ Mr. Battell’s Will. (1915, April 7). *The Middlebury Campus*, 11(3), p. 2.

just for the college, but also for the citizens of Vermont. Storrs Lee (1939) narrates the apocryphal story of the morning when Joseph Battell first witnessed “a woodchopper slashing into a nearby timber lot” while sitting on the porch of the Bread Loaf Inn (p. x). Storrs Lee explains how this moment had a lasting impact on the philanthropist: “His friends were paying \$10,000 for paintings to hang on their walls. Why not buy the subject instead of the reproduction and preserve it for all time?” (p. x). In addition to this impulse towards conservation, Maddox (2000) argues that Joseph Battell not only sought to preserve the wilderness through his last will and testament, but “to people” the wilderness as well (p. 44). Given the unusual nature of the bequest, the archives contain a number of legal exchanges during this time frame discussing how to best manage the property. In one such letter addressed to President Ezra Brainerd, William B.C. Stickney discusses the details of the will. In that typewritten letter, Stickney enumerates the “practical and physical advantages” of the bequest, including opportunities for recreation as well as the study of botany, animal behavior, and forestry.²⁷ The bequest came to be seen as a boon for Middlebury College.

However, the Trustees of the College remained uncertain about how to best approach the management of the Bread Loaf Inn, which had also been included in the bequest. In an address to the New England Association of Teachers of English, Wilfred Davison (1928) wrote, “The problem arose as to what proper use an educational institution could make of a summer hotel” (p. 5). Regarding the problem of the Inn, Anderson (1969) writes:

The Inn, to be blunt, was becoming rather shabby, or perhaps one might say shopworn. It had never had electricity and depended upon kerosene lamps and candles and lanterns, with flashlights most useful. To no one’s surprise, therefore, the Inn lost money in a most discouraging fashion, and the Trustees of the College came to regard it as a white elephant. (p. 9)

²⁷ Stickney, William B. C., 1845-1930. (1917). Letter from William B. C. Stickney to Pres. Ezra Brainerd [Documents]. <https://jstor.org/stable/community.28479578>

Anderson describes how the cost to maintain the Inn quickly grew unmanageable, particularly in the wake of the war years, leading to the proposed sale of the property. In the winter of 1919, the Board of Trustees at Middlebury voted to punt the property to a real estate agent.²⁸ However, that vote was rescinded the following summer when the Director of the Summer Session, Dr. Edward D. Collins, proposed a different fate for the Bread Loaf Inn, one tied to the growth of the Middlebury College Summer Session.

1.2 The School of English Arrives at Bread Loaf

The evolution of the School of English coincides with the evolution of the Middlebury College Summer Session. Therefore, it now becomes necessary to explore another branch in the history of Middlebury College. The earliest seeds for the graduate program were planted when Dr. Walter E. Howard, Professor of History and Dean of the College, helmed the inaugural summer of the Middlebury College Summer Session in 1909.²⁹ Stephen A. Freeman (1974), long-time faculty at the Language Schools, cites the desire to invest in the training of teachers as one of the primary motivations for the establishment of the program. Nearly one-fifth of living graduates of Middlebury College were teachers at the time.³⁰ However, Middlebury College didn't have programs designed to support their continued professional growth at the time. Furthermore, although elementary education had benefited significantly from the growth of normal schools in the region, there had been few programs designed to improve instruction in secondary schools in the state of Vermont.

²⁸ Anderson, G.K. (1969). *Bread Loaf School of English: The first fifty years*. Middlebury College Press.

²⁹ Collins, E.D. (1929). *How the English School Came to Bread Loaf*. *Bread Loaf*. [Pamphlet]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

³⁰ Collins, E.D. (1909). *The organization of the department of pedagogy in Middlebury College*. [Course Bulletin]. Middlebury College.

Therefore, President John Martin Thomas of Middlebury College petitioned the Vermont legislature in 1908 for “an annual grant of \$6,000 to create a Department of Pedagogy” (Freeman, 1974, p. 33). The petition identified the urgent need to improve Vermont’s educational system at the secondary level. The Department of Pedagogy aimed to serve these public needs by supplementing the work of educational agencies already at work in the state. The legislature granted the money, leading to the establishment of the Department of Pedagogy by the following year, helmed by Dr. Edward D. Collins. The organizational plan for the department included money allocated for college extension courses in pedagogy. Freeman (1974) also discusses how the creation of the Department of Pedagogy coincided with the creation of the Middlebury College Summer Sessions, explaining that “the primary *raison d’être* of the Language Schools has always been the training of teachers” (p. 34). Indeed, the pedagogical mission of the Summer Session was reflected in many of its early programming policies. Summer courses would allow teachers to continue their studies without interrupting their teaching obligations during the school year. Tuition was waived for all full-time teachers and clergymen employed within the state of Vermont. Furthermore, the *Middlebury College Catalogue* from 1908 promised that special attention would be given to the needs of high school teachers. The earliest course catalogs included coursework in European Education and American Education, and these course offerings quickly expanded to include coursework in a wide assortment of academic subjects.

The Summer Sessions proved successful almost from the start. In his annual report following the inaugural summer, President Thomas celebrated “the beginning of a successful Summer session with an attendance of 87 the first year” (p. 5). Enrollment continued to grow in the subsequent decade. In 1913, the addition of music courses prompted the first organizational

overhaul of the program, leading to the creation of separately housed and managed schools, including the Modern Language Schools.³¹ Furthermore, Dr. Edward D. Collins (1929) credits the creation of separate schools with a boom in enrollment: “Under the new stimulus, the number went to 222 in 1918, to 298 in 1919, to 339 in 1920” (p. 16). Although Middlebury College had been making steady expansions to their campus facilities throughout the 1910s, soon the “college campus was over-run,” and there was not enough space to house the growing student population during the summer term (p. 16).

Thus, the reorganization of the program led to the first of two interrelated problems. The first problem involved housing the growing number of summer students, and the second problem involved departmental organization. The creation of separate Modern Language Schools and Music Schools left behind an odd assortment of courses that did not quite fit in any of the other departments. Collins describes what was left as the “odds and ends of bargain counter remnants” (p. 18). Since many of the other departments were taught in an assortment of modern languages, this seemingly random assortment of coursework had been lumped together into the “English School,” despite the fact that it “was not a School of English at all” in the traditional sense of an English department (p. 18).

Wilfred Davison credits the idea of the Bread Loaf School of English to Dr. Edward D. Collins, who was serving as the Director of the Summer Session in 1919.³² The suggestion to overhaul the “rags and tatters of instruction” characterizing the “so-called” English school at the time, first occurred during a meeting held to decide the fate of the Bread Loaf Inn (Collins, 1929, p. 18). Perhaps it is fitting, then, that Dr. Edward D. Collins offers us the only surviving firsthand

³¹ Collins, E.D. (1929). How the English School Came to Bread Loaf. *Bread Loaf*. [Pamphlet]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

³² Davison, W. (1929). The Bread Loaf idea. *Bread Loaf*. [Pamphlet]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

account of this meeting, published in a brief pamphlet on the tenth anniversary of the school.³³ According to this essay, the meeting was held on the gentle hills of the Widow's Clearing on a sunny day shortly before the close of the summer session of 1919. There are no surviving minutes from this meeting. Furthermore, it is unlikely that minutes *were* kept at all given the informal setting.³⁴ Collins (1929) only directly identifies three out of four of the men in attendance: "the Director, President Thomas, Dean de Visme of the French School, and one other person" (p. 22). The fourth person in this account remains curiously unnamed. However, based on the rhetorical context of the statement, George K. Anderson (1969) suggests that the fourth member of this party must have been Wilfred Davison, who would go on to act as one of the first directors of the Bread Loaf School of English (p. 12-13). Although the exact identity of this fourth attendee remains uncertain, Collins' account offers us a glimpse into the proceedings:

By successive moves various possibilities were checked off. Dean de Visme with great care and evident seriousness summed up his reasons against the transfer of the French School from the college to Bread Loaf, with the entire plant devoted to its use. His arguments seemed conclusive. At length Bread Loaf and the so-called English school alone remained in the picture. (p. 22)

Dean de Visme's reluctance to relocate the French School to the Bread Loaf Inn illustrates the lingering skepticism regarding the suitability of the Inn as an educational asset. The Bread Loaf Inn had been built as a summer hotel for the New England elite; it had *not* been designed to house several hundred graduate students alongside their professors. To complicate matters even further, although much in need of repair, the site still served as a functioning hotel and would continue to host outside guests during the earliest years of the school. Indeed, the peculiarity of

³³ Collins, E.D. (1929). How the English School Came to Bread Loaf. *Bread Loaf*. [Pamphlet]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

³⁴ George K. Anderson (1969) argues that it was not custom for minutes to be kept at many of these informal meetings, much to the lament of historians (p. 12).

the academic facilities is often noted in early accounts of campus life. In a reprint of “The English Leaflet” dating from 1923,³⁵ Lucia Granville Pittman writes:

The School of English has had to accommodate itself to the building as it was. One student wrote home that her class in vocal technique met in the music room, history of the drama in the bowling alley, and stage design in the woodshed that they were making over into a workshop, but on sunny days any of the recitations might be held under a tree on the lawn. (p. 4)

Despite the obvious challenges presented by the unorthodox academic facilities, it was decided that the Inn would host the inaugural summer of the School of English the following year.

Collins suggests that the early plans for the school were vague. The college printed a single sentence describing the new school in the 1919-1920 course catalog, which stated that the aim of the school would be to offer instruction in the “technique of teaching, composition, literary criticism, and expression” (Collins, 1929, p. 22). No other information was printed in the catalog because, simply put, there was no other information available at the time. Collins writes, “That was all that anybody, including the Director, knew about it” (p. 23). He compares planning for the first summer to putting together a jigsaw without the pieces. Indeed, the publicity department distributed lists of possible courses long before any faculty was officially hired. But the college was not operating blindly. Instead, their experiences facilitating the modern language school helped guide program development, even before the director was hired.

1.2.1 Putting Together the Picture Puzzle

Dr. Edward D. Collins served as director during the first session of the school. Dr. Charles B. Wright and Dr. Wilfred E. Davison were appointed as Dean and Assistant Dean respectively. However, Wright initially turned down the offer. He was a senior professor in the

³⁵ Pittman, L.G. (1923). *The English Leaflet*. [Pamphlet]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

Middlebury English department, and he had been looking forward to a well-earned retirement. Therefore, he was hesitant to helm the inaugural summer of the program. However, he reluctantly agreed to accept the position when searches further afield failed to turn up a suitable candidate.³⁶ Wilfred E. Davison would take up the role in the following summer. Beginning the long-standing tradition of recruiting faculty from other institutions, the teaching faculty included appointments not only from the college, but also from institutions further afield. In addition to those already mentioned, the faculty on record in the course catalog for the first summer are listed below:

Stanley T. Williams, PhD
Instructor in English, Yale University
Alice Howard Spaulding, B.A., M.A.
Secretary-Treasurer, The 47 Workshop
Head of the Department of English, Brookline High School
Vernon C. Harrington, L.H.D.
Boardman Professor of Philosophy, Middlebury College
May B. Severy, A.B.
Instructor in English, State Normal School,
Milwaukee, Wis.; University of Chicago
Harold A. Severy, A.M., M.S.
Instructor in Botany, Milwaukee, Wis.
Julian W. Abernethy, Ph.D., Litt. D.
Author, American Literature, English Literature, Correct Pronunciations
Frank W. Cady, A.M., B. Litt. (Oxon)
Professor of English, Middlebury College
Charles J. Woodbury, A.B.
*Author, Talks with Ralph Waldo Emerson*³⁷

During the inaugural summer, course offerings included Chaucer, Browning, Nineteenth Century Literature, Shakespeare, Fundamentals of Reading and Speaking, Principles of Poetics, Creative Writing, Dramatic Production, English in the Secondary Schools and Literature in High School

³⁶ Collins, E.D. (1929). How the English School Came to Bread Loaf. *Bread Loaf*. [Pamphlet]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

³⁷ Bread Loaf School of English. (1920). "Bread Loaf School of English Catalog" [Course catalog], *Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 1920*, Bread Loaf School of English, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.

and College. Harold Severy offered his expertise in the flora and fauna of the Green Mountains on school hikes, beginning the long-standing tradition of embedding the curriculum into the surrounding geography (Anderson, 1969, p. 16). Historical records note that 51 students were admitted for the inaugural summer of the program (p. 17). Unfortunately, many records from that first summer have disappeared. The archives are frustratingly silent beyond a few administrative footnotes in the budget reports.

Despite the lack of archival material from the first summer session, there are several surviving accounts from the first decade of the school, including firsthand accounts from several of the faculty who would have been present at the time. One of those accounts comes from Wilfred Davison. Near the end of his tenure as director, Davison discussed the educational philosophy of the Bread Loaf School of English at the New England Association of Teachers of English. In that lecture, he offers a glimpse at a typical Bread Loaf summer during the 1920s.³⁸ He begins by explaining the pedagogical vision for the graduate school. Unlike many traditional graduate programs, the coursework at the school has never been focused on research. Instead, the program focuses on offering courses on the studio plan, “by which students and teachers work together in the friendly informality which characterizes everything at Bread Loaf” (Davison, 1929, p. 8). It is not dissimilar to the work later espoused by the National Writing Project. Distancing the school from the bohemian art scene of Greenwich Village, Davison likens the academic model to the Mark Hopkins ideal, alluding to an era of small country colleges characterized by simple surroundings, earnest students, and dedicated teachers engaged in collegial conversations (Rudolph, 1965). He describes Bread Loaf as a self-contained community

³⁸ Davison, W. (1929). The Bread Loaf idea. *Bread Loaf*. [Pamphlet]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

which would be difficult to replicate under different conditions. After all, the nearest village, Ripton, was difficult to reach without an automobile, and the roads remained treacherous.

The School of English became its own sort of village. Instructors and students not only conversed in the classrooms. Literary conversations spilled into the parlors and the porches.³⁹ Davison (1929) writes: “To hear John Livingston Lowes in a lecture, for instance, as was our privilege last summer, is a rare treat; to sit with Mr. Lowes watching a Bread Loaf sunset, that is a real experience” (p. 9). During the first decade of the school, students had the rare opportunity to become personally acquainted not only with their professors, but with an assortment of esteemed literary figures as well, including Robert Frost, Marguerite Wilkinson, Willa Cather, John Farrar, Carl Sandburg, Louis Untermeyer, Edwin Markham, William Lyon Phelps, Isabel Paterson, and Anna Hempstead Branch. It should be noted that there was only one documented lecture during the inaugural summer (Anderson, 1969, p. 26). However, guest lectures soon became a hallmark of the school, with Robert Frost featured as one of the most frequent guest lecturers. In fact, Robert Frost was such a frequent visitor of the school that rumors of his haunting linger in the modern folklore of the school.

Citing these esteemed literary visitors, Anderson (1965) argues that during the early summers one could “detect faint symptoms of a trend toward converting at least part of the School into another MacDowell Colony or Yaddo Conference for creative artists” (p. 42). Unwilling to lose sight of the original pedagogical vision for the school, Wilfred Davison soon saw a need to develop a separate conference for writers. Therefore, John Farrar, friend of the school and founder of two publishing houses, launched the Bread Loaf Writers’ Conference as its director in 1926. The Writers’ Conference always immediately followed the end of the

³⁹ Davison, W. (1929). The Bread Loaf idea. *Bread Loaf*. [Pamphlet]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

summer term for the School of English. Although both programs developed their own distinct identities, modern students at the School of English continue to benefit from high-profile guests. The informal opportunities to benefit from collegial conversations with these leaders in the field remain characteristic of the student experience to this day. I remember one such informal conversation as a student, which occurred late one evening on the porch of Larch Cottage. Jasmine Johnson, Professor at Brown University, and Vinson Cunningham, staff writer at *The New Yorker*, happened to wander past following a keynote lecture on democracy and the teaching of literature. They deigned to join the students on the cramped porch benches to continue the conversation in an informal setting. These spontaneous conversations were common during my time as a student. There were numerous occasions when I shared lunch with my celebrated professor of medieval literature, John Fyler, complete with extended discussions about Chaucer over dessert.

In addition to conversations on the porches and in the parlors, Davison (1929) describes how the school extended into the surrounding wilderness as well. He writes: “Our week is so planned that afternoons and Saturdays are free, and when Saturday morning comes, we drop the books and the conferences and take to the woods, or do something else that is equally interesting and refreshing” (p. 13). In addition to recreational activities—including tennis, bowling, croquet, and swimming—students had the opportunity to participate in organized hiking excursions along the Long Trail. Early copies of *The Crumb* are filled with notices advertising upcoming expeditions into the virgin forests surrounding the campus, including overnight trips to Emily Proctor Lodge on Bread Loaf Mountain. Although Davison suggests that students left their books behind at the Bread Loaf Inn, I suspect that their literary conversations extended into the wilderness as well. My first hike as a student took place along the Camel’s Hump trail. Prior to

arriving at the school, I had no experience with hiking, and did not know what to expect from the 2,588-foot gain in elevation. Needless to say, I did not make it very far on the hike. However, I did manage to find another student huffing and puffing up the trail, and we paused to discuss the books we were reading for our classes. Several hours later, we were still there, sitting on a fallen log, chatting about postcolonial literature when our classmates returned, triumphant, from further up the trail. I spent countless hours in the forest that summer. My experiences in the classroom bled into every single one of those excursions, and it is easy to imagine that the same would have held true during that first summer session as well. After all, our forms of recreation have seemingly not changed much in the past century.

1.2.2 The Davison Directorship

Following the first experimental summer, the directorship of the school passed from Dr. Charles Baker Wright to Wilfred Davison. The Davison Directorship lasted from 1920-1929. His tenure was unexpectedly cut short following his untimely death ten days after a routine tonsillectomy, although there are conflicting reports about the precise cause of death.⁴⁰ In a poem entitled, “Memorial,” published posthumously in the *Bread Loaf Anthology*, Davison reflects on his legacy:

Give me no marble slab nor sculptured bronze
To keep a dead name living when my body dies.
Let all that was of passing worth go back to earth
Where all that’s mortal lies.

My monument be what of living truth
Has flowed through me to other men.
So shall survive what is of lasting worth.
Thus though I die, then shall I live again.

⁴⁰ Middlebury College News. (1929, Dec. 1). Wilfred Davison. *Middlebury College News IV*(1), pg. 8.

There is no doubt that Davison left an enduring legacy on the mountain, living on in the programs he helped establish on the mountain. Before this tragedy, he was well-known for combining “excellence of teaching with sound scholarship,” skills which served him well in the role (Anderson, 1969, p. 27). Although the enrollment numbers may have remained relatively stagnant during the 1920s, there were numerous notable curricular innovations during this period. The first notable development was the founding of the program in theater. The program, first helmed by Alice Spaulding and Donald Oenslager of the 47 Workshop at Harvard University, continues to flourish to this day (Anderson, 1969, p. 29). The Vermont campus continues to host the Bread Loaf Acting Ensemble each summer, working with students and faculty to produce at least one major theatrical production (“Theater at Bread Loaf”). In addition to the campus theater production, the ensemble collaborates with professors to incorporate theater experiences into the study of literature.

Furthermore, the first session of Wilfred Davison’s deanship also marked the inaugural appearance of Robert Frost, who became a longstanding friend of the school. This dissertation will return to Robert Frost—as well as his ghost—in chapter five. Though Frost was never officially affiliated with the school beyond the odd invited lecture, he would wander its grounds every summer from the school’s founding until his death, drawn like a moth to the flame. There are numerous photographs featuring Robert Frost competing in the annual faculty softball game, and his many years on campus are well-documented in the notebooks of Peter J. Stanlis, who first met the poet as a student on the mountain.

Following the Davison Directorship, the leadership of the graduate school passed to Robert Malcolm Gay. George K. Anderson (1969) faithfully continues writing the history of the Bread Loaf School of English through subsequent decades, marching lockstep from director to

director, all the while discussing various innovations during the first fifty years. His historical research was foundational to the beginning stages of this dissertation, and I am deeply indebted to his work. However, it adds little to the conversation to continue to merely reproduce his scholarship here. Instead, we will now turn away from traditional historiographical methods towards the possibility of crafting more-than-human histories through the present absences that haunt the archives.

Discussing the accumulation of ghost stories in the Hudson Valley, Richardson (2005) once argued that the regions become “propitious for hauntings” through “a dual accumulation of substances and absences” (p. 497). Bread Loaf demonstrates a similar pattern, with each summer enacting another refrain in the history of the program. In order to better understand this phenomenon, we will now turn towards the theoretical framework of my dissertation, read through the ritual of the *Ellen* reading. It would be easy to dismiss this task as laughable. The students themselves certainly don’t take *Ellen* very seriously. However, even when we’re tempted to laugh at an odd turn-of-phrase, Jim Maddox (2000) reminds us that there is more to *Ellen* than innuendo: “Battell is not leering at Ellen; he is in fact trying to teach her” (p. 40). Indeed, the *Ellen* reading demonstrates how the early history of the school continues to haunt the present, offering an entry point for telling more-than-human histories.

What can we learn if instead of laughing, historians instead attempt to attune to the whisperings of that old pine tree?

Chapter 2: More-Than-Human Theories

“How did I get up here on this high mountain, do you ask? I was born here. My ancestors were here before me. It is our home, this mountain-top.” —Joseph Battell, *Ellen, or the Whisperings of an Old Pine, Vol. 1*.

“The winds of autumn blew fresh, and its deep colors stretched far and wide over our mountains, when Ellen came again. She held her hat in her hand as she emerged from the forest, and the sunshine seemed to be comparing itself with her soft hair, to see if there was any difference in their color. Stepping lightly across the rocks, and addressing me, she said: ‘Ellen has come to continue her review of the Yale College geometry.’” —Joseph Battell, *Ellen, or the Whisperings of an Old Pine, Vol. 2*.

The fireflies are just beginning to flicker in the meadow, flashes of light amidst the goldenrod and steeplebush, when the students begin their sojourn to the pond behind the barn, their path illuminated by flickering kerosene torches. It is a weekly ritual, one that dates back at least twenty years. In the 1990s, a similar ritual took place up the dirt road behind campus near Gilmore Cottage, the lodgings of the acting ensemble, but this refrain of the ritual is known by its new name—the pond reading. The bonfire burns near the shoreline of John’s Pond, surrounded by Adirondack chairs. However, most students will choose instead to sit in the grass, their plastic cups of beer frothing over the sides. Other students grab wooden skewers, spearing marshmallows to roast over the fire. The sun soon disappears entirely, replaced by the dark expanse of stars. The Milky Way is visible on clear nights, the pale streak of light spilling across the night sky. It would be easy to lay back in the grass, to fall asleep there, warmed by the fire, but the night is still young. Instead, the host holds up an ancient copy of *Ellen*, calling for silence. As though inspired by the ancient poets, the pond reading finally begins with an invocation to two strange muses—an old pine tree and the young girl who finds herself returning summer after summer to learn in conversation with nature.

My theoretical framework is hopelessly entangled within the narrative of the pond reading—a narrative that would eventually lead me into a jumbled snarl of poststructuralism and posthumanism. My journey into the bramble begins with my first encounters with one of the most important books on the mountain: *Ellen, or The Whisperings of an Old Pine* by Joseph Battell. The novel has become deeply enmeshed in the culture of the Vermont campus, offering a compelling entry point for *why* I have chosen to think with poststructuralism and posthumanism. During my years as a student on the mountain, the students would gather on the banks of the pond each week to participate in the pond reading. In many ways, these gatherings mirrored the experience of the graduate school as a whole. Therefore, my theoretical framework grapples with the curious choice of *Ellen* as the invocation for these pond readings. Is there more sincerity in our preoccupation with *Ellen* than we care to admit? And beyond the novel’s innuendo—which is, admittedly, *everywhere*—where else might the novel begin to lead us when we endeavor to think with theory?

2.1 *Ellen* as Entanglement

Throughout *Ellen, or the Whisperings of an Old Pine*, Ellen journeys up from the valley to the mountainside, seeking knowledge beneath the Old Pine’s boughs. The image sets up a striking binary—the human and non-human in dialogue, each learning from the other as they ponder the questions of the universe. However, as these dialogues continually develop over the course of several hundred pages, the boundaries between the human and non-human begin to weaken, growing more and more porous as girl and tree entangle into an embodiment of something more-than-human. To borrow language from Jackson (2010), the girl and tree “meet, collide, and contaminate one another in the threshold” (p. 581).

The entanglement of the human and more-than-human in *Ellen*, might be said to mirror the entanglement of the human and more-than-human during the pond reading, itself a microcosm of the history of the Bread Loaf School of English. What does it mean for the human and more-than-human to entangle within a poststructuralist—and posthumanist—framework? In order to better understand these encounters across the history of the institution, I turn first to St. Pierre’s (2000) poststructural feminist theories, which help elucidate the nature of binaries and their subsequent collapse. From there, I pick-up Barad’s posthumanist and new materialist theories as a way of better understanding the nature of that collapse. What actually happens in the encounter between girl and pine tree, and more importantly, what might it tell us about the role of more-than-human protagonists in the history of the graduate program?

2.1.1 Beginning with Humanism

Before we can begin an overview of poststructuralist feminist theory, it is important to understand its relationship to humanism. St. Pierre (2000) points out the interwoven nature of the two ideologies: “as a response to humanism, [poststructuralism] must always be implicated in the problematic it addresses” (p. 479). Therefore, although poststructuralism critiques humanism, it can never truly escape it. Indeed, even as we attempt to disentangle the encounter between the human and more-than-human in *Ellen*, we run the risk of inadvertently reinscribing the very categories that we seek to trouble with poststructuralism. Poststructuralist readings are always themselves tottering on the edge of collapse.

However, St. Pierre (2000) demonstrates how humanist theories “produce very real, material, and damaging structures in the world” (p. 481). She resists humanism’s tendency to essentialize—a move that contributes to the erasure of complexity and nuance. St. Pierre laments, “So often we are forced to group things/ideas/people that are similar but significantly

different into the same category” (p. 480). Humanism erases differences in order to organize the world into neat, reductive categories. Instead of recognizing vital differences, a humanist framework endeavors to create a “single identity category” within a given name (p. 480). Since such a categorical view would almost surely collapse under scrutiny, it becomes critical to name the object by its supposed essence. This essentialist approach presupposes something like a Platonic form, the idealized version of an object that functions as the linguistic blueprint. Every inconvenient quirk that makes something distinctly unique or inherently messy gets tossed in the wastebin.

In addition to erasing differences, St. Pierre critiques the hierarchical binaries that tend to emerge from humanist categorization. Citing Foucault (1970/1966), St. Pierre (2000) writes, “language has been used to construct binaries, hierarchies, categories, tables, grids, and complex classification schemes that are said to reflect an innate, intrinsic order in the world” (p. 480). These classifications reinforce hegemonic structures. She lingers on one such binary: masculine/feminine. St. Pierre suggests that the masculine/feminine hierarchical relationship is, in fact, reflected in many binaries: mind/body, rational/irrational, subject/object, self/other, etc. The first item is typically privileged while the second item is disadvantaged, reflecting the gendered relationship of masculine/feminine. However, a poststructuralist framework begins to trouble humanist understandings of such binaries—including the hierarchized binary between the human and non-human.

2.1.2 Poststructural Responses

Though humanism frames language as a mirror—wherein names reflect some preexisting incontestable essence—poststructural feminism shatters the mirror metaphor. Instead poststructuralism foregrounds language’s role in constructing reality as we perceive it. St. Pierre

argues, “There are many structures that simply do not exist prior to naming and are not essential or absolute but are created and maintained every day by people” (p. 483). Instead of merely cataloging the world and all of its myriad phenomena, language has the power to speak structures into existence. Under a poststructuralist framework, naming becomes slippery, yet powerful. For example, in the book of Genesis, God said let there be light, and it was so. We may not have the same divine power, but our words just as surely frame our understanding of reality. Language, in all of its mutability, orders the world as we know it.

To better illustrate language’s role in the creation of systemic structures, St. Pierre first looks back to the structuralist theories of de Saussure (1959/1916). Saussure, a structural linguist, conceptualized language as a system made up of a chain of signs. These signs contain both the “signifier (sound or written language) and [the] signified (meaning)” (Weedon, 1987, p. 23). According to de Saussure, the connection between the signifier and the signified is entirely arbitrary. Naming doesn’t reflect any intrinsic quality on part of the signified. Any other string of sounds could just as easily represent the signified.

Instead, de Saussure argues that meaning is relational. Signs are imbued with meaning through their differences from other signs, not any essential essence. Weedon (1987) gives the example of the signifier “whore.” Weedon suggests that the word has no intrinsic meaning. Rather, it gains meaning in relationship to “other signifiers of womanhood such as ‘virgin’ or ‘mother’” (p. 23). Similarly, a signifier like “human” is entirely arbitrary. It is defined against what it is not—all of the non-human entities that populate the landscape around us. From a poststructuralist stance, meaning is derived from difference, not identity. However, for de Saussure, that meaning was still decidedly fixed.

Poststructuralism takes up de Saussure's theory and destabilizes meaning further. St. Pierre (2000) outlines Derrida's (1974/1967) theory of *différance*. With *différance*, the meaning in a chain of signs is constantly deferred. Imagine looking up a definition in the dictionary. At the bottom of the definition, it often directs us to yet another definition. When I look up "human" in the dictionary, I am directed to more related words: "mortal," "natural," and "person." Looking up "person," I am directed to a new set of definitions: "individual," "character," and "self." These definitions of personhood are further complicated by conflicting chains of deferral associated with posthumanism. Tsing (2021) challenges us to "recognize other living beings as 'persons,' as protagonists of stories" (p. 155). Similarly, Batalha Viveiros de Castro (2004) illustrates how Amerindian myths are "filled with beings whose form, name, and behavior inextricably mix human and animal attributes" (p. 464). Our definition of personhood is stretched to the point of collapse when we begin to consider the agency of inanimate objects. Todd (2017) attempts to reframe "fossils and fossil-beings" as a kind of kin (p. 107). Would recognizing "fossil-beings" as kin grant those beings their own kind of personhood? These nuanced, and at times contradictory, chains of deferred meaning continue on and on ad nauseam. St. Pierre argues that such *différance* explains how "language shifts depending on social context so that meaning can always be disputed" (p. 481). The consequences of this infinite, contextualized deferral are profound. Meaning is no longer fixed and absolute. Instead, meaning becomes mercurial, shaped by perpetual difference and deferral within its social context.

2.1.3 Posthuman Entanglements

Poststructural feminist theorist, Karen Barad (2011), enters into this conversation by elaborating on the nature of the "cuts" that divide the human from the non-human. Building a theory of posthumanism, Barad attempts to move theories of *différance* beyond the linguist realm

and into the material realm. Furthermore, in making this move from the linguistic to the material, Barad (2011) emphasizes that the “point is not to blur the boundaries between human and nonhuman, not to cross out all distinctions and differences, and not to simply invert humanism, but rather to understand the materializing effects of particular ways of drawing boundaries between ‘humans’ and ‘nonhumans’” (p. 123-124). At the end of *Ellen*, the girl is still a girl, and the tree is still a tree, though they are arguably changed in the encounter.

So, what is the nature of that transaction? Probing the “cut” between the human and the more-than-human, Barad (2011) draws upon quantum theory to reexamine the ontological premise of *différance* within the material realm. Arguing that current conceptualizations of *différance* are overly dependent on the linguistic turn, Barad suggests that structuralist explanations fail to account for the way “nonhumans differentiate themselves from their environments, from other nonhuman, and from humans, as well as from others” (p. 124). Barad critiques the anthropocentrism of *différance* defined solely through language. Instead of proposing a humanist—or even an anti-humanist—stance, Barad (2007) suggests a theory of posthumanism that instead examines difference through its material attentiveness (p. 136). Barad’s theoretical shift from linguistic boundaries to material boundaries reframes our understanding of *différance*, forcing us to account for the “materializing effects” of human and nonhuman difference (Barad, 2011, p. 123).

Therefore, instead of Cartesian cuts, Barad (2011) introduces the notion of the agential cut, a paradigm shift that endeavors to account for the material performativity of “all bodies, not merely human bodies” (p. 125). Barad defines agential cuts as a form of intra-action, an encounter which “cut[s] things together-apart (in one movement)” (p. 125). When we begin to frame the difference between the “human” and “nonhuman” through agential cuts, we leave

behind any notion of fixed dividing lines. Instead, we move towards agential separability, a concept that reframes difference as a matter of entanglement. Entangled bodies, like the entangled quantum particles described in Bohr's two-slit experiment, join and disjoin, transforming one another in the encounter. Consider the Deleuzoguattarian (1987) assemblage of the orchid and the wasp—though each body is transformed within the orchid-wasp assemblage, neither fully loses its heterogeneity. Nevertheless, the bodies remain entangled long after—sometimes even before—the moment of encounter. They are each inextricably interwoven in the becoming of the other.

With agential realism, we are able to move beyond language play and into the material world around us. For example, in "Nature's Queer Performativity," Barad (2011) gives numerous examples of how such intra-action might play out in nature, describing a number of "queer" natural phenomenon: the prescient chatter between lightning and the ground, the "clairvoyant" neuronal receptors of stingrays, the baffling paradox of quantum erasure, and more. In each of these examples from nature, the bodies in motion entangle, cutting together, while maintaining their material difference, cutting apart. These examples illustrate how it is possible to redefine the boundaries between the human and the non-human. Instead we are left with the more-than-human, signifying the utter inseparability of humanity from the more-than-human world that surrounds us. The human and non-human are no longer ontologically fixed. Nor are they merely linguistic constructs. Instead, these boundaries could be understood as active moments of encounter, encounters that open up the possibility of mutual transformation. Consider the following excerpt from the persona poem, "Joseph Battell Replies to a Southern Correspondent," by Viola C. White (1939):

The Whispering Pine
And Ellen are the symbols of my thought.

(A copy of the book shall go to you.)
Wordsworth upon this subject, or Rousseau,
Would make the pine give lessons to the girl.
I hold that Ellen, as a mortal child,
The heir of Man who is the heir of God,
Takes higher place within creation's scale.
She tells the secrets of the universe
In talk with the old pine. Of life and death
And life beyond, of matter and of mind,
They talk. She tells him motion is a part
Of Matter, and she speculates on size
As whole relative, both in itself
And to ourselves; no absolute exists
Of fast or yet of slow, all things that move
Being relative to the perceiver's view.

In this poem, the speaker inverts the encounter between Ellen and the Old Pine. The Old Pine is learning from Ellen, not the other way around. Although this humanist reading of *Ellen* might at first seem at odds with our posthumanist stance, it recognizes the inherent cross-contamination in the encounter, wherein the “creation's scale” is curiously unsettled.

Here we return to the pond reading, itself an assemblage of human and more-than-human bodies—students from all across the globe, fireflies flickering on the edge of the woods, flames licking the dried wood of a log, stars streaking across the Milky Way—a teeming Deleuzoguattarian rhizome. Throughout the pond reading, these bodies entangle, cutting-together apart in a moment of encounter before we disperse into the night. This moment, itself, is a microcosm of the campus each summer across the history of the institution. Therefore, when students read passages from *Ellen*, our voices low and suggestive, I believe we are recognizing something of ourselves in the encounter. Like Ellen, we ascend to the shady heights of the Bread Loaf Wilderness to listen beneath the boughs of an Old Pine. If that encounter weren't somehow pleasurable, why would we come back, summer after summer, eager to gather around the bonfire once more?

2.2 *Ellen* as Refrain

Over nearly five-hundred pages of *Ellen, or the Whisperings of an Old Pine*, Ellen climbs the mountain to commune with the Old Pine on at least thirty separate occasions. Flipping through encounter after encounter across the yellowing pages of the first volume of *Ellen*, I found myself reminded of the Deleuzoguattarian (1987) notion of refrain. Ellen returns, again and again, as her lessons with the Old Pine grow increasingly theoretical. Similarly, Bread Loaf students return, again and again, to the grassy banks of John's Pond, gathering weekly beneath the milky band of stars to share in a story. And finally, at the end of the summer, these same students will wander away, returning to their homes in distant valleys before returning once more the following summer, settling over the fields like a strange flock of migratory birds.

Yet each summer, the bodies involved in this assemblage change. Some nights the clouds obscure the stars. On other nights, the frogs join our chorus of laughter, performing their own poetic refrain. Occasionally, the host cabin reads *Ellen* faithfully, a word-for-word performance straight from a battered, dog-eared copy of the novel. On other occasions, the reading is not a reading at all. The performance devolves into an elaborate skit, complete with phallic puns and alarmingly well-endowed puppets. Students cycle in and out, living cabinets of curiosities, carrying their own assemblages within them.⁴¹ Human and more-than-human bodies meet and entangle as our footprints press gently into the soft soil, blending blades of grass beneath our sneakers. We shiver as the cool night breeze sweeps down the mountain, sending sparks from the campfire shooting into the inky black darkness. And then, once the fire burns down, the dog-

⁴¹ MacLure (2013) explores the “cabinet of curiosities” as an “alternative logic for qualitative inquiry—one which allows for both the discernment of order and pattern, and is attuned to the lively excess that always exceeds capture by structure and representation, leaving openings where something new, or something else, might issue” (p. 229).

eared copy of *Ellen* exchanges hands, passing to the next cabin in the rotation. The following week it begins again, another iteration of the same strange refrain.

2.2.1 Repetition with Difference

What happens when we attempt to read the pond reading as a refrain? In the opening section of “1837: Of the Refrain,” Deleuze and Guattari (1987) offer three images of refrain: the child humming to comfort themselves in the dark, the housewife singing to herself as the chaos of daily life presses in around her, and the person wandering away from home, following the “thread of a tune” (p. 311). According to Ingala (2018), these three images encapsulate the intertwining functions of the refrain—all three occur simultaneously. The child humming in the dark represents the refrain’s territorializing function. The comforting song “provide[s] protection and orientation through the creation of a center” (p. 193). The housewife singing in her kitchen represents the creation of boundaries and borders through refrain. Amidst the chaos of the world around her, the housewife stakes out her territory like a bird warbling in the wilderness. Finally, the journey away from home reveals the refrain’s “power to break through the circle and protect vectors abroad” (p. 193). We follow the pied piper, lured beyond the edge of the map. When these three elements act in concert, the refrain doesn’t just establish a territory—it pushes against the very borders it creates. Put simply, when all of those functions act at once, the refrain embodies a “territorial assemblage that is found at the intersections of the chaotic, terrestrial, and cosmic forces” (Adkins, 2015, p. 176).

