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MFA NEWS & VIEWS

*creative writing program
newsletter inside*

WITH MIRTH & LAUGHTER

*professor and two-term chair
Kent Bales retires*

THE TRIUMPH OF ENTHUSIASM

*trailblazing efforts by faculty,
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bevy of awards*

ATLAS OF THE NEW WORLD

*alumna Virginia McDavid's
pioneering linguistic fieldwork
with Harold Allen*

feminist **CHARGE**

*How professors Madelon Sprengnether, Shirley Garner, and Toni McNaron
led the Minnesota Department of English into a new era*

When my brothers and I were kids, my father regaled us with quotations—from Oscar Wilde to old movies: the Marx Brothers’ “You can’t fool me; there ain’t no sanity clause” (*A Night at the Opera*); Preston Sturges’ “That’s the tragedy of the rich: they don’t need anything” (*The Lady Eve*); and Bette Davis’ “What a dump” (from *Beyond the Forest*, quoted again by Martha in *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*). By far the phrase that most captured us, sending us reeling into fits of laughter with a clever rhyme requiring fluency in Brooklynese, came from Katz’s Delicatessen on East Houston Street: “Send a Salami to your Boy in the Army,” the sign still hanging above the counter, left over from World War Two.

Katz’s became a central part of my life when I moved to lower Manhattan in the Seventies. The old signs were still there, grimy with ancient grease, as were the equally ancient waiters, bearing plates of knockwurst and pastrami sandwiches as they shuffled across the vast cafeteria in shiny black pants, stained white shirts, and worn shoes with

from the CHAIR

By Paula Rabinowitz



Photo by Richard G. Anderson

the toes cut from the front to make room for bunions. The sign that now really appealed to me had a Wildean flare: “Known as the Best!”

What did this enigmatic declaration mean? My brother, who also lived downtown, and I spent hours contemplating this philosophical problem: was Katz’s the best, or simply *known* as such? If the latter, then what was better than Katz’s? To be known as the best certainly didn’t ensure greatness—but maybe knowing, or being known, was all that mattered. Certainly Wilde would agree, even if he could never be imagined spiking a sour tomato from the bowl on the cracked Formica table. If Katz’s was known as the best, it must be the best. The sign says so. Epistemology trumps ontology any day; why else teach?

Knowing implies some activity: learning or thinking occurred. It is fluid and subject to revision, even if that entails redecorating. What has been known as the best is malleable. Is Pearl S. Buck (1938 Nobel Laureate in Literature) really on a par with Samuel Beckett (1969)?

Awards, like taste, cannot replace many other modes of discernment. Yet some, such as the Nobel, do represent the significant opinions of peers. This process is mirrored in the scholarly procedure of peer-review which vets all important scholarly honors and awards. In academia—unlike in Katz’s Delicatessen—to be known as the best actually signifies. The convention of accepting an award requires demurrals: so many others are more deserving; so many others made this honor possible. When scholars receive awards, it is especially awkward. We work for our own edification, for our students’ improvement, for the advancement of knowledge. Still, considering the slim chances of receiving an award in the Humanities or Arts, it is always gratifying to receive acknowledgement of the quality of one’s work from peers and students.

Since I became chair in summer 2006, the faculty, students, staff, and alumni of the Department of Minnesota have been accorded an impressive array of honors and awards for their contributions to the University of Minnesota and beyond. (See

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ENGLISH@MINNESOTA, VOL. 9 NO. 1. *english@minnesota* is published once a year for the alumni, faculty, staff, students, and friends of the English department. Editing, writing, and design by Terri Sutton except where noted. Send correspondence to the address below.

