

# Jack Vespa

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## Education

Ph.D., English, University of Utah, 2001

Program: British and American Literature

M.A., English, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, 1991

Emphases: American, British, and Continental Literature

B.S., Psychology and Philosophy, Illinois State University, 1985

Emphases: History of Psychology; Greek Philosophy, Indian Philosophy

## Teaching Interests

### Literature of the British Isles

Restoration and 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Literature

Romantic and Victorian Literature

Modernist and Postmodernist Literature

### Literature of the Americas

Antebellum and Postbellum Literature

Modernist and Postmodernist Literature

### Rhetoric and Writing

Introductory, Intermediate, and Advanced Composition

## Teaching Positions

Visiting Assistant Professor

Berry College, 2021-present

Mentor

Lincoln Public School System, 2020-21

Adjunct Professor

Southeast Community College, 2018-21

Doane University, 2018-19

Creighton University, 2018-19

Professor of Practice

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2008-18

Postdoctoral Lecturer

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2004-2008

Visiting Assistant Professor

Berry College, 2002-2004

Instructor

Salt Lake Community College, Summer 1996, 97

Lecturer

University of Utah, LEAP Learning Community,  
1998-2002

Lecturer

University of Utah, 1996-98

Graduate Teaching Fellow

University of Utah, 1992-1996

Graduate Teaching Assistant

Southern Illinois University, 1988-1992

## Teaching Honors

Certificate of Recognition for Contributions to Students, UNL, 2016

Certificate of Recognition for Contributions to Students, UNL, 2011

Certificate of Recognition for Contributions to Students, UNL, 2010

### **Courses Taught at Berry College**

English 201: Topics in Literature: Poetry & Song  
RHW 102: First-Year Seminar in Writing

### **Courses Taught at Southeast Community College**

English 1010: Composition I

### **Courses Taught at Doane University**

English 237: Introduction to Fiction

### **Courses Taught at Creighton University**

English 150: Contemporary Composition

### **Courses Taught at University of Nebraska-Lincoln**

English 487: English Capstone Experience

Themes: From Sensibility to Romanticism  
The Mind in Literature and Film  
From Shakespeare to Romanticism  
Representations of the Imagination and the Artistic Process

English 4/864: British Literature 1660-1800

Themes: The Pleasures and Rhapsodies of the Imagination  
18<sup>th</sup> Century Iconic

English 4/810: Literary Movements: The Age of Sensibility

English 4/805: American Novel II: Modernist and Postmodernist Aesthetics

English 365: 19<sup>th</sup>-Century British Literature

Themes: Moral Geography  
Poetry of Earth  
Britain Unbound

English 364: Restoration and 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Literature: Britain Rising

English 361: Introduction to Late American Literature

English 331: British Authors Since 1800

Themes: The Wordsworth Circle  
Romantic Artistry

English 311G: Revolution and Romanticism

English 305A: The Novel 1700-1900

English 302: Modern British and American Poetry: Ideas of Order

English 231: British Authors Since 1800: Heart of May, Heart of Darkness, and  
the Deep Heart's Core

English 230: English Authors to 1800

English 210: Stories and Human Experience: Fictive and Cinematic Narration

English 207: Reading Popular Literature: Poetry and Song

English 205: 20<sup>th</sup>-Century Fiction

Themes: Across America  
Modernism and Postmodernism

English 202A: Introduction to Poetry

- English 200: Introduction to English Studies  
 English 189: University Honors Seminar: Campus Novels/Campus Life  
 English 180: Introduction to Literature  
 English 151: Rhetoric as Argument  
     Themes: Discourse and Reality  
               Media/Cultural Literacy  
               Adult/Film Culture/Music and Entertainment Culture
- English 150: Rhetoric as Inquiry: Commercial and Pop Culture  
 English 101: Writing: Rhetoric and Reading  
     Themes: Reading, Writing, and the Self  
               Literacy  
               Pop Culture and the Self

## **Curricular Innovations**

### Course Development

*New Course Development:* Conceived, designed, and taught interdisciplinary courses in Poetry, Music, and Song, complete with multimedia material and art song performances, as a version of English 201: Topics in Literature, emphasizing formal and verbal art.

