

Below is a compiled portfolio of the work I did with Ball State University's Compass Creative class when I was a student there. The work is from the 2020 – 2021 school year (the spring 2021 semester), comprised of blog articles that I edited while I was a member of the Blog team.

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EMAILS THAT I HAVE SENT TO INTERVIEW SUBJECTS

To Michelle Haas (History Graduate from Ball State University) [sent on February 22, 2021]

Hello, my name is Anthony Herring, and I am a member of the Blog Team for the [Compass Advantage](#) at Ball State University. As a part of our mission, we often interview alumni from the College of Science and Humanities for a series called Cardinal Directions on their careers after college. We find that this helps inspire undergraduate students to continue in their humanities degrees where a clear career path is not always evident.

Your contact information was given to us by someone at Ball State as someone who we would be able to interview for this feature. We ask that you answer the following questions over email as in depth as you see fit. You are also allowed to expand on these questions or add to them.

What did you study while you were at Ball State?

What is your career now?

What does a typical week in your position look like?

What are the most valuable skills you learned in your major?

How are the skills you learned as a History student relevant to your career and life today?

What is your advice to other History students?

We also ask that you provide us with a bio and a headshot.

If you are interested in this opportunity, I would love to have your responses back by March 5. Also, please feel free to email me back with any questions or concerns.

To Alexandria Gribble (History Graduate from Ball State University) [sent on February 22, 2021]

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Follow up email to Alexandria Gribble [sent on March 5, 2021]

Hello, Ms. Gribble. Although today is the deadline, we would still love to have your responses. Please do so at your earliest convenience. Thank you.

To Dr. Nathan Wuertenberg (History Graduate from Ball State University) [sent on February 22, 2021]

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Follow-up email to Dr. Nathan Wuertenberg [sent on March 5, 2021]

Hello, Dr. Wuertenberg. Although today is the deadline, we would still love to have your responses. Please do so at your earliest convenience. Thank you.

To Molly Hollcroft (History Student/Intern from Ball State University) [sent on March 11, 2021]

Good afternoon,

My name is Anthony Herring, and I am a current member of the Blog Team with Compass Creative. The History Department would like to develop their blog series "Curation Chronicles," which interviews Public History students about their internships. You have been recommended for an interview and blog feature.

We would like you to answer the following questions as in depth as you see fit.

How did you decide you wanted to pursue a degree in Public History?

Why were you interested in this specific internship?

What does a typical day at your internship look like?

What are the most valuable skills you have gained from your internship?

What is the most fulfilling part of your internship?

If possible, I would love to have your responses back by March 22. With these responses, we request that you include a short bio and a headshot. You can find example posts [here](#) and [here](#).

Thanks!

To John Moynihan (History Student/Intern from Ball State University) [sent on March 11, 2021]

Good afternoon,

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Thanks!

POSTS THAT I HAVE FORMATTED

Cardinal Directions- Troi Watts: From Creative Writing Student to Press Secretary [published on February 11, 2021]

*Troi Watts graduated from Ball State University in 2019 with a Bachelor of Arts in [English with a concentration in Creative Writing](#). While at Ball State, she participated in the *Reel Deal* and the *Digital Literature Review* and earned Departmental Honors in English. She now works as a Press Secretary for the [Indiana House Democratic Caucus](#).*

What did you study while you were at Ball State?

At Ball State, I majored in English, Creative Writing, and minored in Professional Writing. When I originally chose my major, I wanted to become a screenwriter. I still do, but going through the Creative Writing program opened my eyes to so many other options.

What did your path look like from graduation to your career?

In my senior year, I became more interested in politics and government, so I enrolled in an introductory government course and was hooked right away. From there, I searched for internships in government agencies and came across the **Indiana House Democratic Caucus (IHDC) internship program**, which didn't open applications until the summer after I graduated.

So while I waited for the application to open, I worked part-time at the [Muncie Public Library](#) and, in my spare time, looked for other employment (I wanted the IHDC internship so bad, but didn't want to put all my eggs in one basket). But nothing really came along and in the summer I applied for the IHDC internship. I was accepted and worked as a Legislative Affairs and Constituent Services intern with IHDC through the 2020 Legislative Session and Interim.