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CORRECTION: In our last issue Thomas Keller III was incorrectly identified as a contract lawyer. He is an attorney and shareholder with Moss & Barnett, Minneapolis. *english@minnesota* regrets the error.

pages 10–12.) The range of distinguished honors—from the extremely rare and coveted (inter)nationally-competitive Guggenheim Fellowship to departmental recognition—cover all aspects of our department’s mission: teaching, service, and scholarly/creative work. To bring home the rarity of the trifecta Professor David Treuer received: only 75 National Endowment for the Humanities fellowships per year are awarded to all humanities scholars at Research 1 universities; only 200 Guggenheims are selected yearly from 3,500 applications in humanities and the arts; less than a dozen University of Minnesota associate professors become McKnight Presidential Fellows—all this and his latest novel, *The Translation of Dr. Apelles*, just out in paperback!

But Professor Treuer is not the only member of our faculty member to be honored many times: Professor Andrew Scheil won NEH and Solmsen Fellowships for his new project: “The Matter of Babylon.” He, too, was named a McKnight Presidential Fellow. His first book, *The Footprints of Israel*, won the 2008 Medieval Academy of America’s John Nicholas Brown Prize, a significant award in the field as it includes art history, archaeology, history, political science, linguistics, and literary criticism, in all languages.

What these awards suggest to me is that we too should be “known as the best.” Our self designation as a pioneer in interdisciplinary literary study has been recognized by the most prestigious granting agencies in the nation. Treuer’s work as a novelist, linguist, critic, and ethnographer, for instance, makes perfect sense in an English department where many of us are trained in or have migrated to interdisciplinary areas including anthropology, American Studies, comparative literature, psychoanalysis, neuropsychology, geography, art history, film studies, and area studies.

Equally as versatile are the members of our Creative Writing Program’s MFA faculty, each of whom writes in a number of genres and forms. They continue to be lauded for the elegance with which they move among these genres. Last spring Professor Charles Baxter was given the American Academy of Arts and Letters’ Award of Merit for the Short Story, and Regents Professor Patricia Hampl was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. This year, both won Minnesota Book Awards, Baxter for his critical work *The Art of Subtext: Beyond Plot* (Graywolf) and Hampl for her memoir *The Florist’s Daughter* (Harcourt). Professor Julie Schumacher, a novelist, short story writer, and the Director of the Creative Writing program, won a 2007 Minnesota Book Award for Best Young Adult novel for *The Book of One Hundred Truths* (Delacorte). Meanwhile, poet and Professor Michael Dennis Browne’s libretto *To Be Certain of the Dawn* was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize.

Three of our faculty members have been recently recognized for their superb teaching: in 2007, Maria Damon won the University-wide Award for Outstanding

Our self designation as a pioneer in interdisciplinary literary study has been recognized by the most prestigious granting agencies in the nation.

Contributions to Post-Baccalaureate Graduate and Professional Education; Rebecca Krug received the college’s 2007 Arthur “Red” Motley Exemplary Teaching Award for undergraduate teaching; and Siobhan Craig has been chosen by the department’s undergraduate students to receive the 2008 Ruth Christie Distinguished Teaching Award. From Old English to hip hop, across many national and media boundaries, we seek to make the study of languages and literatures in English historically grounded, theoretically sophisticated, and socially inclusive.

“But that’s not all,” as the late-night ads for Ginza knives might say. A great faculty inspires but is also spurred on by amazing students. Among our current undergraduates, we have a 2008 Fulbright recipient, Melissa Shelsby, and five Selmer Birkelo Scholarship winners in the past two years (only 13 per year in all of CLA). One

of those winners, Amanda Steepleton, also received both the President’s Student Leadership and Service Award and the University of Minnesota Alumni Award. Our MFA program candidates and graduates continue to publish books at an astounding rate; and five 2008 Minnesota State Art Board grants went to MFA candidates and alumni. The past couple of years have seen our PhD alumni finding placement in great numbers: in 2007 six out of seven job-seeking graduates accepted tenured positions.

Moreover, the success of faculty and students owes much to the persistent energy of a talented staff. Over the past two years, both Creative Writing coordinator Kathleen Glasgow and English adviser Rebecca Aylesworth won the College’s Outstanding Service Award, and informational representative Terri Sutton garnered grants from the McKnight Arts & Humanities Endowment to mount our series “Framing Suzan-Lori Parks,” in conjunction with the playwright’s March 2008 Esther Freier Lecture, and from the Delmas Foundation to fund “50 Years of Joseph Warren Beach Lectures in Literature,” which we hope to establish as a book series.