The pond reading sits at a similar intersection of the chaotic, terrestrial, and cosmic. *Ellen* acts as a territorializing function, a centripetal force that pulls us towards a shared center. The flickering campfire might be said to function as a territorializing force as well, creating the literal geographic center of the pond reading. Each week, like moths drawn to the flame, students

gather around the center to reenact the territorial assemblage. The boundaries of the assemblage are debatable as well. Is it the edge of the clearing? The point where the light fades into darkness? The end of the summer when the parking lot sits empty? Regardless of where the borders are drawn, it is in the nature of the refrain to push against them. As Adkins (2015) writes, “A refrain, as an assemblage, will have two opposed tendencies, one toward stasis and one toward change” (p. 176). Therefore, the refrain doesn’t just territorialize—through rhythmic repetition, the refrain paradoxically pushes towards deterritorialization as well, forever flirting with collapse. This deterritorializing force is what opens up the possibility for change.

As bodies entangle, the rhythm of the refrain begins to shift, marking new territory as it probes the edge of the darkness. For instance, rain-soaked logs might temporarily relocate the pond reading into the barn. Or, instead of reading directly from *Ellen*, someone might break out a banjo. Although seemingly innocuous, Jackson (2016) suggests that such deterritorializing forces “escape capture and create new conditions for living” (p. 190). Jackson’s “new conditions for living” move beyond the linguistic turn—the refrain as mere metaphor—and into the material conditions of the world around us (p. 190). In summary, as rhythmic changes accrue over time, at first imperceptibly and then with full force, the material world changes along with it. But how do we mark those changes? Deleuze and Guattari’s notion of repetition as/with difference leads to an important question—how can we begin to account for the material effects of the refrain? Indeed, what exactly happens within the repeated encounter between the human and more-than-human across the history of the Bread Loaf School of English?

2.2.2 *Diffractional Ripples*

In order to understand the material effects of entanglement as refrain, Barad (2007) might suggest that we must first understand the phenomenon of diffraction. At first, this seems simple

enough. Begin by imagining a stone dropping into a still body of water. As the stone hits the water, this movement creates ripples. These waves travel through the water, radiating out from the point of contact. Now imagine watching rain fall across the surface of a pond. As the individual droplets of water break the surface, they also create ripples, much like the falling stone. However, as the rain grows heavier, these ripples begin to collide, “producing a pattern that results from the relative differences (in amplitude and phase) between the overlapping wave components” (Barad, 2007, p. 76-77). This pattern of disturbances, or “superpositions,” is central to classical definitions of diffraction (p. 76). In essence, diffraction could be defined as repeating patterns of differences—something very similar to the Deleuzoguattarian refrain. When studying the material effects of entanglement, it is important to attend to the ripples, the fine-grained details produced when bodies collide.

However, diffraction can be notoriously difficult to pin down. After outlining the classical definition of diffraction from Newtonian physics, Barad (2014) subsequently upends that definition by introducing the quantum wave-particle paradox:

According to classical Newtonian physics, the two-slit diffraction apparatus is the ultimate ontological sorting machine—it unambiguously differentiates particles from waves: waves make diffraction patterns because they can go through both slits at once, particles don’t. But in the early twentieth century electrons passing through a diffraction apparatus fail to behave like proper particles. Rather they behave like waves. Indeed, it seems that each individual electron is somehow going through both slits at once. (Talk about inappropriate!) To make matters worse, each individual electron arrives at one point on the screen just like a proper particle. Now add a which-slit detector to the apparatus (to watch the electron going through the slits) and the electrons behave like particles. (p. 113).

The two-slit experiment muddies the classical understanding of diffraction—particles shouldn’t behave like waves, vice versa. Yet, the Davisson-Germer two-slit experiment demonstrates how electrons can somehow act as both particles and waves simultaneously. The very nature of the electron changes depending on how we measure it. Put simply, the two-slit experiment

demonstrates how our entanglement with a given phenomenon not only has the potential to change our epistemological understanding of that phenomenon, but it has the potential to change the ontological nature of the object we are measuring as well.

The episto-ontological implications of this paradox are staggering. Barad (2007) points to the two-slit experiment as evidence that “practices of knowing are specific material engagements that participate in (re)configuring the world” (p. 91). Furthermore, this suggests that it is impossible to examine phenomena from a distance—we must always remember that as researchers we too are entangled in the “world’s differential becoming” (p. 91). Therefore, beyond studying historical phenomena for moments of collision, we must remember that knowledge-production is a material practice with tangible consequences.

These entangled material-discursive practices illuminate how the Deleuzoguattarian refrain contributes to becoming in a material sense. Let us return to the growth cycle of the pine tree from chapter one. The growth cycle of the pine tree, itself a refrain, causes a curious phenomenon to occur—the production of layers of light and dark rings, which ripple out from the tree’s center like the waves produced by a stone dropped in a pond. As the seasons pass, the tree becomes entangled with its environment. When heavy rain falls on the mountain, the rings grow thicker. During times of drought, the rings might grow thin, barely the width of a hair-line fracture. And when lightning strikes, severing the trunk in two, the pattern is disrupted entirely. More than a metaphor, the rings are the material evidence of intra-action. Years later, when we bend down to examine the rings left behind in the stump, we find evidence of a story, written in the material traces left behind as the result of entanglement. What does this mean, then, for returning to the history of Bread Loaf as refrain?

As we examine the history of the graduate program for evidence of intra-action, we would do well to examine not only discursive patterns of repetition as/with difference, but also to examine the material traces these diffractive patterns leave behind on human and more-than-human bodies. Take that dog-eared copy of *Ellen*, which passes from hand to hand summer after summer. What might we learn as we flip through *Ellen*'s pages, pausing to attune to its physical materiality—the marginalia scrawled just inside the cover, the frayed edges of the paper, or even the points where the spine is beginning to crack? Like the rings of a tree, this physical evidence of the pond reading as refrain can help us better understand the story of the school's becoming, but only if we take the time to attune to the material traces left behind in the aftermath of collision.

2.3 *Ellen* as Haunting

In *Specters of Marx*, Derrida (1993) introduces the concept of hauntology by suggesting that there are sites across the globe where time “bends out of joint,” sites where multiple temporalities meet and cross, hopelessly blurring the lines between past, present, and future (p. 7). Derrida's definition addresses two dimensions of hauntology: the spatial and temporal. The spatial is perhaps the easier of the two to grasp. After all, hauntings are often conceptualized as geographically fixed. Our ghosts wander familiar haunts, tracing well-worn paths before fading from the corner of our vision. As Blanco and Peeren (2013) write, “Haunting has been classically attached to where, from the proverbial haunted house to the ghost town” (p. 396). Historian Michel de Certeau (1984) expands on this notion, suggesting that places are often haunted by narrative: “Every place has its own story, or even a proliferation of stories, and every spatial practice constitutes a form of re-narrating or re-writing a place” (p. 396). Some locations, however, seemingly accumulate more ghosts than others. Consider the Hudson River Valley.

Richardson (2005) notes the staggering accumulation of ghost stories across the region, arguing that these narratives “emanate from and embody the blank spaces between words in [the] historical narratives” of the region (p. 394). In other words, haunted landscapes are landscapes rich with narrative, whether or not those narratives fit into sanctioned histories.

The second dimension of hauntology involves the temporal. Unlike the Hudson Valley, the Bread Loaf School of English may not have its own headless horseman, but at the pond readings, time certainly bends “out of joint.” When students recite from the pages of *Ellen*, history folds towards us. The students are pressed together, corner-to-corner, as two moments tentatively touch—a fragile bridge forming between past, present, and future. Time begins to collapse the moment the host holds *Ellen* aloft to read from the time-worn pages. One literary critic, Julian Wolfreys (2013), goes as far as to suggest that texts are “merely a conduit, a spirit medium if you like, by which the author communicates” (p. 72). The text becomes something like a spiral staircase, an ever-winding passageway between disparate temporal points. Indeed, Wolfreys illustrates how literature collapses time. When we discuss the author—or even the characters—we often speak in the present tense. Battell writes. The Old Pine lectures. Ellen returns. There is a sense of immediacy. Ellen’s sojourn to the top of the mountain is no longer in the past. Instead, it is lived over-and-over again, looping before our eyes each time the reading begins anew. Ellen and the Old Pine share their fate with Schrödinger’s cat, caught somewhere in the in-between. Thus, Wolfreys suggests that texts “hover at the very limits of living and dying” (p. 72). If that is the case, Bread Loaf students spend a good deal of time communing with the not-quite-dead. In fact, we tend to grab these revenants by the shoulders and rattle them awake.

2.3.1 *Material Hauntings*

While it is important to note that hauntology stops short of claiming the *literal* existence of ghosts, posthuman scholars believe that the specter transcends mere conceptual metaphor. Hauntology is more than a useful metaphor to describe how the past, present, and future begin to converge in messy temporal entanglements. Instead, Barad pushes the notion of hauntology even further, arguing that “hauntings” may have material weight, illustrating this phenomenon by examining temporal entanglements in the post-atomic age. Peering into the history of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Barad (2017) suggests that hauntological entanglements move beyond the metaphorical:

Hauntings are not immaterial, and they are not mere recollections of reverberations of what was. Hauntings are an integral part of existing material conditions. This past—nuclear time, decay time, dead time, atomic time, doomsday clock time, a superposition of dispersed times cut together-apart—is literally swirling around with the radioactivity in the ocean. Time itself is nationalized, racialized, out of joint. (p. 74)

Simply put, Barad argues that memory—another form of present absence—leaves behind material traces, which continue to clog the atmosphere even after attempts at erasure. Barad gives the example of photographs of the shadows of incinerated bodies following the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Western narratives may attempt to sanitize history, but Barad argues that “memory is written into the worlding of the world in its specificity, the ineliminable trace of the sedimenting history of its iterative reconfiguring” (p. 84). These photographed shadows are the trace, the scars, left behind, in the wake of annihilation. As we investigate entanglement, we must pay attention to those traces. Similar material traces abound in the natural world. Haraway (2016) invites her readers to consider xkcd’s cartoon “Bee Orchid” as one illustrative example of the materiality of memory. Haraway explains how “we know a vanished insect once existed because a living flower still looks like the erotic organs of the avid female bee hungry for

copulation” (p. 69). She then frames these material traces as a form of haunting: “Once embraced by living buzzing bees, the flower is a speaker for the dead” (p. 69). The orchid is haunted by the present absences of its apian counterpart. The bee may have gone extinct long ago, but its memory is written into the worlding of the present. Indeed, the memory of the bee is not only apparent in the present, it is implicated in the “making-with” of the reproductive cycle of the orchid. In short, the bee is both *revenant* and *arrivant* long after its extinction.

2.3.2 *Making-With the Specter*

The example of the orchid illustrates the generative potential of hauntings. However, that generative potential remains unrealized if we fail to listen at the threshold. We must resist the urge to exorcize our ghosts by banishing them to the past. Carstens (2021) argues that we must instead learn to recognize hauntings as lively assemblages, entangled networks of “more-than human bodies, things and forces” (p. 121). The pond reading, like the bee-orchid, is both *revenant* and *arrivant*. Each time students thumb through the pages of *Ellen*, the *revenant* reaches out from the pages of the novel. Nevertheless, this fails to capture the full nature of the haunting. The ritual of the pond reading is richly generative. The community gathers each week around the campfire not only in an act of conjuration, but also in an act of creation. The novel is transformed with each new reading. Students do not simply read the text verbatim. Instead, they sing songs. They perform skits. Occasionally they may even build alarmingly well-endowed puppets. The pond reading might, in short, be regarded as *arrivant*, heralding the future of the graduate school. To borrow language once more from Haraway (2016), the pond reading is the “making-with” of the Bread Loaf School of English, an act of *sympoiesis* that crosses both “spatial and temporal thresholds” (p. 58).

These acts of *sympoiesis* continue long after the firewood has burned down to embers. Indeed, there are traces of similar moments of *sympoiesis* in the archival record. The central characters of *Ellen* make frequent appearances in the pages of the student newsletter. Most of these appearances take the form of parody, including daily bulletins written to imitate the philosophical dialogue as the novel, despite relaying relatively mundane campus news. In the pages of *The Crumb*, Ellen and the Old Pine discuss an assortment of topics, ranging from upcoming paperwork deadlines to the dinner menus for the week. The excerpt included below, for instance, preceded an announcement about the formation of an affiliate group for queer students on campus:

“Sometimes, Piney,” Ellen said after returning and lounging silently under the tree for some time, “Ellen feels somewhat uncomfortable around the Old Pine, which might be a reason for her having displaced herself into an imagined third-person narrative voice.” “The Old Pine isn’t quite sure he understands, but he is willing to listen,” replied the lascivious, many branched plant. “Well, Ellen doesn’t know how to put it into words, but perhaps her plight is similar to the one faced by gay and lesbian students or faculty who, depending on their environment, may not feel entirely safe at their school.”⁴²

In this parody, and others like it, the editor of the student newsletter creates new encounters between the *revenant* and the *arrivant*. Although the excerpt pokes fun at the “imagined third-person narrative voice” from the novel, it also makes use of that voice to articulate the need for affinity spaces, thus shaping the further worlding of campus life.

Furthermore, not every mention falls into the category of parody. These invocations are often treated earnestly as well, albeit almost begrudgingly. For instance, the final newsletter from the summer of 1996 consists of a single letter addressed to “My dear sweet Ellen.”⁴³ Although the letter is addressed to Ellen, the contents of the letter make it clear that the current students are

⁴² Bread Loaf School of English. (July 17, 2000). *The Crumb*. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

⁴³ Bread Loaf School of English. (August 9, 1996). *The Crumb*. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

the real addressee, drawing a parallel between the two figures. Throughout the letter, the unnamed author adopts the persona of the Old Pine in order to convey several important reminders for the end of term. Many of these reminders are mundane logistical concerns.

However, “Piney” closes this letter with the following sentiments:

Consider that proof that I will watch over you always, Ellen, wherever you are. And you must know by now that whenever you return—and please, my most precious, return often—I will be here once more to cradle you in my arms and whisper in your ear the softest songs of love the winds will allow.

The passage clearly pokes fun at the suggestive imagery in the original novel, but it is also strangely sincere, acknowledging the lasting impact of encounters with the wilderness. Each summer on the mountain continues to shape students long after they leave campus behind. Furthermore, these excerpts showcase the central role of *Ellen* as a model of learning at the Bread Loaf School of English. Haraway (2016) argues that sometimes models are more than mere metaphors: “A model is like a miniature cosmos, in which a biologically curious Alice in Wonderland can have tea with the Red Queen and ask how this world works, even as she is worked by the complex-enough, simple enough world” (p. 63). In this case, *Ellen* can be read as more than a metaphor. Instead, it can be read as a microcosm of *sympoiesis* on the mountain more broadly.

In summary, hauntology introduces temporal elements to the already entangled bramble of human and more-than-human intra-action at the pond reading. As we attune to the material traces left behind in the archival record, we must also be mindful of bodies that are present in their absence. Where do we find the traces of the bodies who have climbed the mountain before us? Or more challenging yet, where do we find the traces of the bodies that have yet to arrive? As I close this brief theoretical framework, I imagine new students, decades from now, who will thumb through the pages of *Ellen* only to encounter our marginalia along the boundaries of the

page. I wonder what they will imagine as they trace the letters on the page, leaving the oils from their fingertips smeared across the powdering paper before they, too, hike to the forest's edge to begin the ritual anew.

2.4 The End of the Pond Reading

The ritual eventually comes to an end once the professor finishes reading their offering to the assembled mass of bodies. They tuck their notes away, and the crowd begins to dissipate, disappearing into the shadows like sparks flitting into the night sky. In the morning, the only trace that the pond reading ever happened will be the ring of ashes in the fire pit, the imprint of footsteps left behind in the soft loam at the edge of the pond. The night before, many of the attendees would have left the edge of the fire for other reveries, perhaps clutching growlers of beer in East Barn, where just earlier that day they discussed poetry. Others would have disappeared into the meadow, trampling foam flowers and trillium on the meandering path down to the stream. But now that the morning light is cresting the distant mountaintops, those students left awake will be returning to the stack of books left unread on their bedside tables. It will be another week before the ritual officially begins anew, but it never really ends. The pond reading, after all, embodies something of what it means to be a student at the Bread Loaf School of English. *Ellen* functions as an invocation because every student understands that wisdom can be gleaned when one pauses long enough to attend to the old pine tree at the edge of the mountain wilderness. As we move into examining the more-than-human history of the Bread Loaf School of English, *Ellen* will remain an important touchstone in understanding the role of the more-than-human in the history of the institution.

The next chapter of my dissertation will turn to the problem of narrativizing these more-than-human histories. More-than-human narratives resist linear narrative structures. Many

narratives in nature are cyclical. Consider the ebb and flow of the tides and the rise and fall of the moon. There are other natural phenomena that are seemingly random. Cronon (1992) invites us to consider the spontaneity of genetic mutations and the abrupt shift of tectonic plates ahead of an earthquake (p. 1368). In addition to these temporal challenges, there is also the challenge of accounting for more-than-human protagonists. How can we begin to account for narratives that *currently* lay beyond human perception? Perhaps the bees are not really crafting narratives when they dance, and perhaps networks of mushrooms are not taking advantage of their rhizomatic networks to communicate the latest in fungi gossip. However, there are still narratives left in the material traces of the more-than-human world. In order to learn how to tell more-than-human narratives, we must also learn how to acknowledge more-than-human authorship. The next chapter will attempt to attend to these questions as they pertain to the history of the Bread Loaf School of English.

Chapter 3: More-Than-Human Methodologies

“This version of the hauntological is alive to entangled networks of more-than-human bodies, things and forces, which attempts to parse by mobilizing together different categories of thought, action, and aesthetics.”

—Vivienne Bozalek, Michalinos Zembylas, Siddique Motala, and Dorothee Holscher, *Higher Education Hauntologies: Living with Ghosts for a Justice-to-Come*.

When I first embarked on my research studying Bread Loaf, I started by exchanging stories with classmates who attended the summer school at the same time that I did. One such conversation was with Elizabeth.⁴⁴ Elizabeth lived down the hall from me my first summer in Vermont, another resident on the second floor of Larch, one of several residential cottages surrounding the main plant of the Bread Loaf Inn. Although you would occasionally find Elizabeth lounging on Larch Porch, more often than not, she could be found meandering through the meadow. Once, after listening to a lecture from Nancie Atwell, Elizabeth and I walked through the meadow at twilight. As we wandered the paths, we discussed what we had learned as the fireflies flitted around us. They were something like our thoughts, ideas flitting to and fro, our brains unable, quite yet, to rest. I remember watching the sky fade gradually from lavender to indigo, surrounded by yarrow, goldenrod, steeplebush, and milkweed.

When we sat down to talk, we shared those memories of the meadow before wandering further afield.

“When I teach *The Odyssey*, and I’m teaching it right now,” she continued, her eyes lighting up, “I think about the conversations we had in class. I think about Daniel Mendelsohn coming in and teaching class. I think about conversations we had in class. I think about reading about the wine-dark sea while I was at Pleiad and basking in the sun there.”

⁴⁴ The name Elizabeth is a pseudonym.

She closed her eyes, and I wondered what she saw. I get the briefest flash of my own memories of Lake Pleiad. My classmates are swimming out at the center of the lake. I'm sitting, uncomfortably warm, on the rocks along the shore. I could just make out the leeches in the murky shallows. They curl and uncurl, pudgy question marks against the mossy lakebed.

Elizabeth opened her eyes, continuing, "I remember reading about Odysseus cloaked in mist—and I keep coming back to this—I think about the mountains in the morning, and sometimes in the evening after the rain, just cloaked in mist. I remember what it looked like, physically in front of me. And somehow, I understood Odysseus at a different level."

When I returned to my dissertation, I found myself remembering these early conversations with Elizabeth, pulling at the entangled threads in her narrative—the mist rolling over the mountains, the wine-dark sea on the shores of Lake Pleiad, the fireflies flickering above waves of wild flowers in the meadow. Everywhere, the human and more-than-human begin to meet, collide, and contaminate, shaping our encounters with the literary—itsself another layer of entanglement. If, as Barad (2017) contends, entanglement leaves traces, what would it mean to examine narratives across the history of Bread Loaf for evidence of those traces? With these questions in mind, I turn towards methods drawn from narrative inquiry, as well as historiography, as the foundation for my methodological framework.

3.1 Narrative Inquiry

3.1.1 Methodological Foundations

Narrative research resists a simple definition. Broadly speaking, narrative research can be distinguished from other forms of qualitative research "by [its] focus on narrated texts that represent either a whole life or aspects of it" (Jossellson, 2011, p. 224). In essence, narrative researchers gather, interpret, and render the stories that surround us as "important sources of

empirical knowledge” (Bruce et al, 2016). However, just about every other aspect of narrative research is up for debate. Narrative research runs the gamut from generalized research studies, wherein researchers analyze narrative data, to research *as* narrative, wherein the research itself produces the narrative (Coulter & Smith, 2009). Though the former would be recognized as standard fare in most qualitative journals, the latter may vary widely in form and function. The amorphous nature of narrative research can often make it difficult to pin down, but it nevertheless creates generative possibilities for new narrative forms.

This flexibility can be traced, in part, back to continued debates about the place of narrative research within the academy. Though narrative research has been increasingly legitimized, positivist epistemological approaches to knowledge production are often hard to shake (Fraser, 2004, p. 180). The acceptance of what Plummer (1995) terms the “narrative moment” has been slow to arrive in many social science fields, including education, which may privilege the “orthodoxies of science and professionalism” (Fraser, 2004, p. 181). This hesitancy can be traced back to epistemological differences. Positivist theories presuppose the existence of an objective external reality made observable through scientific methods of deduction. However, for the typical narrative researcher, those methods are too limiting, failing to adequately capture the complexity and nuance of the world around us.

Though narrative research studies often reflect a range of epistemological and ontological stances, much of narrative research tends to embrace the “relativity and multiplicity of truth” (Jossellson, 2011, p. 225). Jossellson (2011) foregrounds the interpretative nature of narrative work: “Narrative truth involves a constructed account of experience, not a factual record of what ‘really’ happened” (p. 224). In other words, narrative researchers acknowledge a layering of interpretation as stories are constructed, interpreted, and re-rendered. Throughout the process of

constructing these narratives, “multiple interpretations by multiple readers are expected and promoted” (Coulter & Smith, 2009, p. 578). The object of analysis is not necessarily the “truth” of the events. Rather, the object of analysis centers on how our understandings of “truth” are *stories*. As an illustrative example, consider the numerous competing narratives involving the Anthropocene. Although the name has yet to be formally adopted by the International Union of Geological Sciences, the Anthropocene has been suggested as the proposed geological dating for the present epoch (Lewis & Maslin, 2015, p. 171). The name, from the Greek *anthropos*, reflects the widespread impact of humanities as a geologic force. However, geologists disagree on the exact dates—and by extension the exact narrative—of the Anthropocene. The potential start dates for the epoch range from the origins of farming over twelve thousand years ago to the denotation of the first nuclear weapon in 1945 (Lewis & Maslin, 2015, p. 175). Furthermore, similar anthropogenic variables lend their names to other possible epochs. The Pyrocene. The Wheatocene. The Capitalocene. The Plasticene. The list could go on and on. The dizzying proliferation of Othercenes might first suggest little more than an academic fad, yet another symptom of what Haraway (2015) identifies as “dithering” within the academy (p. 161). However, each name—and each accompanying narrative—at once feels both “too big and too small” to fully account for the complexities of these interwoven timespaces, hence the proliferation of names for our ongoing geological epoch in the first place (Haraway, 2015, p. 160). These competing—at times contradictory—narratives speak to the complexities of understanding the relationship between the human and more-than-human in the modern world, reinforcing the importance of post-positivist research in the environmental humanities.

My approach to narrative research takes up this post-positivist stance, which allows me to explore events entangled across multiple perspectives, capturing the subjectivity of knowledge

and lived experience. The inherent multiplicity of post-positivist epistemologies lends itself to an emergent, evolving research design. Therefore, it is difficult to reduce narrative inquiry to a litany of prescribed methods. Unlike other qualitative approaches, “narrative research eschews methodological orthodoxy in favor of doing what is necessary to capture the lived experiences of people” (Josselson, 2011, p. 225). Many narrative researchers resist the limitations of overly rigid research designs, which frequently stymie narrative possibilities before they are even allowed to form (Schaafsma & Vinz, 2011). After all, even a single narrative can contain multitudes. As such, my approach to narrative research design has been iterative. Recursivity is not a mark of weak research design—it is a mark of emerging complexity. Here we might return to Elizabeth and Odysseus. Elizabeth evokes the imagery of the wine-dark sea, the possibility of wandering into uncharted waters. Similarly, this approach to narrative research feels a bit like opening Aeolus’s bag of winds. Our ship may be blown off course temporarily, but at least the story is all the richer for the detour.

3.1.2 Poststructural Narratology

The gathering of stories is an important entry point to narrative inquiry; however, the “*shaping and crafting* [of these stories] into narratives for further examination becomes an important next step” (Schaafsma and Vinz, 2011, p. 5). Once we have established our epistemological and ontological foundations, we must understand how our theoretical framework translates into narrative choices. Influenced by narratological theories, this shaping and crafting is an important element of narrative research. After all, our narrative strategies reflect our process of meaning-making. In narrative research, meaning-making often transforms into *narrativization*. Schaafsma and Vinz (2011) emphasize the important role of *narrativization* in narrative inquiry: “The verb, *narrativize*, suggests strategies of shaping that situate and reveal—

within and outside the rendering of the text—the hand of the researcher/writer, context/history, and all the supporting constructions” (p. 3). The process of shaping a narrative is, therefore, an important interpretive act.

To better understand how epistemology and ontology translate into narratology, first we must explore the distinct academic lineage of narratology, which developed as an offshoot of literary studies. Narratology, a term coined by French structuralist Tzvetan Todorov, encompasses the study of narrative and narrative structure (Schaafsma & Vinz, 2011). Although Todorov’s earliest narratological work dates back to the 1960s, narratological thinking can be traced even further back to the work of the Russian formalists in the 1920s. French structuralists transformed the scope of narratology in the 1960s, developing the field into “science of narrative structure and form” (p. 23). As the name suggests, structuralists were preoccupied with *structure*—how are stories constructed spatially and temporally? By zooming out to investigate narrative skeletons, structural narratology offers an almost “scientific” system to study structure *across* narratives. Soon thereafter, every story had a beginning, middle, and end—a narrative framework that the student of narrative can neatly plot and diagram.

Structural narratology not only influences how we analyze a story—it might also influence how we construct narratives as we endeavor to flesh-out our lived experiences across the tidy skeleton of a plot diagram. Consider the following example from *Lost Children Archive*, an autobiographical novel written by Valeria Luiselli. The daughter in the novel instructs her mother to draw four squares, labeling them in the following order: character, setting, problem, and solution. The daughter explains that school taught her to tell stories this way. She proceeds to jot her stories neatly within the confines of her four boxes. The mother, in turn, laments bad literacy education. However, these neat squares are not entirely without merit. Structural

narratologists might suggest that we (re)shape memory to mold it into our expectations of genre. Furthermore, even though all structural narratologists attempt to impose order over narrative structures, their approaches differ wildly. Structural narratological theories range from Tzvetan Todorov's equilibrium theory to Roland Barthes' enigma theory, with dozens of permutations in between (Vinz, 2021).

However, structural narratology represents just one possible approach to narrative theory. Poststructural narratology destabilizes the tidy assumptions of the structuralists. Schaafsma & Vinz (2011) cite Rimmon-Kenan (1983), who explores "the possibility of deconstruction as a method that will enrich narratology into narratologies" (p. 24). Rimmon-Kenan's work challenges the scientific authority of structural narratology, instead suggesting that its theories represent one of many possible narratological approaches. Schaafsma and Vinz (2011) continue to unpack poststructural narratology, explaining how it "[identifies] and reveal[s] the complex ways in which forms, discrepancies, and pluralities in narrative lead to more nuanced understandings of the mutability of texts and discourses" (p. 24). The poststructural narratologist refuses to smooth away narrative inconsistencies as they drape their stories over a narrative frame. Instead, these apparent inconsistencies suggest other narratives to pursue. The poststructuralist notes where stories resist dominant narrative structures, mapping these wanderings and following them in search of a richer understanding.

Though rooted outside of the social sciences in literary theory, narratology influences the way we approach and analyze the narrative data we gather. A structural narratological approach might attempt to understand how our stories fit within a tradition, or else render them to fit our understanding of narrative form. My approach to narrative inquiry takes up a poststructural narratological stance. The poststructural narratologist embraces multiplicities and ambiguities in

the construction, interpretation, and rendering of narrative knowledge. By attuning towards moments of divergence, the poststructural narratological stance embraces pluralities, moving towards a multiplicity of narrative forms. When examining narratives from Bread Loaf, this tolerance of multiplicity is particularly important. Recall the Deleuzoguattarian (1987) assemblage of the orchid and the wasp. Although each body is transformed within the orchid-wasp assemblage, contaminating the other in the encounter, neither fully loses its heterogeneity. Similarly, when we examine the narratives of Bread Loaf over time, it is important to select a narratological approach capable of accounting for that multiplicity.

3.1.3 More-Than-Human Narratives

But we are only getting part of the story if we only attune to human multiplicities. The protagonists in the history of the Bread Loaf School of English often extend beyond the human. Anderson (1969) describes the expanses of wildflowers, the haunt of innumerable birds, and stands of various pines. How do their stories influence grand narratives? In order to fully account for the history of Bread Loaf, the stories we tell each summer must similarly account for a proliferation of more-than-human protagonists within the larger assemblage, including the surrounding landscape. However, this poses narratological problems. How do we narrate the more-than-human? Anna Tsing (2021) reflects on the inherent challenges of narrating multispecies assemblages: “Assemblages coalesce, change, and dissolve: this *is* the story” (p. 96). Take the bobolink, for example. In the months ahead of its annual migration, the bobolink might inhabit the campus meadow, before beginning the long journey south.⁴⁵ However, its

⁴⁵ Although the bobolink is only a temporary inhabitant of the meadow, we enter into a kinship relationship during its brief nesting season in the Northeast. Donna Haraway conceptualizes *kin* as a “wild category that all sorts of people do their best to domesticate” (p. 2). She advocates for making kin as “oddkin rather than, or at least in addition to, godkin and genealogical and biogenetic family,” forming kinship networks that trouble “important matters, like to whom one is actually responsible” (p. 2).

haunting birdsong continues to linger within the pages of a student poetry anthology. Narrating these ephemeral relationships across the landscape can prove challenging, particularly given the limitations of human perception. Nevertheless, Tsing suggests that narrating landscapes might begin with “looking for drama and adventure beyond the activities of humans” (p. 95). For more than a century, the Bread Loaf School of English has operated nestled in the largest wilderness area in Vermont. The surrounding landscape is more than the “passive and mechanical” backdrop imagined by Western philosophers (Tsing, 2016, p. vii). Instead, it is populated by its own protagonists, whose stories frequently collide with our own.

The recent history of John’s Pond—formally known as Johnson’s Pond—illustrates how human protagonists collide with more-than-human protagonists, reshaping anthropocentric understandings of historical narratives—as well as the literacy events that characterize campus life in Vermont. Brandy Brook winds through the copse of trees before widening into a shallow pond behind the barn. As discussed at length in the previous chapter, we would gather on the banks of the pond at the end of classes each week to participate in the pond reading. Prior to the pond reading, the host cottage would invite one of the professors to read around the campfire. The pond readings always began with an invocation from *Ellen, Or the Whisperings of an Old Pine*. As noted earlier, the novel, a platonic dialogue between a young girl and a pine tree, was written by one of Bread Loaf’s founding fathers Joseph Battell, the Vermont philanthropist who originally left the Bread Loaf Wilderness in a bequest to Middlebury College upon his death.⁴⁶ Haunted by Joseph Battell, the landscape surrounding John’s Pond assumed an almost mythic status in my mind, the geographic center of an important campus ritual. The landscape of the pond often feels as timeless as the mountains.

⁴⁶ *Ellen, or the Whisperings of an Old Pine*, and its influence on campus folklore, will be discussed at much greater length in the third chapter of this dissertation.

However, John's Pond was *not* as timeless as the mountains. Instead, the pond is yet another ever-shifting assemblage. The story of that assemblage involves both human and more-than-human agency. The pond does not appear at all on the earliest maps of the school. According to campus historian, George K. Anderson (1969), the pond was originally constructed in 1963, the result of "damming of Brandy Brook for a stretch of about 100 feet, whence it was sluiced off to resume its course down to the Main Branch of the Middlebury River" (p. 89). The shallow body of water was originally christened Johnson Swimming Pool, named after Victor Johnson, the year-round caretaker responsible for the pond's creation. However, *The Crumb*, the daily student newspaper, fabricated an alternate creation narrative in an issue published in 1993:

With the Persied meteor storm on the way, it seems an appropriate time to remind the Bread Loaf community that our little swimming hole, Johnson Pond, was itself a result of the now famous Johnsonian meteor shower of 1945, when an errant meteorite struck the Bread Loaf campus with such a force one night that the entire community was shaken awake. On seeing a strange glow coming from down near Gilmore Road, students and faculty alike ventured out into the darkness to investigate. By the time they had reached the road, the crater formed by the meteorite had already filled with water rerouted from a nearby stream. The shimmering swimming hole steamed and swirled from still-hot space rock. Some of the more adventuresome Bread Loafers stripped down and waded in, luxuriating in the newly-formed spring. Though the meteorite soon cooled down to become the island in the center of the pond, bathers in subsequent years continued the ritual skinny-dip during summertime meteor showers.⁴⁷

This inventive creation narrative illustrates the almost mythic nature of the pond and its associated rituals, including skinny-dipping.⁴⁸ There are numerous mentions of the pond in *The Crumb* over the next several decades. These passing, often humorous, mentions hint at collisions with the more-than-human protagonists. For example, issues of *The Crumb* from the summer of 1989 document an ongoing standoff with a pair of beavers who moved into the vicinity. On July

⁴⁷ Bread Loaf School of English. (August 10, 1993). *The Crumb*. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

⁴⁸ Immediately following the damming of the river, Johnson Pond frequently bore witness to impromptu swimming sessions. *The Crumb* suggests that skinny-dipping in the pond has been a time-honored student pastime.

3rd, 1989, *The Crumb* reported: “Two beavers are currently living in Johnson Pond. Swimmers are warned that these eager new neighbors are not afraid of humans, but may not be friendly either.”⁴⁹ Subsequent newsletter entries in the days that follow chronicle the time-consuming removal of the beavers, culminating two weeks later, when *The Crumb* reports: “Johnson Pond is Beaver-free at last. Jim ‘Scarface’ Maddox made them an offer they couldn’t refuse, and consequently the beavers have relocated to a pond off Upper Plains road in East Middlebury.”⁵⁰ These amusing, perhaps even trivial, footnotes to the history of the campus nevertheless hint at the importance of more-than-human protagonists.

The emerging importance of the pond to campus life was made evident when it was briefly destroyed at the turn of the century. According to archival records, the dam responsible for holding back the waters of Johnson Pond crumbled following a torrential storm during the summer session in 2000. The impact of the storm, itself a non-human agent, would have a lasting impact on the historical narrative of campus life for several summers. The destruction of the original pond was first announced through a parody of the novel, *Ellen*, in *The Crumb* the day following the storm:

“Well, Piney,” Ellen asked the conifer-laden tree, “first things first. What news have you about the goings-on in that remote scholar’s settlement?” “Did you not,” answered the old pine, “observe the celestial pyrotechnics of last evening?” “Would that Ellen could have had the old pine to shield me from the deluge, but Mamma told Ellen that you were essentially a gigantic lightning rod and that Ellen shouldn’t go near you when Ellen hears thunder. For that matter, she told Ellen not to go near you at all, but Ellen’s a contrary little scamp and disobeyed.” “A rod I may be,” responded the Wise One, “but fortunately, I emerged from the tempest unscathed and with my uncanny powers of speech intact. But the roads around Bread Loaf were not so fortunate. I have heard from my many Disney-esque woodland friends, the squirrels and the chipmunks and worker bees, that Route 125

⁴⁹ Bread Loaf School of English. (July 3, 1989). *The Crumb*. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

⁵⁰ Bread Loaf School of English. (July 14, 1989). *The Crumb*. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

and many back roads are impassable due to flooding, and that Johnson Pond bridge has cracked in twain.”⁵¹

The following day, *The Crumb* dispensed with the parody to note: “Johnson Pool (nee Pond) sustained severe damage, including the collapse of the main bridge.”⁵² The damage to the dam resulted in a mud wallow where the pond once stood, leading to a multi-summer campaign to restore the landmark to its former glory. The pond would not return until five years later, when it was resurrected thanks to the work of Middlebury President John McCardell. *The Crumb* cleverly announced the pond’s return in a column entitled “The Last Masterpiece of John Done”:

Last summer, outgoing Middlebury President John McCardell pledged to restore Bread Loaf’s swimmin’ hole, which disappeared in 2000 when a violent storm washed away its dam. He’s been true to his word; you’ll find John’s Pond, named in honor of the man without whose efforts not one shovelful of dirt would have been removed, by following the path behind the barn. Thanks to some judicious thinning of the nearby woods, John’s Pond seems sunnier than its predecessor — which means the pond water might be a shade warmer ... We’ll find out soon enough, especially if some intrepid souls decide to resuscitate the traditional post-Barn Dance skinny-dip.⁵³

In subsequent summers, students gradually ceased swimming in John’s Pond, abandoning the watering hole for other nearby temptations. However, John’s Pond took on a new life six years later in 2011 with the first recorded pond reading:

A Pond is the Earth’s Eye: So says Thoreau and he knew ponds, some. It’s Thursday, which means it must be time to don your fleece, cozy up to a campfire, listen to slightly off-center lit, and make merry with your Mountain friends. A waterside soiree of great pitch and moment will take place at John’s Pond at 9 pm. The ladies in Annex have lined up a Mystery Faculty Reader.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Bread Loaf School of English. (July 17, 2000). *The Crumb*. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

⁵² Bread Loaf School of English. (July 18, 2000). *The Crumb*. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

⁵³ Bread Loaf School of English. (June 28, 2005). *The Crumb*. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

⁵⁴ Bread Loaf School of English. (June 30, 2011). *The Crumb*. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

By the time I first arrived at the Vermont campus five years later, such readings were firmly entrenched in the campus culture, even though they were, in fact, a relatively recent addition to campus life, at least in its present form. The opening invocation of *Ellen*, perhaps, rooted the pond reading in the rich lore of the history of the campus, ritualizing the pond reading despite its youth. Each excerpted passage from *The Crumb* above illustrates how both landscape and literature intersect in the history of the mountain campus.

These snippets of the more-than-human history of John's Pond reveal the importance of attending to both human and more-than-human protagonists when narrating the history of Bread Loaf. The pond reading, in its present form, would not exist without a series of encounters between the human and more-than-human. In short, the pond reading might be said to constitute an assemblage of more-than-human actants. Anna Tsing (2021) would argue that in order to write its history, we must attend to each component of that assemblage in its "separate ways of being at the same time as watching how [it comes] together in sporadic but consequential coordinations" (p. 96). To write the history of the pond reading is to tell the story of the people who gather on the shores of John's Pond, yes, but it is also to tell the story of beaver dams and torrential storms and mud wallows and thinning trees. In sum, this attention to the more-than-human requires new narratologies.