During my internship, I learned a lot about how to apply my English background to legislative and constituent work. I got an inside look at the personal connections and legislative processes that culminate into new state law. I was able to use that understanding and tailored writing ability to earn my Press Secretary position in December 2020.

What does a typical day or week look like in your position?

Honestly, every day is different, especially during the Legislative Session. I am responsible for all things media-related for about eight Democratic state representatives. Typically, I start my day by looking over last night's news. That involves seeing what topics and legislation is trending and where our members can offer more insight. Throughout the day I monitor any media requests for my members, watch legislative committees and session, and write press releases. Writing press releases is always a large part my day. Usually, I'm asked to write about something that I know very little about personally - like I am not an insurance expert, but I'm tasked with writing a release on Medicaid - in the voice of someone else. It's a lovely challenge that keeps every day interesting.

What is your favorite part of being a press secretary?

I pursued this position because I wanted to use my writing to make a real difference. As a press secretary, I help constituents understand the intentions of their legislators and learn more about legislation that affects them. On top of that, I get to write every day. It may not always be the kind of writing I wish I was doing, but it's writing and it makes me happy.

What are the most valuable skills you learned as an English major? How have they helped you post-graduation?

One of the most valuable skills I learned was how to recognize stylistic choices like tone, verbiage, and voice. Knowing how to control and replicate these types of elements makes your writing adaptable to most situations. This has come in handy a lot during my time with the IHDC. When I'm helping prepare a member for an interview, it helps to have an understanding of their voice so that I can put together effective talking points or relevant research.

What is your advice to other English majors?

Trust yourself. There are going to be a lot of people who try to limit your path to teaching or writing books. Thankfully, English majors can do pretty much anything we set our minds to. Being able to write and communicate well is an invaluable skill that employers want.

You can connect with [Troj Watts on LinkedIn](#).

Philosophy & Religious Studies Good News: 2020 [published on February 8, 2021]

What a way to start the New Year off right! We have some good news from the [Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies](#).

Faculty

Elizabeth Agnew's Virginia Ball Center Seminar, [Muslims in Muncie](#), was featured in the January 2021 *Ball State Alumni Magazine* in the article "[A History of Friendships](#)," on the life and legacy of Dr. Mir Masoom Ali. She presented on the project at the National Humanities Alliance Conference in October 2020.

Dave Concepción co-authored an essay entitled "[Improving Student Learning with Aspects of Specifications Grading](#)" with Sarah Vitale, which is featured in *Teaching Philosophy*. He has been appointed Editor-in-Chief of the journal *Studies in Pedagogy*. He continues to lead numerous workshops on inclusive pedagogy annually.

Rachel Fredericks published her second article in the *European Journal of Philosophy*, entitled "Moral Responsibility for Concepts, Continued: Concepts as Abstract Objects."

Jeff Fry was promoted to full professor. With Andrew Edgar, he is coediting a projected book entitled *Philosophical Perspectives on Pandemic Sport*.

Kevin Harrelson designed and taught a course called “COVID-19 in the Human Context” in Summer 2020. He also appeared on [Indiana Public Radio’s “All IN”](#) radio program in an episode (April 28) on “The History of Pandemics,” and published an editorial titled “Essential Labor and Fairness in the Economy” in *Inside Indiana Business* in June. He made numerous other radio and podcast guest appearances about living in a pandemic.

Matthew Hotham was awarded a \$5000 grant from the [Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion](#). His goal was to investigate student hesitations in engaging with the oral/aural Qur’an in his classes. To accomplish this, he devised new assignments to improve engagement and understanding.

Kibujjo Kalumba oversaw the publication of *Philosophia Africana* Vol 19 (1&2) during his 12th year as Editor-in-Chief of the journal.