Of our three cover story subjects, Shirley Garner, first woman chair of English (1994–2000), received the 2007 Mullen/Spector/Truax Women’s Leadership Award in recognition of the generative work she has done as a scholar, teacher, and administrator to nurture women’s careers. And Madelon Sprengnether, who midwived the Creative Writing Program’s MFA degree, this summer was named Regents Professor, the highest honor for a University of Minnesota professor. These and the many other awards listed in this newsletter show that our current watershed of honors simply recognizes years of great effort and service. We are an award-winning department, whose members constantly do exceptionally fine work; it’s nice work if you can get it being a scholar, teacher, student, or staff in such a place. It’s nice, too, to know that we’re known for this.

Paula Rabinowitz received the 2008 CLA Dean’s Medal for excellence in scholarship.

Almost 30 years ago, three renegade Department of English professors printed up a simple brochure advertising eight upcoming classes with a focus on “Feminist Studies in Literature.” Over the next 13 years, the brochure’s offerings nearly quadrupled. The group of three became an official Department of English subfield, incorporating other professors, nurturing numerous graduate students, and sponsoring one of the nation’s first Feminist Studies in Literature symposia (with an opening address by poet Adrienne Rich). The subfield also spawned a ground-breaking publication, *Hurricane Alice*, a nonacademic feminist journal of passionate and sophisticated analysis and description.

The three professors—Shirley Garner, Toni McNaron, and Madelon Sprengnether (then Gohlke)—meanwhile published trailblazing scholarship, notably Garner and Sprengnether’s edited volume (with Claire Kahane) *The (M)other Tongue: Essays in Feminist Psychoanalytic Interpretation* (1985) and McNaron’s *Voices in the Night: Women Speaking about Incest*, edited with Yarrow Morgan (1983). Garner and McNaron served as directors of Women’s Studies and the Center for Advanced Feminist Studies, a graduate minor which McNaron initiated.

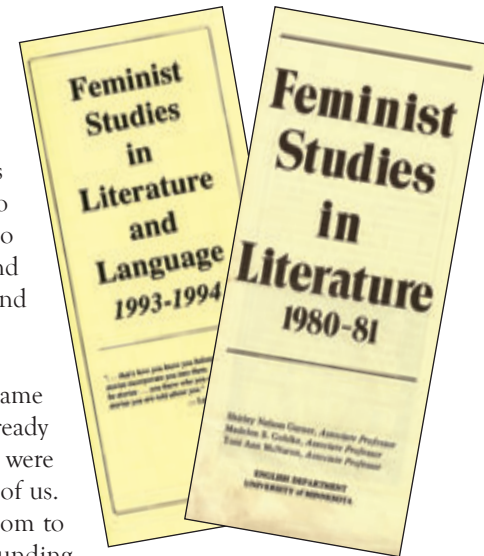
Beginnings

Professor Emerita Toni McNaron: All three of us understood very quickly that feminism needed to come to the academy. We thought, “This has to do with learning: it’s not just politics and voting, abuse and violence; it’s not just child care. It’s about learning, and we are in the position to help that part.”

Regents Professor Madelon (Mimi) Sprengnether: I came to the University in 1971. Shirley and Toni were already faculty members. Toni had tenure. Shirley and I were untenured assistant professors. Toni befriended both of us. Toni, because she had tenure, had a little more freedom to be an activist. She was really the instigator for the founding of the Women’s Studies Program [in 1973].¹ After Women’s Studies was established, Shirley and Toni and I began to look for ways to make some curricular modifications within the English department. And in particular to introduce women writers into the curriculum where they . . . weren’t!

Professor Shirley Garner: We all began to bring feminist material into our classes. This might be on the one hand simply teaching women writers that weren’t taught, or it might be teaching from a certain perspective, looking at how women were presented as characters in literature, how feminist questions got brought up. Then we began to realize that we were doing this in many courses that were just part of the usual curriculum, and that students really liked being able to choose such courses.

