

## **Exploring the Edge: Geology, Photography and Writing Projects in the Quarry**

*DePauw University Nature Park*

*Ian and Mimi Rolland Welcome and Activities Center*

*Manning Environmental Field Station*

Joseph Heithaus, associate professor and department chair of English, DePauw University

Cynthia O'Dell, associate professor and department chair of art, DePauw University

Jeanette Pope, assistant professor of geosciences and coordinator of the

Women in Science Program, DePauw University

We borrow the term “edge” from the lexicon of bird watchers. Bird watchers often look to edges of forests, lakes, streams, fields for the abundance of activity and life. The Nature Park has many such natural and manmade edges, but it is also a human edge as well – it is on the edge of our campus, the edge of our community, and it is a place caught between its past as a quarry and its present as a park. Is the nature park natural? What is nature?

As an artist and photographer, Cindy O’Dell will invite her small group to use the camera as a vehicle for exploring the edges of the Nature Park. Participants will be asked to use the lens to investigate the ways the Nature Park itself creates interesting tensions between humans and a deeply scarred landscape.

As a Geologist, Jeane Pope will take her group into the quarry to discover the ways it has exposed a geological record millions of years old. The quarry itself is alive with evidence of Indiana’s natural history as a sea bed on a tectonic plate once located in the southern hemisphere.

As a poet, Joe Heithaus will have his group explore the edges of the park through a short writing exercise. The words they write will examine any number of ways the quarry is alive with a history found not only in the geologic record, but also in the human remnants of stone cutting. Part of our writing will involve observing the ways nature’s forces are already masking that past.