This brief history of John's Pond illustrates how understanding ritual and lore at Bread Loaf—in this case the history of the pond reading—requires the ability to attune to various "inhabitants of the landscape, [both] human and not human" (Tsing, 2021, p. 97). Historical narratives that fail to properly acknowledge the more-than-human are woefully insufficient. But what happens when we begin to pay attention to these narratives? We might begin to find stories in unlikely places. Consider the steadfast growth of a pine tree, climbing higher and higher each

year. The growth cycle of the pine tree involves the production of layers of light and dark rings. When heavy rain falls, the rings grow thicker. During times of drought, the rings might grow thin. And when lightning strikes, severing the trunk in two, the pattern is disrupted entirely. When we bend down to examine the rings left behind in the stump, we might find evidence of that narrative, written in the material traces left behind. But we must learn to pay attention to a different kind of storytelling by first recognizing the possibility of more-than-human authorship.

However, reading and writing more-than-human narratives can pose significant challenges. One problem involves the inadequacy of Aristotelian poetics, which fail to offer a satisfactory framework for more-than-human protagonists. William Cronon (1992), an environmental historian, recognizes this disconnect as one of the key problems with crafting historical narratives involving the environment, arguing that narrative is an inherently human endeavor. Part of the problem is one of affinity. Cronon (1992) suggests that nonhuman events “lack the compelling drama that comes from having a judgeable protagonists” (p. 1368). We might endeavor to personify the more-than-human, but those narratives lack the moral thrust of Aristotelian storytelling. Another pressing problem involves the limitations of human perception. Tsing (2021) offers the example of Jakob von Uexküll, who attempted to describe the world from the perspective of a tick using only its sensory abilities. In doing so, Uexküll was able to show how “a tick knows and makes worlds” (p. 156). The example of the tick demonstrates the sensory limits of our ability to attune to more-than-human narratives. Ants secrete pheromone trails to communicate within their colonies. Trees send distress signals through subterranean mycorrhizal networks. Blue whales vocalize at frequencies indiscernible to the human ear. Each of these methods of communication evades normal human perception—and perhaps human storytelling as well.

Finally, Tsing (2021) suggests that merely attuning to one species at a time falls short of adequately representing more-than-human narratives. Starting with more-than-human perception may prove useful, but the “bubble worlds” of ticks are inadequate on their own (Tsing, 2021, p. 156). Instead, we must learn how to attune to cross-species coordinations in more-than-human storytelling. Tsing gives the example of the pine wilt nematode. The narrative of the nematode intermeshes with the life rhythms of the pine sawyer beetle when the nematode hitches a ride in the beetle’s trachea. The narratives of both creatures are entangled *across* the environment. Representing these dynamics requires tracing ephemeral webs of encounter, and representing these dynamics narratively can prove challenging. However, this difficult task is a worthwhile one. Unlike Cronon, who suggests that landscapes lack dramatic potential independent of the human storyteller, Tsing argues that the “livability, impermanence, and emergence of landscapes” constitutes a compelling narrative, even in the absence of human intervention (p. 158).

But telling these stories requires expanding our traditional understandings of narratology to include more-than-human protagonists as well. Therefore, although the methods of this study draw upon traditional methods drawn from traditional historiographies, it also cultivates methods of *narrativization* derived from the more-than-human sensibilities of the environmental humanities. This involves reframing our understanding of the *relationship* between the human and more-than-human in history. While methods of narrativization run the risk of unsettling our concepts of personhood, particularly regarding non-human agency, more-than-human protagonists are not altogether unheard of in storytelling. Eduardo Batalha Viveiros de Castro (2004), for instance, illustrates how Amerindian myths are “filled with beings whose form, name, and behavior inextricably mix human and animal attributes” (p. 464). He argues that,

although all humans were once animals in much of western thinking, these stories offer an alternative ontology, one where all animals were once human. Therefore, in order to *narrativize* stories with more-than-human protagonists, it may often be necessary to learn from storytellers from non-western traditions, in addition to the posthuman and new materialist theoretical perspectives that follow in the footsteps of these traditions.

3.1.4 *Haunted Historiographies*

In early chapters of this dissertation, I briefly outlined the history of the Bread Loaf School of English using approaches embraced by traditional historiographers. However, later chapters of this dissertation depart from linear historiography in favor of hauntological historiography, which may be better suited to depicting more-than-human narratives. Such narratives are often elided in traditional historical narratives, and its methodological implications warrant mentioning here.

Jacque Derrida (1993) first coined the term hauntology as a conceptual metaphor in *The Spectres of Marx*, an examination of how communism continues to haunt contemporary Europe. Derrida opens with the following excerpt from *Hamlet*: “Time is out of joint” (p. xxi). He argues that the arrival at the specter on stage in the opening scenes of the play in fact collapses the past, present, and future. The specter is both *revenant* (past) and *arrivant* (future). Similarly, hauntology promises to challenge the historian’s relationship with time, including the purported objectivity of historical knowledge (Blanco & Peeren, p. 482). Michel de Certeau (1988) once suggested that the role of the historian was to “construct sepulchers for the dead” (Ballif, 2013, p. 141). Traditional historiography, in other words, maintains the boundary between life and death by memorializing the dead with the written word, thus exorcizing the dead to the past (Ballif, 2013, p. 145).

The introduction of the specter disrupts this boundary. The historian who embraces hauntology must also embrace this temporal entanglement, challenging linear understandings of time. Instead, hauntological historiography invites historians to write “at the threshold” of past, present, and future (Ballif, 2013, p. 149). Ballif (2013) suggests that by positioning our work within this liminal space, we open up the potential to “listen precisely to that which is excluded, to that which our modes of understanding have excluded, to that which—therefore—lies at the threshold of our understanding” (p. 152). In summary, hauntological historiographical methods may have the potential to enable the historian to account for more-than-human protagonists. Furthermore, these narratives may even require spectral temporalities in order to fully account for more-than-human phenomena.

How can hauntology help environmental historians craft rich histories—histories that acknowledge the landscape as *more* than the inert backdrop imagined by Western philosophers? The answer hinges on hauntological understandings of time. Environmental historians have observed that linear narratives are ill-equipped to depict the narratives of more-than-human protagonists. Cronon (1992) makes the compelling case that many natural events lack linear narrative structure. Some natural events are cyclical: “the motions of the planets, the seasons, or the rhythms of biological fertility and reproduction” (p. 1368). Other natural events are random: “climate shifts, earthquakes, genetic mutations, and other events the causes of which remain hidden from us” (p. 1368). Cronon argues that when we impose linear historical narratives on natural events, we often impose it on a “reality that bears little or no relation to the plot we use in organizing our experience” (p. 1368). Cronon offers the Dust Bowl as an example. When historians neglect to account for the cyclical nature of weather patterns on the Great Plains, the resulting narrative fails to fully account for more-than-human agency.

However, Ballif (2013) suggests this problem transcends the more-than-human. Every history suffers from the problem of erasure. Indeed, the “radical singularity” of many historical events “must be elided in order to compose a historical account” of an event (p. 147). Haunted temporality, on the other hand, endeavors to attend to the threshold of past, present, and future:

A hauntological historiography, haunted by spectral temporality, attends to the radical singularity of the event, which linear history elides by subjecting it to a narrative—with beginning, middle, and end—or to a paradigm, or to a case study, or to a representative anecdote, saddling all events with signification and meaning, subjecting them to the tidy explanatory world of causes and effects, which presume and necessitate a buried past and a predictable future. (Ballif, 2013, p. 149).

In other words, hauntological historiography resists the impulse to impose linear temporality on events that might otherwise resist traditional narrative structures, including many of the natural events identified by environmental historians like William Cronon. Our initial impulse might be to throw out narrative altogether, but posthuman scholarship may offer us alternative narratological possibilities, including the possibility of *sympoiesis* or “making-with” across spatial and temporal thresholds (Haraway, 2016, p. 58). These possibilities illustrate how hauntological historiographies are uniquely situated to tell more-than-human narratives.

Many posthuman scholars have considered the connection between the hauntological and the posthuman. Posthuman scholar Delphi Carstens (2021) categorizes hauntological studies in two distinct schools: “the postmodern and the posthuman” (p. 121). The postmodern school of hauntology “frames the hauntological retroactively in terms of nostalgias for lost futures” (p. 121). The posthuman school of hauntology, on the other hand, frames the hauntological as “alive to entangled networks of more-than-human bodies, things, and forces, which it attempts to parse by mobilizing together different categories of thought, action, and aesthetics” (p. 121). In other words, posthuman hauntology understands the present as “immanent to its pasts and futures” (p. 121). In this frame of thinking, the scholarship of Donna Haraway (2016) might be understood as

inherently hauntological, particularly her concept of the Chthulucene. Haraway borrows from the Greek root *kthôn* in order to conjure images of the “chthonic ones,” the earth-bound beings who “writhe and luxuriate in manifold forms and manifold names” (p. 2). The suffix “-cene” then evokes the “temporality of the thick, fibrous and lumpy” present—one which is never *entirely* present (Haraway, 2015, p. 163). The shapeshifting nature of the Chthulucene opens spaces for “Yes, and...” as a mode of thinking about intertwined timespaces.

This tentacular exploration of unruly and undulating timespaces pushes us to learn to live within a present that contains multitudes. Living in this present involves, in part, telling stories that “gather up the complexities and keep the edges open and greedy for surprising new and old connections” (p. 160). In summary, hauntological historiographies resist building sepulchers to the dead. Indeed, hauntological historians might also “think-with” the present (Geerts, 2021, p. 164). This ability to “think-with” the present begins to account for the “chthonic ones,” more-than-human agents who might otherwise evade the historical narrative.

3.2 The Haunting in the Meadow

As my methodological framework draws to a close, I return to my early conversations with Elizabeth about her experiences as a student at the Bread Loaf School of English. During many of those early conversations, she talked at length about the meadow at the edge of campus, explaining how the landscape helped shape her learning experiences on campus. Her knowledge of the meadow was so intimate that she could describe its exact dimensions: “I can tell you that the meadow is about two-thirds of a mile. I measured it out—I actually have my own map of the meadow—but it’s about two-thirds of a mile in perimeter.”

As she continued speaking, she pointed to specific points on my personal map of the meadow.

“I learned where the red-winged blackbirds were—where the different kinds of flowers were,” she said, tracing the fields beneath her fingertips. “I have this distinct memory of walking in the meadow, and it was sunset. I was taking pictures too, and I stopped for some reason. I looked up, and there was this huge majestic deer standing in the middle of the meadow. I wanted to take a picture, but before I could even do that it just leapt away. It was like I could feel the reverberations in the land. I started thinking about how you never find animals when you purposely go out looking for them. You always do when you’re not expecting it.”

After describing her encounter with the deer, she began to list all of the animals she had encountered in the meadow: groundhogs, red-winged blackbirds, fireflies. However, the most striking was the animal that was notable in its absence—the bobolink. Elizabeth explained that the bobolink is a black bird with a cream-colored patch on its face. Its song is joyful, rambling up and down the musical scale, trilling wildly, seemingly without rhyme or reason. Bobolinks are migratory birds. Like many of Bread Loaf’s students, they spend their summers in the Northeast before skipping town to spend their winters in warmer climes. Elizabeth remembers seeing countless bobolinks her first summer at Bread Loaf, but she hadn’t seen a bobolink since. Somehow, over the course of her summers at Bread Loaf, the bobolink had vanished from the assemblage.

As the summer progressed, Elizabeth became obsessed with finding out where the bobolinks had gone. The obsession spilled into her coursework, including Bob Sullivan’s almanac class.⁵⁵ Crafting their own almanacs, students were invited to consider their place within

⁵⁵ Volume 98, Issue 4 of *The Crumb*, shares quotes from Bob Sullivan’s speech at the 2017 Bread Loaf Vermont Opening Ceremony: “This is the kind of place where people are okay with trying things, okay with experiments of all kinds, and that, as a result, it’s a good place to think about how we communicate—not just in terms of email and phone and other stuff, but how we feel each other, how we hear and see and smell things that are more than what we think, maybe, and see and smell and hear.” In Sullivan’s speech I catch a glimpse of the Deleuzoguattarian

various landscapes. Unsurprisingly, Elizabeth elected to become the class's meadow reporter. Although she already spent a lot of time there, watching the sunset beneath a tree, now she had a burning question. Where had the bobolinks gone?

She visited the Middlebury archives, studying back issues of *The Crumb*. She read Emily Dickinson, who faced a similar quandary in Poem Number 1591:

The Bobolink is gone —
The Rowdy of the Meadow —
And no one swaggers now but me —
The Presbyterian Birds
Can now resume the Meeting
He boldly interrupted that overflowing Day
When supplicating mercy
In a portentous way
He swung upon the Decalogue
And shouted let us pray—

She checked out books on birdwatching, studying the plumage and noting sightings in her journal. After exhausting all of her research, she found out that the bobolink's absence probably had something to do with the over preservation of the meadows. It was entirely possible that the roar of machinery had driven the birds away. The mowing contributes to the "repetition as/with difference" of the meadow as refrain. The constant mowing keeps the trees at bay, warding off the looming forest, but all of that noise disturbed the bobolink population as well. On one hand, the mowing serves a territorializing function, marking the boundaries of the space. On the other hand, it deterritorializes as well, pushing bodies—in this case the bobolink—away from the assemblage. At the end of the summer, Elizabeth surmised that was *probably* what had happened, though she couldn't be entirely sure. She kept an eye out for them anyway, just in case they should ever happen to return. In the meantime, the meadow would remain haunted by their

rhizome—rats swarming as part of a body without organs. Then in Volume 98, Issue 24, we hear from Bob Sullivan once more: "Rats are the same as humans, but humans don't want to think that."

absence.

Elizabeth's narrative is rich with encounters between the human and more-than-human, illustrating how the landscape took center stage in her learning experiences. Her evening strolls through the meadow served as the impetus for a significant chunk of her coursework, an interdisciplinary investigation of the mystery of the bobolink. Her narrative reveals how the bird's present-absence constitutes a haunting, while simultaneously illuminating something of the delicate nature of the entanglement of human and more-than-human bodies at Bread Loaf. It isn't enough to examine *becoming* on campus within spatial entanglements alone. Instead, we must also attune to the temporal entanglements. As Derrida (1993) reminds us, the specter is both *revenant* and *arrivant*, pointing backwards and forwards from the present moment. When Elizabeth researched the history of the meadow, she caught a glimpse of the past. Now, imagine what it would look like to view her story of the present-absent bobolinks as *arrivant* as well. Derrida implores us to listen to our ghosts. By attuning to this particular haunting, Elizabeth invites us to imagine the conditions required for the bobolink's return.

The next chapter of this dissertation will draw on the meadow as a model for *narrativizing* the more-than-human histories of the Bread Loaf School of English, attending to how the present-absence of the more-than-human in the earlier written histories haunt the historical narrative of the graduate school. The refrain then continues where this chapter ends by returning to the meadow.

Chapter 4: The More-Than-Human Refrain

“It was then I realized that I had some faculty colleagues not listed on our Bread Loaf catalog. On my left in the meadow an ancient family of crows asserted from time to time their hereditary right to engage in instruction. At my back, the wings of chimney swifts at any moment might thunder commentary. On the road the clop of horses’ hooves and the creak of hay-wagon-wheels supplied items of bibliography not found in the English Romantic Poets textbook. All these were sounds, but not noises. There is a difference.”
—Donald Davidson, *Commencement Address in 1956*.

We begin our exploration of the more-than-human refrain with an excerpt from Donald Davidson’s commencement address from the end of the summer session in 1956. Donald Davidson is perhaps best known as one of the founding members of the Fugitive Poets and the Southern Agrarians, but he was also known for his long association with the Bread Loaf School of English.⁵⁶ Beginning in 1931, he taught on the mountain nearly every summer until his death (Winchel, 2000, p. 147). His association with the graduate program is not without controversy. His relationship with his northern colleagues was often fraught, particularly given his stance as a staunch defender of racial segregation.⁵⁷ These tensions are evidenced by one of several poems from his *Long Street* collection, which reflects on his summers in the northeast: “Late Answer: A Civil War Seminar.” The poem—which depicts an ongoing disagreement between the speaker and his northern colleagues—lends credence to the rumor that Davidson would have been largely responsible for the creation of the Eleven O’Clock Rule. The Eleven O’Clock Rule forbade any discussion of the “Civil War after eleven at night, on pain of expulsion from the faculty club and

⁵⁶ In addition to Donald Davidson, the roster of Fugitive Poets at the Bread Loaf School of English included Allen Tate, Robert Penn Warren, and John Crowe Ransom, illustrating the ongoing relationship between the graduate school and the Southern Agrarians.

⁵⁷ Davidson was known to be a staunch defender of racial segregation, defending racial inequality in numerous essays published in the *Sewanee Review* (Murphy, 2001). It is important not to elide his perspective on race in his discussions of regionalism in the United States, which is openly hostile towards Black southerners.

payment of a fine, the amount of which varied” (Winchel, 2000, p. 149).⁵⁸ Representing the side of the Union, Robert Frost was known to ignore this rule, if only to provoke southern guests at the Inn (Anderson, 1969, p. 142). The Eleven O’Clock Rule was eventually retired as more and more of the southern faculty came to embrace the New South. However, the rule was quite necessary during the tenure of Donald Davidson, particularly given his unapologetic defense of the Confederacy.

Despite these regional tensions, Donald Davidson returned to the mountain summer after summer, drawn back each summer like a moth to the flame. He often commented on the pastoralism of campus life in his essays and poetry. These writings seem to indicate that he held the graduate program in high regard, celebrating it as an embodiment of agrarian ideals (Winchel, 2000, p. 201). His praise of the program is nowhere more apparent than in the commencement address excerpted in the epigraph, which is notable in its acknowledgement of the more-than-human pedagogues on the mountain. Davidson esteems his more-than-human colleagues. Songbirds rarely appear under the faculty listings on course bulletins, but perhaps that is our mistake. He honors numerous more-than-human educators, including an ancient family of crows, the chimney swifts in the eaves, and the creak of hay-wagon-wheels. Through this sonic landscape, the poet evokes the refrain, suggesting that these sounds are more than mere noise. If students pause to listen, the birdsong can be found to be just as instructive, if not more, than an anthology of Romantic poetry. He ends his speech by urging the graduates to make their own music: “A procession of days, such as we know at Bread Loaf, is not to be measured in time. Count it in friends, members of the Graduating Class. Measure it in poetry. Write it in

⁵⁸ The poem never directly mentions the Bread Loaf School of English, but the descriptions of the Adirondack chairs gleaming in the dusk and the Vermont woods caught in a purple afterglow make the setting of the poem clear to anyone who has spent time on the mountain.

stories. Tune it in songs. It cannot pass away” (Davidson, 1956, p. 10). Davidson reminds his audience that the landscape not only has poetic characteristics, but it ought to inspire us to create our own poetry as well. We, too, add our own verse to the more-than-human refrain.

His meditation on the mountain continues in his essay collection, *Still Rebels, Still Yankees* (1957), published the following year. In the eponymous essay, he shares an anecdote from one of his many summers on the mountain. He describes staring across the meadow towards the neighboring mountain range, accompanied by another southern transplant, identified simply as the Virginian. The Virginian remains unnamed in the essay, but his companion was likely James Southall Wilson, who hailed “from the Virginian branch of the Confederacy” (Anderson, 1969, p. 142). Regardless of the true identity of his companion, Davidson remembers those moments in idyllic terms, describing “trim Vermont fields where all weeds were flowers and all the grass was hay” (p. 232). Watching the sun disappear behind the distant mountain range, he remarks on the “uprightness and order” of the surrounding “spruce and balsam and maple” (p. 232). The Virginian comments on the similarity between the forest and their northern colleagues. This comparison plants the seeds for the remainder of the essay, in which he draws parallels between New Englanders and the landscape, arguing that most of the locals had been transformed into “the image of what they had contemplated” (p. 233). Davidson compares and contrasts the landscape in Vermont with the landscape in Georgia, setting the landscape and the people who inhabit it side-by-side: “If New England encouraged man to believe in an ordered universe, Georgia—and a good deal of the South besides—compelled him to remember that there were snakes in Eden” (p. 240).⁵⁹ In this vein, he offers his close reading of the

⁵⁹ His characterization of the southern landscape is troubling, particularly regarding his characterization of the Black communities in Georgia. Throughout *Still Rebels, Still Yankees*, he makes frequent references to white supremacy and is utterly unapologetic regarding the cruelties of Jim Crow. Therefore, it is nearly impossible to extricate his racial politics from his observations about the southern landscape.

environment, arguing that the landscape subtly shapes our manners over time. Unfortunately, it is impossible to extricate his perspectives on the southern landscape from his ardent defense of the Confederacy, but the essay nevertheless strengthens his position on the pedagogical potential of the landscape. Furthermore, he attunes to the potential of more-than-human authorship through his close reading, arguing that the landscape plays an important role in shaping our worldview.

Donald Davidson is not the only professor who has honored the more-than-human in his coursework. The notion that the landscape has the capacity to tell stories worthy of literary study appears across the course catalogs of the graduate school. In addition to tailoring their curriculum at satellite campuses to the surrounding region, there have been numerous graduate courses focused on the intersection between literature and landscape in the past century, including most recently *Creative Nonfiction: The Almanac* and *Holding Place: Long-Form Writing about Landscape* with Robert Sullivan. Moreover, the landscape has shaped education on the mountain beyond the coursework. At the end of the summer session in 1989, David Huddle made the following remarks pertaining to the more-than-human in the commencement address:

Everything from the ubiquitous mosquitos and black flies, to the high clouds of a thunderstorm ponderously sailing down the mountain range toward our meadows, to the extravagant sunsets that make us want to stop laying volleyball and cry or dance or shout or fall down on the grass and be quiet reminds us that we are here *with* the natural world.

He goes on to argue that our future necessitates learning to attune to the natural world, suggesting that the strength of the Bread Loaf School of English is this “central image of the green worlds to carry back into our regular lives, an image that has as good a chance as anything else to save us” (Huddle, 1989, p. 5). Before later chapters examine what teachers carry back with them following their return to their regular lives, this chapter will attempt to *narrativize* the green world associated with the graduate school, pausing to linger in the meadow bordering the

campus. The more-than-human has made its home on the edge of campus throughout the history of the meadow, an embodiment of entanglement in education. The pages that follow mark an attempt to listen at the threshold, attuning to the voices haunting the meadow.

4.1 Arriving at the Meadow

The meadow was once a pasture, and in the early 1920s, it was fenced off with white rail-fences. At one point, when Bread Loaf was still farmland, the Inn grew and harvested its own food. However, those white rail-fences, along with some of this utility, have long since rotted away. Yet, there are still traces of these old boundaries, marks across the landscape. Now, a low stone wall lined with lilies denotes the campus boundary with the meadow. Yet, this low stone wall only borders a small portion of the perimeter. Instead, the vast majority of the meadow is enclosed by a slowly encroaching forest. Left unmanaged, the forest might swallow it whole—closing in around the fields of flowers like an amoeba engulfing its prey. But for now, the forest and the meadow maintain a precarious truce, one that is mediated by human intervention. The growl of ravenous lawnmowers pushes back against the forest. Thus, guarded by these mechanical sentinels, the meadow remains a sheltered sanctuary for the weary summer student.⁶⁰ It is an embodiment of the entanglement of more-than-human protagonists in the history of the graduate school. As I read more and more about its history, I wondered about the stories those fields would tell if we learned to recognize the possibility of more-than-human authorship.

Therefore, this chapter continues in the tradition of *Ellen*, envisioning the entanglement of the more-than-human on campus through the voice of the meadow. I have chosen to replace the pine tree with the meadow in an attempt to rewrite his narrative in refrain, deliberately

⁶⁰ Though it should be noted that the meadow's healing influence apparently has mixed effects. George K. Anderson (1969) writes, "Once an unfortunate [student], having cracked up but being unwilling to leave [Bread Loaf], was sufficiently distraught enough to go out into the Bread Loaf Pasture to catch field mice" (p. 143).

engaging in repetition as/with difference. Joseph Battell chose the voice of an old pine tree as his literary avatar, even gendering the tree with masculine pronouns. The prose, as a result, reads like a Freudian fever dream, with the young girl commenting on the pine tree's impressive girth in her first several lines of dialogue. Nevertheless, the height of the pine tree serves another, more pressing purpose. The pine tree towers above the other trees, which allows him to observe the neighboring hills from his vantage point. Battell frames the pine tree as an impartial observer. In this capacity, the pine tree narrates his account of the history of the surrounding landscape, describing the disappearance of the "Indian canoe" and the "bateaux of the French" in the valley, those vessels replaced by sloops and schooners, then steamboats (Battell, 1903, p. 2). In these early passages, Battell depicts the pine tree as steadfast, an unwavering constant amidst an overwhelming ocean of change. High on the mountain-top, the world around him might change, but he remains constant.⁶¹

However, it is its very constancy that renders the pine tree unable to conceive variations within the refrain. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) offer three images of the refrain: the child humming in the dark, the housewife singing in the kitchen, and the person wandering far from home, following the "thread of a tune" (p. 311). These three images encapsulate the intertwining functions of the refrain. The child humming in the dark represents the refrain's territorializing function. The housewife singing in her kitchen represents the creation of boundaries and borders through refrain. Finally, the journey away from home reveals the refrain's "power to break through the circle and protect vectors abroad" (p. 193). When these three elements act in concert, the refrain does not merely establish a territory—it pushes against the very borders it creates. In

⁶¹ It is not without coincidence that the Old Pine spends an inordinate amount of time attempting to dismantle the work of Charles Darwin. Ellen asserts that the concept of evolution is "absurd, in supposing that anything made for some purpose by a higher order of intelligence could be transformed into something else by a lower order" (p. 458).

the opening passages of the novel, the pine tree is clearly capable of the first two functions of the refrain, making note of distant mountain peaks on the horizon. However, the pine tree in the narrative resists change on numerous occasions. His roots run too deep. He was born on the mountain-top, earthbound in the rock-strewn soil. Therefore, he is unable to walk the path of the wanderer, breaking through the boundaries of the refrain to imagine something new.

The pine tree is not only earthbound on the mountain-top, he is isolated as well. The pine tree might tower high above the surrounding hills, but he is doomed to watch those hills from a distance. Although he is aware of his surroundings, he admits that there is much that he cannot discern because “the view is much obstructed by hills and mountains” (Battell, 1903, p. 3). Joseph Battell suffered from similar bouts of metaphorical nearsightedness. The historical record often depicts him admiring his domain from the comfort of the Inn porch, much like an art collector might admire an expensive portrait within its gilt frame. His relationship with the logging industry is particularly telling in this regard. Although he refused to allow the timber industry within the view of the Inn, he nevertheless sanctioned logging machines on the other side of the ridge (Perlman, 2019). The pine tree, likewise, seems at peace with its myopia:

Of the distant mountain ranges the old Pine knows but little. I do not often concern myself with what is going on beyond my immediate vicinity. This may not have been always so, but in late years I have become so interested in the valley directly to my east that I give but little attention to the rest of the world. (Battell, 1903, p. 3).

The pine tree, unable to move closer, admits to its intentional ignorance. He does not concern himself with the world beyond his immediate vicinity. Instead, he obsesses with the cultivated fields in the valley to the east. Ellen enters into the narrative shortly thereafter, opening up the possibility of the refrain in her travels back and forth through the wilderness. Nevertheless, the refrain remains weak, barely audible over the sound of saws whirring on the other side of the ridge.

The meadow, on the other hand, more closely resembles the refrain. Its boundaries are negotiated and renegotiated in the late summer when the lawnmowers trample the wildflowers. The trees make their retreat, but the landscape remembers its lives before the meadow. Those grasslands were once the home to herds of cattle and flocks of sheep. But before the pastures, the ground was carpeted with woodland flowers, perhaps mayflowers and wood sorrel, blossoming beneath the shade of sugar maple groves. European settlers would eventually level the forests for farmland. The land surrounding the modern campus was particularly coveted, particularly compared to the rugged terrain further downstream. The soil is rich because the meadow was once an ancient lakebed, home to the ancestors of the pike, trout, and perch. Those same soils nourish complex root systems today, which sustain an incredible assortment of species. If the pine tree is phallic, then the meadow is decidedly yonic, the nesting ground of countless species over the centuries.

The pine tree communes with his youthful protégée on the mountain-top, but the meadow resembles an elaborate feast in comparison. Moreover, it is an intimate feast, with the dinner guests pressed close together. Indeed, Zandt et al. (2020) explain that natural grasslands can contain upwards of 89 species per square meter (p. 1511). The greatest biodiversity occurs in sporadically mown meadows, much like the meadow on the mountain (Wezel et al., 2022, p. 2). The meadow brims with narrative possibility. Discussing more-than-human narratives, Tsing (2021) suggests that merely attuning to one species at a time falls short of adequately representing more-than-human narratives. We must, instead, learn to attune to cross-species coordinations in more-than-human storytelling. I have chosen to attune to the meadow across the history of the graduate school for precisely this reason. The voice of the meadow not only contains multitudes—its inhabitants continuously change over time.

In an act of *sympoiesis*, the remainder of this chapter continues in the spirit of the refrain, replacing the old pine with the meadow. Therefore, the following passages imitate the opening passages of *Ellen*, beginning with the history of the surrounding landscape in the voice of the meadow. The shift in narrative voice was carefully considered. The pine tree may have been masculine, but the meadow is feminine. The pine tree may have been distant, but the meadow is intimate. Finally, the pine tree may have been singular, but the meadow is multitudinous. Following an introduction in the voice of the narrator, the narrative continues with an ongoing dialogue between the meadow and one of the many students who frequent its fields, narrating the more-than-human history of the campus across the past century. I have included extensive paratextual elements, including footnotes, throughout this section as a means of not only depicting the rhizomatic nature of more-than-human narratives, but also in an effort to document the historical research consulted in the composition of the chapter.

Now, it is time to listen at the thresholds of the archive.

It is time for the meadow to tell its story.

4.2 The Meadow Begins to Speak

How did we get up here on this high mountain, do you ask?⁶² These crests and valleys are little more than memory, akin to the delicate ridges adorning your fingertips, an imprint left behind when the glaciers withdrew. The landscape remembers when the wedge of ice halted its retreat, lodged in the river ravine downstream of where the school now stands. The flood waters eddied where wildflowers now grow, rising higher and higher until a mountain lake blanketed the fields. The ice gradually melted away, leaving rich soil in its wake. The earth would become

⁶² The opening lines to this section mirror the opening lines of *Ellen or the Whisperings of an Old Pine*.

treasured farmland in the centuries that followed.⁶³ But before plows churned the loam, the mountains were home to dense forests, sugar maples and beech trees dwelling in the shadows of each noble peak. The wilderness bore another name then—Kedakina—the name still spoken by the descendants of the Abenaki. Long before the settlers arrived, clearing the evergreens with their axes, the Abenaki sought sanctuary in the mountain hollows during the leaf-falling moon, hunting deer, bear, and moose with snares and arrows (Forest Service, n.d.; Caduto, 2010).

We were born to the sound of cross-cut saws, our first lullaby, the thunder of falling timber. The settlers claimed the land beneath their feet, felling trees to make way for grasslands. They drove wooden posts into the soil along the ancient shoreline, building fences to confine sheep within our pastures. The lambs would feed on our grasses in the early spring, the flock growing, until the hills resembled a patchwork quilt of farmland (Perlman, 2019). The grassland birds appeared shortly thereafter—the bobolink and meadowlark, the killdeer and savannah sparrow, the northern harrier and American kestrel—arriving with the snowmelt. This refrain continued much the same for forty years, until the shepherds moved further west, departing the rock-strewn earth for greener pastures (Perlman, 2019). In the years that followed, the forest crept across neighboring meadows, taking root in the land the settlers stole. The barns sat empty. The fields sat fallow. The farmhouses sagged on their foundations, their skeletal remains picked clean by carrion crows. The farmers who remained introduced cattle to our pastures, the bleating chorus replaced by gentle lowing, tails swatting black flies beneath the summer sun.

This was long before automobiles rattled along the mountain roads. In the years before the summer people arrived, fleeing from coastal cities, the settlers still worked the land. Arnon

⁶³ Perlman, M. (2019). Middlebury's Bread Loaf lands: A story of nature, humans, and a conservation legacy. *Middlebury College*. https://www.middlebury.edu/sites/www.middlebury.edu/files/2022-07/BL_History_FINAL%20%281%29.pdf

Atwood built the first farmhouse. Joseph Parker took up residence in the decades that followed (Perlman, 2019). He released the cattle to graze within our pastures each summer, before returning the beasts to fallow paddocks, allowing the birds to nest undisturbed. In the winter, several feet of snow covered our back like a blanket, but on cool mornings in the late spring, our fields were filled with birdsong—the high-pitched melody of the bobolink, the plaintive cry of the killdeer, and the low warble of the meadowlark. The cool breeze whistled through the midsummer flowers, humming a familiar refrain. It was an ancient melody. The forest was pressing closer and closer, remembering the loam the lake had left behind. The trees unfixed their earthbound roots, but the farmhands pushed them back, their gleaming scythes in hand.⁶⁴ Wood sorrel and jack-in-the-pulpit grew just inside the tree line, oblivious to the battle upstream.

One summer, a young man followed the path upstream, seeking sanctuary in the shadows of the wilderness. He coughed and coughed, until his lungs cleared in the fresh mountain air. Before long, he was whistling a different tune, and the birds took up his song. This man was no farmer. Instead, he coveted the wilderness, imagining the fence posts replaced by gilded picture frames. His friends might hang paintings in their drawing rooms, but the brushwork paled in comparison to the wilderness in front of him. In the years that followed, he learned from the trees, putting down roots. He became an innkeeper. Buildings sprang up along the roadside like wildflowers, their panels the same shade of yellow as the brown-eyed susan. The plow leaned heavily on its side where it had been abandoned, its metal appendages reaching heavenward like the legs of an upended beetle. The summer people arrived shortly thereafter, lounging on the Inn porch while their children wandered through our fields, plucking handfuls of wildflowers to

⁶⁴ The Bread Loaf Wilderness is not unlike the fabled Birnam Wood, but the trees need no soldiers to hold their boughs aloft. Indeed, the evergreens have already reclaimed much of their former territory without spilling a drop of blood.

press between the pages of their books. *Surely*, the summer people exclaimed, *Thomas Cole himself could not imagine such beauty!* Indeed, the forests surrounding our meadows remained untouched. Nevertheless, the logging continued on the other side of the mountain.⁶⁵ Our view might have been obscured by the surrounding forest, but humming sounded uncannily familiar.

But then the innkeeper departed the mountain and failed to return the following summer. The birdsong carried a hint of melancholy, the mournful cry of the hermit thrush haunting the shade where the innkeeper once considered the whisperings of an old pine. In his absence, it seemed as though the grand inn might meet the same fate as the old farmhouses, its cellar doors overgrown with raspberry brambles, but it was soon decided that students would roost there instead. We watched them arrive the following summer, flocking along the highway with suitcases laden with books.⁶⁶ On warm days, the students would fall asleep in the sun, their books left open in the grass. We peered between the pages, reading snatches of poetry. The words resembled birdsong, containing their own musical refrain. William Cullen Bryant greeted the bird merrily swinging on brier and weed. Emily Dickinson mourned the missing rowdy of the meadow. The words on the page were familiar. We, too, greet the nesting birds in the spring and mourn their absence when the winds grow cold.

Sometimes, the students leave behind more than their books. We have found field mice nesting in green-plaid flannel shirts and leather gloves of varying sizes.⁶⁷ We have seen beer bottles shatter in the wake of mowing machines, leaving glittering green glass in the wake of its

⁶⁵ Perlman, M. (2019). Middlebury's Bread Loaf lands: A story of nature, humans, and a conservation legacy. *Middlebury College*. https://www.middlebury.edu/sites/www.middlebury.edu/files/2022-07/BL_History_FINAL%20%281%29.pdf

⁶⁶ These lines deliberately echo *Ellen or the Whisperings of an Old Pine*, wherein the author shifts back-and-forth between first person and third person throughout the novel.

⁶⁷ Bread Loaf School of English. (1973, July 20). *The Crumb*. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

blades.⁶⁸ The summer people are often careless with their possessions, their children leaving behind well-worn baseballs when the dinner bell rings out from the porch of the Inn.⁶⁹ However, the signs of their habitation are temporary. Their low wooden chairs gather on the edge of our fields, flocking together like “green, yellow, and cream-colored domesticated geese” prepared to “forage in the meadow” (Goeres, 1983, ln. 8-14). These strange birds return to the barn at the end of the summer, much like the Morgan horses who have long since disappeared.

The students begin to pack their bags with the inevitable mowing of the hay, the first sign that summer is winding down.⁷⁰ The last of the summer people lock up the Inn before the cars rumble down the mountain, leaving the buildings empty until the winter people return with planks of wood strapped to their feet, arriving along with the snow. Their plumage changes over time, but the students always return at the height of summer, their suitcases heavy with books. It continued much the same for nearly a century until, one summer, the students failed to return alongside the monarch butterfly. The birds still arrived from their southern homes, nesting in the dense vegetation. Speckled killdeer eggs hatched in mid-summer, the fledglings abandoning their eggshells in hollow depressions in the earth, but still the inn remained shuttered. The rustle of mice beneath its floorboards resembled the phantom *clicking* of fingers, scurrying across typewriter keys as end-of-term papers grew in fits and starts. But the typewriters were long gone. The leaves started to turn shortly thereafter—yellows, oranges, and reds—limned by the fading autumn sun. Then another summer came and went without the students. Instead, moose browsed

⁶⁸ Bread Loaf School of English. (1982, July 8). *The Crumb*. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

⁶⁹ Bread Loaf School of English. (1994, July 7). *The Crumb*. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

⁷⁰ Bread Loaf School of English. (2005, August 10). *The Crumb*. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

on twigs near the tree line, and coyotes stalked rabbits in thickets of meadowsweet.⁷¹ The birdsong still contained poetry, but the poets were gone. It would be another turn of the seasons before the summer people returned, their faces weary but hopeful.

4.2.1 *Ellen Returns to the Mountain*

When the sun started dipping behind the distant mountains, the first of the students wandered into the tall grasses, an anthology of poetry clutched loosely in her grasp. She sat with her back resting against the oak tree, the little book of poetry abandoned at her side. Its clothbound cover was visible in the golden sunlight. The title was a familiar one: *The Bread Loaf Anthology*. But like so many before her, the young woman made no move to open its cover, cracking the spine to thumb through the pages. Instead, she started gathering wildflowers, weaving them into her hair as the song sparrows warbled in the tall grass. For a long time, she worked in silence, her lips pursed together in concentration. But then the wind swept down the mountainside, and the meadowsweet seized the opportunity to graze her face. We could feel the warmth of the sun on her skin. Brushing us away, the young woman paused in her weaving, her expression curious.

“And who are you?” she asked, peering across the sea of wildflowers.

