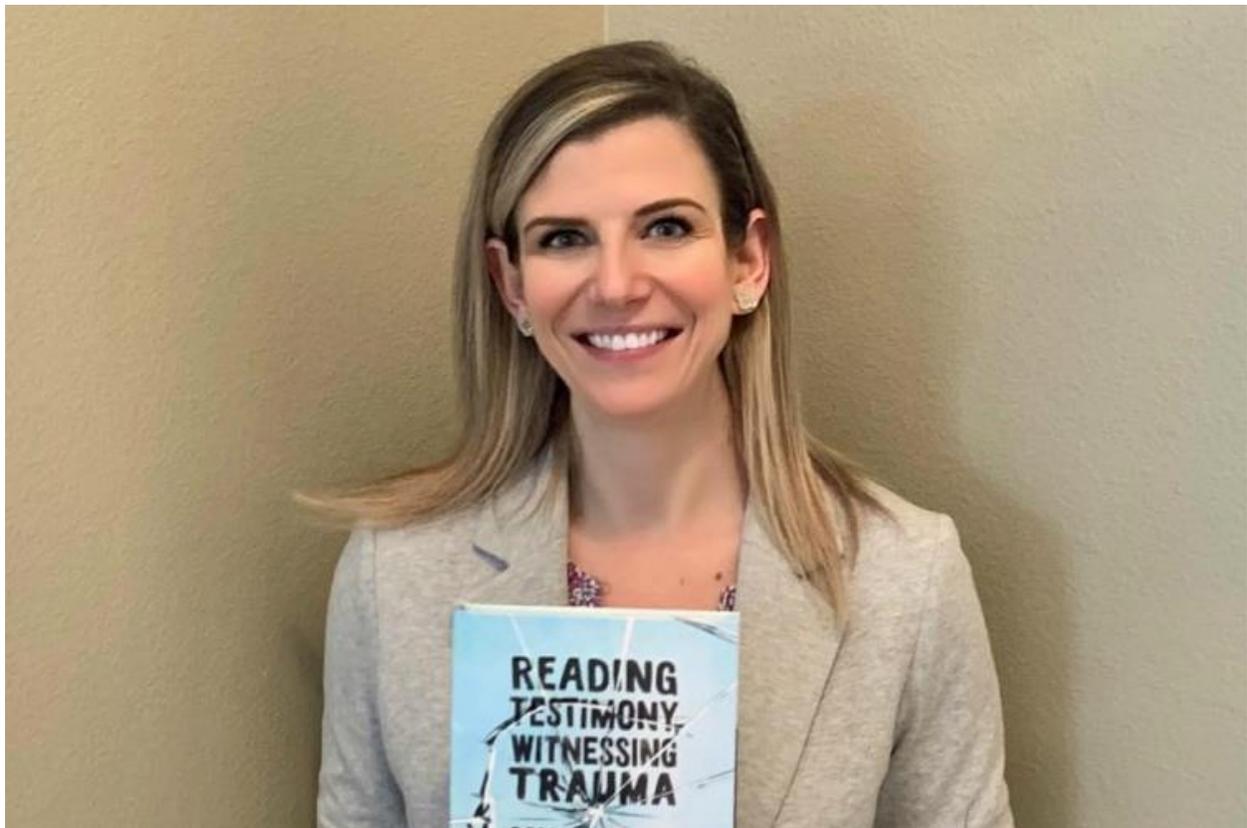


Reading, Responding, and Witnessing

English department alumna wins Eudora Welty prize for recent book

Thursday, November 12, 2020

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Eden Wales Freedman, a 2014 graduate from UNH's [PhD English program](#), has been awarded the 2020 Eudora Welty prize for her recent book, *Reading Testimony, Witnessing Trauma: Confronting Race, Gender, and Violence in American Literature*.

Wales Freedman’s book, which came directly from her dissertation, treats reader response to traumatic and testimonial literature written by and about African American women. Though the book is academic, its applications are real-world and timely, as it provides guidance on how to relate to one another across difference and in times of crisis.

This has been a big year for Wales Freedman. Not only has she won the prestigious Eudora Welty prize, but she also has a new job. After having served as a tenured professor at Mount Mercy University in Iowa, she has now been appointed Vice Provost for Faculties and Academic Affairs at Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota. Looking back, she says that she could not have gotten to where she is now without her experience at UNH.

Without question, the most valuable part of my UNH

experience was the mentorship I received“Without question, the most valuable part of my UNH experience was the mentorship I received,” Wales Freedman says. “Nearly every one of my professors went above and beyond to help ensure my future success.” In particular, she references Drs. [Robin Hackett](#), [Reginald Wilburn](#), [Delia Konzett](#), [David Watters](#), [Siobhan Senior](#), [Cris Beemer](#), and [Cari Moorhead](#).

In addition to mentorship, Wales Freedman says that teaching experience and research support at UNH helped her to secure a tenure-track position before she had even defended her dissertation. Her final year, she received a [Dissertation Year Fellowship \(DYF\)](#) from the graduate school, which allowed her to focus on her scholarship as she approached the end of her time at UNH.

Speaking now as Vice Provost, Wales Freedman insists that earning an English degree is one of the most practical majors one can pursue. She says that the skills involved—reading, writing, and thinking critically and creatively—are essential for every job in any field.

“I will always be grateful to UNH for sharpening the tools I would need to become a tenured professor and university leader,” Wales Freedman says. “I will never stop paying that gift forward.”

- WRITTEN BY:
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