



The Pulitzer Project in Kansas: William Allen White and Freedom of Speech

In 1922, *Emporia Gazette* editor William Allen White placed a pro-labor sign in the windows of his newspaper, a provocative action that led to his arrest. In response, he wrote “To an Anxious Friend,” an impassioned defense of freedom of speech during trying times. For this, he became the first Kansan to win the prestigious Pulitzer Prize.

Through 2016, the Kansas Humanities Council is joining the Pulitzer Prizes Board and the Federation of State Humanities Councils to celebrate the spirit of White’s editorial and 100 years of the Pulitzer Prizes. The initiative seeks to illuminate the impact of journalism and the humanities on American life today, to imagine their future, and to inspire new generations to consider the values represented by the body of Pulitzer Prize-winning work.

KHC is kicking off a season of **special projects, Speakers Bureau** events, and **community writing workshops** to explore freedom of speech.



To hear White’s editorial and learn more about *The Pulitzer Project in Kansas*, visit the Programs page at www.kansashumanities.org

The Pulitzer Prizes



Free Speech in Times of Crisis

“Congress shall make no law... abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press...” With these simple words in the First Amendment, U.S. citizens are granted an inalienable right to express their opinions, a right that does not dissipate at times when society is under stress and disagreements get heated. Even when we do not agree with someone’s language, we believe in the speaker’s right to utter it—and that if we disagree with someone’s speech, the best response is more speech. History shows us, however, that sometimes people in positions of authority actively work to close off public discussion. This presentation will look at the reasons free speech is protected and provide current examples of how people in authority dissuade the public from speaking up. Events of today can be connected to William Allen White’s famous editorial, the work of Joseph Pulitzer, and the history of journalism in the United States. *Presented by Stephen Wolgast.*

Steve is a former New York Times editor who now teaches journalism and digital media at Kansas State University.

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Booking a Pulitzer Project in Kansas Program

How to Bring a KHC Speaker or Writing Workshop Instructor to Your Community

- Select a speaker and/or writing instructor.
- Contact the speaker/instructor and confirm time, date, and location.
- Apply online for KHC program funds to bring the scholar to your community.
- Publicize your event. Download a press release, speaker bio, photo, and KHC logo poster.
- Tell us how it went. After the event, download and fill out a Speakers Bureau evaluation and cost-share form and email them to Leslie Von Holten (leslie@kansashumanities.org).



Make Art, Not War

Kansas: A frontier where strong people with strong opinions find their voice. Throughout our turbulent history, Kansans have vociferously and voraciously pursued the greater good, working both within established systems as well as outside these systems to affect change. With these movements come a rich array of protest art—art made to draw attention to a topic of great concern in the hope of eliciting change or expanding the conversation. From John Stuart Curry's depiction of John Brown's call to action to M.T. Liggett's politically charged fence-line artwork, protest art in Kansas includes an array of forms. Sometimes humorous, sometimes biting, and often clever, this presentation will look at the ways artists craft their messages.

Presented by Erika Nelson.

Erika is the creator and curator of the World's Largest Collection of the World's Smallest Versions of the World's Largest Things Traveling Roadside Attraction and Museum.

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Free Speech in an Information-Overloaded World

Being informed requires information. Yet in today's 24-hour news cycle, Wikipedia, and social media, do we have the right information to be informed citizens? Understanding government policies regarding public access to data collected is key. This presentation provides an overview of information policy access and changes. It raises critical questions and gets people thinking: What do we know about how people use information? Do they have the right information, and enough of it, to make informed choices in their lives? How much more access to information do we still need? With the federal government as both a collector and publisher of massive amounts of information, does the U.S. population take advantage of this content? One example of real-world opportunities in Kansas is the expansion of e-government resources, community partnerships, and more strategic use of public libraries throughout the state and nation. *Presented by Jim Walther.*

Jim teaches library and information management at Emporia State University.

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The Pulitzer Project in Kansas: Community Writing Workshops

The Pulitzer Prizes

As part of the special Pulitzer initiative, Kansas nonprofits can invite trained instructors to facilitate writing workshops in their communities. Just as William Allen White defended free speech “by voice, by posted card, by letter, or by press,” participants are welcome to express themselves through essays, poems, letters to the editor, memoirs, fiction—any way they so choose. *Writing workshops are available through December 2017, or as funding allows.*



Anthony Funari teaches writing and literature at Johnson County Community College in Overland Park. A published author and scholar of Renaissance Studies, Anthony works to help writers articulate their thoughts and to understand their readers’ perspectives.

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Paula Ripple taught English composition at Dodge City Community College and Dodge City High School and has served as a mentor to new writing teachers. In retirement she continues to explore writing and innovative techniques employed by contemporary writers.

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Daniel Hoyt teaches fiction writing and literature, including the Literature of Rock and Roll, at Kansas State University. His short story collection, *Then We Saw the Flames*, won the Juniper Prize for Fiction. Dan asks his writers to rediscover the world, to see it through new and different points of view.

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Kim Stanley teaches courses in English and World literature, poetry, and beginning and advanced writing at McPherson College. She is interested in the ways in which literature can affect people’s lives and beliefs, and in using literature to help people talk about values.

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