### Course Documents

Revised documents concerning the major music genres in American culture, generating additional instructional text as well as incorporating multimedia material (especially links to songs and music videos), in order to augment our coverage of these genres.

### Auxiliary Course Documents

*Project Addenda and Primers:* Began creating a series of project addenda and primers in order to augment the learning and achievement of my literature and writing students. The addenda offer rhetorical advice and writing examples for students; the primers are devoted to discussing various facets of literary history and criticism that inform course texts.

### Assignments

Created a writing project that turns upon the interpretation of poetry in order to introduce composition students to a system of analytical writing that emphasizes the formulation of an analytical thesis, which should mark the drafting stage of the writing process.

## **Features**

Gillan, Maura. "Professor Jack Vespa Combines English and Music to Create New Course." *The Daily Nebraskan*. University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 8 September 2016. Web.  
[http://www.dailynebraskan.com/arts\\_and\\_entertainment/professor-jack-vespa-combines-english-and-music-to-create-new/article\\_8490ce22-756a-11e6-b8b0-eb935659b216.html](http://www.dailynebraskan.com/arts_and_entertainment/professor-jack-vespa-combines-english-and-music-to-create-new/article_8490ce22-756a-11e6-b8b0-eb935659b216.html)

## **Invited Lectures and Performances**

"Exploring Poetry & Song." *Senior Scholars Program*. Oak Hill & The Martha Berry Museum of Berry College. 29 September 2023.

“My Music and Spirituality” [lecture] and “All Things Must Pass” [performance]. *The Universality of Music as a Bridge for Spirituality*. Interfaith Center Panel. Berry College. 30 November 2022.

“Poetry & Song.” *Faculty Lecture Series*. The Spires at Berry College. 23 March 2022.

“Shakespeare and the Sonnet Tradition.” UNL Glenn Korff School of Music: Music 4/872 (Art Song II) taught by Dr. Kevin Hanrahan. UNL, 18 January 2017. Performed Sonnet 130 (“My mistress ’eyes are nothing like the sun”) as part of lecture.

“Shakespeare and the Sonnet Tradition.” UNL Glenn Korff School of Music: Music 4/872 (Art Song II) taught by Dr. Kevin Hanrahan. UNL, 2 February 2015. Performed Sonnet 73 (“That time of year thou may’st in me behold”) as part of lecture.

Performed “You Ain’t Going Nowhere” and “Little Wing” with colleague Stephen Buhler at an open-mic event in support of *Laurus*, an undergraduate literary magazine. UNL, 18 December 2006.

Played “Don Vazquez” in *A Bold Stroke for a Husband*, by Hannah Cowley. Directed by Fred Burwick. Wordsworth Summer Conference. Grasmere, Cumbria, UK, 11 August 2005.

Played “Beddoes” in *Death’s Jest Book*, by Thomas Lovell Beddoes (adapted by Jerome McGann). Directed by Fred Burwick. Wordsworth Summer Conference. Grasmere, Cumbria, UK, 22 August 2003.

### **Scholarly Research Interests**

Literature of Sensibility and Romanticism

The Wordsworth Circle

Scholarship of Teaching

### **Scholarly Awards and Honors**

Faculty Development Leave, UNL, Spring 2012

### **Publications**

#### Scholarship of Teaching

“Approaching Shakespeare Romantically.” Teaching Romanticism XIV: Shakespearean Legacies. *Romantic Textualities: Literature and Print Culture, 1780-1840*. Teaching Blog [January 2016]. Cardiff University. n. d. Web. <http://www.romtext.org.uk/teaching-romanticism-xiv-shakespearean-legacies/>

#### Literature of Sensibility, Romanticism, and the Wordsworth Circle

“Veiled Movements in *The Vale of Esthwaite*.” *The Wordsworth Circle* 45.1 (Winter 2014): 62-65.