Sarah Vitale received the Lawhead Award in General Education. She also published “Combatting Epistemic Violence Against Young Activists” (*Analytic Teaching and Philosophical Praxis* 40, no. 2), which she co-authored with Owen Miller, a 2020 graduate of the philosophy program. She also started the Philosophy Outreach Project Advisory Board, where Zoe Lawson and Daniel Klinestiver, two departmental alumni, sit.

Alumni

Mendim Akiti, a 2019 graduate of the Philosophy and Religious Studies program, is a Master’s student in Religious Studies at Florida State University.

Eli Brunsman, a 2020 graduate of the Religious Studies program, now lives in Tallahassee, Florida. She works for a Reform Judaism temple as a Program and Outreach Director.

Allison Hunt, a 2020 graduate of the Religious Studies program (with a minor), moved to Indianapolis and recently joined the leadership council of The Satanic Temple Indiana as the archivist. Her job is to write a history of the chapter. She has also devised a system to create and preserve institutional memory moving forward. Lastly, she leads a club called “Encyclopedia Satanica,” which examines historical artistic depictions of Satan.

Michael Mares, a 2018 graduate of the Philosophy program, took a position as a Child Welfare Caseworker for El Paso County, Colorado, working with young people with disabilities.

Benjamin McIntosh, a 2018 graduate of the Philosophy and Religious Studies program, moved to Indianapolis just before the pandemic struck and has been freelancing as an editor and proofreader. His day job is in retail and he spends his free time writing fiction. He is currently working on a novel adaptation of a long-running D&D campaign he runs for his friends.

Kyle Orr, a 2019 graduate of the Religious Studies program, travelled to East and Southeast Asia (for six and two months respectively) to work as a missionary. When he returned to the U.S., he started working with a campus ministry at Ball State. He is currently applying to seminaries and divinity schools.

Quintin Thompson, a 2017 graduate of the Philosophy program, began working as a New Markets Project Analyst at [Apex Clean Energy](#) in Charlottesville, VA. Quintin received his masters degree in public affairs from the [O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs at Indiana University](#) in 2019.

Kay Rittichier, a 2017 graduate of the Philosophy program, is completing her Master's in Computer Science at IUPUI, where she expects to graduate in Summer 2021. Her thesis is in applications of Natural Language Processing. She extends her undergraduate work in philosophical logic and the philosophy of computer science.

We cannot wait to see what else our faculty, students, and alumni continue to accomplish.

Cardinal Directions: Philosophy Alum Works with Lighthouse Autism Center [published on February 17, 2021]

Erin L. Walton is a Junior Program Manager (PM) at [Lighthouse Autism Center](#) which recently became the largest provider of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) services in the state of Indiana. She holds a B. S. in Philosophy and a [M. A. in Special Education](#), both from Ball State University, and has nearly two decades of experience working with children and families in a variety of educational settings. Under the supervision of a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA), Erin leads a team of Registered Behavior Technicians (RBT) in providing the highest quality 1:1 ABA therapy to children ages 2-18 with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). She collaborates with a multidisciplinary team of clinical professionals to support those children and their families by creating highly individualized treatment plans designed around each child's specific needs. These plans are centered in evidence-based practices and geared toward promoting independence in a variety of communication, social, and life skills.

What did you study while you were at Ball State?

While at Ball State, I studied [Philosophy and Religious Studies](#) from 2004-2008. I returned in 2017 for a graduate program where I studied Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), Autism, and Early Childhood Education (ECE) while earning my M.A. in Special Education.

What is your career now?

I currently work as a Junior Program Manager with Lighthouse Autism Center (Anderson) and will sit for my boards in May to become a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA). In this role, I provide ongoing training and support to children and families with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and the Registered Behavior Technicians (RBTs) who work directly with clients in a 1:1 clinical setting. Until I receive my BCBA credentials, I am directly overseen by a Sr. Program Manager/BCBA who reviews any assessing, development, and behavior and treatment plan implementation based on the principles of ABA.

What does a typical week in your position look like?

