

Dr. David Bell

By Collin Massie



Dr. David Bell is our **Director of Creative Writing** and currently teaches a creative writing class for undergraduates and graduates, a creative writing capstone class, and English 100 and 200. His primary passion is creative writing coupled with an insatiable appetite for reading.

He has had a successful **career as a novelist**, publishing a number of works over the past decade. One of his novels, *Cemetery Girl*, even won the prestigious Prix Polar de Cognac award in 2013. His experience in writing has proven him to be a great source of wisdom in the creative writing world. As Dr. Mary Ellen Miller puts it, “The whole world knows that Dr. Bell is a splendid and very successful writer. My brother-in-law who lives in Ohio was

extremely impressed when he found out that I know Dave personally.”

Dr. Bell grew up in a family of very active readers and, surrounded by a vast amount of books, found himself “obsessed with books from an early age.” One day he thought to himself that the books must be coming from somewhere—that someone must be creating them, and that perhaps he should be one of those people. His journey from avid reader to accomplished novelist had officially begun.

He found out, as all aspiring writers eventually do, that making a career out of writing is easier said than done—that the process is more like learning an instrument than perhaps reading a book. He found that writing alone couldn’t keep him afloat, but his passion for it never dwindled. He discovered, to his great pleasure, that he liked the teaching aspect more than he thought he would, discovering that a career as a college professor was just the thing for him.

Soon after receiving his PhD. in Creative Writing, and starting his career as a college professor, he **published his first novel, *The Condemned***, in 2008. More than anything else, Dr. Bell says that he felt relieved, because his biggest fear was that he would die without ever having published a book. When his first novel was published, he says he began to think, “Wow. I should drive carefully, because I have something to live for.” His wit is definitely another of Dr. Bell’s shining attributes, as others could attest. Dr. LeNoir says, “He entertains and informs, and he connects with an audience in ways that other authors rarely succeed in doing.”

Outside of the world of academia and writing, Dr. Bell has his other enjoyments as well. As mentioned earlier, he is of course more than just a fan of reading, but keeping true to his **love for story-telling**, he also enjoys watching films spanning all types of genres. But after all is said and done, he loves to walk in the cemetery near his house to clear his head.

Dr. Bell is also currently very **excited about our MFA program**. It being a newer addition, he is thrilled to see students in the program begin to graduate, as well as to receive a large number of new applicants.

Dr. Bell's advice to English students is "to read a lot. It will make you a better thinker, empathetic, and even if you don't have the money, it allows you to travel to other places." It's truly a necessity for anyone in the field of English. And to aspiring writers he says, "**Write what you want to write. Life is too short to write what others want.** And if you do, there's a better chance others will be interested in it too."