She tucked one flower behind her ear, waiting for an answer. It was the beloved buttercup. The flower might not have been native to my meadows before the settlers, but it has been my tenant for many years. As we considered her question, she returned to her task of weaving, the bright yellow petals of each buttercup catching the sunlight in the space between her fingertips.

⁷¹ Coyotes have made numerous appearances in the pages of *The Crumb*. An entry from July 1, 2010 compares their cries to the wailing of the furies: Alecto, Megaera, and Tisiphone, before explaining that the species moved into Vermont in the 1940s.

“We are the meadow,” we answered eventually, “though it is no easy question.”

“How so?” she asked, pausing in her task. “It seems simple enough to me.”

“We have lived many lives,” we explained, “and we have many voices.”

It was true. Our voice can be heard when the wind whistles through the wildflowers, but it can also be heard when the fledglings call to their mothers, crowded in their nests. It can be heard in the bellow of the bull moose, echoing through the surrounding hills, and it can be heard in the chirrup of grasshoppers, rubbing their wings together to join in the symphony of sound. After the migratory birds fly south to escape the bitter cold, their birdsong carries the story of my sanctuary with them.

For a long moment, she seemed to consider my answer before gesturing towards the meadowsweet. “Does the meadowsweet speak for you?”

“Yes,” we said. “But the meadowsweet is not alone. Listen to the birds warbling in the distance. Listen to black flies buzzing near the delicate shell of your ear. The bats who roost in the attic sing my song as well. In time, you learn to sing our song as well. It is a particular talent of the poets. Now, will you not tell the meadow your name?”

“My name is Ellen,” she answered, her hand now resting on the anthology at her side. “I am a teacher back home, but here there is always more to learn.”

“There is always more to learn,” we agreed, “as long as we learn to listen.”

Ellen hummed thoughtfully. “And what might we learn from the meadow, pray tell?”

4.2.2. Field-Mouse Week

In the tall grasses nearby, the field mice were foraging, their whiskers twitching nervously with the shadow of each passing bird. Following their movements, we contemplated

her question before remembering one summer from long ago, when the *clicking* of typewriters still rang out from the barn.

“The meadow can teach lessons about sanctuary,” we said. “There was once a student many summers ago who dreamed of catching field mice.”

Ellen wrinkled her nose. “Whoever would want to catch a field mouse?”

We did not understand her question at first, for there were many among us who treasured the taste of field mice. But then we remembered the parade of checkered picnic blankets over the years, the baskets brimming with cheese and crackers. The field mice only ever appeared afterwards, feasting on the remaining crumbs.

“She was one of the students,” we explained. “Sometime during her fifth week on the mountain, she grew tired of her studies. She neglected her books and her essays, but refused to return home to her distant valley. Instead, she wandered into our pastures, on her hands and knees, determined to catch one of the mice nesting amidst the meadowsweet.”

Ellen’s eyes were alight with curiosity. “Did she manage to catch one?”⁷²

There was a nearby field mouse listening now too, clinging to one of the purple flowers.

“The field mice were quite safe,” we answered. “The professors managed to coax the poor student out of the meadow, sending her back to the valley. Truth be told, I am not certain it was the best course of action.”

⁷² In the final chapter of *The Bread Loaf School of English: The First Fifty Years*, George K. Anderson tells the story of an unfortunate student who grew so distressed over exam week, that she retreated to the pastures in an effort to catch one of the field-mice. The framing of the incident in the book makes it seem like it was in the early decades of the graduate school’s history; however, later allusions to the incident in *The Crumb* on August 1, 2007 suggest the incident happened in the 1960s. I have made time deliberately murky here to accommodate both possibilities.

“I would wager that the field mice disagree,” Ellen said, watching the eavesdropping mouse scamper down the stalk, its tail disappearing into the meadowsweet once more. “What do you suppose would have been the best course of action?”

“Let her continue searching,” we answered. “She had only just come to her senses, after all.”

Ellen frowned. “But we all must return home in time,” she said, tilting her head to one side. “There was a poet who once roamed your fields who continues to remind us that nothing gold can stay.⁷³ I have heard it said that winters on the mountain are brutal.”

“We know that better than most,” we said, “but we also know the inevitability of the spring. Even those long dead have sometimes been known to return to the surrounding hills.”

“Ghosts?” Ellen asked, her eyes widening.

“Of a sort,” we conceded. “Let us tell you another story. One summer an immense windstorm swept down the western ridge of the mountains. Our buildings were undisturbed, but trees crashed to the earth further afield, disturbing our brethren in the forest. That summer, our fields hosted more visitors than usual, including the ghost of the catamount.⁷⁴ We had not heard its scream in these parts in many years, thinking it long dead, silenced by the *crack* of gunfire when sheep still grazed amidst the meadowsweet. But that summer it wandered down the mountain, returning to haunt these hills.”

“Has it returned since?” Ellen asked.

⁷³ Of course, the poet is Robert Frost in “Nothing Gold Can Stay.” Given his long history on the mountain, I cannot help wondering how much of this poem was inspired by his time spent visiting the campus of the Bread Loaf School of English.

⁷⁴ According to George K. Anderson (1969), there was an immense windstorm that took place on November 25, 1950. Although this storm took place months before the summer session, it had a lasting effect on the wildlife the following summer session: “Deer wandered over the croquet courts on the West Lawn; racoons went scurrying around under the floor of the Inn and the Little Theater or wandered, whole families at a time, out of the woods to the Farmer’s Cottage, where Mrs. Victor Johnson fed them most regularly; a bear followed Mrs. Cook and Mrs. Beck up the road from Brandy Brook Bridge to the West Lawn” (p. 152).

“It returns from time to time,” we answered. “We are glad, for we quite enjoy his music. We heard it singing one summer in the neighboring woods. Its song had scarcely ended before arguments ensued. *It was simply a case of mistaken identity*, the summer people reassured themselves. *Bobcats have been known to roam these woods.*”⁷⁵

Ellen glanced towards the darkened woods. “So, was it truly the mountain lion? I have heard stories of other cases of mistaken identity on the mountain.”⁷⁶

“It is possible that shadows obscured their vision,” we conceded. “And it is true that other ghosts have wandered in twilight. So, why not the mountain lion? It has even more claim on the land than the summer people.”

“But why would it return?” Ellen asked. “Surely, these hills have grown too tame.”

“Why do *you* return?” we asked. “Perhaps, it is searching for something it lost long ago. We suspect most who arrive in our fields are searching for something—the woman searching for the field mouse, the mountain lion searching for lost territory, the poet searching for inspiration. What do you hope to find beneath the oak tree?”

4.2.3 *Grazing Herds of Sheep*

Staring out across the purple hills, Ellen contemplated our question. “Perhaps I am searching for something lost long ago as well,” she said, holding up her book of poetry. The gilt lettering on the cover caught in the light of the golden hour. “I have heard it once said that the

⁷⁵ The July 13, 1999 edition of *The Crumb* reports another mountain lion sighting near campus. One of the students returned from her run in the nearby forest, telling the following story: “I heard a noise, looked into the woods off, and saw a mountain lion. The animal was about the size of a full-grown Labrador dog. It was only about thirty feet away, and I saw it climb a tree—it was *not* a dog. The cat looked at me and wasn’t scared.” There was another report of a mountain lion on August 2, 2002. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, eastern mountain lions have been extinct for at least seventy-years, but their western brethren have been known to wander as far east as Connecticut (Bielawski, 2023).

⁷⁶ The July 18, 2006 edition of *The Crumb* makes the following observation about the alleged haunting in the meadow: “you might see a spectral figure prowling the meadow by the Frost Cabin, gesturing wildly and muttering threateningly that you’re on his property. It’s probably just Paul Muldoon, swatting away the deer flies and still bitter over being temporarily evicted from his usual summer abode, the Noble Farmhouse.”

pastoral tradition mourns the forgotten golden age.⁷⁷ The pastoralists mourn our lives before the factories, the days when ferns grew along the asphalt instead of weeds.⁷⁸ Perhaps that is what we are hoping to find once more.”

Her voice had grown wistful. But the meadow remembered the sheep that once grazed in our pastures. Many years ago, the largest ram had taken an extraordinary dislike to the summer people. It had lowered its horns, charging any student foolhardy enough to enter its paddock.⁷⁹ The beast had been banished before the end of the summer, leaving the students free to cavort in the fields like shepherds. But what was a shepherd without his flock?⁸⁰

The students knew nothing of haying the meadow. Not so long ago, the farmers had sharpened and greased the mowing-machine by hand, its metal blades shaped against an anvil. But the students had renounced hard labor long ago, choosing to live instead as ornamental hermits.⁸¹ Brushing against her cheek with a blade of grass, we said as much. Perhaps, she did not know that sheep had once grazed here before departing for the slaughterhouse. The bleating of ewes had been absent from our song for quite some time.

Ellen seemed lost in thought for a long moment. “Perhaps, we are searching for something unchanged,” she said. “In the cities, we have spent the past several years in solitude as

⁷⁷ When Andrew Mahlstedt delivered the commencement address in 2006, he quoted the words of Professor John Elder, who once noted that “Bread Loaf is the pastoral.” Mahlstedt notes that the “pastoral tradition is about the loss of a mythical Golden Age, when everything was crystalline and pure, and the very human desire to return to that evanescent moment of pastoral perfection.”

⁷⁸ Donald Davidson (1957) romanticized the Vermont wilderness, noting that “all the weeds had turned into ferns and buttercups” (p. 236).

⁷⁹ On July 6, 1922, *The Crumb* reported on the ram’s brief reign of terror in rather cryptic terms: “The farm manager announces that it will be safe for guests to gambol in the sheep pasture after Sunday. A certain disturbing element is taking the train for Boston tomorrow.”

⁸⁰ In his commencement address, Andrew Mahlstedt (2006) mentioned that his classmates once joked that “the only thing missing in Bread Loaf’s pastoralized surreality was a herd of sheep.” It is ironic that we once had a herd of sheep, but the finest of its kind was shipped off to Boston, presumably meeting an unfortunate fate as mutton.

⁸¹ Studying the promotional material for the Bread Loaf School of English, I was sometimes reminded of 18th-century advertisements for ornamental hermits. Landowners would pay significant sums to host those willing to live on the land in “picturesque distress” (Parks, 2023).

sickness sweeps through the land. But now we can return to the same mountain stream, leaving our clothes strewn across the smooth river stones for an afternoon swim. Perhaps, we return to remember the world untouched.”

We could hear the stream singing as light and clear as the tinkling of bells. But when the meadow hummed in harmony, we remembered the flood waters. The waters continue to rush downstream, but we have never quite forgotten that we were once a lake. The grasslands grow marshy from time to time, the paths thick with heavy mud. Once during heavy rainfall, we spotted students fishing from the third-floor balcony of their cottage, using their breakfast as bait.⁸² The same mountain stream where students shed their clothing has been known to swell into a flood, overflowing its banks as the waters rush downstream, washing out the roads into town.⁸³ Not so long ago, the floodwaters left a mud wallow where there was once a pond. Now, there is another pond in its place—a different pond—the water a touch warmer than its predecessor. We had seen artists sketch the stream, leaving the waters frozen in time, but we have never been steadfast. The students rarely linger long enough to notice.

Once again, we said as much. Perhaps, she did not remember the ancient lakeshore as we did. Our harmony had been subdued then, less lively than the stream.

Ellen furrowed her brow, once again considering our words. She was slower to answer this time, gazing across the sea of meadowsweet. The tall grasses rippled in the fading light, billowing like waves on the distant ocean. “Perhaps, we are searching for connection,” she said

⁸² *The Crumb* reports numerous rainiest seasons on record, including 1976. In the commencement address for that summer session, Robert W. Hanning offers comical description of the rainfall: “[It was] a summer that saw, before the flood waters receded, Dick Brodhead fishing for whales from a rocking chair on the third-floor balcony of Maple, using French toast for bait” (p. 3). Although this is likely an exaggeration, it was a fun image to include.

⁸³ Significant stretches of Route 125 washed away following a flash flood in 2000. The roads were washed away once more in 2009, and then again in 2017, to say nothing of the Great Northeast Flood of 2023, resulting in a landslide in the neighboring village of Ripton, Vermont (Banacos, 2023).

at long last, nodding down at the anthology at her side. “I have been reading poetry written near the meadow. The poet speaks, of course, but the poet must listen as well. Dallas Lore Sharp lends his ear to the bobolink, warbling high above the clover sea.⁸⁴ Wilfred Davison lends his ear to the mountain clearing, despairing the inadequacy of human speech.⁸⁵ But he still listens—*we listen*. We listen to the buzz of black flies, and we listen to the high-pitched keen of the catamount. We listen to the distant gurgle of the stream, and we listen to the silent songs. As night falls, our voices join in. These voices, these songs, remind us to attune to the world around us. They invite us to create poetry of our own.”⁸⁶

Finally, her words rang true. Each summer countless creatures return to my fields: the monarch butterfly and the eastern meadowlark, the catamount and the coyote, the professor and the student. As the summer wears on, the boundaries between us and them begin to weaken, growing more-than-more porous as we become something more-than-human.⁸⁷ Once the late summer mowing begins, we have both been transformed in the encounter, but then the summer people leave. Imagining the empty building, we realized that one final question that plagued us.

“And what will you sing when you leave these fields behind?”

“My own verse,” she answered. “But I am not quite done listening.”

⁸⁴ Dallas Lore Sharp, American author and university professor, taught at the Bread Loaf School of English from 1927 to 1929. His contribution to the *Bread Loaf Anthology* is titled “While Bobolink Was Here.” It documents the changing song of the bobolink over the summer in the meadow.

⁸⁵ Following the inaugural summer, Wilfred E. Davison was the first dean of the Bread Loaf School of English, and he contributed several poems to the *Bread Loaf Anthology*, including “Echoes,” which notes the following truth about the more-than-human voices on the mountain: “Ancient that voice as mountain heights are old, / A voice no human speech, however bold, / Has ever yet the meaning told.”

⁸⁶ After pages of troubling the notion of the pastoral, Andrew Mahlstedt (2006) ultimately defends it in his commencement address: “It is the earth that gives us, and the writers we read, the inspiration to write literature.”

⁸⁷ Through their ecological research, Gao, et al. (2023) have demonstrated the interdependence of mountain meadow ecosystems. Meadows are an excellent model of entanglement *because* they demonstrate interdependence of ephemeral *flora* and *fauna*.

On the porch of the inn, the dinner bell started to ring. Ellen frowned, rising to her feet. She looked across the meadow one last time, her crown of wildflowers quite forgotten.

“Before leaving, may I read you a poem?” she asked. She held her book of poetry aloft.

The wind rustled the leaves in the oak tree in affirmation as the meadow strained to listen. Whiskers twitching, the field mouse peeked out from its burrow. The grasshopper paused its music, its movements abruptly ceasing. Even the fireflies blinked in anticipation. It had been so long since we had glimpsed the pages of a book, after all.

She thumbed through the pages before pausing, her finger tracing the stanzas before she read the words aloud:

Sunset at Bread Loaf
Charles Malam (1939)

When meadowlarks are dust and delicate bones,
When the thrush of summer sings no more on the hill
And they come with spades to turn the river stones
Seeking the visible forces forever still,
When the man and his horse and the plow that turned the clover
And the skull of the bee are legends to bracket together
And iron works the peculiar fossils over
In that other world, in that unfamiliar weather,

Will they know what they have not found, those other folk,
Where they stand thigh deep in the red and lavender grass
Under the smoke-ringed sun? Will they stop and stroke
The fragile carbonates, knowing they, too, must pass
To a thought, to a dream, to a song, its lost words ended,
Sad as this day was sad, and wholly splendid?

Her words seemed to hang—suspended in the air—as we remembered those absent from our midst, those who had faded to a thought, to a dream, to a song, its lost words ended. We, too, would fade from memory. But the sunset was far too beautiful to despair. Ellen lingered a moment longer in the final moments of the golden hour, before hiking through the tall grasses, her book clutched tight in her hands. But she turned back at the edge of the meadow, her lips

curled upwards in a smile. The fireflies flickered amidst the wildflowers, fading into the shadows like ghosts.⁸⁸

“Good-bye,” she whispered. “Good-bye!”

“It is never truly good-bye,” we answered. “Someone will sing again tomorrow, after all. Then again tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow...”

4.3 Disrupting the Pastoral

In this chapter, I have attempted to narrate the more-than-human history of the meadow, drawing on various strategies from my methodological framework, including paratextual elements, nonlinear narrative elements, and more-than-human narrative voices. There are a variety of primary and secondary sources reflected in the footnotes of this chapter, including interdisciplinary ecological articles in addition to entries from the past century of *The Crumb*. This history does not aspire to the accuracy of an almanac, chronicling the meteorological history of the campus. Instead, it attempts to examine that which “eddies under, around, and sometimes through” the archive (Cohen, 2017, p. 27). In doing so, it attempts to understand the history of more-than-human entanglement in the spirit of the refrain. How have repeated encounters between the human and more-than-human transformed the character of the graduate school over time?

In narrating this chapter, I drew heavy inspiration from the poets who have wandered the meadow before me, including Donald Davidson, Robert Frost, Charles Malam, Dallas Lore Sharp. With this in mind, I beg your indulgence if you detected more than a hint of pastoral

⁸⁸ In an entry from June 27, 2007, *The Crumb* disrupts our romantic notions of the firefly: “I don’t mean for the reality to intrude upon your aesthetic sensibility, but the fact is that the insects’ bioluminescence assists them in locating and attracting potential mates—so the scene you may first view with a Wordsworthian eye for sublimity is actually the largest singles bar in Vermont in full swing.” This is, of course, another form of entanglement, so our aesthetic sensibilities are not the least bit disturbed.

sentimentalism in this chapter. The pastoral tradition pervades the literature surrounding the Bread Loaf School of English, and it bleeds through any discussion of the more-than-human. Though this chapter engages in such sentimentalism, it also attempts to unsettle it, pointing to its dangers. Recalling the words of John Elder, Mahlstedt (2006) offers a similar critique of the pastoral tradition in his commencement address: “He also taught us that the pastoral writers were, for the most part, children of privilege who could afford the time in the country, who could sit under the tree to contemplate the herding of sheep because the shepherds, for whom life is not fanciful, were doing the physical labor” (para. 13). Reading these words, I am reminded that the mountain *is* a place of privilege. The original inhabitants of the Bread Loaf Inn were made up of the New England elite, the sort who could afford to leave behind their labors during the summer months. The independent school teachers who followed in their footsteps may not have been men of wealth, but they nevertheless exercised a different sort of privilege.

However, several programs in the past several decades have contributed to a marked shift in the composition of students on campus. Public-school teachers now make up 40% of the student body. How did the graduate school begin this shift? As mentioned in this chapter, mountain meadows are not only transient—they are also incredibly diverse. The next two chapters briefly depart the meadow to examine similar trends in the student body, offering another interpretation of the refrain. The refrain in these two chapters will pave the way for the final chapter, which examines how students of the Bread Loaf School of English eventually bring the more-than-human home. Much like the meadow, they are living cabinets of curiosities, carrying their own assemblages within them.

Chapter 5: The Ghosts of Gentle Folk

“At Bread Loaf, there are many things that go bump in the night: moths against the lampshades, critters in the trash cans, the screen door at the Inn as illicit lovers rush home before daybreak... While some might tremble nervously in their beds at night as ghosts roll gutterballs in the phantom bowling alley, others have come to accept some apparitions as part and parcel of the Bread Loaf experience.” —“Ask Old Piney,” *The Crumb*, July 9, 1997

The early summer sessions of the Bread Loaf School of English marked the first appearance of one of its most familiar ghosts, that of Robert Frost. Although Frost was never officially affiliated with the school, he would wander its grounds every summer from the school’s founding until his death, drawn like a moth to the flame. I remember my first encounter with Frost’s spirit, over fifty years later, seated at a table in the dining hall of the Inn. It was late June, a few weeks into the summer, and printed in *The Crumb* was the following announcement:

The annual all school Robert Frost picnic is Saturday, July 2 at 6 p.m. No tickets are necessary. A shuttle will transport people from the Front Desk to the event every 15 minutes starting at 5 p.m.

Later that week, I joined a handful of others in the back of a white Ford Transit passenger van, which rattled down Rt. 125 before turning right down a gravel path into the woods. We bounced up and down as the gravel ground beneath the tires before coming to a stop at the parking lot of the Homer Noble Farm, the summer home of Robert Frost from 1939-1963. The farmhouse was white paneled, gleaming in the brilliant golden light of the late afternoon. We were early, and since the burgers were still frozen solid, the manager of the Inn offered to guide our group up the path to Frost’s cabin, which was tucked further still into the forest at the end of a muddy dirt road. The path was cool and dark, lined with ferns and low remnants of an old stone fence. It had recently rained, and the path was swarming with black flies. They circled our heads, drawn to the perspiration that beaded down the backs of our necks. As we trudged up the path, we swatted them away from our faces until we reached the Frost Cabin.

The cabin was the antithesis of the farmhouse below. Its wooden panels were unpainted, worn, and splintering. The Innkeeper, producing a set of keys from his pockets, unlocked the doors and led us inside. It took a moment for my eyes to adjust to the dim lighting. Everything inside was seemingly carved from stone or wood, as though the cabin had sprung up, unbidden, from the surrounding wilderness, an enchanted cottage lifted straight from the pages of a fairytale. As I wandered the narrow halls, I remember thinking how small it seemed compared to how large Frost loomed in my imagination. Staring at the large Morris chair in the corner of the living room, I tried to imagine him sitting there, his dog, Gillie, curled at his feet, as he hosted students from the college for an evening of literary conversation. However, the dog wouldn't have been there in the beginning. He arrived in the summer of 1940 following the death of Frost's wife, Elinor. Nevertheless, the image of the dog, its tail thumping against the wooden floorboards, somehow completed my mental portrait.

Later, after the picnic, a group of us walked up the narrow verge along the highway back to campus, too impatient to wait for the return journey in the passenger van. My roommate led the way, and behind me, another classmate stopped frequently to pick up wildflowers from the side of the road. After a while, she pressed a handful into my outstretched hand before continuing her search. I remember breathing deeply, the flowers lifted close to my nose, grateful to be walking in the footsteps of giants.

Years later, in my apartment in Morningside Heights, I found myself transported back to the Robert Frost cabin as I read Peter J. Stanlis's (2009) recollections of this time as a student at Bread Loaf. Stanlis spent hours in Frost's company, often talking with him until late in the night. Once the candles had burned low, Stanlis would begin the sojourn back to campus, where he would feverishly document every aspect of the conversation that he could remember. Recalling

Frost's demeanor, Stanlis writes, "His manner was the most informal, relaxed, artless, sociable, warm-hearted, and touched by humor" (p. 15). Following one late night conversation in the summer of 1939, Frost accompanied Stanlis on the path back to campus from his summer cabin in Ripton, wandering the same path up Rt. 124 my classmates and I would traverse decades later. On the way back, the pair lingered at the graveyard along the south side of the road, one that I have driven by many times without a second thought.

I found myself mesmerized as I read the passage, imagining myself walking alongside them, becoming like a ghost myself, an interloper, an eavesdropper, witnessing something intimate and private. Remember this quiet moment in the cemetery, Stanlis recalls:

Frost's voice came out of the darkness like a disembodied spirit. He quoted what I recognized as a deliberately modified line from Milton's *Samson Agonistes*: 'O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of stars,' changing Milton's last word, noon, to stars. I was startled by the dark, ominous, brooding tone in his voice. (p. 43)

I closed the book for a moment, picturing myself standing among the stone monuments to the dead. Frost's face is lit in the soft gray light of the moon. For a moment, I studied his features. In his craggy face I caught a fleeting glimpse of recognition, perhaps of approval, but perhaps that is wishful thinking. Nevertheless, I saw the blaze of stars in his eyes. Then, a truck laid on its horn below my apartment window on Amsterdam Avenue, and the entire scene seemed to dissipate, a candle flickering out with a sudden draught.

As I continued my research into the founding of the Bread Loaf School of English, I found myself ravenously consuming Stanlis's book and mourning the fact that he only documented three summers. Despite the short window of time, I felt like I knew Frost a little better. Stanlis describes him as endlessly restless, melancholy but hopeful. Reading his poetry now, I think I can recognize something of that spirit. In "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening," Frost writes in his final stanza:

The woods are lovely, dark, and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

Rereading these lines, I am reminded that energy can neither be created nor destroyed. I picture him, still wandering the path along Rt. 125 on moonlit nights, only to vanish in the high beams of a passing car. Perhaps I have walked alongside him, wildflowers clenched between my fingertips, with Gillie dutifully following at my heels.

5.1 Listening at the Threshold

Robert Frost is perhaps the most famed literary figure associated with the graduate school, yet he never taught a course on the mountain. Indeed, his poetic sensibilities were often at odds with the increasingly academic culture of the graduate school in its early years, writing that he was hesitant to put poetry “on the operating table” (Anderson, 1969, p. 33). In a conversation with a student, Frost once compared the average scholar to the hapless frog in Mark Twain’s “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County”:

Before the frog was filled with buckshot he was like the poet, light and imaginative and capable of great leaps by a command or the slightest stimulus. But after being filled with buckshot, the frog was like a scientific critic or scholar, weighted down, stuffed with ponderous logic and knowledge, but useless in the art of jumping. (Stanlis, 2009, p. 58)

Despite his skepticism, he maintained a close relationship with the school, beginning with his first annual lecture at the start of the Davison directorship. Anderson (1969) characterized these lectures as largely improvised, involving “almost any conceivable subject pertaining to literature, the arts, history, philosophy, or politics” (p. 32). Frost continued delivering these lectures each summer until his death, returning to the mountain again and again like the migratory birds nesting in the meadow. There was no denying that he was fond of the program, comparing it to a “Brook Farm that worked, without the drudgery and tyranny of a commune” (Stanlis, 2009, p.

96). He returned not only for the lectures, but also for the annual softball game, where legend has it that he once chased a member of the opposing team into the woods, his softball held aloft like a cudgel.⁸⁹

Robert Frost continued to visit the campus in the years *following* his death, assuming the status of a mythic figure on campus. He appears frequently in issues of *The Crumb*, including this haunting entry over forty years following his death:

Students, Faculty Engage in Cult Like Nighttime Ritual at Frost Farm

Questions surround the so-called “Frost Séance” (tonight, 10 p.m.), the ritualistic gathering of Bread Loafers at the Frost Cabin in the dark of night to read Frost poems. Masquerading as an eager acolyte to this group of practitioners of the dark arts, a *Crumb* reporter was able to ask Séance Supervisor Paul Muldoon⁹⁰ about their mission:

What is it that you do? Well, we read Frost poems as a kind of tribute to the man, you see. You bring along a Frost poem you’d like to read, like “Acceptance” or “The Axe-Helve,” and we sit in a big circle and read ‘em by flashlight. It’s not really that spooky, unless you do manage to summon a ghost.

Have you, in fact, raised Frost from the dead? No, not yet, but we’re getting closer every year.⁹¹

As this article demonstrates, students have made frequent attempts to resurrect the ghost of Robert Frost within the pages of *The Crumb*. He appears in numerous headlines across the decades, including my personal favorite: “Robert’s Ghost Goes Stir-Crazy in Drinking Cabin, Visits Atmosphere and Pond.”⁹² Indeed, some poetry events promise their own “Frost-in-body experience[s].” Robert Frost has even been said to possess the bodies of various faculty

⁸⁹ Bread Loaf School of English. (2001, June 27). *The Crumb*. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

⁹⁰ Irish poet, Paul Muldoon, has taught many summers at the Bread Loaf School of English over the past three decades.

⁹¹ Students, Faculty Engage in Cult Like Nighttime Ritual at Frost Farm. (2006, July 19). *The Crumb* [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf School of English, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.

⁹² Bread Loaf School of English. (2014, August 1). *The Crumb* [Student Newsletter], Bread Loaf School of English, F7, Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

members, including Paul Muldoon, most frequently.⁹³ Robert Frost may have spurned the classroom lectern, but his lessons nevertheless still reverberate through the wilderness surrounding the mountain campus.

I have regrettably stopped short of hosting my own Frost Séance; however, this chapter will nevertheless attempt to heed the *revenant*, even as it turns towards the recent history of the institution. We will start by turning towards a brief preface written by Robert Frost for the *Bread Loaf Anthology*, a slender volume of poetry published by Middlebury College Press. In this preface, Frost expresses his fondness for the institution: “You who are as much concerned as I for the future of Bread Loaf will agree with me that once in so often it should be redefined if it is to be kept from degenerating into a mere summer resort for routine education in English, or worse still for routine education in literature” (Frost, 1936, p. xix). In this passage, the *revenant* gestures towards the *arrivant*, the future of the institution as it continues to evolve over time. Frost indirectly reminds his readers of the importance of the refrain, repetition as/with difference across the history of the institution.

This chapter endeavors to trace the more-than-human by conjuring the ghosts that haunt the refrains in the recent history of the Bread Loaf School of English. Anderson (1969) closed his history of the institution with the following assertion: “Bread Loaf, the Inn and the School, remains peopled with ghosts—some gentle, some unfriendly, but most of them well-disposed towards Joseph Battell’s bequest” (p. 154). The more-than-human continues to haunt the recent history of the graduate school, and this chapter attempts to account for these present absences by listening at the threshold of the recent history of the institution. However, now we turn towards the spectral elements that haunt the curriculum. George K. Anderson ends his history upon the

⁹³ Bread Loaf School of English. (2014, August 1). *The Crumb* [Student Newsletter], Bread Loaf School of English, F7, Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

fiftieth anniversary of the graduate school. This chapter will pick up in the following decade with the founding of the Program in Writing, which continues to haunt the programming of the graduate school today.

Furthermore, since the earliest days of the Bread Loaf School of English, the summer faculty has been selected almost entirely from institutions other than Middlebury. Although many faculty members maintain long-term professional relationships with the institution, the very nature of Bread Loaf creates moments of encounter between key figures in the fields of literature, writing, and education. However, many of these figures have gone largely unacknowledged in the history of the institution. While the fourth chapter showcases the more-than-human protagonists in the history of the institution, this chapter attempts to acknowledge the contributions of the human protagonists by listening at the threshold to acknowledge their contributions to the refrain.

5.2 James Moffett at Bread Loaf

James Moffett is one such figure lingering at the threshold of the history of the Bread Loaf School of English. His many contributions to the institution, including the program that would eventually evolve into the Bread Loaf Teacher Network, have remained largely unexamined. Moffett first joined the faculty in the late 1970s, arriving at the school during a key inflection point in the history of the institution. Through his involvement with the Program in Writing, Moffett contributed to widespread curricular changes on the mountain. Prior to the introduction of the Program in Writing, the curricular offerings in writing and the teaching of writing remained sparse at the Bread Loaf School of English, generally averaging to no more than two courses each summer. Traditional literature courses took precedence, occasionally supplemented by work in the theater program. Yet in the decade following the Program in

Writing's inaugural summer, the school offered an average of ten writing classes each summer (Low, 1993, p. 56). These curricular trends continue today with robust course offerings in Writing, Pedagogy, and Literacy, particularly on the mountain campus.

Although Dixie Goswami would eventually take the helm as the director of the program—and as a trailblazer in the field of classroom research—James Moffett is rarely acknowledged for his early role at the very start of the program. Indeed, during the opening remarks of the Bread Loaf in the Schools Conference in 1985, Paul Cubeta acknowledged Moffett's early influence on the Program in Writing at Bread Loaf: "That first summer of 1978, Jim Moffett *was* our Writing Program. And what a way to begin!" (Low, 1993, p. 58). Although Moffett only taught as full-time faculty for four summers—1978, 1984, 1985, and 1988—he maintained a decade-long relationship with Bread Loaf, spending summers on the mountain as writing consultant and guest speaker. Furthermore, his personal correspondences with institutional leadership additionally reveal his influence, even in his absence. Therefore, this brief section will examine how Moffett joined the faculty during the inaugural summer of the Program in Writing, before then outlining the broad strokes of his role in shaping the program in the 1980s.

5.2.1 The Beginnings of the Program in Writing

Beginning in the summer of 1978, the writing curriculum at the Bread Loaf underwent a radical transformation as a result of the inaugural summer of the Program in Writing. Paul Cubeta, then director of the graduate program, envisioned the creation of the Program in Writing as a means of recruiting and supporting teachers working in rural communities. In collaboration with Walker Gibson, Professor of English at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, Cubeta invited key stakeholders to an initial planning session in the Barn during the preceding summer

session.⁹⁴ Alongside this invitation, Cubeta included a draft grant proposal, seeking \$110,750 in funding from the Rockefeller Foundation, with the hopes of paying for financial aid for seventy-five rural teachers over the course of three summers. The funding would also cover the appointment of two faculty members for the writing program. In the draft grant proposal, Cubeta outlined the rationale for the program, which included many of the perceived challenges facing rural teachers:

The men and women who teach in America's rural schools usually do so without the educational and cultural resources of the more populated sections of this country.... Their own isolation from these cultural supports — and more importantly, from each other — creates an additional burden for these teachers. Unlike most secondary school teachers who live in or near urban areas, the rural school teacher has little opportunity to participate in supportive continuing education programs that speak to the particular educational needs of their students. Moreover, they have little occasion, through summer seminars, university courses or even local workshops, to plan with their colleagues goals and strategies appropriate to the needs of their students. (Cubeta, 1977, p. 2)

The grant proposal carries on to outline how the unique positioning of the Bread Loaf School of English makes it ideally situated to address these challenges. The mountain campus is located in the heart of rural Vermont, nestled in the protected wilderness of the Green Mountains. The dense broadleaf forests surrounding the mountain campus are a far cry from the cosmopolitan centers along the eastern seaboard. Yet the mountain campus routinely attracts decorated faculty from prestigious universities across the United States and England.

The Program in Writing would sit at the boundary of these two worlds. Over the course of a two-year program of study, rural teachers would benefit from the opportunity to learn from leaders in the field of composition studies. In return, Bread Loaf faculty benefited from an increased familiarity with “the problems of rural education” (Cubeta, 1977, p. 2). The program as

⁹⁴ Bread Loaf is somewhat atypical in that all classes are located in a large repurposed barn on campus. One half of the building contains three floors of classrooms. The other half of the building is a large space where students frequently gather to study between classes.

proposed would consist of two core courses, the teaching of writing and the teaching of literature, each designed to help teachers identify the literacy needs of rural students. These seminars would be supplemented by additional programming, featuring guest writing consultants and lecturers. Through these support structures, the program aspired to foster authentic writing opportunities for rural students, thereby addressing concerns pertaining to illiteracy in rural America.

The grant application proved successful. Bread Loaf soon received large grants from both the Rockefeller Foundation and the General Mills Foundation in order to fund the program. In his opening remarks at the Bread Loaf in the Schools Conference in 1985, Cubeta reflected on the process of building the faculty for the Program in Writing (Low, 1993, p. 57-60). He quickly identified Mina Shaughnessy, a pioneer in the field of composition studies from City University of New York, to helm the program. However, when it became clear that her declining health would prevent her from working with the program, Shaughnessy supplied Cubeta with three names: James Moffett, Shirley Brice Heath, and Janet Emig (Low, 1993, p. 58). Dixie Goswami, one of Janet Emig's graduate students, joined the writing faculty during the second year of the program. Under her leadership, the Program in Writing flourished, eventually evolving into the Rural Bread Loaf Teachers Network in the early 1990s, and later the Bread Loaf Teacher Network. But that first summer, James Moffett laid the groundwork for the program. In the words of Paul Cubeta, Moffett "assured the success of [the] writing program from its start" (Low, 1993, p. 59).

5.2.3 James Moffett Arrives at Bread Loaf

College records indicate that the Program in Writing enrolled thirty students during the inaugural summer in 1978, including teachers hailing from ten states, largely in the northeast. In

addition to the required coursework, students benefited from the support of writing consultants including Donald M. Murray, Mina P. Shaughnessy, Walker Gibson, and Mary I. Lanigan. Moffett taught two sections of the required pedagogical course: *Principles, Problems, and Practices of Teaching English*. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the coursework reflected the educational philosophies perhaps best exemplified by the Dartmouth Seminar, including the work of James Britton, James Squire, and John Dixon.⁹⁵ In the Bread Loaf School of English Catalog (1978), his course description explains that the seminar would “focus on the development of the student as writer and teacher rather than on various schools of thought in English education” (p. 17). This description reflects his suspicion of educational parlance. Instead, teachers would learn how to teach writing by writing, echoing the early philosophies of the National Writing Project. In addition to reading both inside and outside of class, students were required to respond to their classmates’ writing in order to further develop their understanding of the “capacities that make good teachers” (p. 17). These writing-centered pedagogies perhaps best exemplify the early influence Moffett, along with his British colleagues, had on the Program in Writing.

Although it could be argued that course descriptions do not always accurately reflect the pedagogy of the course instructor, there is ample evidence that Moffett had a significant impact his first summer at Bread Loaf. His influence on the campus writing culture beyond the walls of his classroom would set the stage for future developments in the Program in Writing. One area of the archives where his influence is readily apparent is in campus programming. Issues of *The Crumb* make frequent mention of Moffett. For example, Moffett regularly screened films on writing for the larger Bread Loaf community during the summer of 1978. On July 6, Moffett

⁹⁵ In fact, James Britton would also spend time at the Bread Loaf School of English. During the era of the Program in Writing, there was a strong contingent of faculty from the UCL Institute of Education, suggesting that the mountain campus might have been an arena for an ongoing dialogue between Anglo-American English educators, much in the spirit of the Dartmouth Conference.

screened two short films on writing pedagogy, before subsequently leading a discussion of the films with the wider campus community. Then again on July 19, Moffett screened a documentary about the *Foxfire* magazine. Following the screening, he hosted Moira Tingle to discuss her involvement in the project. Indeed, similar events were so frequent that on July 26, the editor of *The Crumb* declared: “The CRUMB mentions Jim Moffett at least once a week!” These weekly notices illustrate how Moffett’s influence extended beyond the rural students, who were enrolled in his coursework, and into the larger community during the first summer of the program. These campus-wide events created opportunities for cross-pollination outside the walls of the classroom as new pedagogical possibilities spread through the wider campus assemblage.

In subsequent summers of the program, Moffett made additional appearances to teach courses on writing pedagogy. No longer restricted to the “back to basics” sensibilities of the inaugural summer, his coursework frequently reflected his ongoing intellectual concerns. In 1984, for instance, Moffett taught two courses: *Writing from Meditation* and *Writing from Reading*. For the former, his handwritten personal notes planning for this course illustrate how the course gave Moffett the opportunity to put pedagogical principles outlined in two key articles—“Writing, Inner Speech, and Meditation” (1982) and “Reading and Writing as Meditation” (1983)—into practice. Similarly, Moffett taught *Ways to Writing, Ways of Writing* in 1988. Students enrolled in this course worked with *Points of Departure: An Anthology of Nonfiction* (1985) and *Active Voices IV* (1985) as models for their own writing. Mirroring the principles of the National Writing Project, enrolled students learned about the teaching of writing by working within writing workshops as they produced their *own* works of nonfiction, which were subsequently published for the wider Bread Loaf community in lieu of an end-of-term examination. Similar practices continue today with student-written publications produced each

summer on the mountain campus, including the *Bread Loaf Journal*, which publishes poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction from across the campuses each summer.