Due to the individualized nature of the ABA field, each week brings a variety of different tasks and challenges to my schedule. I spend approximately 50% of my time consulting with clients and their families which allows me to create and evaluate program and behavior goals, train and support RBTs, assess and reassess clients, meet and train with families, and transition and support school staff. The other side of this role is managerial in nature: daily schedules, staff evaluations, clinical paperwork, communicating with other professionals within and without of my company, and so on. This past week, I helped transition 3 clients to part-time school schedules and had 3 completely different experiences!

What are the most valuable skills you learned in your major?

My ability to critically think and evaluate information has been an invaluable addition to my skillset. This is particularly important within the field of ABA, especially when evaluating the efficacy of an intervention.

How are the skills you learned as a Philosophy student relevant to your career and life today?

As implied in the prior question's response, I use critical thinking every day in my career. Philosophy also prepared me to communicate in an observable, measurable, and objective manner, which is another skill used in ABA. Whether I am communicating with a highly trained clinician or a parent who is new to the world of ABA, these tenants are integral in ensuring everyone is on the same page with the behaviors targeted for increase and decrease.

What is your advice to other Humanities students?

The best advice I can offer to other students studying within the Humanities is to remember it is time well spent to learn about the self, the other, and the ways they intertwine to create the human experience. Any course of study within the Humanities deepens our understanding of the collective "us" and allows a realization that we are truly connected across time, space, thoughts, experience. I will add that through my own journey to discover my career (or as I see it, my Calling), I have learned to be comfortable in the fact that I did not "know what I wanted to do" when I entered University. Each job I've worked has helped me become the professional I am today, allowed me to hone both personal and professional skills, and become a mentor for other professionals. I know it is uncomfortable trying to reconcile not knowing what you want to do with the societal expectation that you should have figured it out already. Be patient. Enjoy the now. Learn. Grow. Live.

You can connect with Erin for further information via email (erin.walton@lighthouseautismcenter.com) or visit her [website](#).

Cardinal Directions: Britt Kusserow specializes in LGBTQ+ Affirmative Therapy [published on February 26, 2021]

The following is an interview with Religious Studies alum, Britt Kusserow, who now has a career as a Associate Marriage and Family Therapist with a specialization in LGBTQ+ Affirmative Therapy.

What did you study while you were at Ball State?

[Religious Studies](#)

What is your career now?

Associate Marriage and Family Therapist with a specialization in LGBTQ+ Affirmative Therapy.

What does a typical week in your position look like?

I work specifically in residential care meaning that I work with clients who live in supported housing near the same location that they attend groups, therapy, and other aspects of programming. My typical week at this point in my growth is usually Mondays - Fridays 9AM - 4PM designing and facilitating therapeutic groups and working individually with clients and their families in a therapeutic or coaching role. The best part of my week is that I have had the opportunity to design and implement programming specific to our LGBTQ+ population, as well as to help my organization ensure that best, most affirmative practice extends to our shared housing as well as in our group and therapeutic setting. So, every Friday I get the pleasure of co-facilitating "Queer Culture Group" and offering a safe/brave space for our LGBTQ+ clients to build community with one another, explore intersectional identities, study queer history, and have fun!

What are the most valuable skills you learned in your major?

As a Religious Studies major with no specified affiliation (I've worked in a lot of churches while remaining sincerely agnostic at heart), **I learned to be curious about the experiences of others, which has been extremely valuable as I transitioned into a more specific mental health track!** So often the things that hold us back can be tied to a history of invalidation, and learning to "unlearn" societal messages around communication and lean into empathy and curiosity is an ongoing process, and one that makes me a better clinician, and a better person.

How are the skills you learned as a Religious Studies student relevant to your career and life today?

Aside from cultivation of curiosity, having a base knowledge of several major world religions helps me approach my therapeutic work in a more holistic way. I'm able to support and seek resources for clients regardless of belief or religious association, and a little knowledge can go a long way in building rapport with a client. Additionally, I think it's important for queer people such as myself to model that there doesn't have to be a disconnect between being LGBTQ+ identified, and taking part in a religious tradition or spiritual practice. Regardless of

who you are or what you believe, there is a religious community out there that will love and affirm you - I promise.