“William Wordsworth’s Poetry of Moral Sentiments.” *Journal of Ethics in Leadership* 3.2 (2008): 103-117.

"Georgic Inquisitiveness, Pastoral Meditation, Romantic Reflexivity: 'Nutting' and the Figure of Wordsworth as Poet." *Genre* 38 (Spring/Summer 2005): 1-44.

#### Miscellaneous American and British Literature

"The Unsurveyed Interior: William Cullen Bryant and the Prairie State." *American Transcendental Quarterly* 11.4 (December 1997): 285-308.

"Another Book at the Wake: Indian Mysticism and the Bhagavad-Gita in I.4 of *Finnegans Wake*." *James Joyce Quarterly* 31.2 (Winter 1994): 81-87.

#### Reviews

"Isn't It a Pity about Get Back / Let It Be." KZUM Year End Reviews. [2021]. Sunrise Communications. 4 January 2022. <<https://kzum.org/kzum-year-end-reviews/>>.

"Time, Space, and *The Beatles*: The White Album at 50." *KZUM Backtrack: Best of 2018*. KZUM. December 2018. <https://kzum.org/kzum-backtrack-2018/>

"Jackson Browne Charms with His Songs and Showmanship." KZUM. June 2018. <https://kzum.org/jackson-browne-charms-with-his-songs-and-showmanship-at-pinewood-bowl/>

"Iron & Wine's Pieces Fall in Place." KZUM. October 2017. <https://kzum.org/iron-wines-pieces-fall-place/>

"Wilco Rocks the Equinox." KZUM. September 2017. <https://kzum.org/wilco-rocks-equinox-jack-hearts-sound-vision/>

"Doug Underwood, *Journalism and the Novel: Truth and Fiction, 1700-2000*." *New Books on Literature 19: An Online Review of New Books on English and American Literature of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century* (September 2009): <[http://www.nbol-19.org/view\\_doc.php?index=14](http://www.nbol-19.org/view_doc.php?index=14)>.

"Bob Hicok, *Insomnia Diary*." *Prairie Schooner* 80.2 (Summer 2006): 204-206.

"*Apocalyptic Narrative and Other Poems*, by Rodney Jones." *Quarterly West* 40 (Spring/Summer 1995): 214-220.

#### Creative Nonfiction

"Diary of a Ph.D." *Continuum* 11.2 (Fall 2001): 48.

#### **Conference Papers**

##### Scholarship of Teaching

"A Semester in the Life of Designing and Teaching a Poetry and Music Course." 48<sup>th</sup> Annual College English Association Conference. Hilton Head Island SC, 1 April 2017.

"Creating Curricula, Relevance, and Interiority." 47<sup>th</sup> Annual College English Association Conference. Denver CO, 1 April 2016.

Literature of Sensibility, Romanticism, and the Wordsworth Circle

"Charlotte Smith's Scenic Lyricism." 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Nineteenth Century Studies Association Conference. Lincoln NE, 15 April 2016.

"Charlotte Smith and the Lyric Geography of Sussex." 20<sup>th</sup> Annual British Women Writers Conference. Boulder, CO, 7 June 2012.

"Bards, Minstrels, Confidantes." 19<sup>th</sup>-Century British Poetry Panel. 35<sup>th</sup> Annual European Studies Conference. Omaha, NE, 9 October 2010.

"Manly Melancholy." Issues in British Literature Panel. 34<sup>th</sup> Annual European Studies Conference. Omaha NE, 3 October 2009. "Manly Sentiment'?" British Poets Panel. 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual European Studies Conference. Omaha, NE, 4 October 2008.

"Charlotte Smith and Helen Maria Williams." 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Studies May Faculty Seminar, University of Nebraska College of Arts and Sciences. Lincoln, NE, 20 May 2008.

"Wordsworth's 'Mechanism of Poetry.'" From Sympathy to Romanticism Special Session. Modern Language Association. Philadelphia, PA, 27 December 2006.