Although Moffett certainly was not the only leader in composition studies to influence the curriculum at Bread Loaf—part of the beauty of the campus hinges on the ongoing interchange of scholarship each summer—his contributions to the early curriculum are frequently understated in both Moffett scholarship and in the history of the Bread Loaf School of English. Beyond the summers where Moffett directly taught courses, he remained involved in planning for the future of the program, contributing to curricular discussions throughout the 1980s. The James Porter Moffett Papers, housed at the University of California Santa Barbara, contains a thin folder of letters between Moffett and Cubeta. These letters reveal his support in planning the Bread Loaf in the Schools Conference in 1985. At the conference itself, when Cubeta introduced Moffett to the conference participants, his admiration for Moffett was clear, declaring that “he represents the embodiment of the only idea I’ve ever had at Bread Loaf: get the best and leave the rest to them” (Low, 1993, p. 59). Following the conference, when the institution managed to secure additional funding to expand the school’s outreach into rural schools, Moffett received a letter from both Cubeta and Goswami seeking his experience and advice on how to best use the funds in order to support of the creation of vibrant writing communities in partnership with K-12 schools. These small gestures illustrate how Moffett established his legacy at the Bread Loaf School of English, a legacy that would continue long after his death in 1996.

5.3 The Evolution of the Program in Writing

James Moffett clearly had an important influence on the Program in Writing. However, the transitory nature of the institution creates the conditions for the “entanglement” of key

figures *across* the field of composition studies. These moments of cross-contamination are particularly clear in the early years of the Program in Writing. Karen Barad (2011) describes the phenomenon of entanglement using language borrowed from quantum physics. Entangled bodies, like the entangled quantum particles in Niels Bohr's famous two-slit experiment, join and disjoin. During this moment of encounter, both bodies are transformed. Furthermore, the bodies may remain entangled long after—sometimes even before—the moment of encounter. They have become inextricably linked, interwoven in the becoming of the other. The bee-orchid cartoon cited in an earlier chapter of the dissertation serves as an example of the transformative effect of entanglement. Similarly, the early legacy of James Moffett remains entangled with the history of the Program in Writing, but the program continued to evolve with each new refrain in subsequent summers of the program.

During the second summer of the Program in Writing in 1979, the course offerings expanded significantly. James Moffett returned as a writing consultant along with Janet Emig and Camillus Lee Odell. However, the primary writing courses were taught by Andrew Conrad and Dixie Goswami. Andrew Conrad, the Director of Writing at Princeton, only taught at Bread Loaf for a single summer session. However, Dixie Goswami would eventually found the Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network alongside James Maddox, and her son, Rocky Gooch.⁹⁶ When Goswami joined the faculty, she was working as a writing specialist at the University of Tennessee in addition to serving on the Commission on Composition of the National Council of Teachers of English. Though this chapter will discuss her contributions to the field of composition in English education in more detail later, Goswami taught two courses her first summer at Bread Loaf: *Teaching Writing* and *Evaluating Writing*. The course description of

⁹⁶ News, "Dixie Goswami Retires," Middlebury Bread Loaf School of English, Fall 2019, <https://www.middlebury.edu/school-english/news/dixie-goswami-retires>

Teaching Writing closely mirrors the course taught by Moffett the previous summer, while *Evaluating Writing* focused on developing the capacity to respond usefully to the writing of others. The other writing courses this summer included *The Writing as Process* with Conrad, *Fiction Writing* with Huddle, and *Experiments in the Writing of Poetry* with Raab.

In 1980, the third summer of the program, the curriculum saw the further development of the composition program at Bread Loaf. This was the first summer wherein courses in writing were differentiated for first year students and returning students. First year students were required to take one of two courses: *Teaching the Craft of Writing* or *Metaphors, Methods, and Models for Teachers of Writing*. Goswami taught the latter, which included course readings from seminal texts in the field of composition authored by Elbow, Moffett, and Britton. The influence of the Dartmouth Conference is again notable in the reading list. However, even more notable than the coursework for first year students was the course work offered for returning students. Returning students in the Program in Writing were required to take *The Teacher of Writing as Researcher*. According to the course description in the 1980 Summer Course Catalog, students would be required to “present plans for systematic [writing] research in their own institutions.”⁹⁷ Goswami sought to democratize literacy research by dispelling the notion that classroom research required strict scientific methodologies.

Student work from this course—as well as subsequent variations of the same course—would later be published in a collection of essays entitled *Reclaiming the Classroom: Teacher Research as an Agency for Change*. Edited by Goswami and Stillman, the collection illustrates how writing pedagogies from the Program in Writing ultimately transformed classroom practice well beyond the graduate school’s relatively secluded mountain campus. In the

⁹⁷ Bread Loaf School of English. (1980). Bread Loaf School of English Catalog. [Course Catalog]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

acknowledgments of the collection, Goswami and Stillman (1986) write, “Nearly a hundred rural teachers from across the country have been part of the classroom inquiry program supported by the Bread Loaf School of English.”⁹⁸ The essays included in this collection from teacher researchers reflect the writing pedagogy championed at Bread Loaf, including the use of dialogic journals, writing conferences, and collaborative writing groups. Beyond this collection of classroom-based composition research, there was a corresponding spike in classroom-based research from Bread Loaf students in NCTE journals during the same time frame. I have no doubt that Dixie Goswami was a driving force behind many of these publications. Almost forty years later, when she visited my classroom in South Carolina, she insisted that I submit a proposal to the NCTE National Convention despite my initial reservations. I have gleaned that this is a relatively common occurrence from my conversations with other former students.

The “final” summer of the program as initially proposed took place in 1981. However, there were already signs that the Program in Writing would continue beyond the initial proposal, including the school-wide reorganization of course unit requirements with the split between the written arts and the theatrical arts. In 1981, the writing consultants included Ann E. Berthoff, Shirley Brice Heath, Janet Emig, and Richard Marius.⁹⁹ As in previous summers, the writing consultants delivered school-wide lectures. In an erroneously misdated issue of *The Crumb*, the editors announced that Ann Berthoff would give a lecture on “Recognition, Representation, and Revision.” Later that same summer, Ken Macrorie interviewed Janet Emig in the Barn. The following week, Emig delivered a lecture on current research in writing.¹⁰⁰ Since Emig had

⁹⁸ Dixie Goswami and Peter Stillman, *Reclaiming the Classroom: Teacher Research as an Agency for Change*. (Heineman, 1986) Acknowledgements.

⁹⁹ Bread Loaf School of English. (1981). Bread Loaf School of English Catalog. [Course Catalog]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

¹⁰⁰ Bread Loaf School of English. (1981). *The Crumb*. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

recently published her seminal article, “Writing as a Mode of Learning,” it is not difficult to surmise the content of her lecture. Although not a designated writing consultant for the Program in Writing, *The Crumb* reports that Nancie Atwell also visited this summer to discuss her research into the process of writing. At the time, Atwell was the Director of the Boothbay Writing Project, and it is arguable that Bread Loaf planted the seeds for her eventual book on the writing workshop, *In the Middle*. In addition to this extracurricular programming to support the teaching of writing, the school offered its most robust writing curriculum yet: *Teaching Writing* with Goswami, *Writing to Learn* with Martin, *Writing Across Curriculum* with Odell, *Studying Writing: Theory into Practice* with Goswami, *Poetry Writing* with Pack, and *Fiction Writing* with Hansen.

The initial proposal for the Program in Writing was only funded from 1978 to 1981. However, the program continued well into the early 1990s. Throughout the 1980s, the program received funding from a variety of sources including the Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation, the New York *Times* Company Foundation, the International Paper Company Foundation, the Grace Foundation, and the General Mills Foundation. In a trend that will continue over the next several decades, these grants were in large part due to the tireless efforts of Dixie Goswami. Starting in 1982, Dixie Goswami served as the coordinator of the program, and her contributions were integral to its ongoing evolution. During the same time period, Bread Loaf students benefited from the tutelage of dozens of eminent scholars in the fields of English education and composition, including Nancie Atwell, James Britton, Donald H. Graves, Peter Elbow, Peter Medway, Michael Cooke, Ann E. Berthoff, Eliot Wigginton, and many others. The full roster of visiting writing consultants can be found in Appendix B. The Program in Writing would continue in this form until 1993 with the founding of the Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network.

The next chapter will examine the connection between the Program in Writing and the Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network.

Chapter 6: Beyond the Green Shade

“I recognize that a little community hidden away in the Green Mountains is not going to transform the academic world or the nation. Our efforts are surely pathetically insignificant if judged from the viewpoint of the total American academic establishment. Bread Loaf has often been treated by the educational bureaucracy with gentle condescension as a well-intentioned, harmless anachronism.” —Paul Cubeta, “Very Green Thoughts in a Green Shade,” Opening Address from 1968

“A green world is a beautiful work of the imagination. But the imagination must project itself always outward into the working of a society which fails its highest hopes.”—Paul Cubeta, “Very Green Thoughts in a Green Shade,” Opening Address from 1968

Those early summers of the Program in Writing illustrate the transformative potential of the graduate school as refrain, replete with territorializing and deterritorializing forces. On one hand, the storied history of the institution served as a territorializing force. By situating the new program within the larger body of the institution, the fledgling initiative benefited the earlier iterations of the refrain. However, the almost protean assemblage of scholars from the field of composition studies opened up the possibility of curricular transformation on the mountain, not just for the rural teachers enrolled in the program, but for the graduate school as a whole. It would be beneficial to once again return to the notion of the refrain. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) offer the image of the traveler wandering far from home in order to depict the refrain’s power to push against the borders it creates. Throughout the 1980s, the Program in Writing continually renegotiated its borders, eventually leading to the renegotiation of borders for the graduate school as a whole. In order to better support rural teachers, the graduate program would have to imagine possibilities beyond the green world.

It is here that we might recall the early history of the Bread Loaf Inn, back when Joseph Battell would barricade the route up the mountain in order to keep motor vehicles away from the pristine fields further up the mountain. Maddox (1992) characterizes those early summers in the same vein as the utopian communities that dotted the landscape in response to the rise of

industrialism in the nineteenth century. However, he troubles these utopian visions, arguing that such notions are ill-suited to the field of education:

Isolated utopian communities, let us constantly remind ourselves, aren't enough. Let's remember that pastoral green worlds such as Shakespeare's and such as Bread Loaf's are defined precisely by their dialectical relationship to the world of the town they are a refuge from and to which the Shakespearean characters and the Bread Loaf pastoralists have to return at the end. The green world of Bread Loaf is an interlude between bouts of real business down there. (Maddox, 1992, p. 16)

Drawing parallels with the move between country and city in Shakespearean drama, Maddox worked to unsettle the complacent pastoralism on the mountain campus, instead endeavoring to broaden the reach of the program to far afield from the green hills on campus. The Program in Writing, instituted under the Cubeta directorship, initiated the work of bridging the gap between the "green world" and the "bouts of real business down there," broadening the borders of Bread Loaf into rural communities across the nation. James Maddox, who served as director of the graduate school from 1989 to 2010, recognized the value inherent in broadening those boundaries, working alongside Dixie Goswami to ensure that connections made on the mountain extended beyond the six-week summer session.

The Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network (BLRTN) would eventually play an important part in the effort to continue these generative conversations beyond the summer session. The rural teachers who benefited from earlier programming craved similar opportunities once they returned to their remote hometowns, but there was no formal programming for these continued conversations at this time. Furthermore, the expansion of the program in writing also created increased opportunities to further the reach of the school to new populations of students, including students not originally served by the Program in Writing. In the years prior to the founding of the network, the graduate school had already begun the painstaking work of recruiting a more diverse student body to the mountain. Maddox, in particular, was often candid

about the troubling lack of diversity on the mountain. In his first annual report as director of the school, he makes note of his early attempts to seek grant support for minoritized students. These efforts, although already in motion, were further galvanized by the memorable commencement address from senior class president, Stuart Robinson, that same summer:

I recalled a conversation that I had had about minority representation and life in general at Bread Loaf. I was told that Bread Loaf had made a commitment to the rural teacher and that Bread Loaf could not do both—could not maintain this commitment as well as develop a minority recruitment program that would lead to the creation of a Bread Loaf community that is more reflective of this nation at large. As I sat on the porch of Cherry thinking about what I had been told, I asked myself—if Bread Loaf could not do two things at once, how could it pat itself on the back for watching the growth and the respect of a program in writing that celebrates its tenth year on the mountain?¹⁰¹

Robinson (1989) goes on to contend that Bread Loaf *could* do more than one thing at once, and it could do them rather well. Given its excellence in other areas of graduate education, he argued that there was no excuse for the population of the graduate school *not* to better reflect the population of the nation as a whole. Bread Loaf needed to change in order to better serve the shifting demographics of schools in America. Therefore, he urged the administration of the school to “embark with the same sense of daring that it did when it started its outreach to rural teachers, the program in writing, and the theater” in its recruitment of both minority students and faculty.¹⁰²

Maddox took these criticisms to heart, remaining vocal about his commitment to addressing the lack of diversity on campus throughout his directorship. In his opening remarks from the seventy-fifth session of the graduate school, he frames this criticism in relation to the “American-ness” of the graduate school as an institution. He first celebrates the strength of the

¹⁰¹ Robinson, S. (1989). “Dancing without collisions.” [Commencement address], Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 1989, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.

¹⁰² Robinson, S. (1989). “Dancing without collisions.” [Commencement address], Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 1989, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.

program, arguing that “nothing is going to give you a fuller sense of America than more than 300 secondary-school teachers, drawn from across the country, fully committed to their classrooms and their students.”¹⁰³ In that same speech, however, he also addresses the shortcomings of the graduate school in these regards:

But, I have long thought, if Bread Loaf is truly to reflect America, we must confront one problem that we have because of the demographics of Vermont. Vermont vies with Maine for having the least diverse population in the United States; and the plain fact is that the Bread Loaf School, like Middlebury College as an undergraduate institution, has had difficulties attracting a diverse student body. An uncomfortable fact. But an important fact, and one that needs confronting.¹⁰⁴

Vermont remains one of the least diverse states in the nation to this day. Maddox attempted to address this demographic reality, calling for outreach initiatives to diversify campus. He argued that, although the graduate school owed a “special home responsibility” to teachers in the Northeast, the burgeoning national influence of the institution came with ethical responsibilities, including the responsibility to serve students from diverse sociocultural backgrounds.

These calls to action corresponded with an increased effort to diversify the student body by recruiting teachers from minoritized populations. Many of these early programs are still thriving today, including Bread Loaf Andover. Beginning in 1987, Bread Loaf established a partnership with Lou Bernieri at the Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts in an effort to build relationships with teachers in urban school districts.¹⁰⁵ In his annual report to Middlebury College President Timothy Light from October 1990, Jim Maddox writes about the positive impact of this alliance: “The partnership with Andover was the subject of an article by Fred

¹⁰³ Maddox, J. (1994). Director’s Speech. [Speech transcript], *Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 1994*, Bread Loaf School of English, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.

¹⁰⁴ Maddox, J. (1994). Director’s Speech. [Speech transcript], *Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 1994*, Bread Loaf School of English, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.

¹⁰⁵ Maddox, J. (1994). “Director’s Speech.” [Speech transcript], *Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 1994*, Bread Loaf School of English, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.

Hechinger in the *New York Times* in late August, 1990. The Hechinger article brought inquiries for applications and inquiries as to the possibilities of our forming partnerships with other educational institutions across the country.”¹⁰⁶ In the subsequent decades, the graduate school would continue to form partnerships with similar programs, although not all of them were as long lived as the partnership with Phillips Academy. As mentioned, Andover Bread Loaf remains active to this day, with an extensive network that includes educators from “New York City, Lawrence, Boston, New Orleans, Puerto Rico, India, El Salvador, and Pakistan” (“The Impact of ABL,” 2023). These partnerships have enabled the graduate school to extend support to students from diverse sociocultural backgrounds. In 2023, Phillips Academy and Lawrence partner institutions offered six summer programs and ten academic year programs. 93% of youth served by these programs identified as Latine, Black or Multi-racial and 94% of youth report speaking a language other than English at home (“The Impact of ABL,” 2023). These statistics illustrate the long-term impact on student outcomes for students well beyond the footprint of the mountain.

The Piney Woods Bread Loaf Summer Institute was another partnership that arose out of efforts to address the lack of diversity on the mountain, although it was shorter lived than the partnership with Phillips Andover. Dixie Goswami started planting the seeds for this partnership in the early 1990s. In his annual report to Acting President John McCardell, Maddox notes: “The team of Professor Goswami, Professor Jacqueline Royster of Spelman College (a 1991 Bread Loaf faculty member who will return to Bread Loaf in 1992), and myself have twice visited Piney Woods since the close of the 1991 Bread Loaf, to help the school establish its own Writing

¹⁰⁶ Maddox, J. (1990, October 29). “Letter Addressed to President Timothy Light” [Letter], *Records of the Bread Loaf School of English*, 1990, Bread Loaf School of English, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.

across Curriculum Program and eventually to become a regional center, in the summers for the training of high-school teachers.”¹⁰⁷ This partnership came to fruition with the inaugural Piney Woods Institute, which was held from June 14-July 9, 1993. According to the informational brochure, this first Institute attempted to “recognize and retrieve the history of writing and its teaching, especially in the African American tradition.”¹⁰⁸ The Bread Loaf School of English took charge of the curriculum for the Institute, offering three hours of graduate credit to participants; however, the institute prioritized the leadership of Black scholars. Dr. Ken Alston, an associate professor from Benedict College, and Dr. Elspeth Stucky, director of the South Carolina Cross Age Tutoring Project, co-directed the inaugural year of the institute. Both directors worked in historically black colleges and universities. There were nineteen teacher participants during the first summer of the Piney Woods Institute.¹⁰⁹ The Piney Woods Institute disappeared from archival records by the mid-1990s; however, there is evidence that the relationship with Black educators in Mississippi continued under the auspices of the Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network.

6.1 The Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network

The Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network (BLRTN) continued the work of expanding the scope of programming at the graduate school beyond the summer term into the academic year. During the inaugural summer of the program in 1993, the DeWitt Wallace-Reader’s Digest Fund provided grant funding to the tune of 2.77 million dollars, covering the cost of tuition for over

¹⁰⁷ Maddox, J. (1992, February 20). “Letter Addressed to Acting President John McCardell” [Letter], *Records of the Bread Loaf School of English*, 1990, Bread Loaf School of English, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.

¹⁰⁸ Bread Loaf School of English. (1993). “The Piney Woods Bread Loaf Summer Institute for Teachers” [Brochure], *Brochure for 1993 Bread Loaf School of English*, Bread Loaf School of English, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.

¹⁰⁹ Bread Loaf School of English. (1994). “General Statistics” [Enrollment records], *Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 1994*, Bread Loaf School of English, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.

thirty beneficiaries.¹¹⁰ The program functioned as a natural extension of the earlier Program in Writing, seeking to support rural teachers in six target states: Alaska, Arizona, Mississippi, New Mexico, South Carolina, and Vermont. In his director's report to the college president in 1992, Jim Maddox expressed his hopes that "within 2-3 years the Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network (as the entire DeWitt Wallace Enterprise is named) will be highly visible in all 6 of those states."¹¹¹ Participants in the program were initially identified as "DeWitters" on campus, in reference to the name of their particular fellowship (Miera, 1996, p. 12). However, as the program continued to expand in the subsequent decades, it would draw additional funding from "the Annenberg Rural Challenge, the Carnegie Corporation, the Arthur Vining Davis Foundations, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Educational Foundation of America, the Human Foundation, the C.E. and S. Foundation, the Braitmayer Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Educational Testing Service, the Leopold Schepp Foundation, the Gates Foundation, and several state departments of education and school districts."¹¹² These numerous funding sources speak to the tireless efforts of the Director of the Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network, Dixie Goswami, in securing additional funding to support the continuing education of rural English teachers. The steady growth of the program can be directly attributed to her talent in securing grant funding to support the continued professional learning of rural teachers.

Goswami (1994) identified numerous critical issues for rural teachers during the first

¹¹⁰ Maddox, J. (1993). "Director's Speech." [Speech transcript], *Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 1993*, Bread Loaf School of English, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.

¹¹¹ Maddox, J. (1992, February 20). "Letter Addressed to Acting President John McCardell" [Letter], *Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 1990*, Bread Loaf School of English, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.

¹¹² Bread Loaf School of English. (2010, June 29). *La Miga*, Vol. XX, no. 9. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf School of English, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.

summer of the program. The primary challenge the Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network hoped to address was the isolation of the rural teacher. Renee Moore, an early BLRTN teacher from rural Mississippi, cited this isolation as one of her greatest challenges in the classroom: “The sense of being cut off professionally is a big issue for me; I never quite know if I’m in step with the rest of my profession” (Benson, 1995, p. 21). Sondra Porter, a teacher from rural Alaska, expressed similar sentiments: “I think BreadNet is going to be very important for rural schools because it will offer the things my students can’t get otherwise. My students are so isolated” (Benson, 1993, p. 5). In the course of my own historiographical research, I also interviewed a teacher who participated in BLRTN during the first decade of the network, Cheryl,¹¹³ who also framed her isolation as a rural teacher as one of the chief challenges of her early career. Cheryl, who joined BLRTN in the late 1990s, taught in rural South Carolina for four years prior to joining the network. Prior to enrolling in the graduate school, she frequently turned to the *English Journal* and other NCTE publications for professional development, not out of curiosity, but rather out of desperation:

I read all of their publications cover-to-cover because that was the only way I knew to teach. I mean, I didn’t have anything. I didn’t have a social network of friends to help me. I didn’t have a mentor or anything like that. I didn’t have a curriculum. I would just open up *English Journal*. That’s what I would do. And I depended solely on *English Journal* to get me through teaching high school. Then I figured out, oh, they have a middle school journal, once I got to teaching middle school.

Cheryl only spent two years working within the network. However, she explains that the experience was transformative in her early development as an English teacher, in large part because she was finally able to collaborate with peers in the field for the first time in her career. Cheryl was not alone. The pages of the *Bread Loaf Teacher Network Journal* are brimming with

¹¹³ All names of interviewed research participants are pseudonyms.

narratives from rural teachers who shared similar experiences about the challenges of teaching in rural contexts.

Maintaining these connections throughout the school years involved an impressive amount of coordination. The *Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network Journal* documents numerous events that took place during the academic year following the first summer of the program. Jim Maddox, Rocky Gooch, Dixie Goswami, and Lucy Maddox visited Alaska, traveling across the state in order to participate in the Alaska Writing Consortium, collaborate with the Alaska Teacher Research Network, and visit the classrooms of various BLRTN teachers. The South Carolina BLRTN coordinated their first site meeting with Clemson University's African-American Festival of Literature and Arts, meeting with the celebrated writer, Alice Childress. BLRTN events also took place in Mississippi, New Mexico, and Vermont. In addition to network meetings and site visits, the network took advantage of an innovative telecommunications system in order to connect teachers and classrooms. Although Kurt Broderson (1996) argued that such technology was only "one strand of the web" (p. 18), it nevertheless played an important role in lessening the impact of teacher isolation, particularly in an era before such technologies became ubiquitous in education. BreadNet, the campus telecommunication system, might seem dated by modern standards; however, the network was truly innovative in the 1990s, particularly since in one southeastern state served by BLRTN, only about 80 out of 1100 schools had internet connections at the time (Gooch, 1996, p. 15).

6.1.1 The BreadNet Telecommunications Network

With the BreadNet Telecommunications Network, the more-than-human manifests in the evolving relationship between humans and technology. Training in BreadNet played an important role during early summers of the network. First instituted in 1983, BreadNet was

innovative at the time, particularly since fewer than 10% of households had access to an at-home computer at the time. Bill Wright, Director of Information Technology, likened the “national microcomputer-based network” to sitting around a conference table, writing “instead of one-to-one pen pal arrangements, we can have five or six classrooms working together on a project.”¹¹⁴ BreadNet may have predated the Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network, but the new program helped accelerate its growth. Rocky Gooch, the Director of BLRTN Telecommunications, discussed the importance of the computer network in maintaining communication among members of the teacher network during the school year, particularly in rural regions of the country. During the first year of the program, Hayes Microcomputer Products Inc. donated high-speed modems for all teachers in the network (Gooch, 1993, p. 4). These generous donations connected the classrooms of many rural teachers in the network, enabling ongoing conversations through the BreadNet platform. Furthermore, teachers in the network received telecommunications training during their summer on the mountain, including training that was woven into their coursework on the mountain.

Once teachers left the mountain, however, many of them faced unforeseen challenges in implementing BreadNet within their classrooms. Susan Miera (1996) discusses many of these challenges in her brief history of the first three years of the program: “Promises for Internet access given by district administrators when we received the fellowships the spring before we left for Vermont became ‘maybes’ when we returned and when real costs to the district were discussed” (p. 12). Furthermore, many teachers struggled to bring their students online because they were only able to access BreadNet from their home computers. Rocky Gooch (1996) acknowledged these challenges: “When a teacher is 250 miles from a computer store or the

¹¹⁴ “What is BreadNet?” (1993). *Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network*, p. 8. <https://www.middlebury.edu/school-english/sites/www.middlebury.edu.school-english/files/2019-11/1993%20BLRTN%20%20Nov.pdf?fv=bsV6GGQf>

vendor that supplies her school with computers, even small obstacles can seem insurmountable” (p. 14). The Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network did its best to help teachers overcome these obstacles, sometimes even offering site visits to help with a range of technological challenges.

Despite these initial challenges, BreadNet served an important role in expanding the footprint of the mountain during the academic year, and the far-reaching impact of the telecommunications system became abundantly clear following its first full year of implementation with the Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network. Usage data published by the network indicated that “at least 70% of BLRTN fellows, network leaders, and staff log[ged]-in at least once a week; and 25% log[ed]-in every day” (Gooch, 1994, p. 18). However, this usage data fails to fully capture the stunning body of collaborative work during the inaugural year of the network. Gooch (1994) offers an expensive account of the sort of activities that took place on BreadNet following its first year of implementation, including “social interaction; conversations about practice, theory, and research; planning of collaborative action research; conference discussions designed and managed by students and teachers; drafting, writing, and publishing; planning of presentations and workshops; and a wonderful, rich category—miscellaneous” (p. 18). Given the range of opportunities for collaboration, many teachers benefited from the system even when it was challenging to include their students directly. Zucaro (1996) noted that “one of the most valuable aspects of BreadNet for [her was] being able to browse and read other conferences and exchanges,” showcasing the benefit of the network even from the stance of an onlooker (p. 20).

Numerous projects are chronicled in the *Bread Loaf Rural Network Journal*, but one of the earliest was a project connecting classrooms of teachers in Alaska, Mississippi, and Vermont during the 1993-1994 school year. Teachers invited their classes to read *Anne Frank: The Diary*

of a Young Girl and share their responses on BreadNet (Maddox, 1995, p. 1). Teachers involved in the project discussed the role of BreadNet in the project, as well as their top three takeaways from the “conference” following the first year of the program. The first of these takeaways was the transformative potential of “teacher talk” through the online conferencing system. Peggy Turner, a rural teacher from Guntown Middle School in Mississippi, noted, “for the first time in nine years of teaching I was hearing from a rural teacher, with students the same age as mine, with a similar number of kids (more than one hundred), who were about to engage with the same text at the same time” (Christian, 1994, p. 3). In short, the telecommunications system helped address the isolation that many network participants identified as one of the challenges of teaching in rural settings. These collaborative conversations also led to the second takeaway from the project. BreadNet had a significant impact on the participants’ approach to planning and teaching. Christian (1994) describes how the collaborative process encouraged her to think more carefully about her approach to vocabulary instruction in the classroom: “The electronic conference gave me a forum of professional teachers with whom I could speculate about such issues of pedagogy, and such speculation helped me to be a more creative teacher and a stronger critic of teaching philosophy and practice” (p. 4). The final takeaway involved the role BreadNet played in expanding the worldview of students involved in the project. In a written reflection from the end of the project, one Mississippi student participant made the following observation:

I discovered that people in Alaska and Vermont are just like us. Now I realize how normal we are... People always say that we are different from other people, and now I know that we really aren't *that* different. I think that getting to know these people has put a good influence on my life because now I know the truth about us. (Christian, 1994, p. 4)

Christian (1994) argues that this ability to perceive commonalities across space also helped students perceive commonalities across *time*, drawing connections between their experiences and

the diary of Anne Frank. Following the conclusion of the project, Mary Burnham made the following observations about how the conference changed her students' relationship with *Anne*

Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl:

My students talk about the students from other far flung classrooms as if they were members of our class. They refer to things they've said when we have discussions or when we talk and write. This is a transformation from past years. More importantly, they discuss Anne as if she too were a member of our class. The students of other years always knew Anne was real; that she had really lived and died, but the level of talk this time has a different quality. (Christian, 1994, p. 5).

These reflections, and others like them, illustrate the transformative power of BreadNet even in the early years of its implementation, widening the graduate school's reach. The Anne Frank Conference continued conversations that took place on the mountain during the summer, not only reinforcing the powerful potential of networking in school reform, but also demonstrating the advantages of creating similar networks amongst students as well.

Furthermore, many of these projects managed to breach containment within the network into the field of English education as a whole through local and national conferences. One example of this was the South Carolina BLRTN, who presented their findings at the South Carolina Council of Teachers of English Conference after conducting an online conference about poetry over the course of three months (Atkins, et al., 1994). Over the course of the project, students from classrooms across the state exchanged responses to poetry on the BreadNet platform, creating a dynamic ongoing conversation around the reading and writing of poetry. Claire Bateman, a poet teaching at Clemson University, expressed her enthusiasm for the project, explaining that the online conference resembled the "action of the poet's mind in which there is, practically speaking, no center, no beginning, middle, or end—or rather, perhaps, the center is everywhere, and the process is more simultaneous, multiphrenic, and multivocal than it is orderly, linear, and conclusive" (Atkins, et al., p. 8). In other words, the project created

conditions ideal for the cultivation of poetic experiences. The write-up of the conference presentation notes that many teachers attending the conference session were enthusiastic about the transformative potential of telecommunications networks in the English classroom, and “much of the discussion that went on during the workshop breaks focused on ways to get telecommunication conferencing access to all South Carolina teachers” (p. 9). In conversation with larger professional networks, the transformative potential of the refrain reverberated across the wider field of English education.

Beyond its external networking capabilities, BreadNet impacted classroom discussion *within* the classrooms on the mountain as well. Although discussion boards are relatively common in online learning systems today, they were revolutionary in the 1990s. In her narrative interview, Cheryl discussed how her first experience with BreadNet transformed how she approached the analysis of literature:

He had us go online, and this was back before the Internet. We could get on these little forums, and somebody would throw out a question. We would start responding and talking about things, talking about what we had read, in addition to what we had talked about in class. I was horribly intimidated by it. Horribly intimidated. I mean, it was just so difficult for me. But I think that was helpful to me as a teacher, to realize how students could be intimidated and understand what they were going through. Because I didn't know how to *think* about a story. I just knew, here's this piece of literature, and I'm supposed to appreciate it, and we need to talk about it.

Her narrative about her experiences with BreadNet demonstrates how exposure to the online network within her coursework as a *student* enabled her to not only expand her own understanding of literary analysis, but also to anticipate the needs of her own students when she returned to her role as teacher. The technology mediated a more-than-human relationship between reader and text that helped add depth to her pedagogical practices.

The telecommunications system owed its success in large part to the team who ensured that teachers had access to support resources throughout the school year. In particular, Rocky

Gooch played an invaluable role in the success of BreadNet until his untimely death on September 30, 2001, when he passed away after a long struggle with cancer.¹¹⁵ His death dealt a harsh blow to not only members of the Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network, but also to the graduate school as a whole. When Jim Maddox announced the news to the community in a letter shortly following Gooch’s death, he wrote, “Some of the brightest memories I have as Bread Loaf’s director are those of being on the road with Rocky and Dixie, visiting the classrooms of Bread Loaf teachers, discussing grant proposals as we drove over the long stretches of road in New Mexico, Mississippi, and other states, and—always deciding where we would seek out some good food and cheer with Bread Loaf friends for the evenings’ dinner.”¹¹⁶ The year following his death, there was a memorial held in his honor on campus, and the graduate school established a memorial scholarship in his honor the subsequent summer.

His legacy as an early champion of BreadNet lives on in the ongoing mission of the Bread Loaf Teacher Network to this day. Although BreadNet has been officially retired in favor of an updated platform, it has had a lasting impact. This was never clearer than at the height of the pandemic when many teachers were struggling to teach in digital spaces for the first time. Many school districts struggled to move learning into online spaces when schools closed in 2020. However, the Bread Loaf Teacher Network had been collaborating online for over two decades at the start of the pandemic. Therefore, the network served as a model in the field of English education, offering possibilities for what the study of literature could look like in digital spaces. In fact, Goswami (2020) published a list of “archived publications by and about BLTN remote, network teaching and learning,” framing it as a “powerful resource in the time of

¹¹⁵ Bread Loaf School of English. (2002, July 1). *The Crumb*. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

¹¹⁶ Maddox, J. (2001, November). Letter to Friends of the Bread Loaf School of English [Letter]. *Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 2002*. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

COVID-19 disruption.” These publications continue to serve as a testament to the lasting impact BreadNet continues to have on the field, even though it has now been replaced with updated technology. Furthermore, the success of the telecommunications system serves as an important reminder that more-than-human entities include the technological advancements within our assemblages as well. In many ways, BreadNet operated as an extension of the meadow, facilitating moments of encounter on the information superhighway.

6.1.2 New Visions for the Bread Loaf Teacher Network

Beyond BreadNet, the Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network continued to expand under the leadership of Dixie Goswami, largely due to her commitment not only to recruitment, but also to securing significant sums in grant money. The money secured for the DeWitt Wallace Reader’s Digest fund, for instance, was due to expire in 1997, and yet she was able to “secure that very rare thing from DeWitt Wallace, a second-round grant, for almost two and half million dollars, to extend [the] work, and to add the states of Colorado and Georgia.”¹¹⁷ In addition to this second-round grant, Bread Loaf also received a half-million dollars from the Annenberg Rural Challenge in 1997. James Maddox notes that there were “several more irons in the fire” at the time of his speech at the opening of the summer session.¹¹⁸ These grants enabled the continued growth of the network throughout the latter half of the 90s, expanding the enrollment from thirty students during the first summer of the program to over two-hundred active network members by the turn of the century:

¹¹⁷ Maddox, J. (1997). Director’s Speech. [Speech transcript], Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 1997, Bread Loaf School of English, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.

¹¹⁸ Maddox, J. (1997). Director’s Speech. [Speech transcript], Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 1997, Bread Loaf School of English, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.

Table 1: Enrollment in the Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network

Year	Network Enrollment
1995	46
1996	66
1997	137
1998	172
1999	214

Reflecting on the growth of the program, Maddox (2000) mused, “I wonder when Dixie will drop her much-loved phrase ‘small teacher network’ and admit that we’re at least by now, well, a middle-size teacher network” (p. 3). Indeed, the growth of the network was further bolstered by the generosity of the state departments of education in Alaska, Kentucky, and Ohio, who agreed to contribute funds to cover the tuition costs of an additional 18 teachers in 1999.

The expansion of the network led to the creation of an umbrella organization, the Bread Loaf Teacher Network (BLTN), which could include public-school teachers in urban contexts as well as rural contexts. The Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network continued operations under this umbrella until 2002, when “Rural” was dropped from the name of the network in promotional materials entirely. The official name change followed the final year of the Wallace-Reader’s Digest Fellowship in 2001, which offered scholarship funding totaling over five million dollars by the end of its nine year duration.¹¹⁹ Despite the rebranding of the network, it continued to recruit specifically from rural communities, while simultaneously expanding to urban school districts in target cities like Trenton, New Jersey and Greenville, South Carolina.¹²⁰ The outreach to these urban school districts was, in part, funded by the urban school districts themselves. The

¹¹⁹ Maddox, J. (2001, November). [Letter to Friends of the Bread Loaf School of English]. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.

¹²⁰ Bread Loaf School of English. (2001). “Bread Loaf School of English Catalog” [Course catalog], Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 2001, Bread Loaf School of English, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.

two aforementioned city school districts—Trenton and Greenville—both pledged funding to send teachers to Bread Loaf in 2001 with promises to increase this support in 2002, a partnership made possible by earlier funding to the tune of \$1.2 million in grant funding.¹²¹

6.1.3 Repetition with Difference

The Bread Loaf School of English—and by extension, the Bread Loaf Teacher Network—has continued to grow in the decades that followed, and yet the refrain continued to change, with each subsequent summer creating new opportunities for repetition with difference, with certain summers creating larger ripples than others. In 2010, James Maddox retired from the directorship after more than twenty years, passing the title onto Emily Bartels, the first female director of the graduate school. Bartels had been teaching on the mountain since 1995, serving as assistant director of the program since 2001 (Middlebury College, 2011). The correspondence of the director is no longer archived along with the records of the graduate school each summer, but *The Crumb* can offer us some insight into her first summer as director. She ushered in the new directorship at the opening banquet on the mountain before traveling to the various satellite campuses scattered across the western hemisphere. In particular, she was given a royal welcome at the Asheville campus, where *The Biscuit* announced her arrival with regal deference: “Fresh from her coronation as Director of the Bread Loaf School of English, Gloriana herself, Emily Bartels, arrives in Asheville to inspect the troops, meet the students and plan her conquest of Spain.”¹²² Emily Bartels continues her benevolent reign over the graduate school today as the Dean of the program, though the Directorship recently passed to Lyndon Dominique.

¹²¹ Maddox, J. (2001, November). [Letter to Friends of the Bread Loaf School of English]. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.

¹²² Bread Loaf School of English. (2011). *The Biscuit*, Vol. 6 [Student newsletter], Bread Loaf School of English, F7, Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.

It has been six years since another significant variation in the refrain. In 2017, Dixie Goswami founded the BLTN Next Generation Leadership Network (BLTN NextGen), initially funded by a generous donation from the Ford Foundation. Although supported by adults affiliated with the graduate school, the network is led by a Youth Advisory Board made up of students from across several network sites, including “Lawrence, MA; Atlanta; rural South Carolina; Louisville, KY; Vermont; the Navajo Nation, and the Santa Fe Indian School” (“BLTN Next Generation Leadership Network”). In 2023, the network also welcomed three new affiliate sites: Chelsea, MA; Henrico, VA; and Philadelphia, PA (“2023 Affiliate Sites”). These projects continue in the spirit of the early BreadNet conferences, creating opportunities for “cross-site” and “cross-generational” events with a particular focus on networked youth advocacy (“BLTN Next Generation Leadership Network,” n.d.). Like a rock dropped in a pond, the reach of the graduate school continues to move outwards in ever-widening ripples, reterritorializing to include voices once entirely absent from the mountain wilderness.