What is your advice to other Humanities students?

I suggest you enjoy your time and keep as broad a lens as you can when thinking about yourself and your future. People recommended to me at 18 years old that I become a social worker or a therapist and I laughed at them. I was so certain that I was going to be a famous musician/youth minister at the time. Unraveling my identity and learning that I am made of many parts was super helpful when I found myself having quite the identity crisis when those things didn't pan out the way I expected! I wish I had relaxed a little more when I was younger, learned what I could, and been open to a multitude of possibilities. Because trust me, the possibilities are endless.

Feel free to reach out to Britt with questions at bdkusserow@gmail.com or check out her [Alignable profile](#).

POSTS THAT I HAVE EDITED

Modern Languages and Classics: Good News 2020 [published on March 5, 2021]

It's time to celebrate some good news from the [Department of Modern Languages and Classics](#).

Faculty

[Ellen Thorington](#) has an article on the early fifteenth-century author Christine de Pizan coming out in *Genèse(s) et filiation(s) chez Christine de Pizan*, published in Paris through Garnier.

Students

Drew Shaeffer has committed to Indiana University's graduate program for French Linguistics. She will start in Fall 2021 and has also committed to being an associate instructor teaching French undergraduate classes.

Alumni

Ella Donovan, Spanish program alumnus, is a finalist for the Fulbright English Teaching Assistant Program in Peru.

Andrew Lamb and Harriet Legan, both former French majors, have been named finalists for the [Fulbright English Teaching Assistant Program](#) in Belgium.

Alexis Palmer, a 2016 graduate who majored in Japanese major and minored in French, received a position as office assistant at the [Consulate General of Japan in New York](#) in January 2021.

Cardinal Directions: History Alum Becomes Program Specialist [scheduled to be published on March 18, 2021]

Michelle Haas graduated in 2001 from Ball State University with a degree in [History](#). To complete her Public History program, she interned for the National Park Service (NPS) at [New River Gorge National Park in WV](#). Since then, she continued to work for the NPS at several parks throughout the nation working in a variety of roles from resource interpretation and management to business and administration. She now works at [Fort Sumter and Fort Moultrie National Historical Park in Charleston, SC](#). She spends her free time travelling, hiking, playing bass in garage band, and spending time with friends and family.

What did you study while you were at Ball State?

History with a focus on Public History.

What is your career now?

I work as a Concessions & Fee Program Specialist for Fort Sumter and Fort Moultrie National Historical Park, a unit of the National Park Service.

What does a typical week in your position look like?

I oversee a few different business management programs and there's constant shifting between competing priorities. A lot of my week involves project planning and compliance, budget reviews, policy review and application, and supervision. While I no longer work regularly with the public directly or create content the public has access to, I've continued working in the field of public history by administering programs that support visitor services and experiences within the park.

What are the most valuable skills you learned in your major?

How to effectively target my research for the data, I need to serve a specific purpose and translate it in a way that makes it accessible to those who need to understand and refer back to it.

How are the skills you learned as a History student relevant to your career and life today?

I learned to think critically about the information I received and to seek out other sources when the information wasn't complete. What was missing in the story presented and why? As a park I had a responsibility to convey complete information and in doing so help maintain the integrity of, and high regard for my agency. In my everyday life it helps me work through the information, disinformation, and agendas of various media sources, political spin, and even recreational reading.

What is your advice to other History students?

Be bold in pursuing opportunities within the organizations that inspire you. Your skill set is transferrable in a variety of ways. Seek out travel and volunteer opportunities as much as you can. You'll gain more insight and experience of the world and human condition than you can imagine!

You can connect with Michelle via her email (michelle_haas@nps.gov).

Cardinal Directions: Social Studies Graduate to AP Teacher [scheduled to be published on March 16, 2021]

Alexandria "Lexi" Gribble teaches AP United States Government and Politics and AP Human Geography at Herron High School in Indianapolis, Indiana. She is also the sponsor of Model UN at [Herron High School](#). Before joining the team at Herron, she taught middle school for two years in Marion, Indiana. She graduated from Ball State in 2018 with a double major in [Social Studies Education](#) and [History](#). During her time as a student at Ball State and in addition to her class work, she conducted research on historical empathy in the classroom and presented that research at the [National Council for History Education's](#) annual conference in 2018.

