

4-1-2013

## “Digital James Dickey” Developing an App for the iPad based on a poem by James Dickey (grade level 11 & 12)

Deno P. Trakas  
*Wofford College*, [trakasdp@wofford.edu](mailto:trakasdp@wofford.edu)

Ed Epps  
*Spartanburg High School*

Caroline Odell  
*Wofford College*

John E. Lane  
*Wofford College*

David A. Sykes  
*Wofford College*

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.wofford.edu/avdproject>



Part of the [Literature in English, North America Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Trakas, Deno P.; Epps, Ed; Odell, Caroline; Lane, John E.; and Sykes, David A., "“Digital James Dickey” Developing an App for the iPad based on a poem by James Dickey (grade level 11 & 12)" (2013). *Arthur Vining Davis High Impact Fellows Projects*. Paper 4.  
<http://digitalcommons.wofford.edu/avdproject/4>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Arthur Vining Davis High Impact Fellows at Digital Commons @ Wofford. It has been accepted for inclusion in Arthur Vining Davis High Impact Fellows Projects by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Wofford. For more information, please contact [stonerp@wofford.edu](mailto:stonerp@wofford.edu).

## High Impact Fellows Project Overview

### Project Title, Course Name, Grade Level

*“Digital James Dickey” Developing an App for the ipad based on a poem by James Dickey  
(grade level 11 & 12)*

### Team Members

Student(s): *Caroline Odell*

High School Teacher: *Ed Epps*

Spartanburg High School

Wofford Faculty: *John Lane*  
*Deno Trakas*  
*David Sykes*

English  
English & Environmental Studies  
Computer Science

### Brief Description of Project (<150 words)

The purpose of our project was to create an app for the ipad based on a nature poem by James Dickey that could be used by a high school teacher in a classroom. The app includes a poem, video readings by the poet, perspectives (comment and literary criticisms) by a number of experts, biography, a gallery of photos, and a resources page. In fall of 2013 we will test the app in the high school classroom

### List of Materials Required and Costs, if Applicable

- iPad
- iPad *Digital James Dickey* app

The Digital Dickey Project:

Choose one Dickey poem:

The Vegetable King

The Heaven of Animals

On the Coosawattee

The Shark's Parlor

Encounter in the Cage Country

For the Last Wolverine

Kudzu

(All from *Poems '57-'67*)

Read on screen, then answer four or five questions about the poem and the way it demonstrates Dickey's interest in environmental themes and subjects.

Get Russ Bradley to video in fall. ([bradleyrn@wofford.edu](mailto:bradleyrn@wofford.edu))

Outline for AVD Grant Project:  
The James Dickey App: A Selection of Nature Poems

Project team:

John Lane, Wofford professor  
Deno Trakas, Wofford professor  
David Sykes, Wofford professor

Ed Epps, high school teacher  
Caroline Odell, Wofford student

Description of Project:

Create an ipad-type app based on a selection of nature poems by James Dickey that can be tested by a high school teacher in a high school classroom.

Between now and next spring John Lane (Wofford environmental studies and English professor), Deno Trakas (a Wofford English professor and one of James Dickey's former students), David Sykes (a Wofford computer science professor), and Caroline Odell Wofford (a Wofford computer science student) will work together to create content and write a program for an app that will be tested in the classroom of Edwin Epps, a Spartanburg High School AP English teacher.

We are gathering material to create a scaled down app similar to "The Wasteland" app available for ipad:

<http://www.touchpress.com/titles/thewasteland/>

We will collect:

1. Poems--select a number of James Dickey poems (maybe a dozen) with clear nature/environmental themes

2. Readings--offer both audio and video of James Dickey reading some of the poems with this material pulled from existing sources we've gathered.
3. Perspectives--videotape contemporary poets and critics reading and discussing various aspects of the poems.
4. Notes -annotations and references explaining and exploring the texts of the poems.
5. Manuscripts-scanned original facsimiles of James Dickey's original mss.
6. Gallery--a gathering of still photos of subjects, locations, and pictures of James Dickey himself (much like the "gallery" in "The Wasteland" app).
7. Exercises-unique interactive ways (assignments, poetry exercises) in which students can engage actively with the material.