"Dorothy Wordsworth's Poetry and Poetics." 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Studies May Faculty Seminar, University of Nebraska College of Arts and Sciences. Lincoln, NE, 10 May 2006.

"Poet of Nature." Wordsworth Summer Conference. Grasmere, Cumbria, UK, 31 July 2005.

"Nutting 'and the Figure of the Wordsworthian Poet.'" Wordsworth Summer Conference. Grasmere, Cumbria, UK, 22 August 2003.

"'The Language of My Former Heart': William and Dorothy Wordsworth's 'Living Calendar' of Revolutionary Desire and Recompense." Nationalism and Emotion Panel. Seventh Annual American Conference on Romanticism. Park City, UT, 13 October 2000.

"The Politics of Nature and Topography in Wordsworth's *The Ruined Cottage*." Work-in-Progress Talks. Tanner Humanities Center. Univ. of Utah, 5 April 2000.

"Wordsworth's 'Poetical History': *An Evening Walk* and *Descriptive Sketches*." Romantic Geopolitics and Poetic (Re)Form Special Session. Modern Language Association. Chicago, 29 December 1999.

"Romantic Geometry, Physics, and Poetry." Literature and Science Panel. Engendering Romanticisms: The 5<sup>th</sup> Annual National Graduate Student Romanticism Conference. Indiana Univ., 3 April 1998.

## Miscellaneous British and Continental Literature

“*Rasselas*, Romance, and Realism.” History of the Novel Panel. The South-Central Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies Annual Conference. Univ. of Utah, 2 March 1995.

“Rilke’s ‘Archaic Torso of Apollo’—A Study in Translations.” Association of English Graduate Instructors and Students Colloquium. Southern Illinois Univ. at Carbondale, 6 May 1992.

## **Book Project**

### *The Earth and the Heart: William and Dorothy Wordsworth’s Romantic Geopoetics*

My project concerns William and Dorothy Wordsworth’s experiments with georgic, pastoral, and sentimental top in the era of Sensibility, Sympathy, and Revolution. By reworking these traditions, the Wordsworths reimagine the figure of the poet, superseding prominent figures of a poet as visionary bard, melancholy minstrel, empiricist, or enthusiast with one of a poet as confidante, who speaks to us much as if we are a friend, lover, or sibling, rehearsing lyrics and narratives and improvising surmises in the process.

William fashions a descriptive-meditative idiom that is grounded in a self-enacting subjectivity, which owes something to contemporary theories of moral sympathy and allows him in some lyrics to model a process of self-reflection for his readers.

Dorothy fashions a similar yet singular idiom of her own, grounded in a more self-effacing subjectivity, that allows her to foster an ethic of familial/communal affiliation for her readers.

By reconsidering the Wordsworths’ reader-based program for poetry in the contexts of sensibility, and sympathy, and Revolution, I demonstrate how they fashion an engaged, socially-responsible poetry, rather than a self-indulgent poetry that turns upon a “wordsworthian or egotistical sublime,” as John Keats once put it.

## **Work-in-Progress**

“The Growth of a Poet’s Calling: Wanderers and Confidantes” [Chapter Four of Book].

## **Professional Activities**

### *Book Proposal Reviewer*

~ Reviewed a proposal for an edition of Dorothy Wordsworth’s journals for Broadview Press, May 2017.

### *Session Organizer or Moderator*

~ Chaired “Cultural Codes and Diversified Curricula” panel at the annual meeting of College English Association in Hilton Head Island, SC, 1 April 2017.

~ Chaired “New Philosophies” panel at the annual meeting of the Nineteenth Century Studies Association in Lincoln, NE, April 2016.

~ Chaired “Regulating the Feminine Landscape” panel at the annual meeting of British Women Writers Association in Boulder, CO, June 2012.