Sprengnether: So we had the idea of putting together this little brochure [entitled “Feminist Studies in Literature: 1980-81”] describing the courses we were offering. I



feminist UPRISING

As Creative Writing Program director, Sprengnether spearheaded the 1996 establishment of the MFA degree in Creative Writing. Garner became the first female chair of English in 1994. McNaron led the Bush Faculty Development Program on Excellence and Diversity in Teaching. Garner currently serves as associate dean of the Graduate School.

Among their many combined honors, perhaps the most significant was the 2007 establishment of the Garner-McNaron-Sprengnether Dissertation Fellowship. In honor of all three women’s pioneering efforts within English and the University, we’ve compiled an oral history of the Feminist Studies in Literature subfield (1980–1994), which changed the Department of English irrevocably.

think it was Toni who contacted Judy Chicago directly about using an image from *The Dinner Party*—because we *really* liked *The Dinner Party*—and to our great surprise she gave us permission.

McNaron: We understood that to ask for funding was probably foolhardy. We went off to lunch after some department meeting that had frustrated all three of us. And we decided to simply do it. We made up the first flier, paid for it ourselves, got it printed, and just began advertising. So the thing existed, and was immediately extremely popular, both with undergraduate and graduate students.

Garner: The chair of our department called us in and said that this was not appropriate, and that we didn’t have the authority to do this. We said, “But we aren’t doing anything other than listing our courses.”

McNaron: Then at some point we had a chair who wanted to have the department organized by subdivision. And of course there wasn’t one in feminist studies. By then we had found faculty in Women’s Studies and in Speech Communications, people in

¹ McNaron herself assigns credit for Women’s Studies’ start to English department graduate students, who returned from an early conference “all excited about bringing feminism into the academy”; in any case, McNaron pushed for the Program and served as its first chair.

French and Italian, and German; we thought that we had enough of either our own courses, or supporting courses, that we could be a subfield.

So that was the first moment really that we tried to go head forward and say to the Department, “Here we are, we’ve been doing this, here’s our courses, here’s who’s taking them, here’s who’s turned away because classes were full, we want to be a subfield.” We had a lot of data. There was sort of nothing that they could do. So they approved it. And we became a subfield, and we began having meetings like everybody else.

Sara Eaton (PhD 1985), Professor of English at North Central College, Illinois: The feminist subfield as an actual subfield was in its infancy when I was in attendance (1976–85). . . . This was so long ago that Shirley, Mimi, and Toni made the English department nervous when they sat together at department meetings. The feeling was heady: always edgy, intellectually exciting, emotionally supportive.

Brenda Daly (PhD 1985), University Professor, Iowa State University: This subfield was very exciting, and the greatest challenge was to absorb all the new feminist ideas. It also enabled feminist graduate students to identify and support each other. For example, I found Pat Johnson and Maureen Reddy through the subfield, and we later presented papers at the National Women’s Studies Association and at MLA together. I would never have become editor of the *NWSA Journal* (2003–2007) without this background.

Maureen Reddy (PhD 1985), Professor and Chair of English, Rhode Island University: I had come from an undergrad and MA program where the few—two, to be precise—feminist profs felt marginalized and embattled. The UM Department of English felt like a major contrast. Of course, I now realize that I overlooked or couldn’t see the serious struggles the feminist profs (as opposed to the grad students) had to endure. . . . It made it possible to do feminist work without feeling marginalized. It gave me—and other young women—an *institutional* way to respond to those professors who wanted to exclude feminist theory from their scholarly worlds.

Garner: We were I believe the first department in the country to have anything like “feminist studies in literature.” The way that differed from a focus on women or a focus on women writers is that it was to be from the *perspective*. And we did that deliberately because there was at least one male professor who might teach women writers but not at all teach them with the kind of focus on women that we wished to have. I wanted to see what the *status* of women was actually [within a certain historical period] and also what their potentialities and possibilities were and how that was represented in literature.