Dixie Goswami has been at the center of the refrain for over forty years, eventually retiring following the 2019 summer session. Middlebury President, Laurie Patton, honored her contributions to the graduate school at the time of her retirement, awarding her with the Virtual Family Exceptional Service Award, citing her efforts to build a “more engaged and inclusive Middlebury” (Hanewald, 2019). Exactly three decades earlier, Maddox first shared his hope to trouble the utopian visions of his predecessors by expanding the program beyond the footprint of the mountain. Dixie Goswami was the driving force behind making that vision a reality. Remarking on her retirement, Maddox noted that Goswami was “the person most instrumental in making Bread Loaf a 52-week-a-year school instead of a six-week-a-summer school” (“Dixie Goswami Retires,” 2019). This declaration would have been unsurprising to members of the

Bread Loaf Teacher Network. Recalling their summers together on the mountain, Jacqueline Royster described the Goswami approach with the following terms: “Those of us who know Dixie well understand that Dixie doesn’t quite ask you to do things. She pretty much declares agreement and speaks the world that she wants to see exist” (“Dixie Goswami Retires,” 2019).

I often remember the moment when Dixie visited my classroom during my early career in public schools, when I was excited to share what I had learned on the mountain the previous summer with my students. Resting her hand on my shoulder, Dixie told me to draft a proposal for the National Council of Teachers of English Conference (NCTE). I expressed my doubts, but she refused to accept my feeble excuses, pushing me to submit anyway. It is perhaps unsurprising that I found myself presenting at the conference in Houston the following November. Quite recently, I overheard another teacher telling a similar story at the South Carolina Council of Teachers of English Conference (SCCTE). These stories serve as a testament to her tireless efforts in her support of public-school teachers. Indeed, her work can be directly linked to the burgeoning population of public-school teachers at the graduate school, whose numbers have risen to approximately 40% of the student body (Hanewald, 2019). Following her retirement, Beverly Moss has assumed the helm of the Bread Loaf Teacher Network, and continues to support the next generation of teachers and students through the network.

6.2 Miles to Go Before I Sleep

In 2005, the first major theater production during the summer session was a staged reading of the play, *Fortinbras*, a comedic exploration of the events following *Hamlet*. In light of this theatrical production, *The Crumb* makes numerous references to the spectral throughout the summer, including the publication of the following column: “Top Ten (Roughly) Reasons Robert

Frost's Ghost Still Haunts the Bread Loaf Campus." The past and present press together near the bottom of the list with an entry that playfully suggests that his ghost continues to return because "Dixie Goswami arranged for him to participate in a student writing exchange, and you just don't let Dixie down."¹²³ Although anyone who has spent time on the mountain in the past forty years would likely agree that such an arrangement is entirely plausible, the tongue-and-cheek entry alludes to the ways in which time bends out of joint in the *becoming* of the graduate school. We have simply replaced *Hamlet's* ghost with our own specter, the ghost of the poet who once wandered the mountain trails, a small black collie trailing dutifully at his heels.

Since his death, Robert Frost has played the role of the specter, both *revenant* and *arrivant* in campus lore. In his preface to the *Bread Loaf Anthology*, Frost reminds us to remain open to the possibilities of the refrain. Indeed, the history of the program in writing illustrates the generative potential inherent in rhythmic repetition across several decades in the history of the school. James Moffett dropped the first pebble into still waters during the inaugural summer of the program, but waves have continued to ripple outwards from the center with each successive summer. With each new variation, the rhythm of the refrain has continued to shift, marking new territory as the assemblage probes the edge of the wilderness. As rhythmic changes accrue over time, at first imperceptibly and then with full force, the material world changes along with it. These material changes are most evident in the classrooms of teachers who return to the mountain again and again. Therefore, the final chapter of my dissertation will follow this movement outwards, attending to the stories of several past students of the Bread Loaf School of English. How do teachers carry the more-than-human home with them each summer? After all, they have promises to keep, and many miles to go before they sleep.

¹²³ Bread Loaf School of English. (2005, July 8). *The Crumb*. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

Chapter 7: Returning to the Valley

In my rear view mirror,
They start unscrewing the trees.
—“Life after Bread Loaf,” David Emory

To my knowledge, the groundskeeper has yet to unscrew the trees at the end of the summer. Nevertheless, the students have to leave the mountain behind during the mowing season, returning to their own classrooms. Since 2012, the poem excerpted in the epigraph has been published in the final issue of *The Crumb*. I have included it here in the hopes of extending the ending of the poem. David Emory concludes his poem by imagining the groundskeepers “rolling up the meadow” and “unscrewing the trees.” It is an ending that evokes the ephemeral, the campus disappearing in the rearview window. The image is an evocative one, yet it fails to capture the reality for most students. Instead, it would be more accurate to imagine the students loading the meadow into the trunks of their cars along with their luggage, preparing to bring the mountain home with them. Bread Loaf students carry the mountain with them, never forgetting the sight of the mist rolling over the meadow.

The earlier chapters of this dissertation attempted to narrate more-than-human encounters before examining the historical development of structures that have allowed these more-than-human encounters to return home at the end of the summer session. In this final chapter, we will attune to stories that past students have to tell, lingering in their narratives in an effort to better address how a gathering becomes a happening. What makes the Bread Loaf School of English greater than the sum of its parts? Moreover, how do teachers carry the more-than-human home with them each summer? The answer resides in their narratives, wherein the mountain continues to haunt them long after they have returned home.

7.1 Voices from Bread Loaf Teachers

Several of my participants last attended the Bread Loaf School of English in the late 1990s, over twenty years ago, and their recollection of particular events were hazy. Nevertheless, the stories that follow illustrate the transformative potential of both human and more-than-human entanglement. Throughout the drafting of this chapter, I was often reminded of the migratory birds in the meadow. Each summer an assortment of species alight amidst the meadowsweet, becoming part of a larger ecological network, before migrating south once more the winter. These narratives follow a similar pattern, beginning with the journey to the mountain from far-flung lands. The sections that follow then narrate moments of entanglement. It is interesting to note that there is evidence of tension across many of these encounters, including moments of anxiety when they initially felt as though they did not belong within the assemblage. These points of tension introduce an element of discord to the refrain. However, these discordant moments open up the possibility of resolution. This section will conclude with the return home as the participants reflect on how they carried the mountain with them at the end of the summer.

7.1.1 The Journey to the Mountain

The stories in this chapter reflect an assortment of educational experiences from the past three decades on the mountain. Maggie was the most recent graduate of the program to be interviewed.¹²⁴ Now in her early thirties, Maggie knew she wanted to be a teacher from a young age. Even as an elementary school student, she would play school with a huge blackboard in her basement, taking turns with her friends to teach an assortment of stuffed animals. When she entered high school, she took an interest in literature. Although English was her favorite class, she started her studies as a nutrition student before quickly realizing that she did not want to

¹²⁴ The names in this chapter are all pseudonyms.

work in a medical setting. She changed her major, returning to her first love—education and literature. During her interview, she explained:

The content seemed to be a better first for me, not necessarily in terms of what I was good at, but what I was really interested in. I think the idea of the hope that comes with teaching was where my head was at in university. I was hopeful for future generations of students and wanted to help shape them. I had a lot of optimism for the profession, and I was really excited to get to talk about books for a living.

After she received her bachelor's degree in English education, Maggie took a substitute teaching job. She started at the Bread Loaf the summer after her first year in the classroom, spending her first summer at the Oxford campus before finding her way to the Vermont campus during her second summer in the program. Maggie admits that she initially selected the program because of the opportunity to study at Oxford University. She had been fascinated with the campus since she was young. Her second summer in Vermont was simply the result of college requirements—all students are required to spend at least one summer at the main campus. However, she enjoyed her time on the mountain campus so much that she returned for an additional summer. She spent two summers on the mountain campus before then traveling back to Oxford for her final summer in the program.

My second participant, Cheryl, attended the Bread Loaf School of English in the late 1990s. Prior to her first summer at Bread Loaf, Cheryl had four years of teaching experience in secondary schools in rural South Carolina. When she enrolled, she had already received her master's degree from a large southern university, where she participated in the National Writing Project. However, Cheryl reports that she was highly motivated during her first years of teaching, constantly seeking out opportunities for professional development:

I was kind of at a point in my life where I was doing something every summer for a course. One summer, I want to say it was the first summer after I taught, after my very first years of teaching. I went to [small southern college] and took a class under Walter Edgar about local history, so I did local history projects there. That was intense. I mean, it

was *almost* like reading for a Bread Loaf course. It was a long course—it was one of the National Endowment for Humanities courses, I think. So, I was getting myself into this thing, where every summer I had something I was studying or taking. Then, after I got my master’s degree, I was kind of like, okay, what else? So, Bread Loaf was my next step.

In each of our conversations, Cheryl discussed the homesickness she felt on campus. The Green Mountains were far away from home, and she often felt alienated on campus. However, her alienation had little to do with the landscape and more to do with the culture. She noted several moments when she felt unfairly judged due to her southern identity. Nevertheless, she spent two summers as a member of the Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network, where she collaborated with other rural teachers using the BreadNet platform. Since she already held an advanced degree, she chose not to pursue another degree in the program. However, she returned for multiple summers, spending time on both the Vermont campus and the New Mexico campus.

My third participant, Tara, also attended the graduate program in the late 1990s. Prior to attending Bread Loaf, Tara volunteered abroad as a teacher in southern Africa. Upon her return to the United States, she substitute taught while searching for full-time teaching jobs. She ended up in a town between San Diego and Yuma very close to the US-Mexico border. She taught high school English there for two years, splitting her time between the English department and the English as a Second Language Department. She eventually moved to the Boston area. The proximity of the Bread Loaf School of English to her new home played a role in her decision to spend one summer there for graduate study. Furthermore, Tara emphasized the reputation of the school as one of her deciding factors for choosing to attend Bread Loaf for graduate studies:

The reputation of the school played a factor, the fact that it brought noted faculty from all over the country, and that it was also a master’s in English program, not a master’s in education program, played a large factor. Actually, when I moved to Boston, I was trying to decide whether I wanted to go into a master’s program in English or a master’s program in education.

Tara exclusively attended the Vermont campus, and in her interview, she seemed uncertain about the landscape's role in shaping her experiences as a graduate student. Furthermore, she notes actively avoiding many of the campus events outside of the classroom, more often than not choosing to give a wide berth to the weekly bonfire at Gilmore House. However, she credits the network of scholars with deepening her understanding of the intersection between literacy and identity, so I have included excerpts from her interview in order to illustrate how entanglement manifests within moments of human-to-human contact as well.

My final participant, Eve, might seem like an odd choice to include at first. Eve was the only participant who attended the graduate school as a poet rather than a classroom teacher, though it should be noted that she engages in teaching in non-traditional settings. Prior to starting the program, she lived at an international retreat center for artists and writers, where she had spent several years as a staff writer. In the early 2000s, she applied to the graduate school rather than the writer's conference because she knew she wanted to enter into conversation with the poetry world:

I am a poet, and I am studying to be a poet, and I understand there's been a conversation in the poetry world from the beginning of time until now. But I don't know that conversation, and I want to be part of that conversation. Rather than going and having somebody tell me how bad my poems are, I want to understand that conversation.

On the first day of class, she shared these sentiments with the professor of her Milton class. He pulled her aside, informing her that he was going to treat her as a poet. Instead of writing a final paper, he would require her to enter into the conversation *through* her poetic work. Eve submitted a chapbook at the end of the semester, binding together her poem with handmade paper from a nearby town. This chapter will discuss the impact of this moment at great length in a later section, examining how it transformed her understanding of the conversation she hoped to enter as a poet. Although she only attended the graduate school for one summer, I have chosen to

include the rest of her interview, in part, because of her rich meditations on how this experience empowered her to enter into conversation with the epic poets of western literature.

Each of these interview participants offer distinctive perspectives on their time as a student at the Bread Loaf School of English, reflecting an assortment of educational experiences. In the spirit of the meadow, this diversity of experiences reflects the diversity of students each summer session on the mountain, creating the opportunity to examine not only the inner workings of the refrain, but also the variations within that refrain from participant to participant.

7.1.2 Stories from the Barn

Once the participants explained their arrival on campus, I prompted them to share narratives from their summers on the mountain. Although the boundaries of the classroom are often porous, this section will begin with stories that took place within the barn, the central classroom building on campus. In addition to housing several classrooms, the barn functions as one of the central meeting spaces on campus, where students and professors can meet to discuss their work. The stories in this section focus on entanglement in this setting, narrating key moments of encounter for each of the participants.

Discussing her first summer in the program, Maggie shared that she initially felt incredibly intimidated, plagued by the nagging suspicion that the students and professors were more intelligent than her. However, she grew in confidence over the course of multiple summers, in part because of the support of those same students and professors. During her first summer on the mountain, there was one professor whose mentorship made her feel as though she *belonged* within the assemblage. She told me the story about how his class helped her grow in her confidence:

I was in a class called solo theory and performance, and as part of the class, we had to do a solo performance. [laughs] I remember that the instructor had very high expectations,

and this was sort of well-known about the professor. He didn't give out A's easily and wasn't necessarily known for praise. On top of being intimidated by having to do a performance when I am not a performer, and having to do it in front of my peers—who I was also intimidated by—I had to do it for a grade for this really intelligent person that I respected a lot. I remember finishing the performance. He came up to me and gave me a hug. I was not expecting that at all. Having the validation of his respect, and his understanding of how hard it was for me, and him saying that I did a good job, was something that sticks out as part of the breadth of experience.

Despite her fears, the unexpected positive feedback from her instructor boosted her self-esteem, reinforcing her belief in her capabilities. This encounter, as well as other experiences outside of the classroom, helped her realize that she belonged on campus. She recognized that she had something valuable to add to the refrain.

Cheryl confessed a similar lack of confidence when arrived on campus, explaining how intimidated she felt by conversations in class. Although she already held an advanced degree, she felt as though she did not know how to analyze or discuss literature. In addition to this sense of intimidation, she felt homesick during much of her time on campus. The combination of intimidation and homesickness manifested in an overwhelming sense of alienation during her early days on campus. Although she felt uncomfortable, there were several encounters with peers that ultimately helped alleviate these anxieties. She shared an anecdote about an encounter with one of her classmates in the barn that seemed initially to confirm her fears:

I remember the first paper that I wrote and going to the library. There was this guy in my class, and he read my paper. And he was like, oh, we gotta work on this, and I was like shit. I had been teaching for—I was older than him—and I had been teaching for awhile, and I should know this stuff. He was a lot younger than me, and he really helped me with that paper.

However, her confidence grew after this encounter. Her classmate spent the next several hours helping her bring her writing to life. He asked her to explain her evidence, talking her through her analysis.

“It was such a simple thing,” Cheryl said, “that no one had ever spoken to me.”

Cheryl ended her story by reflecting on what she had learned from the experience, explaining how her attitudes towards writing transformed: “Writing—and this was a big part of the National Writing Project as well—but just getting the words down and communicating became more important, and not just so much of getting it right.” In addition to this encounter with her classmate, she credits her transformation to her course instructors as well, telling me a story about how feedback from one of her professors made her feel as though she might actually belong:

I wrote a story. She just wrote the kindest words to me in the margins of that story that just left me in tears, and it gave me so much confidence—and it was a different type of confidence. You know, when I walked onto Bread Loaf’s campus in Vermont that first summer, I was just bum-fuddled.

The feedback on her story made her feel appreciated and validated, counteracting the feelings of intimidation and homesickness she felt earlier in her experience. These two moments of entanglement would go on to transform her approach to writing instruction in her own classroom.

Eve shared one final narrative that took place within the bounds of the traditional classroom setting. As mentioned previously, her instructor asked each student to share their reasons for enrolling in the course on the first day of class. After she explained to the class that her background was in poetry, her instructor requested to speak with her after class:

He was like, if you’re here as a poet, not as a teacher, I am going to treat you like a poet. That means when it is time to write your final paper, because we had to do a zillion papers, he’s like you’re gonna do something different. I was like, no. I don’t want to do that. He’s like, yes, you are. And we argued. Then, when we got to the final paper, he made me do a poetic response to *Paradise Lost*... So, I made a chapbook. I did an entire chapbook. It was one long poem, maybe twenty-five or thirty pages long. I found this handmade paper, and I handbound it.

Although she was initially resistant to the alternative assignment, she shared how this exercise inspired her later poetic works, which are all in conversation with the epic poets. Therefore, her

narrative here illustrates how the assemblage on campus transcends the students and professors. It even transcends the surrounding landscape. It also includes the literary voices from each reading list, many of whom are long dead. Wolfreys (2013) reminds us that literature has the potential to collapse time. The voices of the epic poets “hover at the very limits of living and dying” (p. 72). Eve explained how this pedagogical experience encouraged her not only to commune with the epic poets—it also encouraged her to see them as her teachers:

I am in conversation canto by canto with Dante, and also in conversation with him as a student to Virgil. What does it mean to be a student versus being a teacher, and how do you trust your teacher, which is still interesting to me. Then in *Purgatorio*, and all the way through hell too, he’s talking to other poets. So it is like one big long conversation.

Eve would continue conversing with the epic poets long after Bread Loaf. However, she credits her coursework helping her take the first step into their world.

7.1.3 Learning Beyond the Barn

Although the participants shared numerous stories that take place within the classroom on campus, many of their stories take place beyond the barn. Since the earliest summers of the program, literary conversations have spilled into the parlors and on the porches. Surrounded by the wilderness, these extended literary discussions create further opportunities for the more-than-human to enter into the conversation. It was common for extracurricular events to transform into literary experiences, some of which seemed intent on summoning ghosts. Tara discussed one such moment in her narrative. Although she rarely attended campus events, she remembers attending the bonfire at Gilmore House one night:

There was a poet there. He was from Princeton. He’s Irish. His name was Paul. It might be Paul Muldoon. There was that one housing unit that was off from the main campus, I forget what it was called, but every Thursday night, they would hold a bonfire. I went once, I think. Paul Muldoon was there, and he was reading the Molly Bloom soliloquy from the end of *Ulysses*, and it was beautiful. It was completely understandable and emotional, the like emotions coming through. I am sure that part of it was that he is a

poet. But I know that if I had read that on my own, I would not have been able to find the meaning of it. But I was able to from *hearing* him read it because of *how* he read it.

In this short anecdote, Tara illustrates how the literary world creeps into other facets of campus life, including one of the predecessors to the pond reading. Moreover, her experience helped her arrive at a deeper understanding of the text, one that she is uncertain whether or not she would have reached on her own. In this narrative, Paul Muldoon reprises his role as “Séance Supervisor.”¹²⁵ However, this time he summons Molly Bloom instead of Robert Frost. Nevertheless, the image of the poet by the fire reminds me of an earlier student narrative—the story that Peter Stanlis told recalling a moonlit night between tombstones in a darkened graveyard when Robert Frost recited Milton’s *Samson Agonistes*. Without meaning to, Tara evokes the spectral landscape in her narrative, reminding us that the more-than-human includes the specter as well.

Maggie, in turn, discussed her evenings spent on Larch Porch. Looking out over the fields towards Tamarack, Larch Porch is situated on College Cross Road. East campus stretches out from its doorstep, a rolling field of freshly mown grass. On quiet mornings, fog settles over the quiet expanse until the distant cottages seemed almost like phantoms. When the sun rises, they too, evaporate in the mist. Larch Porch, on the other hand, is sturdy. Green benches encircled one half. The other half is populated by beer coolers that double as seats. It is a sort of way station along College Cross Road—a liminal space where people might occasionally pause as they pass through to other destinations. However, it gradually captures people as night falls over the mountains, much in the same way water eddies in the river, capturing flotsam and jetsam as it flows downstream.

¹²⁵ Students, Faculty Engage in Cult Like Nighttime Ritual at Frost Farm. (2006, July 19). *The Crumb* [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf School of English, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.

Unlike the bonfire, the gatherings on Larch Porch were informal. Nevertheless, Maggie describes her experiences on Larch Porch as formative in her growth over her summers on the mountain:

I remember the first summer that I was on the Vermont campus. I think it was 2016, so it was an election year. I remember just sitting and absorbing conversation. I am not—at least at that time—I was not a very politically informed person. I knew sort of the bare bones of current events. It wasn't something that I was particularly interested in. But obviously, the 2016 election was a big deal because Donald Trump was running. It was almost this joke that he was running. I remember the conversation on the porch, just kind of listening to people talk about Hillary Clinton and some of the campaign tactics. It was really the first space that I had been in that was politically intellectual.... It shaped how I interacted with politics moving forward because I didn't want to just be that quiet person on the porch who has nothing to say. I felt so uninformed, and so out of my depth.

As Maggie continued her narrative, she explained that though she enjoyed evenings on Larch Porch, they often challenged her, pushing her to her limits. Describing this paradoxical relationship, she said, "I always felt this imposter syndrome. I came to Bread Loaf with a very narrow education in literature. And I think on Larch Porch, more so probably than a lot of the classes I took, I was challenged to engage in a lot of current event conversations. For me, being smart was always, oh, I can analyze this passage and bring up a good point. But this space was more like, can you construct an argument on the fly? And can you engage with what is going on in the world?" Crammed onto the narrow benches on the porch, Maggie credits these informal encounters as transformative, demonstrating how the bodies on the porch met, collided, and contaminated one another.

On the other hand, Cheryl avoided these informal meetings. Nevertheless, she indicated that her experiences outside of the classroom were often just as formative as her experiences inside of the classroom, particularly since she was suffering from homesickness at the time. She discussed how these feelings of alienation would often lead her out into nature:

[My friend and I] were both taking David Huddle’s class, and we were so homesick. She and I would go walk every single afternoon. And we would leave the Bread Loaf campus and turn right, and go down a ways down that road and then cut up on a dirt road and go up the mountain. I bet we walked six or seven miles a day. I mean, when I came home I was in shape. We would pick up rocks and carry them too. But we walked so much, and we talked and talked through everything, the classes we were taking and the material we were covering.

In her story, Cheryl demonstrates how literary discussion from the classroom would continue during her afternoon hikes. More importantly, the natural world offered her sanctuary, particularly since she often felt intimidated by the pace of discussion in the classroom. I am reminded of the countless others who have sought sanctuary in the surrounding landscape. The indigenous Abenaki sought sanctuary in the mountains during the leaf-falling moon. Joseph Battell sought sanctuary in the mountains when his health betrayed him. Even the hapless student who took to the meadow to hunt for field mice sought sanctuary amidst the meadowsweet. Cheryl might gather stones instead of field mice, but her story nevertheless echoes these earlier narratives. Those stones represent everything she carried with her on these long walks. Her pockets heavy with stones, she used her daily sojourn into the wilderness to rehearse ideas, which helped her build her confidence in classroom discussions over time.

7.1.4 Points of Tension

There is ample evidence in each of the stories shared so far that the “bodies” in the Bread Loaf assemblage cut together-apart, remaining entangled long after the initial moment of encounter (Barad, 2011, p. 125). Tsing (2021) invites us to examine these moments of contamination: “We are contaminated by our encounters; they change who we are as we make way for others” (p. 27). However, these moments of contamination are occasionally fraught, introducing the possibility of discord in the refrain. In the nineteenth century, back when it was still possible to erect barricades at the base of the mountain, these conflicts were mitigated by

uniformity. Joseph Battell ruled over his domain, maintaining control over the guest list. It is no longer feasible, or desirable, to erect barricades on the highway. Yet as the community continues to expand, so, too, does the possibility for discord.

Cheryl would readily recognize this discord. While listening to her speak, I was often reminded of the poetry of Donald Davidson, who sometimes expressed similar feelings of displacement on the mountain. Though her politics bear zero resemblance to those of her predecessor, Cheryl speaks with a thick southern accent. It was impossible to hide her southern heritage. Furthermore, she felt unfairly judged based on her accent on numerous occasions. Cheryl shared the story of an uncomfortable encounter with her roommate, who had mocked her southern drawl. In the following excerpt, she describes the aftermath of the encounter:

I thought she was so well educated, why would she judge me about my southern accent? Then I became extremely defensive. I was like, you sound like that nanny, wherever that show was, you know the way the woman has that really brash New York accent. It became a tit for tat thing that made it very juvenile. But I was crushed, just crushed. We were mad at each other for a day or two, like we couldn't speak to each other. But that incident has stuck with me my whole life. And I have always, ever since then, whenever I meet somebody and they have a different accent, it makes me want to find out more about them and let them know that I appreciate their accent.

The encounter with her roommate introduces discord into the refrain, but this discord lends itself to the possibility of resolution. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) write, “The lapping, wailing of molecular discordances have always been present, even if instrumental evolution and other factors are now giving them growing importance, as the value of a new threshold for a properly musical content” (p. 272). In other words, the minor chord has always been involved in the refrain. Moreover, it often resolves into a major key. Much in the same way, Cheryl learned from her encounter with her roommate. Later in her interview, she discussed how this moment had a direct impact on her approach to her project with the Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network, when she endeavored to help her students learn to appreciate regional differences.

In addition to this encounter with her roommate, Cheryl told the story of another fraught moment when she fell victim to harmful misconceptions on the mountain. The story revolves around the now discontinued Suppressed Desires Dance. In 1947, the first mention of Suppressed Desires appeared in *The Crumb* in reference to the theater production, making its next official appearance in the student newsletter in 1981.¹²⁶ The bulletin for the dance invited students to “act on the desire we have suppressed the most.”¹²⁷ It was, in essence, a costume contest, featuring an odd assortment of obscure literary characters, not to mention other manifestations of the Freudian id. The dance occurred annually from 1981-2015, when it was officially retired following another moment of campus discord. Cheryl rarely attended social events on campus, but she had been excited to learn about the costume contest. She told me the story about the care she took to create her costume:

I was impressed with myself. I don't dress up, but man, I had a suppressed desire to be Scout from *To Kill a Mockingbird*. I got a ride into town. I found myself a pair of overalls, a pair of converse tennis shoes, and I came home. I wore just a white t-shirt and overalls that were too big for me and my little converse shoes, and then I made a big cut-out of a shadow that I attached to the back of my costume, who was meant to be Boo Radley watching over me. My roommate, who refused to go to the party, carved me a little boy and girl out of soap to carry, but then somebody said, as they were trying to figure out who I was, that I must be a slave owner... I was just, my feelings were hurt by that too.

Cheryl initially felt pride in her costume, reflecting her pride in southern background. Therefore, she felt deeply mischaracterized when someone misinterpreted her costume for that of a slave owner. This misunderstanding clashed with her intended portrayal of Scout and Boo Radley, creating a sense of dissonance. She felt a deep sense of kinship with the character, having always

¹²⁶ Bread Loaf School of English. (1947, July 16). *The Crumb*. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury VT. It should be noted that some mentions of the Suppressed Desires Dance suggest that it has been around since the 1930s, but I could find no concrete record of its existence earlier than 1947.

¹²⁷ Bread Loaf School of English. (1981, July 24). *The Crumb*. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury VT.

admired Scout for her ability to navigate racial tensions and traditional gender roles. Given this context, the misinterpretation of her costume transcended mere *faux pas*. Cheryl instead viewed the incident as an indictment of her southern identity. It was a moment of discord that she attempted to resolve when she returned home through her involvement in the Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network. Her project attempted to help students communicate pride about their own cultural backgrounds, while also remaining open to learning about the cultural backgrounds of others.

7.2 There and Back Again

The previous sections have included narrative excerpts, each selected to offer insight into how a gathering becomes a happening. The next section returns to the question from the opening of the chapter—how do teachers carry the more-than-human home with them each summer? Reviewing the transcripts from their narratives, I was reminded of one of my classmates, who once attempted to bring home a small part of the Bread Loaf campus. It was a sliver of wood that had fallen to the ground outside the Robert Frost cabin. He plucked it from the dirt, placing it in his pocket to give to his friend back home. In his retelling of the incident, he used the word “relic” to describe this souvenir. Relics are tangible memorials to the dead, evoking images of sacred and venerated artifacts. As he told his story, I envisioned the faithful carrying the finger bones and burial shrouds of deceased saints in their pockets for protection.

What might it mean to carry a relic of the Bread Loaf School of English with us? And more importantly, what can we make of his impulse to give that splitter of wood to his friend, attempting to render the intangible tangible in the form of a sliver of wood no larger than a matchstick? Although none of my participants returned home with pocketfuls of splinters, the

stories contained within showcase the experiences they carried home with them, experiences worth sharing with their students.

7.2.1 Resolving Moments of Tension

We will begin by resolving the tension addressed in the previous section. Cheryl made her discomfort on the mountain clear in each of her narratives. However, she expressed sincere gratitude for the program when asked about her return to the classroom. Reflecting on her experiences, she explained that her time at the graduate school transformed her approach to teaching:

When I was at [large southern university], we had all of our desks bolted to the floor in rows, and so I had never seen desks all scattered around the room. So, I suddenly realized, oh the classroom is dynamic, and we can have different things here. It doesn't have to stay like this. So that became a big part of things.

Before her time on the mountain, most of her educational experiences involved chairs bolted to the ground, an industrialist model so rigid as to seem immovable. However, the desks in the barn were “scattered,” an image of the assemblage. Her experiences helped her understand how her classroom might echo that assemblage, even hundreds of miles away. Despite her discomfort, she nevertheless recognized how these structures created the conditions for her intellectual growth.

Furthermore, Cheryl attempted to resolve the tensions she felt in the program by creating conditions for cultural contact for her students. She was the only participant interviewed who was an active member of the Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network. As a member of the network, she helped her students participate in an exchange on BreadNet. She confessed that her class never discussed a shared text during their exchange. Instead, she focused on helping students bridge cultural differences. Her students introduced themselves and shared about their lives and

community in South Carolina. In return, they received letters from other classes introducing themselves as well.

“We got hand-written letters,” she explained. “I could send things via email, but it was difficult. My kids didn’t have access to those types of things. I couldn’t even scan material yet. I must have hand-typed everything.”

One memorable part of the exchange was a student who had a speech impediment, but was still able to write kind letters to a girl in Alaska who was going through difficulties. Given her own uncomfortable experiences on the mountain, Cheryl found it reassuring that her student was able to communicate despite speech impediment.

At the end of the exchange, students shared physical items that represented their community. Cheryl could not remember the items they sent to Alaska, but she thinks they might have sent items that were local to the area, including boiled peanuts, cotton, and a t-shirt from Piggly Wiggly. In return, her students received similar items from classrooms several thousand miles away:

We sent the other classes boxes of things from South Carolina, and they sent us something for Alaska. It was salmon that somebody’s daddy had caught, and oh my god, we thought it was amazing.... It was such a memorable day, you know, when we got that box and opened it up.

Through this classroom exchange, Cheryl attempted to resolve the discord she felt on the mountain. Her efforts to facilitate cultural exchange highlights how the incident on the mountain impacted her desire to foster empathy and understanding despite regional differences. These moments of encounter, mediated through the physical exchange of letters, allowed her students to enter into an analogous assemblage. In short, Cheryl returned home with the desire to help her students communicate pride about their cultural backgrounds, while also remaining open to

learning from others. The material items exchanged might be understood as the material traces left behind in the aftermath of collision.

Much in the same spirit, Maggie explained that her experiences on the mountain helped broaden her worldview beyond teaching as well:

Bread Loaf motivated me to be more informed and aware of my own identity within the greater political sphere, you know, the larger world. It is as simple as wanting to be more up to date with current events, which has changed again now that I have a newborn baby. Now it is hard to stay up to date with anything because you just get a little bit inside your own bubble. But I think before Bread Loaf, I was definitely in a bubble, and I didn't even realize it. So Bread Loaf was something that I took away from that, at least being aware that I was in a bubble.

In this brief explanation, it is easy to see the echoes of Larch Porch. In her earlier narrative, Maggie shared that she felt out of depth and uninformed, a realization that helped her better understand her naivety. The experience motivated her to be more informed about the world at large. I am reminded once more of the nineteenth-century when Joseph Battell attempted to create his own image of the “pastoral green world” by erecting a barrier on Rt. 125 (Maddox, 1992, p. 16). Through her narrative, Maggie suggests that the boundaries of the “pastoral green world” are much more porous than they might first appear. The campus might remain relatively isolated, yet the business of the real world has long ago crept onto the mountain.¹²⁸ During her time on the mountain, Maggie refused to succumb to a pastoral longing for the past. Instead, she carried home a desire to better understand the world beyond the mountain, sharing that desire first with her students, and then with her newborn son.

¹²⁸ I am reminded here of the 1973 faculty commencement address, which was delivered by A. Bartlett Giamatti, faculty member and President of Yale University: “Bread Loaf’s great secret is not that it is cut off from the world, but rather that it is always making us think of how to best re-connect with the world, how to best recognize and revise. That is what Bread Loaf does, and what I think education is about, and we might all do worse than to remember it in the time ahead.”

7.2.2 *The Traveler Far from Home*

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) offer the image of the traveler wandering far from home in order to depict the refrain's power to push against the borders it creates. Our final narrative pushes against those borders, challenging our definitions of teaching and learning. Eve, although not an educator in the traditional sense, also shared her meditation on how the experience shaped her understanding of various pedagogical questions:

I love that conversation of student-teacher, and who are my teachers? My professor was one of my teachers, but really Milton was my teacher. Dante is my teacher. But I do need to push back. I think it is *important* to push back against the poetic voices that are out there.

If you look at Dante, that is exactly what he is doing. He makes Virgil a God at the beginning, and by the end, Virgil just disappears, and three quarters of the way through purgatory, he doesn't have power any more. And you can see that Virgil is lying. Virgil is lying the entire time, which I think is also fascinating. We need our poetic teachers, but we need to take them in context.

I am always pushing back about how I should be teaching or not teaching because it changes from student to student, and I learned that with my professor. Here's this Princeton guy, who just came from Oxford. You know, he's one of the preeminent scholars in Milton, and I'm shaking in my boots because I'm like, holy shit, I'm going to be found out to be an idiot, right? And he's like one, you're not, and two, he just met me where I was. And he met this woman who made Milton her spiritual teacher where she was. And there was another woman who wanted to be a Milton scholar, and he met her where *she* was. He really taught me that was the best way to be a teacher.

In this excerpt, Eve reflects on the nature of teaching and learning, noting the importance of not only academic professors, but also long-dead literary figures like Milton and Dante. In this description, we catch a glimpse of teaching and learning on the mountain. Students who attend the Bread Loaf School of English summer after summer not only learn from their professors, but they also learn from the ghosts that inhabit those meadows. Furthermore, she emphasizes the need to push back against our teachers, even those considered authoritative. Dante, after all, learns to challenge his teacher. Eventually, Virgil disappears from the text entirely. Much in the

same way, we must learn to listen to the *revenant*, but we must also occasionally challenge them as we envision the *arrivant*. Eve carried home an understanding that transformation with the refrain requires the willingness to occasionally wander off the beaten path and forge a path of our own. Therefore, Dante is perhaps an apt figure to end with given his meandering journey towards truth in the pursuit of ghosts.

7.3 Beyond the Rearview Mirror

Through the narratives featured in this chapter, I have attempted to illustrate how each of the participants carried the mountain home with them, demonstrating how the campus never really disappears in the rearview mirror. Instead, alumni of the program carry the mountain with them. As a result, K-12 students, students who have never even stepped foot on campus, are part of the assemblage as well. It is also important to note that the stories contained in this chapter offer the barest glimpse of this refrain. If we accept the definition of the refrain as a pattern of repetition with difference, then each summer might be regarded as another iteration of the refrain. The flock converges on the meadow again and again, but with minute differences each time—new faces, new stories, new shifts in the landscape. These narratives, therefore, belong to a much larger narrative that will continue as the Bread Loaf School of English enters into another century of educating English teachers on the mountain.

In some ways, this dissertation might be read as an attempt to understand my own relationship with the mountain. Although I haven't stepped foot on the mountain in seven years, I have spent the last several years attempting to attune to its voice in the yellowing pages of the archives, haunted by "what eddies under, around, and sometimes through that repository" (Cohen, 2017, p. 27). These more-than-human narratives have proven to be evasive, particularly given the limitations of human perception. Wilfred Davison (1939) once claimed that the voice

of the mountain was one that “no human speech, however bold, / Has ever yet the meaning told.” Indeed, there are narratives that evade human capture. The archival record has had little interest in documenting the birdsong in the meadow, nor can it comprehend the signals sent through subterranean mycorrhizal networks. These narratives lurk in the threshold, as elusive as the catamount rumored to haunt the hills surrounding the graduate school.

Despite these challenges, I have cherished the allusions to the more-than-human across the archive. Not only have these references proven integral to my burgeoning understanding of the history of the school, they have also encouraged me to consider the future of storytelling in the Anthropocene, particularly in the secondary setting. Throughout my graduate research, I have been haunted by the question of how we might begin to address these narratological challenges through our classroom literacy practices. Affrica Taylor (2017) argues that the Anthropocene requires transformative pedagogies, practices which require us to “radically rethink our agency in the world, to understand that we are just one agentic species among many, albeit a formidable and potentially destructive one” (p. 1450). The Bread Loaf School of English has been uniquely situated to help me better understand how we might develop such transformative pedagogies.

In order to radically rethink our agency in the world, we might begin by drawing parallels between reading words on the page and reading the natural world that surrounds us. This paradigm shift involves learning to pay attention to the rich multispecies narratives that surround us. Cohen (2017) argues that human history is the “attenuated tale of a single species... cut from an overwhelming story” (p. 25). In order to avoid the myopia of single species narratives, teachers must begin to develop practices designed to foster more-than-human reading practices, moving from reading more-than-human narratives to writing more-than-human narratives. By honoring the more-than-human protagonists of the texts we read—both in the word and in the

world—we create possibilities for “collaborative and communal *learning-with* that unsettle human-centric orientations to literacy” (Pindyck and Vinz, 2022, p. 105). This renegotiation of reading practices doesn’t endeavor to erase the human. Instead, it endeavors to remind us that the human species is one of many, each deeply enmeshed in a natural world teeming with possibilities.

On the other hand, I have also grown to interrogate my relationship with the mountain. Although more-than-human protagonists have played an important role in the development of the graduate school, it is important to take care in how that story is framed. In an earlier chapter of my dissertation, I attempted to confront the dangers of uncritical pastoralism in dialogue within the meadow, echoing the warnings of one of the graduate school’s former students. It is important to avoid viewing the wilderness from the front porch of the Inn, assuming the vantage point of an art collector admiring an expensive portrait within its gilt frame. The danger in pastoralism—an impulse rooted in the prelapsarian longing—is that we are continuously searching for something that is long gone. Instead, more-than-human historians must attend to stories at the threshold of the past, present, *and* future. Otherwise, we run the risk of communing overlong with the *revenant*, forgetting to attend to the *arrivant*.

These teacher narratives have reminded me of the importance of the *arrivant*, the programs that have connected the more-than-human landscapes on the mountain with secondary classrooms across the globe.

