

Honors Program

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Honors Student Presents Paper at State English Conference

Beth Rauch, a Shippensburg University senior and McMurray native, presented her senior seminar paper at the English Association of Pennsylvania State Universities undergraduate conference on Friday, April 3 at West Chester University.

Rauch's paper, "Queers Should Quit Libraries: The Problem with Banning and Omitting Queer Materials from Library Collections," tackles the thorny issue of books with homosexual topics being banned from public library shelves. The paper was written as the culminating research project for Rauch's senior seminar capstone class.

Rauch, an English secondary certification major and a member of the SU Honors Program, looked at specific cases of banned books with homosexual themes and the resulting snowball effect of wider bans. She discussed why such books need to be available and how libraries can establish better systems for patrons to challenge books they feel are inappropriate.

More than 100 people attended the one-day conference at the West Chester University campus. Rauch presented her paper to an audience of about 25 professors and students.

"There was definitely interest in this topic," says Rauch. "People were approaching me after the presentation and asking how they can make others aware of this issue and how they can be ready to deal with this in their own public libraries."

The paper has been accepted for publication in the 2008-2009 *Write the Ship*, Shippensburg University's student academic journal, and has won the journal's Editor's Choice Award. Rauch also hopes to rework and submit the paper for publication in a national journal.

Rauch's future plans are to pursue graduate school in library science at the University of Pittsburgh this fall and train to be a public school librarian.

The Shippensburg University Honors Program is made up of more than 150 undergraduate students of diverse backgrounds who are accepted to the program based on academic achievement, intellectual curiosity, and evidence of leadership and community service.

The Honors Program offers small, dynamic classes with outstanding instruction; opportunities for research projects, internships, and study abroad experiences; and cultural events, social activities, and service projects.