Doris Marquit (PhD 1978), long-time adjunct faculty in English and Women’s Studies: Feminism didn’t just introduce new subject matter, but new classroom dynamics. A new philosophy of what the instructor was—that it shouldn’t just be authoritarian “I-have-all-the-wisdom-which-I-will-now-impart-to-you.” Of course we weren’t the only people talking about that. But we *did* it. What became a cliché of the classroom—like sitting in a circle—I mean this was new stuff!

Courses

McNaron: One of the first courses in Feminist Studies in Literature was the Courtly Love course which I organized. It was taught by a collection of faculty, all from the U, in English, French, History, Art History, and Music, I believe. It was a stunning course that students simply adored. The other unique feature of FSL was our offering the English Quarter twice, once with Shirley and me and once with Mimi and me.

continued on page 6

Feminist “Click” in Academia

When I was in graduate school, my Shakespeare seminar focused on *King Lear*. We never talked about any of the erotic and negative language around women. And it was not a question I raised.

When I first came here [in 1970], Toni asked me if I would respond to a paper in the Shakespeare section at the Midwestern Modern Language Association. She said, “I would especially like a woman to do this.” I thought this was very odd. I said yes. This was a paper on *Othello*. I had never studied *Othello*. My plan was to do what I would usually do, which was to collect bibliography and began to read that as well as the text. Well, I taught three courses including a large survey. So I thought, “Well, I’d better just be sure I read *Othello*.” So I read it in bed at night. Which meant that I read it more like I would read things in bed at night. I was paying a lot of attention to Desdemona.

As the time approached, I began to read some of the literary criticism. I realized that it took the same positions as the characters take toward Desdemona, that she’s either whore or angel. I had figured out the perspective I thought Shakespeare wanted us to take, which was clearly somewhere in between these positions. I was so relieved that I hadn’t read the criticism, because when something is very well argued you’re taken in by it. So that changed the way I did my scholarly work forever.

This [MLA] paper was about how Desdemona had really had an affair with Cassio, and that her name meant “of the demon” and that she really was this [laughs] duplicitous woman. This was so bizarre. I hardly knew what to do. What I did was I didn’t talk much about the paper at all. My position was that there were deliberately in the text different points of view that you were supposed to thread your way between.

It was very exciting to see that for the first time and think, “OH! Look what’s here!” — Shirley Garner



Shirley Garner in 1991

The “feminist review” Hurricane Alice, started in 1983, was a collaborative effort between faculty, students, and community members such as Martha Roth, writer and wife of English professor Marty Roth. The intent: to create, as then graduate student Maureen Reddy remembers, “a serious but nonacademic feminist publication—a place to publish the kind of work [we] wanted to read and to write.” A short history:

Martha Roth: Shirley, Jeannie Sugnet (now Strauchon), Mimi, and I went to see a play by a supposedly feminist playwright and went out afterward to talk about it. We waxed passionate—we hadn’t liked the play—and toward midnight Jeannie said, “We should be recording this!” And Shirley said, “No; we should be publishing it—and I’ve got just the name for our journal: *Hurricane Alice*.” We all loved it. Alice happens to be my middle name.

Reddy: I usually loathe meetings, but I remember those *Hurricane Alice* meetings with great fondness. We had lengthy, often contentious discussions of general principles and of particular submissions.

Roth: I think I was the only one who had ever edited a journal, although my experience was in medicine and science. . . . I was a bit of a tyrant, I think, insisting that we all learn basic editing skills like proofreading, cutting to fit, lifting display quotes, writing heads.

Garner: We deliberately made it in a newspaper format so that it would cost very little money. I don’t think we ever paid writers. We sold subscriptions to libraries, and that thrived for a long period of time.

Roth: We just ran out of energy in about 1992. I wanted to spend more time on my own work [*Transforming a Rape Culture* came out in 1994]. Maureen agreed to “take it with her” when she accepted the job at Rhode Island College.

Reddy: Unfortunately, the perpetual money struggle did us in after a few years. I still miss *Hurricane Alice*, especially when I read *Bitch*, which I think of as very much like what we tried to do.