We have started working on the app with several full-blown meetings of our team.

We have chosen six poems and gathered material. In January Carolyn will learn to design an app in an independent study with Dr. Sykes.

In the spring we will prepare the alpha version of the app for limited testing, revise over the summer, and test a beta version in Ed Epp's classroom in fall 2013.

## Info on Costs for Required Curriculum Materials

This app will only be available through a site license owned by Wofford College. High schools can request use of the app in their class room and it will be free for their uses in specific literature class rooms. The app will not be available any other way because of copyright restrictions.

## Classroom Assessment

In fall 2014 Ed Epps will test the app in his Spartanburg High School classroom.

Deno Trakas also plans to use the app in his Wofford College Fall 2014 American Lit class.

## Curriculum Units



## Resources for Digital James Dickey

Calhoun, Richard and Hill, Robert. *James Dickey*. Boston: Twayne, 1983. The first full-length biography.

Carroll, Paul. "James Dickey: The Smell of Blood in Paradise." *The Poem In Its Skin*. Chicago: Big Table Publishing Co., 1968. 40–49. An excellent short essay on "Heaven of Animals" that Dickey refers to in *Self-Interviews*.

Clabough, Casey, "To Blend in the Place You're In, But With a Mind to Do Something: The Practice of Merging in James Dickey's 'To the White Sea.'" An essay about Dickey's novel *To the White Sea* and the process of merging with the landscape.

Dickey, Christopher. "The Sharks in the Parlor: Fact, Fiction, and Foreign Policy." *South Carolina Review*. An essay by Dickey's son about his father's low regard for facts and high regard for imagination in fiction, poetry, and people.

Dickey, Christopher. *Summer of Deliverance*. New York: Touchstone, 1998. A fascinating biography by Dickey's son.

Dickey, James. *Self-Interviews*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1970. 106-109. Dickey talks about the genesis of "Heaven of Animals" and says he got the idea from a Disney film.

Dickey, James. *Sorties: Journals and New Essays*. New York: Doubleday, 1971. Journals entries and essays on poetry, poets, music, love, death ...

Dickey, James. Interview by Franklin Ashley. *Paris Review*, No. 20. <http://www.theparisreview.org/interviews/3741/the-art-of-poetry-no-20-james-dickey> A fascinating, wide-ranging interview, but it doesn't touch on "Heaven of Animals."

Dunlap, Bernie. Interview with President of Wofford College, on "Heaven of Animals". 16 Jan. 2013. Videotape.

Harding, Wendy, and Martin, Jacky. "Oscar, Derrida's Cat, and Other Knowing Animals." *Transatlantica 2* (2012) (2012): 2–14. Print. A philosophical essay that includes a paragraph on "Heaven of Animals."

Hart, Henry. *The World as a Lie: James Dickey*. New York: Picador, 2000. The most thorough and most controversial biography.

Hodge, Marion. "James Dickey's Natural Heaven." *South Atlantic Review* 56.No. 4 (Nov. 1991) 57–70. Print. A useful article on "Heaven of Animals."

Jake Ohring Performs "The Heaven of Animals" for Poetry Out Loud NJ 2011 State Finals--YouTube. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=4bM4dfKkSYw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4bM4dfKkSYw)

McClure, Nancye. "Outsider Artists: Walter Anderson and James Dickey." (original source not found)

Princess Grace Kelly Reading Heaven of Animals. Audio Recording. An interesting cultural artifact, but she leaves out part of the poem.

Tillinghast, Richard. "The Creation of the Animals," a poem from his book *Sleep Watch*.

"Turner, Daniel Cross, "Mock Primitive: The Artful Ethnography of James Dickey." Presented at the conference "James Dickey: A Celebration of the Life and Works," Jan 19-20, 2007. An essay about two poems, "Slave Quarters" and "The Sheep Child."

Turner, Daniel Cross. "Modern Primitives: Mergings in the Poetry of Robert Penn Warren and James Dickey." *South Carolina Review*, 173-182. Print. A comparison of the two poets that includes a brief discussion of "Heaven of Animals."

Verburg, T. Larry, "Water Imagery in James Dickey's *Deliverance*." (original source not found)