Epilogue: Invocations

“Periods are partial stories, and stories do not end, punctuate as we may. Plot lines thrive and mutate beyond artful terminus, beyond historical probability.” —Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, “Anarky,” *Anthropocene Reading: Literary History in Geologic Times*.

Kiawah Island was beautiful in the early morning light. The night before, it had been nearly impossible to discern the surrounding landscape, save the looming outlines of live oak trees. Instead, the darkness had pressed against the car windows like a blanket. Although comforting to human motorists, street lights have been known to disorient the loggerhead sea turtles who nest on the barrier islands during the summer months. The sand-covered hatchlings mistake their incandescent glow for the distant moon. Within each glass light bulb, the filament burns bright, leading the hatchlings astray until they collapse with exhaustion. There, far from the gentle waves, the hatchlings fall prey to the ghost crabs, who scuttle like silent phantoms haunting the dunes. It is out of courtesy to these seasonal visitors that many of the barrier islands remain shrouded in darkness, even during the mild winter months. But in the daylight, the smooth cordgrass billowed in the breeze like waves on the ocean. The Kiawah Island Convention Center was surrounded by cabbage palmetto trees, the same tree that appears on the blue banner of the state flag of South Carolina. The criss-crossed bootjacks at the base of the palm fronds reminded me of the sweetgrass baskets, woven by Gullah Geechee artisans along Highway 17.

It was my first time back at the South Carolina Council of Teachers of English Conference in exactly ten years. When I first attended, I had been a pre-service teacher in the middle of my semester of student teaching, but now I was in the final semester of my doctoral program, once again on the cusp of something new. However, despite my many years away from the southeast, I was greeted by several familiar faces when I walked into the convention center,

all fellow graduates of the Bread Loaf School of English. Over the course of the weekend, I encountered numerous graduates of the program. In impromptu reunions, we swapped stories about the indomitable Dixie Goswami, whose mentorship was the common thread for many of the alumni at the conference. The president of the South Carolina Council of Teachers of English, a current Bread Loaf student, shared her passion for the program. She already held a doctorate, but she would be returning as a student to the mountain in the summer in the pursuit of community. Our conversations might have seemed borderline fanatical to the uninitiated, but each of the alumni in the room could remember the simple beauty of the mist-covered mountains, best viewed while sitting in an Adirondack chair, an unopened book resting in their lap.

When I sat down at my laptop to write this section, I found myself remembering our conversations on Kiawah Island, a small coastal community approximately one thousand miles away from the Bread Loaf Inn. The landscape could not have been more different, the meadow little more than a memory. Just outside the convention center, gentle waves broke against the shoreline—quartz, chert, and broken shells glistening in the bright midday sun. Instead of meadowlarks, sandpipers hopped along the shallows, probing the sand for tiny crustaceans. In the marshlands, the horizon stretches, illimitable, into the distance. But during our impromptu gathering on the shores of the sea, our narratives evoked the mountain wilderness, the distant clouds transforming into the mist-covered mountains in our memory. If the *Ellen* reading is indeed an act of invocation—an ancient ritual of “calling in” that invites the muses beneath our skins—then we unleash those muses in such moments of convocation, moments of gathering with fellow teachers who have also knelt beneath the branches of an old pine. The memory of the

meadow evokes the memories of connection we felt on the mountain, and it continues to haunt us long after we have departed the mountain.

Therefore, this narrative will have no conclusion, no attempt to exorcize the spirits that continue to haunt us, but perhaps it is better that way. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen reminds us, after all, that more-than-human histories have no ending: “Periods are partial stories, and stories do not end, punctuate as we may. Plot lines thrive and mutate beyond artful terminus, beyond historical probability” (p. 27). Much in the same way, this dissertation endeavors to offer one small glimpse at the spiraling histories of the Bread Loaf School of English, but it is a story without end. There are other spirals that remain unexamined, other threads as of yet invisible within the overwhelming tapestry, but I will leave those stories to haunt the next researcher who follows in my footsteps.

Therefore, I will close this loop of the spiral in the same with I began, with a dedication to the *revenant* and *arrivant*, the historian who might one day take up this work:

*To the Unknown Chronicler of 2044,
Whose duty it will be to write the
History of the Bread Loaf School of
English in Middlebury College for
The celebration of the 125th session of the school.
Never forget to listen at the threshold
In pursuit of the specter beneath your skin.*

References

- Adkins, B. (2015). 11. 1837: Of the refrain. In *Deleuze and Guattari's a thousand plateaus: A critical introduction and guide* (pp. 171-190). Edinburgh University Press.
- Anderson, G.K. (1969). *Bread Loaf School of English: The first fifty years*. Middlebury College Press.
- Atkins, J., Bateman, C., DuBose, G., Everson, B., & Summerlin, J. (1994). Other voices other rooms: Reading and writing poetry on-line in South Carolina. *Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network Journal*, 7-10.
- Bain, D. (2021, October 28). *Joseph Battell: A life and a legacy* [Lecture]. Henry Sheldon Museum of Vermont History, Middlebury, Vermont.
- Ballif, M. (2013). *Historiography as hauntology: Paranormal investigations into the history of rhetoric. Theorizing histories of rhetoric*. Southern Illinois University Press.
- Banacos, P. (2023). The Great Vermont Flood of 10-11 July 2023: Preliminary meteorological summary. *The National Weather Service*. <https://www.weather.gov/btv/The-Great-Vermont-Flood-of-10-11-July-2023-Preliminary-Meteorological-Summary>
- Barad, K. (2014). Diffracting diffraction: Cutting together-apart. *Parallax* 23(3), 168-187.
- Barad, K. (2007). *Meeting the universe halfway: Quantum physics and the entanglement of matter and meaning*. Duke University Press.
- Barad, K. (2011). Nature's queer performativity. *Qui Parle* 19(2), 121-158.
- Barad, K. (2017). Troubling time/s and ecologies of nothingness: Re-turning, re-membering, and facing the incalculable. In M. Fritsch, P. Lynes, & D. Woods (Eds.), *Eco-destruction: Derrida and environmental philosophy* (pp. 206-241). Fordham University Press.
- Battell, J. (1895). *Bread Loaf Inn*. Library of Congress.
- Battell, J. (1901, October 1). Ellen or, the whisperings of an old pine: A philosophical novel. *The Dial*. The Dial Publishing Company.
- Battell, J. (1903). *Ellen, or the whisperings of an old pine*. American Publishing Company.
- Battell, J. (1865). *The yankee boy from home*. James Miller Publishers.
- Benson, C. (1993). Teaching out in the middle of everywhere. *Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network Journal*.
- Benson, C. (1995). Teaching out in the middle of everywhere: Cleveland, MS. *Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network Journal*.
- Bielawski, M. (2023). Mountain lions wiped out from Vermont 142 years ago. *Vermont Daily Chronicle*. <https://vermontdailychronicle.com/mountain-lions-wiped-out-from-vermont-142-years-ago/>

- Blanco, M. & Peeren, E. (2013). Haunted Historiographies / Introduction. *The spectralities reader: Ghosts and haunting in contemporary cultural theory*. Bloomsbury.
- Blanco, M. & Peeren, E. (2013). *The spectralities reader: Ghosts and haunting in contemporary cultural theory*. Bloomsbury.
- Bozalek, V., Zemblyas, M., Motala, S., & Holscher, D. (2021). Introduction. *Higher education hauntologies: Living with ghosts for a justice-to-come*. Routledge.
- Bread Loaf Next Generation Leadership Network. (n.d.). 2023 Affiliate Sites. *BLTN Next Generation Leadership Network*. <https://breadloafnextgen.middcreate.net/social-action-teams/2023-affiliate-sites/>
- Bread Loaf Next Generation Leadership Network. (n.d.). BLTN NextGen: Thought Leaders for a New Generation. *Bread Loaf Next Generation Leadership Network*. <https://breadloafnextgen.middcreate.net/about/#:~:text=BLTN%20NextGen%20is%20a%20youth,address%20issues%20identified%20by%20youth>.
- Bread Loaf School of English. (1920). "Bread Loaf School of English Catalog" [Course catalog], *Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 1920*, Bread Loaf School of English, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.
- Bread Loaf School of English. (1978a). "Bread Loaf School of English Catalog" [Course catalog], *Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 1978*, Bread Loaf School of English, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.
- Bread Loaf School of English. (1984). "Bread Loaf School of English Catalog" [Course catalog], *Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 1984*, Bread Loaf School of English, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.
- Bread Loaf School of English. (1988). "Bread Loaf School of English Catalog" [Course catalog], *Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 1988*, Bread Loaf School of English, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.
- Bread Loaf School of English. (2002). "Bread Loaf School of English Catalog" [Course catalog], *Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 2002*, Bread Loaf School of English, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.
- Bread Loaf School of English. (1978b). "General Statistics" [Enrollment records], *Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 1978*, Bread Loaf School of English, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.
- Bread Loaf School of English. (1994). "General Statistics" [Enrollment records], *Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 1994*, Bread Loaf School of English, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.
- Bread Loaf School of English. (2010, June 29). *La Miga*, Vol. XX, no. 9. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf School of English, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.
- Bread Loaf School of English. (2011). *The Biscuit*, Vol. 6 [Student newsletter], Bread Loaf School of English, F7, Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.

- Bread Loaf School of English. (1922, July 8). *The Crumb*, Vol. 2. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.
- Bread Loaf School of English. (1947, July 16). *The Crumb*, Vol. 28. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.
- Bread Loaf School of English. (1973, July 20). *The Crumb*, Vol. 54. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.
- Bread Loaf School of English. (1978c). *The Crumb*, Vol. 59 [Student Newsletter], Bread Loaf School of English, F7, Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.
- Bread Loaf School of English. (1981, July 24). *The Crumb*, Vol. 62 [Student Newsletter], Bread Loaf School of English, F7, Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.
- Bread Loaf School of English. (1982, July 8). *The Crumb*, Vol. 63 [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.
- Bread Loaf School of English. (1994, July 7). *The Crumb*, Vol. 75. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.
- Bread Loaf School of English. (1996, August 9). *The Crumb*, Vol. 77. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.
- Bread Loaf School of English. (1997, July 9). *The Crumb*, Vol. 78. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.
- Bread Loaf School of English. (1999, July 12). *The Crumb*, Vol. 80. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.
- Bread Loaf School of English. (2000, July 17). *The Crumb*, Vol. 81. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.
- Bread Loaf School of English. (2000, July 18). *The Crumb*, Vol. 81. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.
- Bread Loaf School of English. (2001, June 27). *The Crumb*, Vol. 82. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.
- Bread Loaf School of English. (2002, July 1). *The Crumb*, Vol. 83. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.
- Bread Loaf School of English. (2002, August 2). *The Crumb*, Vol. 83. [Students Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.
- Bread Loaf School of English. (2005, July 8). *The Crumb*, Vol. 86. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.
- Bread Loaf School of English. (2005, August 10). *The Crumb*, Vol. 86. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

- Bread Loaf School of English. (2006, July 18). *The Crumb*, Vol. 87. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.
- Bread Loaf School of English. (2007, June 27). *The Crumb*, Vol. 88. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.
- Bread Loaf School of English. (2007, August 1). *The Crumb*, Vol. 88. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.
- Bread Loaf School of English. (2010, July 1). *The Crumb*, Vol. 91. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.
- Bread Loaf School of English. (2014, July 9). *The Crumb*, Vol. 95. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.
- Bread Loaf School of English. (2014, August 1). *The Crumb*, Vol. 95. [Student Newsletter], Bread Loaf School of English, F7, Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.
- Bread Loaf School of English. (2017, July 3). *The Crumb*, Vol. 98. [Student Newsletter], Bread Loaf School of English, F7, Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.
- Bread Loaf School of English. (1993). "The Piney Woods Bread Loaf Summer Institute for Teachers" [Brochure], *Brochure for 1993 Bread Loaf School of English*, Bread Loaf School of English, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.
- Broderson, K. (1996). Encouraging communication across the network. *Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network Journal*, 18.
- Bronner, S. (1990). *Piled higher and deeper: The folklore of campus life*. August House Publishers, Inc.
- Bruce, A., Beuthin, R., Shields, L., Molzahn, A. & Schick-Makaroff, K. (2016). Narrative research evolving: Evolving through narrative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 1-6.
- Caduto, M. (2010). Hunting with the Abenaki. *Northern Woodland Magazine*.
https://northernwoodlands.org/outside_story/article/hunting-with-the-abenaki
- Carr, D. (1986). Narrative and the real world: An argument for continuity. *History and Theory*, 25(2), 117.
- Carstens, D. (2021). A posthuman hauntology for the Anthropocene: The spectral and higher education. In V. Bozalek, M. Zembylas, S. Motala, & D. Holscher (Eds.) *Higher education hauntologies: Living with ghosts for a justice-to-come*. Routledge.
- Christian, S. (1994). A sense of community: The Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network and the Anne Frank conference. *Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network Journal*.
- Cohen, J.J. (2017). Anarchy. *Anthropocene reading: Literary history in geologic times*. Pennsylvania State University Press.

- Collins, E.D. (1929). How the English School Came to Bread Loaf. *Bread Loaf*. [Pamphlet]. Bread Loaf (F7), Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.
- Collins, E.D. (1909). The organization of the department of pedagogy in Middlebury College. [Course Bulletin]. Middlebury College. Bread Loaf (F7), Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.
- Coons, B. (2007). Graduation banquet address [Transcript], *Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 2007*, Bread Loaf School of English, F7, Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.
- Coulter, C. & Smith, M. (2009). Discourse on narrative research: Literary elements in narrative research. *Educational Researcher* 38(8), 577-590.
- Cronon, W. (1992). A place for stories: Nature, history, and narrative. *The Journal of American History* 79(4), 1347-1376.
- Cubeta, P. (presumed). (1977, July). Grant from the Rockefeller Foundation for Bread Loaf [Grant Proposal]. *Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 1977*, Bread Loaf School of English, F7, Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.
- Cubeta, P. (1968, June 26). Very green thoughts in a green shade: Opening address [Speech], *Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 1968*, Bread Loaf School of English, F7, Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.
- Davidson, D. (1956, August 11). Commencement address [Transcript of Speech], *Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 1956*. Bread Loaf School of English, F7, Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.
- Davidson, D. (1966). Late answer: A Civil War seminar. *Poems, 1922-1961*, 52-56. University of Minnesota Press.
- Davidson, D. (1957). *Still rebels, still yankees*. LSU Press.
- Davison, W. (1939). Echoes. *Bread Loaf anthology*. Middlebury College Press.
- Davison, W. (1939). Memorial. *Bread Loaf anthology*. Middlebury College Press.
- Davison, W. (1929). The Bread Loaf idea. *Bread Loaf*. [Pamphlet]. Bread Loaf (F7), Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.
- de Certeau, M. (1984). *The practice of everyday life* (S. Rendall, Trans.). University of California Press.
- de Certeau, M. (1988). *The writing of history* (T. Conley, Trans.). Columbia University Press.
- Deleuze, G. & Guattari, F. (1987). *A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia* (Trans. R. Hurley). University of Minnesota Press.
- Derrida, J. (1974). *Of grammatology* (G.C. Spivak, Trans.). Johns Hopkins University Press. (Original work published 1916).
- Derrida, J. (1994). *Specters of Marx: The state of the debt, the work of mourning, and the new international*. Routledge Classics.

- de Saussure, F. (1959). *Course in general linguistics* (C. Bally & A. Sechehaye, Eds.; W. Baskin, Trans). McGraw-Hill. (Original work published 1916)
- Dickinson, E. (n.d.). The bobolink is gone. *Famous Poets and Poems*.
http://famouspoetsandpoems.com/poets/emily_dickinson/poems/9608
- Emory, D. (2016). Life after Bread Loaf. *The Crumb*. [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.
- Forest Service. (n.d.). GMNF - The original Vermonters. *Forest Service: Caring for the Land and Serving the People*. <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/gmfl/learning/history-culture/?cid=stelprdb5316753#:~:text=The%20Western%20Abenaki%20people%20have,of%20the%20%22real%22%20story>.
- Fraser, H. (2004). Doing narrative research: Analysing personal stories line by line. *Qualitative Social Work*, 3(2), 179-201.
- Freeman, S. (1974). The first 115 years. *Middlebury College Newsletter*, xlviii(3), 27-35
- Frost, R. (1923). Nothing gold can stay. *The poetry of Robert Frost*. Henry Holt and Company, LLC.
- Frost, R. (1923). Stopping by woods on a snowy evening. *The poetry of Robert Frost*. Henry Holt and Company, LLC.
- Foucault, M. (1970). *The order of things: An archaeology of the human sciences*. Vintage Books. (Original work published 1966)
- Gao, E., Ma, H., Yang, T., Kaiser-Bunbury, C. & Zhao, Z. (2023). Meadow transformations alter above- and below-ground ecological networks and ecosystem multifunctionality. *Functional Ecology*, 37(6), 1703-1716.
- Gardner, M. (1952). *Fads & fallacies in the name of science*. New American Library.
- Gay, R.M. (1939). Joseph Battell. *Bread Loaf anthology*. Middlebury College Press.
- Geerts, E. (2021). Being haunted by—and reorienting toward—what ‘matters’ in times of (the COVID-19) crisis: A critical pedagogical cartography of response-ability. In V. Bozalek, M. Zembylas, S. Motala, & D. Holscher (Eds.), *Higher education hauntologies: Living with ghosts for a justice-to-come*. Routledge.
- Giamatti, A. (1973). Entire affection hateth nicer hands [Commencement Address]. *Records of the Bread Loaf School of English*, Bread Loaf School of English, F7, Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.
- Goeres, B. (1983). The spirits of Adirondack chairs. *The Crumb* [Student Newsletter]. Bread Loaf School of English, F7, Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.
- Gooch, R. (1994). BreadNet: A virtual community. *Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network*, 18.
<https://www.middlebury.edu/school-english/sites/www.middlebury.edu.school-english/files/2019-11/1994%20BLRTN%20May.pdf?fv=BlyCYBcx>

- Gooch, R. (1996). Information superhighway needs more access ramps. *Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network*, 14-15.
- Gooch, R. (1993). Rural teachers & modems. *Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network*, 4.
<https://www.middlebury.edu/school-english/sites/www.middlebury.edu.school-english/files/2019-11/1993%20BLRTN%20%20Nov.pdf?fv=bsV6GGQf>
- Goswami, D. (1994). BLRTN identifies critical issues for rural education. *Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network Journal*.
- Goswami, D. (2020). Bread Loaf Teacher Network: A resource for virtual teaching and learning in time of pandemic. *Bread Loaf Teacher Network Journal*.
<https://sites.middlebury.edu/bltnmag/2020/05/21/bread-loaf-teacher-network-a-resource-for-virtual-teaching-and-learning-in-time-of-pandemic/>
- Hanewald, N. (2019). Professor emerita awarded the virtue family exceptional service award. *Clemson Blogs*. <https://blogs.clemson.edu/emerituscollege/2019/08/28/professor-emerita-awarded-the-virtue-family-exceptional-service-award/>
- Hanning, R. (1976). The teacher: Betwixt Ernest and game [Commencement Address]. *Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 1976*, Bread Loaf School of English, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.
- Haraway, D. (2015) Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Plantationocene, Chthulucene: Making kin. *Environmental Humanities*, 6, 159-165.
- Haraway, D. (1992). *Primate visions: Gender, race, and nature in the world of modern science*. Routledge.
- Haraway, D. (2016). *Staying with the trouble: Making kin in the Chthulucene*. Duke University Press.
- Hartman, S. (2008). Venus in two acts. *Small Axe: A Journal of Criticism*, 12(2), 1.
- Höckert, E. (2020). Chapter 4: On scientific fabulation: Storytelling in the more-than-human world. *Ethics and politics of space for the Anthropocene*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Howell, M. & Prevenier, W. (2001). *From reliable sources: An introduction to historical method*. Cornell University Press.
- Huddle, D. (1989, August 12). "Commencement Address" [Speech Transcript], *Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 1989*, Bread Loaf School of English, F7.
- Ingala, E. (2018). Of the refrain (the ritornello). In J.A. Bell (Ed.), *A thousand plateaus and philosophy*. Edinburgh University Press.
- Jackson, A. & Mazzei, L. (2012). *Thinking with theory in qualitative research: Viewing data across multiple perspectives*. Routledge.
- Jackson, A. (2016). An ontology of a backflip. *Cultural Studies, Critical Methodologies*, 16(2), 183-192.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1532708616634735>

- Jackson, A. (2010). Deleuze and the girl. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 23(5), 579-587. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2010.500630>
- James Porter Moffett Papers. Mss 243. Department of Special Collections, Davidson Library, University of California, Santa Barbara.
- Joseph Battell Dead. (1915, March 10). *The Middlebury Campus*, 11(2), p. 2.
- Josselson, R. (2011). Narrative research: Constructing, deconstructing, and reconstructing story. *Five ways of doing qualitative analysis: Phenomenological psychology, grounded theory, discourse analysis, narrative research, and intuitive inquiry*. The Guilford Press.
- Lewis, S. & Maslin, M. (2015). Defining the Anthropocene. *Nature*, 519(7542), 171-180.
- Low, P.J. (1993). *Literate learners: The evolution of teacher research at the Bread Loaf School of English* (Order No. 9326514). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global. (304080320).
- Luiselli, V. (2019). *Lost children archive: A novel*. Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group.
- Maddox, J. (1995). Bread Loaf in rural communities. *Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network Journal*.
- Maddox, J. (1993). Director's Speech. [Speech transcript], Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 1993, Bread Loaf School of English, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.
- Maddox, J. (1994). Director's Speech. [Speech transcript], Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 1994, Bread Loaf School of English, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.
- Maddox, J. (1997). Director's Speech. [Speech transcript], Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 1997, Bread Loaf School of English, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.
- Maddox, J. (1992, February 20). "Letter Addressed to Acting President John McCardell" [Letter], *Records of the Bread Loaf School of English*, 1990, Bread Loaf School of English, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.
- Maddox, J. (1990, October 29). Letter Addressed to President Timothy Light [Letter], Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 1990, Bread Loaf School of English, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.
- Maddox, J. (1999). From the Director. *Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network Magazine*, 3.
- Maddox, J. (2000). From the Director. *Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network Magazine*, p. 3. https://archive.org/details/ERIC_ED443639
- Maddox, J. (2001, November). Letter to Friends of the Bread Loaf School of English [Letter]. Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 2002. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.

- Maddox, J. (2004, November). Letter to Friends of the Bread Loaf School of English [Letter]. Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 2005. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.
- Maddox, J. (1992). Opening Night Address [Speech], Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 1992, Bread Loaf School of English, F7, Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.
- Maddox, J. (2000). *Records of the Bread Loaf School of English*, Bread Loaf School of English, F7, Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.
- MacLure, M. (2013). The wonder of data. *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies*, 13(4), 228-232.
- Mahlstedt, A. (2006). Rooting in the earth: BLSE commencement address 2006. *Middlebury Bread Loaf School of English Centennial Journal*. <https://www.middlebury.edu/school-english/centennial-journal/rooting-earth>
- Mallam, C. (1939). Mountains and a man: A glimpse of Joseph Battell. *Bread Loaf Anthology*. Middlebury College Press.
- Mallam, C. (1939). Sunset at Bread Loaf. *Bread Loaf Anthology*. Middlebury College Press.
- McGowan, W. (1991). "Boston Magazine: School for Scandal," Archives of Dissent, accessed December 20, 2022, https://omeka.middlebury.edu/archives_of_dissent/items/show/160.
- Middlebury College. (2019, December 6). Dixie Goswami retires. *Middlebury Bread Loaf School of English News*. <https://www.middlebury.edu/school-english/news/dixie-goswami-retires#:~:text=News,-December%206%2C%202019&text=Described%20as%20%E2%80%9Cindefatigable%2C%E2%80%9D%20%E2%80%9C,at%20the%20School%20of%20English>
- Middlebury College. (2011, January 20). Emily Bartels is new director of the Bread Loaf School of English. *News and Announcements*. <https://www.middlebury.edu/announcements/2011/01/emily-bartels-new-director-bread-loaf-school-english>
- Middlebury College. (n.d.). BLTN Next Generation Leadership Network. *Middlebury College*. <https://www.middlebury.edu/school-english/teacher-network/bltn-next-generation-leadership-network#:~:text=The%20BLTN%20Next%20Generation%20Leadership,collectively%20and%20powerfully%20for%20social>
- Middlebury College. (n.d.). Middlebury Land Acknowledgment. *About Middlebury*. <https://www.middlebury.edu/about/middlebury-land-acknowledgment>
- Middlebury College News. (1929, Dec. 1). Wilfred Davison. *Middlebury College News IV*(1), 8.
- Miera, S. (1996). A brief history of BLRTN. *Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network Journal*, 12-13.
- Moffett, J. (1985). *Points of departure: An anthology of nonfiction*. Signet.
- Moffett, J. (1982). Writing, inner speech, and meditation. *College English* 44(3), 231-246.
- Moffett, J. (1983). Reading and writing as mediation. *Language Arts*, 60(3), 315-332.

- Moffett, J., Baker, M., & Cooper, C. (1985). *Active Voices IV*. Heinemann.
- Mr. Battell's Will. (1915, April 7). *The Middlebury Campus*, 11(3), 2.
- Murphy, P.V. (2001). *The rebuke of history: The Southern Agrarians and American conservative thought*. University of North Carolina Press.
- Novack, R. (2020). Seeing the unseen: Reading and writing in the Anthropocene. *Deep reading vol. 2*, Peter Lang.
- Parks, S. (2023). Ornamental hermits were 18th-century England's must-have garden accessory. *Smithsonian Magazine*. <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/ornamental-hermits-were-18th-century-englands-must-have-garden-accessory-180982469/>
- Perlman, M. (2019). Middlebury's Bread Loaf lands: A story of nature, humans, and a conservation legacy. *Middlebury College*. https://www.middlebury.edu/sites/www.middlebury.edu/files/2022-07/BL_History_FINAL%20%281%29.pdf
- Pindyck, M. & Vinz, R. (2022). *A poetry pedagogy for teachers: Reorienting classroom literacy practices*. Bloomsbury Academic.
- Pittman, L.G. (1923). *The English Leaflet*. [Pamphlet]. Bread Loaf (F7). Middlebury College Archives, Middlebury, VT.
- Plummer, K. (1995). *Telling sexual stories: Power, change, and social worlds*. Routledge.
- Poole, H.B. (1930). The summer session. *The English Journal*, 19(6), 490.
- Richardson, J. (2003). *Possessions: The history and uses of haunting in the Hudson Valley*. Harvard University Press.
- Rimmon-Kenan, S. (1983). *Narrative fiction: Contemporary poetics*. Methuen.
- Robinson, S. (1989). Dancing without collisions [Commencement address]. *Records of the Bread Loaf School of English, 1989*, F7. Middlebury College Special Collections & Archives.
- Rougeau, D. (2023). The inn. *That splendid forest: Bread Loaf and the mountain campus*. <https://sites.middlebury.edu/breadloaf/the-inn/>
- Rudolph, F. (1965). (1836-1872) Hopkins, Mark. *Williams College Alumni Review*. <https://specialcollections.williams.edu/williams-history/presidents/hopkins-mark/>
- Schaafsma, D. & Vinz, R. (2011). *Narrative inquiry: Approaches to language and literacy research*. Teachers College Press.
- Schuman, D. (1982). *Policy analysis, education, and everyday life*. Heath.
- Seidman, I. (2006). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences*. Teachers College Press.
- Sharp, D.L. (1939). While the bobolink was here. *Bread Loaf Anthology*. Middlebury College Press.

- Shaw, H.O. (1902, Jan. 1). Yankee Tricks. *Printers' Ink* 38(1), 26. Decker Communications Incorporated.
- Snaza, N. (2016). *Posthumanism and educational research*. Routledge.
- St. Pierre, E.A. (2000). Poststructural feminism in education: An overview. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 13(5), 477.
<http://ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/scholarly-journals/poststructural-feminism-education-overview/docview/1877139601/se-2?accountid=10226>
- Stanlis, P. (2009). *Conversations with Robert Frost: The Bread Loaf period*. Routledge.
- Stickney, William B. C., 1845-1930. (1917). *Letter from William B. C. Stickney to Pres. Ezra Brainerd* [Documents]. <https://jstor.org/stable/community.28479578>
- Storrs Lee, W. (1939). Introduction. *Bread Loaf Anthology*. Middlebury College Press.
- Taylor, A. (2017). Beyond stewardship: Common world pedagogies for the Anthropocene. *Environmental Education Research*, 3(10), pp. 1448-61.
- “The Impact of ABL.” (2023). *Andover Bread Loaf*. <https://www.andover.edu/about/outreach/andover-bread-loaf/abl-impact>
- The School Journal. (1902, April 4). Ellen, or the whisperings of an old pine. *The School Journal*, 64(15), 430.
- Thomas, J.M. (1910). *The expansion of Middlebury College*. Middlebury College.
- Todd, Z. (2017). Fish, kin and hope: Tending to water violations in amiskwaciwâskahikan and Treaty Six Territory. *Afterall*, 43(1), 102-107.
- Tsing, A. (2015). *The mushroom at the end of the world: On the possibility of life in capitalist ruins*. Princeton University Press.
- Vinz, R. (2021). *Lecture 4: Narratology* [PowerPoint slides]. Retrieved from Teachers College & A&HE 6151 Canvas site.
- Viveiros de Castro, E.B. (2004). Exchanging perspectives: The transformation of objects into subjects in Amerindian Ontologies. *Common Knowledge*, 10(3), 463-484.
- Weedon, C. (1987). *Feminist practice and poststructuralist theory*. Basil Blackwell.
- Wezel, A., Stöckli, S., Tasser, E., Nitsch, H., & Vincent, A. (2022). Good pastures, good meadows: Mountain farmers' assessment, perceptions on ecosystem services, and proposals for biodiversity management. *Sustainability*, 13(10), 5609.
- “What is BreadNet?” (1993). Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network, p. 8.
<https://www.middlebury.edu/school-english/sites/www.middlebury.edu.school-english/files/2019-11/1993%20BLRTN%20%20Nov.pdf?fv=bsV6GGQf>

- Whyte, K. (2018). Indigenous science (fiction) for the Anthropocene: Ancestral dystopias and fantasies of climate change crisis. *Environment and Planning E: Nature and Space*, 1(1-2), 224-242.
- Winchel, M. (2000). *Where no flag flies: Donald Davidson and the southern resistance*. University of Missouri Press.
- Wolfreys, J. (2013). Preface: On textual haunting. In M. Blanco & E. Peeren (Eds.), *The spectralities reader: Ghosts and haunting in contemporary cultural theory*. Bloomsbury Academic.
- Zandt, D., Herben, T., van den Brink, A., Visser, E., & de Kroon, H. (2020). Species abundance fluctuations over 31 years are associated with plant-soil feedback in a species-rich mountain meadow. *Journal of Ecology*, 1511-1523.
- Zucaro, C. (1996). Building community with technology. *Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network Journal*.

Appendix A

Timeline of Directors at the Bread Loaf School of English

Wilfred E. Davison	1920-1929
Robert Malcolm Gay	1930-1936
Harry Goddard Owen	1937-1942
Hewette E. Joyce	1943-1945
Reginald L. Cook	1946-1964
Paul Cubeta	1965-1988
James Maddox	1989-2010
Emily Bartels	2011-Present

Appendix B

The Bread Loaf Faculty from 1970-2020 are listed below along with their academic affiliation. The source for all of the listed faculty are the course catalogs archived in the Middlebury College Digital Special Collections folder for the Bread Loaf School of English.

1970

George K. Anderson (Brown)
David Armstrong (Texas)
Sacvan Bercovitch (University of California, San Diego)
Paul Edward Gray (Princeton)
Lawrence Lipking (Princeton)
Douglas R. Maddox (Brandeis)
Micheal J.K. O'Loughlin (Yale)
Robert Pack (Middlebury)
Martin Prince (Yale)
William L. Sharp (Stanford)
Wylie Sypher (Simmons)
Edward W. Tayler (Columbia)
Irene Tayler (Columbia)
Alan Trachtenberg (Pennsylvania State)

1971

George K. Anderson (Middlebury)
Sacvan Bercovitch (Columbia)
W. Robert Connor (Princeton)
Alastair D.S. Fowler (Oxford)
Paul Edward Gray (Princeton)
Laurence B. Holland (Johns Hopkins)
A. Walton Litz (Princeton)
Douglas R. Maddox (Brandeis)
Robert Pack (Middlebury)
Daniel Seltzer (Princeton)
William L. Sharp (Emerson)
Edward W. Tayler (Columbia)
Irene Tayler (Columbia)
Alan Trachtenberg (Yale)

1972

George K. Anderson (Middlebury)

Michael D. Bell (Princeton)
Leo B. Braudy (Columbia)
Michael G. Cooke (Yale)
James M. Cox (Dartmouth)
A. Bartlett Giamatti (Yale)
Paul Edward Gray (Princeton)
Robert B. Loper (Stanford)
Douglas R. Maddox (Brandeis)
James V. Mirollo (Columbia)
Robert Pack (Middlebury)
William L. Sharp (Emerson)
Wylie Sypher (Simmons)

1973

George K. Anderson (Brown)
Helen H. Bacon (Barnard)
Sacvan Bercovitch (Columbia)
Stephen Book (Stanford)
Leo Braudy (Columbia)
Michael G. Cooke (Yale)
Paul M. Cubeta (Middlebury)
A. Bartlett Giamatti (Yale)
A. Walton Litz (Princeton)
James McIntosh (Yale)
James V. Mirollo (Columbia)
Robert Pack (Middlebury)
Peter Sander (Brandeis)
Wylie Sypher (Simmons)

1974

George K. Anderson (Brown)
Sacvan Bercovitch (Columbia)
Stephen Book (Stanford)
Michael G. Cooke (Yale)
Paul M. Cubeta (Middlebury)

A. Bartlett Giamatti (Yale)
Edward J. Gordon (Yale)
Robert W. Hanning (Columbia)
Laurence B. Holland (Johns Hopkins)
James McIntosh (Yale)
James V. Mirollo (Columbia)
Robert Pack (Middlebury)
William L. Sharp (Emerson)
Wylie Sypher (Simmons)

1975

George K. Anderson (Brown)
Helen H. Bacon (Barnard)
Stephen Book (Brown)
Richard H. Brodhead (Yale)
Edward J. Gordon (Yale)
Allen Guttmann (Amherst)
Robert W. Hanning (Columbia)
A. Walton Litz (Princeton)
Robert B. Loper (Washington, Seattle)
Samuel I. Mintz (City University of New York)
Robert Pack (Middlebury)
William L. Sharp (Emerson)
Wylie Sypher (Simmons)
Irene Tayer (City College of New York)
David Thorburn (Yale)

1976

Richard H. Brodhead (Yale)
Michael G. Cooke (Yale)
Lawrence N. Danson (Yale)
Stephen Donadio (Columbia)
Walker Gibson (University of Massachusetts, Amherst)
Robert W. Hanning (Columbia)
John T. Irwin (University of Georgia)
James V. Mirollo (Columbia)
William L. Sharp (Emerson)
Irene Tayer (City College of New York)
David Thorburn (Yale)
Barbara Bellow Watson (City University of New York)

1977

Sacvan Bercovitch (Columbia)

Walker Gibson (University of Massachusetts, Amherst)
Laurence B. Holland (Johns Hopkins)
Jefferson Hunter (Yale)
A. Walton Litz (Princeton)
Robert B. Loper (University of Washington, Seattle)
James V. Mirollo (Columbia)
Alan Mokler (Yale Repertory Theater)
Robert Pack (Middlebury)
Daniel Seltzer (Harvard)
John Wilders (Oxford)
Michael Wood (Columbia)

1978

Felicia Bonaparte (NYU)
Richard H. Brodhead (Yale)
Lawrence N. Danson (Princeton)
Stephen Donadio (Middlebury)
Robert W. Hanning (Columbia)
Laurence B. Holland (Johns Hopkins)
Daniel Javitch (Columbia)
Douglas R. Maddox (Penn State University)
Jerome McGann (Johns Hopkins)
James McIntosh (University of Michigan)
James Moffett (University of California, Berkeley)
Alan Mokler (Princeton)
Robert Pack (Middlebury)
Daniel Seltzer (Princeton) - *Visiting Lecturer*
Walker Gibson (University of Massachusetts, Amherst) - *Visiting Consultant in Writing*
Mary I. Lanigan (Newton North High School) - *Visiting Consultant in Writing*

1979

Sacvan Bercovitch (Columbia)
Andrew Conrad (Princeton)
Dixie Goswami (University of Tennessee)
David Huddle (Columbia)
Douglas R. Maddox (Penn State)
James H. Maddox (George Washington)
Margaret Mahar (Yale)
Martin Meisel (Columbia)

Alan Mokler (Princeton)
Robert Pack (Middlebury)
Lawrence Raab (Williams)
Hope Phyllis Weissman (Wesleyan)
John Wilders (Oxford)
Michael Wood (Columbia)
Felicia Bonaparte (City University of New York) - *Visiting Lecturer*
Janet Emig (Rutgers) - *Visiting Consultant in Writing*
James Moffett (University of California, Berkeley) - *Visiting Consultant in Writing*
Camillus Lee Odell - *Visiting Consultant in Writing*

1980

Richard H. Brodhead (Yale)
Dixie Goswami (Tennessee)
Roger N. Cornish (Penn State)
Ronald T. Hansen (Stanford)
Laurence B. Holland (Johns Hopkins)
Alvin B. Kernan (Princeton)
A. Walton Litz (Princeton)
Douglas R. Maddox (Penn State)
James H. Maddox (George Washington)
Lucy B. Maddox (Georgetown)
Jerome McGann (Johns Hopkins)
Alan Mokler (Princeton)
Robert Pack (Middlebury)
Lawrence Raab (Williams)
Wayne A. Reborn (Texas)
R. Baird Shuman (Illinois)
Robert Wishbuch (Michigan)
Bryan J. Wolf (Yale)
Archibald MacLeish - *Visiting Lecturer*
Janet Emig (Rutgers) - *Visiting Consultant in Writing*
Richard Marius (Yale) - *Visiting Consultant in Writing*
Camillus Lee Odell - *Visiting Consultant in Writing*
Richard Young (Carnegie-Mellon) - *Visiting Consultant in Writing*

1981

Sacvan Bercovitch (Columbia)

Michael Cadden (Yale)
Leopold Damrosch (Virginia)
Lawrence Danson (Princeton)
Stephen Donadio (Middlebury)
John Doolittle (Yale)
Margaret W. Ferguson (Yale)
Dixie Goswami (Tennessee)
Robert W. Hanning (Columbia)
Ronald T. Hansen (Stanford)
U.C. Knoepfmacher (Princeton)
James H. Maddox (George Washington)
Lucy B. Maddox (Georgetown)
Nancy Martin (University of London)
John P. McWilliams, Jr. (Middlebury)
Alan Mokler (Princeton)
Camillus Lee Odell
Robert Pack (Middlebury)
Lawrence Raab (Williams)
Michael Wood (Columbia)
Walter C. Boswell (Penn State)
Helen Vendler (Emmanuel) - *Visiting Lecturer*
Ann E. Berthoff (University of Massachusetts, Boston) - *Visiting Consultant*
Shirley Brice Heath (Stanford) - *Visiting Consultant*
Janet Emig (Rutgers) - *Visiting Consultant*
Richard Marius (Harvard) - *Visiting Consultant*