What did you study while you were at Ball State?

I graduated with a double major in Social Studies Education and History in 2018.

What is your career now?

I teach AP United States Government and Politics and AP Human Geography at Herron High School in Indianapolis, Indiana.

What does a typical week in your position look like?

Now that we have returned to in person learning I am teaching my students both in person and virtually throughout the school day. In addition to teaching, a typical week includes finalizing lesson plans, grading student work, and organizing activities for Model UN. Every week is different and while that can be challenging at times, it is also what makes being a teacher exciting and rewarding.

What are the most valuable skills you learned in your major?

I learned how to apply my historical knowledge to create lesson plans that help my students engage with social studies content in a meaningful way. I learned how to guide students to ask questions, investigate, and explore the world they live in. It is important that teachers provide students opportunities to critically think and apply what they learn in the classroom to their daily lives. Both of my majors prepared me to be that teacher for my students.

How are the skills you learned as a History student relevant to your career and life today?

My time as a History student directly prepared me for my career today. Despite the challenges of the past year, I can still apply the skills that I learned in my classroom no matter if it is in person or virtual. **As a History student I had to be resourceful when researching for my projects by closely examining and analyzing historical texts to find evidence to support my work.** I use this skill daily as I craft lesson plans for my students. I have found ways to be innovative in my career and my time as a History student definitely prepared me for that.

What is your advice to other History students?

Use the time you have as a student to explore all the opportunities that Ball State has to offer. I was able to take classes that I enjoyed, take leadership roles in the History Club, and attend conferences where I learned more about the teaching profession. Those opportunities not only enhanced my time at Ball State, but also helped me gain skills that I use today as a teacher.

You can contact Alexandria via email (agribble@herronhighschool.org).

***Curation Chronicles: Molly Hollcraft Journeys to the Johnson County Museum of History
[published on March 24, 2021]***

Molly Hollcraft is a senior from Indianapolis who is in the [Honors College](#). She is majoring in [Public History](#) with a minor in [Historic Preservation](#), and from January to May 2021, she is an intern at the [Johnson County Museum of History](#) in Franklin, Indiana. Working alongside director David Pfeiffer, she helps to catalogue and store family letters, store artifacts, and install the exhibit on Kuji, Japan.

Below is an interview that the College of Science and Humanities [blog](#) conducted with Molly.

How did you decide you wanted to pursue a degree in Public History? I decided that I wanted to pursue a degree in Public History because I did not want to teach. I wanted to do research and use that research. Public History really stood out to me because there were so many options, and I did not have to follow a single path.

Why were you interested in this specific internship?

I was really interested in this internship because I wanted to have some experience in a museum. I wanted to try different public history jobs before I started to apply to grad schools and try to find a job. This internship, and many others, are important in gaining experience and knowledge about the types of jobs that I might want to pursue.

What does a typical day at your internship look like?

A typical day can vary at the museum. On any given day, however, I am doing collections work. Many days I am working on getting a very large collection of letters (about 6 boxes) cataloged and accessioned. I also work on filing away artifacts and paperwork. I get to sit in on staff meetings and learn about the programs that they put on and the behind the scenes aspects. In a few weeks, I will get to help with deinstallation of the most recent exhibit, pulling artifacts, creating text panels, and installing the next exhibit.

What are the most valuable skills you have gained from your internship?

I think that one of the most valuable skills that I have learned is **how to be brief and succinct, yet still have the important information included.** I also have **grown in my patience and organization with comes with working on a very large and tedious collection.**

What is the most fulfilling part of your internship?

The most fulfilling part of my internship is knowing that I am helping not only the museum, but also **researchers who want to use the letters that I am accessioning for information about Johnson County from the 1910s to about the 1960s.**

Should you wish to contact Molly, you can do so via her email (mmhollcroft@bsu.edu).