~ Proposed and chaired “From Sympathy to Romanticism” special session at the annual meeting of the Modern Language Association, in Philadelphia, PA, December 2006

~ Proposed and chaired “Romantic Geopolitics and Poetic (Re)Form” special session at the annual meeting of the Modern Language Association, in Chicago, IL, December 1999

~ Proposed and chaired “Sound and Vision: The Poetry of Sensibility” panel at the annual meeting of The South Central Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies Annual Conference, University of Utah, March 1995

*Research Assistant, Department of English, University of Utah, 1998*

~ Assisted Professor Bruce Haley with bibliographic documentation and incidental research associated with his book, *Living Forms* (SUNY Press)

*Associate Editor, Quarterly West literary magazine, University of Utah, 1997-2000* ~ Read poetry and prose submissions and selected preeminent work ~ Edited and proofread accepted work ~ Assisted the editor in the day-to-day tasks of running the magazine

### **Academic Service**

*Judge, Undergraduate Poetry Award, English Department, UNL, 2014-16.*

*Reader of applications for graduate study in 19<sup>th</sup>-Century British Literature, UNL, 2016, 2012*

*Member, Undergraduate Program and Curriculum Committee, English Department, UNL, 2012-15*

~ Reviewed course offerings in response to internal assessment

~ Conferred on measures to enhance major for undergraduates and attract new students

*Chair, Teaching & Research Committee, English Department, UNL, 2010-12*

~ Organized colloquia devoted to teaching and research topics in tandem with committee members

~ Advised chair of the department on speakers for two lecture series sponsored by the department

*Member, Early Modern Literature Search Committee, English Department, UNL, 2010-11*

~ Reviewed and ranked 253 applicants for the position in conjunction with my colleagues, generating a short list for MLA interviews

~ Interviewed top candidates in conjunction with colleagues during campus visits

~ Reviewed and ranked top candidates following campus visits, forwarding recommendations to the department accordingly

*Member, Ad Hoc Committee for Graduate TA Reappointment, English Department, UNL, 2010*

~ Reviewed and rated merit files of graduate teaching assistants



*Member, Capstone Faculty Inquiry Group, English Department, UNL, 2009-10*

~ Collaborated with committee members to redesign the department's capstone course, integrating a portfolio component to assist with assessment of the major

*Member, Chair's Advisory Committee, English Department, UNL, 2007-08*

~ Assisted and advised Chair in various matters concerning faculty governance

*Founder and Coordinator, 18<sup>th</sup>- & 19<sup>th</sup>-Century British Literature Circle, English, UNL, 2006-15*

~ Organize colloquia devoted to 18<sup>th</sup>- and 19<sup>th</sup>-century British literature and culture

*Member, Undergraduate Program and Curriculum Committee, English Department, UNL, 2004-07*

~ Reviewed course offerings in response to internal assessment

~ Discussed apt hiring priorities in accordance with the department's strategic plan

~ Revised and consolidated concentration requirements for the English major

~ Drafted and edited a brochure for current and prospective English majors

~ Edited course proposals submitted to committee

*Group Leader, Faculty/ Staff Book Club, Berry College, 2003-04*

~ Coordinated the selection and discussion of contemporary fiction and non-fiction works for a small group of my colleagues

### **Community Service**

*Volunteer Programmer ("Jack of Hearts"), KZUM Radio 89.3 FM, 2015-21*

~ Produced weekly community radio show, *Sound + Vision* (Wednesdays 6-8am)

~ Reviewed albums and concerts

~ Assisted with quarterly fund drives

~ Set-up and staffed local concerts sponsored by the station

*Chair, Programming Committee, KZUM 89.3 FM, 2015-16*

*Volunteer, Lincoln-area Music Festivals, 2014-21*

Lincoln Calling, Nebraska Folk and Roots Festival, Zoo Fest

~ Assisted organizers by performing various duties, including stage introductions, ticketing, etc.

### **Dissertation Redux**

Dissertation: *"Pictures of Man, Nature, and Society": Wordsworth's Romantic Geopoetics*

Director: Charles Berger, English, Southern Illinois U, Edwardsville, IL

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### **Graduate Honors**

Graduate Research Fellow, Tanner Humanities Center, University of Utah, 1999-2000