1982

James Britton (University of London)
Michael Cadden (Yale)
Leopold Damrosch (Virginia)
Lawrence Danson (Princeton)
Stephen Donadio (Middlebury)
John Doolittle (Princeton)
Carol V. Elliott (Princeton)
John V. Fleming (Princeton)
Dixie Goswami
Pamela White Hadas (Washington University)
Shirley Brice Heath (Stanford)
Robert Houston (Arizona)
A. Walton Litz (Princeton)

Ken Macrorie (Western Michigan)
James H. Maddox, Jr. (George Washington University)
Lucy B. Maddox (Georgetown)
Paul Mariani (Massachusetts, Amherst)
Nancy Martin (University of London)
Alan Mokler (Princeton)
Camillus Lee Odell (Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute)
Robert Pack (Middlebury)
J. Hillis Miller (Yale) - *Visiting Lecturer*
Peter Elbow (Wesleyan) - *Visiting Consultant*
Donald H. Graves (New Hampshire) - *Visiting Consultant*
Richard Marius (Harvard) - *Visiting Consultant*
Richard Young (Carnegie-Mellon) - *Visiting Consultant*

1983

Ann E. Berthoff (Massachusetts, Boston)
Michael Cadden (Yale)
Carol Tecla Christ (Berkeley)
Stephen Donadio (Middlebury)
Peter Elbow (SUNY, Stony Brook)
John C. Elder (Middlebury)
Carol V. Elliott (Princeton)
John V. Fleming (Princeton)
Dixie Goswami (UNC Charlotte)
David Hadas (Washington)
Pamela White Hadas (Washington)
Shirley Brice Heath (Stanford)
Robert Houston (Arizona)
U.C. Knoephlmacher (Princeton)
Ken Macrorie (Western Michigan)
James H. Maddox (George Washington)
Lucy B. Maddox (Georgetown)
Paul Mariani (City University of New York)
Alan Mokler (Princeton)
Robert Pack (Middlebury)
Bryan Wolf (Yale)
David Young (Oberlin)
Sacvan Bercovitch (Columbia) - *Visiting Lecturer*

James Britton (University of London) - *Visiting Consultant*
Donald H. Graves (New Hampshire) - *Visiting Consultant*
Camillus Lee Odell (Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute) - *Visiting Consultant*

1984

James Britton (University of London)
Michael Cadden (Princeton)
Lawrence Danson (Princeton)
Carol V. Elliott (Princeton)
John V. Fleming (Princeton)
Dixie Goswami (Massachusetts, Boston)
David Hadas (Washington University)
Pamela White Hadas (Washington University)
Shirley Brice HEath (Stanford)
Alvin B. Kernan (Princeton)
A. Walton Litz (Princeton)
Ken Macrorie (Western Washington)
James H. Maddox (George Washington)
Lucy B. Maddox (Georgetown)
Paul Mariani (City University of New York)
Nancy Martin (University of London)
James Moffett (Berkeley)
Alan Mokler (Princeton)
Robert Pack (Middlebury)
Ira Sadoff (Colby)
Robert Weisbuch (Michigan)
Peter Elbow (SUNY, Stony Brook) - *Visiting Consultant*
Donald H. Graves (New Hampshire) - *Visiting Consultant*
Peter Medway (Leeds) - *Visiting Consultant*
Camillus Lee Odell (Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute) - *Visiting Consultant*

1985

Tony Burgess (University of London)
Michael Cadden (Princeton)
Lawrence Danson (Princeton)
Boyd H. Davis (UNC, Charlotte)
Margreta de Grazia (UPenn)
Stephen Donadio (Middlebury)
John C. Elder (Middlebury)

Carol V. Elliott (Princeton)
Dixie Goswami (Clemson)
David Hadas (Washington)
Pamela White Hadas (Washington)
David Huddle (Vermont)
U.C. Knoepfelmacher (Princeton)
A. Walton Litz (Princeton)
Ken Macrorie (Western Washington)
James H. Maddox (George Washington)
Nancy Martin (University of London)
James Moffett (Berkeley)
Alan Mokler (Princeton)
Robert Pack (Middlebury)
Bryan Wolf (Yale)
Michael Wood (Exeter)
Nancie Atwell - *Visiting Consultant*
James Britton (University of London) -
Visiting Consultant
Donald H. Graves (New Hampshire) -
Visiting Consultant
Alvin B. Kernan (Princeton) - *Visiting
Lecturer*

1986

Isobel Armstrong (Southampton)
Michael Armstrong (Hartwell Primary
School)
James Britton (University of London)
Michael Cadden (Princeton)
Courtney B. Cazden (Harvard)
Margreta de Grazia (UPenn)
Stephen Donadio (Middlebury)
John C. Elder (Middlebury)
Carol V. Elliott (Princeton)
John V. Fleming (Princeton)
Dixie Goswami (Clemson)
Pamela White Hadas (Columbia)
Shirley Brice Heath (Stanford)
David Huddle (Vermont)
Marcus Klein (SUNY Buffalo)
Ken Macrorie (Western Michigan)
James H. Maddox (George Washington)
Nancy Martin (University of London)
Alan Mokler (Princeton)
Robert Pack (Middlebury)
Annabel Patterson (Maryland)

Lee Patterson (Johns Hopkins)
Dianne Sadoff (Colby)
Ira Sadoff (Colby)
Terri Wagener
Nancie Atwell - *Visiting Consultant*
Michael G. Cooke - *Visiting Consultant*
Donald H. Graves (New Hampshire) -
Visiting Consultant
Camillus Lee Odel (Rensselaer Polytechnic
Institute) - *Visiting Consultant*

1987

Michael Armstrong (Harwell Primary
School)
James Britton (University of London)
Lawrence Buell (Oberlin)
Tony Burgess (University of London)
Courtney B. Cazden (Harvard)
Stephen Donadio (Middlebury)
John Elder (Middlebury)
Carol V. Elliott (Princeton)
Jonathan Freedman (Yale)
Dixie Goswami (Clemson)
David Huddle (Vermont)
Uli Knoepfelmacher (Princeton)
Ken Macrorie (Western Washington)
James H. Maddox (George Washington)
Lucy B. Maddox (Georgetown)
Nancy Martin (University of London)
Alan Mokler (Princeton)
Robert Pack (Middlebury)
Annabel Patterson (Duke)
Lee Patterson (Duke)
Wyatt Prunty (Virginia Tech)
Eric Sundquist (Berkeley)
Steven Urkowitz (Hofstra)
Russell Vandenbroucke (Repertory Theater
of St. Louis)
Ann E. Bertoff (Massachusetts, Boston) -
Visiting Lecturer
A. Walton Litz (Princeton) - *Visiting
Lecturer*
Eliot Wigginton - *Visiting Lecturer*

1988

Michael Armstrong (Harwell Primary School)
James Britton (University of London)
Lawrence Buel (Oberlin)
Courtney B. Cazen (Harvard)
Larry Danson (Princeton)
Stephen Donadio (Middlebury)
Carol V. Elliott (Princeton)
Jonathan Freedman (Yale)
Dixie Goswami (Clemson)
Shirley Brice Heath (Stanford)
David Huddle (Vermont)
Corrine Jacker (Columbia)
Ken Macrorie (Western Michigan)
James H. Maddox (George Washington)
Lucy B. Maddox (Georgetown)
Nancy Martin (University of London)
James Moffett
Alan Mokler (Princeton)
Carole Oles (Old Dominion)
Robert Pack (Middlebury)
Gail Kern Paster (George Washington)
Dianne Sadoff (Colby)
Michael Wood (Exeter)
William Worthen (Texas - Austin)
Eliot Wigginton - *Visiting Lecturer*
Bryan Wolf - *Visiting Lecturer*

1989

Isobel Armstrong (Southampton)
Michael Armstrong (Harwell Primary School)
James Britton (University of London)
Richard H. Brodhead (Yale)
Michael Cadden (Princeton)
Courtney B. Cazden (Harvard)
Stephen Donadio (Middlebury)
John Elder (Middlebury)
Carol V. Elliott (Princeton)
John V. Fleming (Princeton)
Jonathan Freeman (Yale)
Dixie Goswami (Clemson)
David Huddle (Vermont)
Albert Innaurato
Lucy B. Maddox (Georgetown)
Ken Macrorie (Western Michigan)

Nancy Martin
Alan Mokler (Princeton)
Carole Oles (Old Dominion)
Robert Pack (Middlebury)
Elsbeth Stuckey (Benedict)
Eric Sundquist (Berkely)
Susann Wofford (Yale)
Gail Kern Paster (George Washington) -
Visiting Lecturer
Eliot Wigginton - *Visiting Lecturer*

1990

Isobel Armstrong (Southampton)
Michael Armstrong (Harwell Primary School)
Courtney B. Cazden (Harvard)
Dare Clubb
Stephen Donadio (Middlebury)
Charles Ferguson (Stanford)
Jonathan Freedman (Yale)
Dixie Goswami (Clemson)
Shirley Brice Heath (Stanford)
David Huddle (Vermont)
Jefferson Hunter (Smith)
Edward Lueders (Utah)
Ken Macrorie (Western Michigan)
Alan Mokler MacVey (Princeton)
Carol Elliott MacVey (Princeton)
Lucy B. Maddox (Georgetown)
Nancy Martin (University of London)
Carole Oles (Sweet Briar College)
Robert Pack (Middlebury)
Annabel Patterson (Duke)
Lee Patterson (Duke)
Dianne Sadoff (Colby)
Ira Sadoff (Colby)
Robert Stepto (Yale)
Michael Wood (Exeter)
Willam Worthen (Texas - Austin)
Nancie Atwell - *Visiting Lecturer*
James Britton (University of London) -
Visiting Lecturer
Geneva Smitherman (Michigan State) -
Visiting Lecturer
Mary Helen Washington (Massachusetts, Boston) - *Visiting Lecturer*

1991

Isobel Armstrong (Southampton)
Michael Armstrong (Harwell Primary School)
Richard H. Brodhead (Yale)
Michael Cadden (Princeton)
Dare Clubb (Barnard & Princeton)
Stephen Donadio (Middlebury)
John Fleming (Princeton)
Jonathan Freedman (Yale)
Dixie Goswami (Clemson)
David Huddle (Vermont)
Jefferson Hunter (Smith)
Alvin B. Kernan (Princeton)
A. Walton Litz (Princeton)
Edward Lueders (Utah)
Andrea Lunsford (Ohio)
Alan Mokler MacVey (Princeton)
Carol Elliott MacVey (Princeton)
Lucy B. Maddox (Georgetown)
Nancy Martin (University of London)
Carole Oles (Sweet Briar College)
Robert Pack (Middlebury)
Jacqueline Jones Royster (Spelman)
Margaret Soltan (George Washington)
Robert Stepto (Yale)
Nancie Atwell - *Visiting Lecturer*
James Britton - *Visiting Lecturer*
John Hardcastle - *Visiting Lecturer*

1992

Kim Benston (Haverford)
James Britton (University of London)
Richard H. Brodhead (Yale)
Michael Cadden (Princeton)
Courtney Cazden (Harvard)
Dare Clubb (Barnard & the New School)
Stephen Donadio (Middlebury)
Jonathan Freedman (Michigan)
Dixie Goswami (Clemson)
David Huddle (Vermont)
A. Walton Litz (Princeton)
Alan Mokler MacVey (Iowa)
Carol Elliott MacVey (Iowa)
Lucy B. Maddox (Georgetown)

Nancy Martin (University of London)
Carole Oles (Hollins)
Robert Pack (Middlebury)
Annabel Patterson (Duke)
Jacqueline Royster (Spelman)
Margery Sabin (Wellesley)
Clair Sponsler (George Washington)
Robert Stepto (Yale)
John Warnock (Wyoming)
Tilly Warnock (Wyoming)
Tony Burgess (University of London) -
Visiting Lecturer

1993

Isobel Armstrong (University of London)
Michael Armstrong (Harwell Primary School)
Valerie Babb (Georgetown)
Kim Benston (Haverford)
Dare Clubb (New School)
John Elder (Middlebury)
Dixie Goswami (Clemson)
David Huddle (Vermont)
Helen Jaskoski (California State)
Jacques Lezra (Yale)
Edward Lueders (Utah)
Victor Luftig (Yale)
Andrew Lunsford (Ohio State)
Ken Macrorie (Western Michigan)
Alan Mokler MacVey (Princeton)
Carol Elliott MacVey (Princeton)
Carole Oles (California State)
Robert Pack (Middlebury)
Annabel Patterson (Duke)
Lee Patterson (Duke)
Jacqueline Jones Royster (Spelman)
Margery Sabin (Wellesley)
Dianne Sadoff (Colby)
Claire Sponsler (George Washington)
Robert Stepto (Yale)
Susanne Wofford (Wisconsin)

1994

Isobel Armstrong (University of London)
Michael Armstrong (Harwell Primary School)

Valerie Babb (Georgetown)
Kim Benston (Haverford)
Michael Cadden (Princeton)
Courtney Cazden (Harvard)
Dare Clubb (New School)
John Elder (Middlebury)
John Fleming (Princeton)
Dixie Goswami (Clemson)
Richard Harmston (Utah)
David Huddle (Vermont)
Jacques Lezra (Wisconsin)
Victor Luftig (Yale)
Andrea Lunsford (Ohio State)
Alan Mokler MacVey (Iowa)
Carol Elliott MacVey (Iowa)
Carole Oles (California State)
Robert Pack (Middlebury)
Jacqueline Jones Royster (Ohio State)
Margery Sabin (Wellesley)
Robert Stepto (Yale)
Susanne Wofford (Wisconsin)
Herther D. Wong (Berkeley)
Michael Wood (Exeter)

1995

Emily Bartels (Rutgers)
Sara Blair (Virginia)
Janice Carlisle (Tulane)
Dare Clubb (New School)
John Elder (Middlebury)
Jonathan Freedman (Michigan)
John M. Fyler (Tufts)
Dan R. Kirby (Arizona)
Dixie Goswami (Clemson)
David Huddle (Vermont)
Victor Luftig (Brandeis)
Alan Mokler MacVey (Iowa)
Carol Elliott MacVey (Iowa)
Lucy B. Maddox (Georgetown)
Peter Medway (Carleton)
Carole Oles (California State)
Robert Pack (Middlebury)
Lee Patterson (Yale)
Joseph Roach (Tulane)
Jacqueline Jones Royster (Ohio State)
Margery Sabin (Wellesley)

Dianne Sadoff (Southern Maine)
Robert Stepto (Yale)

1996

Emily Bartels (Rutgers)
Sara Blair (Virginia)
Michael Cadden (Princeton)
Courtney Cazden (Harvard)
Dare Clubb (New School)
Stephen Donadio (Middlebury)
John Elder (Middlebury)
Jonathan Freedman (Michigan)
John M. Fyler (Tufts)
Dixie Goswami (Clemson)
Shirley Brice Heath (Stanford)
David Huddle (Vermont)
Jacques Lezra (Wisconsin)
Andrea A. Lunsford (Ohio State)
Alan Mokler MacVey (Iowa)
Carol Elliott MacVey (Iowa)
Lucy B. Maddox (Georgetown)
Robert Pack (Middlebury)
Jacqueline Jones Royster (Ohio State)
Margery Sabin (Wellesley)
Dianne F. Sadoff (Southern Maine)
Robert Stepto (Yale)
Susanne Wofford (Madison)
Michael Wood (Princeton)

1997

JoBeth Allen (Georgia)
Emily Bartels (Rutgers)
Courtney Cazden (Harvard)
Harriet Chessman (Wesleyan)
Dare Clubb (New School)
Stephen Donadio (Middlebury)
Kevin Dunn (Tufts)
Oskar Eustis (Brown)
John M. Fyler (Tufts)
Dixie Goswami (Clemson)
Jennifer Green-Lewis (George Washington)
John Hardcastle (London University)
Shirley Brice Heath (Stanford)
Margaret Homans (Yale)
David Huddle (Vermont)

Morgan Jenness (New York Workshop Theater)
William Jewett (Yale)
Victor Luftig (Brandeis)
Alan Mokler MacVey (Iowa)
Carol Elliott MacVey (Iowa)
Lucy B. Maddox (Georgetown)
Paul Muldoon (Princeton)
Robert Pack (Middlebury)
Margery Sabin (Wellesley)
Robert Stepto (Yale)
Bryan Wolf (Yale)
Andrea A. Lunsford (Ohio State) - *Visiting Faculty*
Jacqueline Jones Royster (Ohio State) - *Visiting Faculty*

1998

Valerie Babb (Georgetown)
Sara Blair (Virginia)
Michael Cadden (Princeton)
Dare Clubb (The New School)
Kevin Dunn (Tufts)
Harry J. Elam, J. (Stanford)
Oskar Eustis (Brown)
John V. Fleming (Princeton)
Jonathan Freedman (Michigan)
Dixie Goswami (Clemson)
Jennifer Green-Lewis (George Washington)
Shirley Brice Heath (Stanford)
David Huddle (Vermont)
Morgan Jenness (New York Theater Workshop)
Jacques Lezra (Wisconsin)
Victor Luftig (Brandeis)
Andrea A. Lunsford (Ohio State)
Alan Mokler MacVey (Iowa)
Carol Elliott MacVey (Iowa)
Paul Muldoon (Princeton)
Carole Oles (California State)
Robert Pack (Middlebury)
Jacqueline Jones Royster (Ohio State)
Margery Sabin (Wellesley)
Robert Stepto (Yale)
John Wilders (Oxford)
Susanne Wofford (Wisconsin)

Bryan Wolf (Yale)
Michael Wood (Princeton)

1999

Isobel Armstrong (University of London)
Michael Armstrong (Harwell Primary)
Valerie Babb (Georgetown)
Sara Blair (Virginia)
Michael Cadden (Princeton)
Harriet Chessman (Wesleyan)
Dare Clubb (New School)
Oskar Eustis (Brown)
Jonathan Freedman (Michigan)
John M. Fyler (Tufts)
Dixie Goswami (Clemson)
Jennifer Green-Lewis (George Washington)
David Huddle (Vermont)
Jacques Lezra (Wisconsin)
Victor Luftig (Brandeis)
Alan Mokler MacVey (Iowa)
Carol Elliott MacVey (Iowa)
Ellen McLaughlin (Yale)
Beverly J. Moss (Ohio State)
Paul Muldoon (Princeton)
Jacqueline Jones Royster (Ohio State)
Margery Sabin (Wellesley)
Robert Stepto (Yale)
Jonathan Strong (Tufts)
Susanne Wofford (Wisconsin)
Bryan Wolf (Yale)
Nancie Atwell - *Visiting Lecturer*

2000

Michael Armstrong (Harwell Primary)
Valerie Babb (Georgetown)
Emily Bartels (Rutgers)
Harry Berger Jr. (California, Santa Cruz)
Harriet Chessman (Yale)
Dare Clubb (Iowa)
Oskar Eustis (Brown)
John M. Fyler (Tufts)
Dixie Goswami (Clemson)
Jennifer Green-Lewis (George Washington)
David Huddle (Vermont)
Victor Luftig (Virginia)
Alan Mokler MacVey (Iowa)

Carol Elliott MacVey (Iowa)
Michael McGarty
Beverly J. Moss (Ohio State)
Paul Muldoon (Princeton)
Jeffrey Nunokawa (Princeton)
Carole Oles (California State)
Jacqueline Jones Royster (Ohio State)
Margery Sabin (Wellesley)
Robert Stepto (Yale)
Sarah Greenleaf Whittier (Pacific Collegiate
Charter School)
Bryan Wolf (Yale)
Michael Wood (Princeton)

2001

James R. Andreas, Sr. (Florida International)
Michael Armstrong (Harwell Primary)
Valerie Babb (Georgetown)
Christian M. Billing (Warwick)
Michael Cadden (Princeton)
Harriet Chessman (Yale)
Dare Clubb (Iowa)
Stephen, Donadio (Middlebury)
Jonathan Freedman (Michigan)
Dixie Goswami (Clemson)
Jennifer Green-Lewis (George Washington)
Shirley Brice Heath (Stanford)
David Huddle (Vermont)
Jacque Lezra (Wisconsin)
Victor Luftig (Virginia)
Andrea Abernethy Lunsford (Stanford)
Alan Mokler MacVey (Iowa)
Carol Elliott MacVey (Iowa)
Jacqueline Jones Royster (Ohio State)
Margery Sabin (Wellesley)
Robert Stepto (Yale)
Jonathan Strong (Tufts)
Susane Wofford (Wisconsin)

2002

Isobel Armstrong (University of London)
Michael Armstrong (Harwell Primary
School)
Valerie Babb (Georgetown)
Mary Pat Brady (Cornell)
Dare Clubb (Iowa)

Stephen Donadio (Middlebury)
Oskar Eustis (Brown)
Jonathan Freedman (Michigan)
Dixie Goswami (Clemson)
Jennifer Green-Lewis (George Washington)
David Huddle (Vermont)
Victor Luftig (Virginia)
Alan Mokler MacVey (Iowa)
Carol Elliott MacVey (Iowa)
Lucy B. Maddox (Georgetown)
Beverly J. Moss (Ohio State)
Paul Muldoon (Princeton)
Jacqueline Jones Royster (Ohio State)
Margery Sabin (Wellesley)
Bruce R. Smith (Georgetown)
Valerie Smith (Princeton)
Robert Stepto (Yale)
Jonathan Strong (Tufts)
Susanne Wofford (Wisconsin)
Michael Wood (Princeton)

2003

Isobel Armstrong (University of London)
Michael Armstrong (Harwell Primary
School)
Valerie Babb (Georgetown)
Sara Blair (Michigan)
Harriet Chessman (Yale)
Dare Clubb (Iowa)
John Elder (Middlebury)
Lars Engle (Tulsa)
Oskar Eustis (Brown)
Jonathan Freedman (Michigan)
John M. Fyler (Tufts)
Dixie Goswami (Clemson)
Jennifer Green-Lewis (George Washington)
David Huddle (Vermont)
Holly Laird (Tulsa)
Arthur L. Little Jr. (UCLA)
Victor Luftig (Virginia)
Alan Mokler MacVey (Iowa)
Carol Elliott MacVey (Iowa)
Beverly J. Moss (Ohio State)
Paul Muldoon (Princeton)
Margery Sabin (Wellesley)
Robert Stepto (Yale)

Jonathan Strong (Tufts)
Bryan Wolf (Stanford)

2004

Isobel Armstrong (University of London)
Michael Armstrong (Harwell Primary)
Sara Blair (Michigan)
Courtney B. Cazden (Harvard)
Dare Clubb (Iowa)
John Elder (Middlebury)
Jonathan Freedman (Michigan)
John M. Fyler (Tufts)
Dixie Goswami (Clemson)
Jennifer Green-Lewis (George Washington)
Kristen Silva Gruesz (UC Santa Cruz)
David Huddle (Vermont)
Jacques Lezra (Wisconsin)
Arthur L. Little, Jr. (UCLA)
Victor Luftig (Virginia)
Alan Mokler MacVey (Iowa)
Carol Elliott MacVey (Iowa)
Brett C. Miller (Middlebury)
Paul Muldron (Princeton)
Margery Sabin (Wellesley)
Bruce R. Smith (Southern California)
Robert Stepto (Yale)
Jonathan Strong (Tufts)
Susanne Wofford (Wisconsin)

2005

Isobel Armstrong (University of London)
Michael Armstrong (Harwell Primary)
Sara Blair (Michigan)
Dare Clubb (Iowa)
Stephen Donadio (Middlebury)
Harry J. Elam, Jr. (Stanford)
John Elder (Middlebury)
Jonathan Freedman (Michigan)
Dixie Goswami (Clemson)
David Huddle (Vermont)
Heather James (UC Berkeley)
Arthur L. Little, Jr. (UCLA)
Victor Luftig (Virginia)
Alan Mokler MacVey (Iowa)
Carol Elliott MacVey (Iowa)
Beverly J. Moss (Ohio State)

Paul Muldron (Princeton)
Margery Sabin (Wellesley)
Bruce R. Smith (Southern California)
Robert Stepto (Yale)
Jonathan Strong (Tufts)
Susanne Wofford (Wisconsin)

2006

Isobel Armstrong (University of London)
Michael Armstrong (Harwell Primary)
Sara Blair (Michigan)
Michael Cadden (Princeton)
Dare Clubb (Iowa)
Micheal Dirda
Jonathan Freedman (Michigan)
Dixie Goswami (Clemson)
Jennifer Green-Lewis (George Washington)
David Huddle (Vermont)
Heather James (Southern California)
Victor Luftig (Virginia)
Andrea Lunsford (Stanford)
Alan Mokler MacVey (Iowa)
Carol Elliott MacVey (Iowa)
Lucy B. Maddox (Georgetown)
Paul Muldoon (Princeton)
William Nash (Middlebury)
Patricia Powell (Houston)
Margery Sabin (Wellesley)
Jeffrey Shoulson (Miami)
Margery Sokoloff (Miami)
Robert Stepto (Yale)
Catherine Tudish

2007

Isobel Armstrong (University of London)
Michael Armstrong (Harwell Primary)
Sara Blair (Michigan)
Michael Cadden (Princeton)
Dare Clubb (Iowa)
John Elder (Middlebury)
Jonathan Freedman (Michigan)
John M. Fyler (Tufts)
Cheryl Glenn (Penn State)
Dixie Goswami (Clemson)
Jennifer Green-Lewis (George Washington)
David Huddle (Vermont)
Heather James (Southern California)

Victor Luftig (Virginia)
Alan MacVey (Iowa)
Carol Elliott MacVey (Iowa)
Lucy B. Maddox (Georgetown)
William Nash (Middlebury)
Patricia Powell (Houston)
Margery Sabin (Wellesley)
Sheldon Sax (Middlebury)
Jeffrey Shoulson (Miami)
Margery Sokoloff (Miami)
Robert Stepto (Yale)
Jonathan Strong (Tufts)
Susanne Wofford (Wisconsin)

2008

Michael Armstrong (Harwell Primary)
Sara Blair (Michigan)
Michael Cadden (Princeton)
Dare Clubb (Iowa)
Adrienne D. Dixon (Ohio State)
Jonathan Freedman (Michigan)
John M. Fyler (Tufts)
Dixie Goswami (Clemson)
Jennifer Green-Lewis (George Washington)
David Huddle (Vermont)
Jacques Lezra (NYU)
Victor Luftig (Virginia)
Alan MacVey (Iowa)
Carol Elliott MacVey (Iowa)
Lucy B. Maddox (Georgetown)
Brian McEleney (Brown)
Paul Muldoon (Princeton)
William Nash (Middlebury)
Patricia Powell (Houston)
Margery Sabin (Wellesley)
Sheldon Sax (Middlebury)
Jeffrey Shoulson (Miami)
Margery Sokoloff (Miami)
Robert Stepto (Yale)
Jonathan Strong (Tufts)
Susanne Wofford (Wisconsin)
Craig Womack (Emory)
Michael Wood (Princeton)

2009

Isobel Armstrong (University of London)

Michael Armstrong (Harwell Primary)
Sara Blair (Michigan)
Michael Cadden (Princeton)
Dare Clubb (Iowa)
Jonathan Freedman (Michigan)
Dixie Goswami (Clemson)
Jennifer Green-Lewis (George Washington)
David Huddle (Vermont)
Amy Hungerford (Yale)
Victor Luftig (Virginia)
Andrea Lunsford (Stanford)
Alan MacVey (Iowa)
Lucy B. Maddox (Georgetown)
Paul Muldoon (Princeton)
William Nash (Middlebury)
James Noggle (Wellesley)
Margery Sabin (Wellesley)
Sheldon Sax (Middlebury)
Jeffrey Shoulson (Miami)
Margery Sokoloff (Miami)
Robert Stepto (Yale)
Jonathan Strong (Tufts)
Catherine Tudish (Dartmouth)
Robert N. Watson (UCLA)
Marion Wells (Middlebury)
Jennifer Wicke (Virginia)

2010

Isobel Armstrong (University of London)
Michael Armstrong (Harwell Primary)
Sara Blair (Michigan)
Michael Cadden (Princeton)
Dare Clubb (Iowa)
Jonathan Freedman (Michigan)
Dixie Goswami (Clemson)
Jennifer Green-Lewis (George Washington)
Amy Hungerford (Yale)
Jacques Lezra (NYU)
Victor Luftig (Virginia)
Alan MacVey (Iowa)
Lucy B. Maddox (Georgetown)
Brian McEleney (Brown)
Paul Muldoon (Princeton)
William Nash (Middlebury)
Django Paris (Arizona State)
Margery Sabin (Wellesley)

Sheldon Sax (Middlebury)
Jeffrey Shoulson (Miami)
Margery Sokoloff (Miami)
Robert Stepto (Yale)
Jonathan Strong (Tufts)
Jennifer Wicke (Virginia)
Susanne Wofford (NYU)
Michael Wood (Princeton)

2011

Isobel Armstrong (University of London)
Michael Armstrong (Harwell Primary)
Caroline Bicks (Boston College)
Sara Blair (Michigan)
Michael Cadden (Princeton)
Dare Clubb (Iowa)
Tyler Curtain (UNC - Chapel Hill)
Lars Engle (Tulsa)
Jonathan Freedman (Michigan)
John M. Fyler (Tufts)
Dixie Goswami (Clemson)
Jennifer Green-Lewis (George Washington)
David Huddle (Hollins)
Amy Hungerford (Yale)
Michael R. Katz (Middlebury)
Holly Laird (Tulsa)
Alan MacVey (Iowa)
William Nash (Middlebury)
Margery Sabin (Wellesley)
Sheldon Sax (Middlebury)
Tracy Smith (Princeton)
Michele Stepto (Yale)
Robert Stepto (Yale)
Jonathan Strong (Tufts)
Sam Swope (New York Public Library)
Jennifer Wicke (Virginia)
Maisha Winn (Emory)

2012

Michael Armstrong (Harwell Primary)
Damian Baca (Arizona)
Caroline Bicks (Boston College)
Angela Brazil (Clark)
Dare Clubb (Iowa)
Tyler Curtain (UNC - Chapel Hill)
John Elder (Middlebury)

Jonathan Freedman (Michigan)
John M. Fyler (Tufts)
Jennifer Green-Lewis (George Washington)
David Huddle (Hollins)
Michael R. Katz (Middlebury)
David Kirkland (NYU)
William Nash (Middlebury)
Margery Sabin (Wellesley)
Jeffrey Shoulson (Miami)
Tracy Smith (Princeton)
Margery Sokoloff (Miami)
Michele Stepto (Yale)
Robert Stepto (Yale)
Sam Swope (NYPL)
Patrick Wood Uribe (Boston)
Jennifer Wicke (Virginia)
Susanne Wofford (NYU)
Michael Wood (Princeton)

2013

Isobel Armstrong (University of London)
Michael Armstrong (Harwell Primary)
Damian Baca (Arizona)
Caroline Bicks (Boston College)
Dare Clubb (Iowa)
Tyler Curtain (UNC - Chapel Hill)
Lars Engle (Tulsa)
Jonathan Freedman (Michigan)
John M. Fyler (Tufts)
Dixie Goswami (Clemson)
David Huddle (Austin Peay State)
Amy Hungerford (Yale)
Holly Laird (Tulsa)
Victor Luftig (Virginia)
Andrea Lunsford (Stanford)
Alan MacVey (Iowa)
Carol Elliott MacVey (Iowa)
William Nash (Middlebury)
Rae Paris (Michigan State)
Margery Sabin (Wellesley)
Tracy K. Smith (Princeton)
Michele Stepto (Yale)
Robert Stepto (Yale)
Sam Swope (NYPL)
Patrick Wood Uribe (Boston)
Robert N. Watson (UCLA)

Jennifer Wicke (Virginia)

2014

Isobel Armstrong (University of London)
Michael Armstrong (Harwell Primary)
Damian Baca (Arizona)
Adam Banks (Kentucky)
Angela Brazil (Clark)
Dare Clubb (Iowa)
Tyler Curtain (UNC - Chapel Hill)
Stephen Donadio (Middlebury)
Jonathan Freedman (Michigan)
John M. Fyler (Tufts)
Jennifer Green-Lewis (George Washington)
Amy Hungerford (Yale)
Douglas A. Jones Jr. (Rutgers)
Michael R. Katz (Middlebury)
Andrea A. Lunsford (Stanford)
Alan MacVey (Iowa)
Paul Muldoon (Princeton)
William Nash (Middlebury)
Rae Paris (Michigan State)
Margery Sabin (Wellesley)
Jeffrey Shoulson (Connecticut)
Tracy K. Smith (Princeton)
Margery Sokoloff (Wellesley)
Michele Stepto (Yale)
Robert Stepto (Yale)
Robert Sullivan
Sam Swope (NYPL)
Jennifer Wicke (Virginia)
Michael Wood (Princeton)

2015

Isobel Armstrong (University of London)
Michael Armstrong (Harwell Primary)
Damian Baca (Arizona)
Caroline Bicks (Boston College)
Dare Clubb (Iowa)
Patricia DeMarco (Wesleyan)
Lyndon Dominique (Lehigh)
Stephen Donadio (Middlebury)
Ruth Forman (VONA)
Jonathan Freedman (Michigan)
David Huddle (Vermont)
Amy Hungerford (Yale)

Douglas A. Jones Jr. (Rutgers)
Michael R. Katz (Middlebury)
Rachel Lee (UCLA)
Gwyneth Lewis (Princeton)
Alan MacVey (Iowa)
Carol MacVey (Iowa)
William Nash (Middlebury)
Margery Sabin (Wellesley)
Jeffrey Shoulson (Connecticut)
Michele Stepto (Yale)
Robert Stepto (Yale)
Robert Sullivan
Sam Swope (NYPL)
Jennifer Wicke (Virginia)

2016

Isobel Armstrong (University of London)
Michael Armstrong (Harwell Primary)
Angela Brazil (Brown)
Brenda Brueggemann (Louisville)
Susan Choi (Yale)
Dare Clubb (Iowa)
Patricia DeMarco (Ohio Wesleyan)
Lyndon Dominique (Lehigh)
Stephen Donadio (Middlebury)
John Elder (Middlebury)
Oskar Eustis (NYU)
Jonathan Freedman (Michigan)
John M. Fyler (Tufts)
Shalom Goldman (Middlebury)
Dixie Goswami (Clemson)
Jennifer Green-Lewis (George Washington)
David Huddle (Vermont)
Amy Hungerford (Yale)
Claudia L. Johnson (Princeton)
Douglas A. Jones Jr. (Rutgers)
Gwyneth Lewis (Princeton)
Andrea Lunsford (Stanford)
Margery Sabin (Wellesley)
Stuart Sherman (Fordham)
Jeffrey Shoulson (Connecticut)
Michel Stepto (Yale)
Robert Stepto (Yale)
Robert Sullivan (CUNY)
Sam Swope (NYPL)
Jennifer Wicke (Virginia)

2017

Caroline Bicks (Boston College)
Brenda Brueggemann (Connecticut)
Susan Choi (Yale)
Dare Clubb (Iowa)
Patricia DeMarco (Ohio Wesleyan)
Lyndon Dominique (Lehigh)
Stephen Donadio (Middlebury)
Ruth Forman (VONA)
Shalom Goldman (Middlebury)
Alexa Huang (George Washington)
David Huddle (Vermont)
Amy Hungerford (Yale)
Douglas A. Jones Jr. (Rutgers)
Michael R. Kaz (Middlebury)
Gwyneth Lewis (Princeton)
Kate Marshall (Notre Dame)
Eric D. Pritchard (Illinois at Urbana-Champaign)
Margery Sabin (Wellesley)
Jeffrey Shoulson (Connecticut)
Michele Stepto (Yale)
Robert Sullivan (CUNY)
Sam Swope (NYPL)
Jennifer Wicke (Virginia)

2018

Isobel Armstrong (University of London)
Angela Brazil (Brown)
Brenda Brueggemann (Louisville)
Michael Cadden (Princeton)
Susan Choi (Yale)
Dare Clubb (Iowa)
Tyler Curtain (UNC - Chapel Hill)
Stephen Donadio (Middlebury)
Ruth Forman (VONA)
John M. Fyler (Tufts)
David Huddle (Vermont)
Michael R. Katz (Middlebury)
Gwyneth Lewis (Princeton)
Kate Marshall (Notre Dame)
Eric D. Pritchard (Illinois at Urbana-Champaign)
Margery Sabin (Wellesley)
Cheryl Savageau

Michele Stepto (Yale)
Robert Stepto (Yale)
Robert Sullivan (CUNY)
Sam Swope (Academy for Teachers)
Susanne Wofford (NYU)
Michael Wood (Princeton)
Froma Zeitlin (Princeton)

2019

April Baker-Bell (Michigan State)
Angela Brazil
Dennis A. Britton (New Hampshire)
Brenda Brueggemann (Connecticut)
Susan Choi (Yale)
Dare Clubb (Iowa)
J.D. Connor (Southern California)
Tyler Curtain (UNC Chapel Hill)
Stephen Donadio (Middlebury)
Ruth Forman (VONA)
John M. Fyler (Tufts)
Shalom Goldman (Middlebury)
David Huddle (Vermont)
Amy Hungerford (Yale)
Douglas A. Jones Jr. (Rutgers)
Kate Marshall (Notre Dame)
Gage McWeeny (Williams)
Michelle Bachelor Robinson (Spelman)
Amy Rodgers (Mount Holyoke)
Margery Sabin (Wellesley)
Cheryl Savageau
Michele Stepto (Yale)
Robert Stepto (Yale)
Robert Sullivan (CUNY)
Sam Swope (Academy for Teachers)
Froma Zeitlin (Princeton)

2020

Angela Brazil
Dennis A. Britton (New Hampshire)
Brenda Brueggemann (Connecticut)
Susan Choi (Yale)
Dare Clubb (Iowa)
Tyler Curtain (UNC Chapel Hill)
Dennis Denisoff (Tulsa)
Stephen Donadio (Middlebury)
Ruth Forman (VONA)

John M. Fyler (Tufts)
Shalom Goldman (Middlebury)
David Huddle (Vermont)
Amy Hungerford (Yale)
Rochelle L. Johnson (Idaho)
Michael R. Katz (Middlebury)
Jacques Lezra (UC Riverside)
Kate Marshall (Notre Dame)
Cruz Media (UC Santa Clara)
Michelle Bachelor Robinson (Spelman)
Amy Rodgers (Mount Holyoke)
Margery Sabin (Wellesley)
Cheryl Savageau
Michele Stepto (Yale)
Robert Stepto (Yale)
Robert Sullivan (CUNY)
Sam Swope (Academy for Teachers)
Susanne Wofford (NYU)
Bryan Wolf (Yale)
Michael Wood (Princeton)