Sprengnether: The Courty Love class wasn’t focused on women writers, because we didn’t even know who they were at that time period! The primary research discovering women who had written in the now called Early Modern period hadn’t been done. But we were giving a kind of proto-feminist set of interpretations or readings of that canonical body of literature. . . .

The idea behind English Quarter was that majors in English would take a 16 credit course, which would be their only course responsibility for one full quarter. The topics revolved. One year [1982] Toni and I taught it with two graduate assistants. It was pretty grandiose, something like, “The Female Imagination in British and American Literature.” We read a *tremendous* amount of work [by women]. It was the most intense class I have ever taught, and when it was over I was completely wiped out. I think everyone was. The reading list was humongous. I was to some extent learning as much as the students did. I’d never read Willa Cather, except maybe in high school—never thought of her seriously, never considered her a major author. So that was all tremendously exciting—and it was also ground level work. Let’s just survey the field!

McNaron: The earliest courses *anywhere* were redress courses: courses in women writers, ideas of women, images of women. Then only later did you get a phase where feminist theory was saying, “It’s the questions we ask of Mark Twain or T. S. Elliot, or how we think about the formation of theory,” and that became the next level of work. It was very exciting to see that progression, that growth.

Sprengnether: Of course, feminist criticism hadn’t existed either, so that was just beginning to take hold. The primary texts were coming out in almost every field. And we were contributing to it ourselves in our own publications. It was a time of tremendous energy and ferment and excitement. You were pioneering; you were laying the path for others to follow. You just had a sense of tremendous personal creativity.

Daly: A seminar on psychoanalytic theory taught by Professor Sprengnether² and another on romantic love taught by Professor Garner influenced my work. Both professors were Shakespearean scholars, whereas my field was contemporary women writers, yet their studies of the theories of the maternal encouraged me to explore its significance in my life and employ it in my scholarship and teaching.

Garner: Then I taught a junior-senior seminar called Lost Women Writers. I worked through publishers who were bringing back women writers. I didn’t choose any writers who were not known in their own time. So the question was, “Why are these writers not part of the canon now? Were the books really no good?” And this was so interesting: they were stories of wife abuse and of bad clerics. . . . One of these women was the highest paid journalist in the United States at the time.

Conflict — Coalition

Sprengnether: I remember some of the painful conversations that we had with members of the English Department curriculum committee—one faculty member whose vote I had pretty much counted on, who was one of the more liberal members of the department, argued that he wasn’t convinced that women writers were as good as the male writers who were already established in the curriculum. So we had many, many conversations on the subject before we established the first permanent course number that was focused specifically on women writers. That course number still exists.

Professor Emeritus Marty Roth, Feminist Studies in Literature subfield member and long-time teacher of the American Women Writers course: Learning how to teach American literature from a gendered playing field took a little time. I learned mainly

² Notes Eaton: “Sprengnether had participated in an NEH seminar and read Lacan, Derrida, and Ricoeur back when no one knew what was coming. She basically shared all the NEH materials with a group of us, in her home one night a week. Out of this class came both my dissertation topic and my first publication.”

from many of the wonderful books and essays that started to come out in the mid-Seventies. The one I remember most clearly was Judith Fetterley's *The Resisting Reader*.

Professor Emeritus Kent Bales, Chair 1983–88: My recollection of the Eighties and early Nineties is one of a quickly growing push for change throughout the profession—and indeed from outside the old senses of “profession” as well. A number of isms soon arose, feminism among them. Faculty who found or felt themselves left behind either fought to gain a new mastery or heaped scorn upon the “newfangled” thing, as Shakespeare might have put it. (Brilliant feminist readings of Shakespeare, however, were among the first successes within the new theory to appear in Minnesota's English department.)

Garner: One of the primary initiations of feminist studies in literature was with scholars in Shakespeare, and that's because Shakespeare as a writer is so alert to rhetoric about gender and I also think to the socially constructed notion of gender. There was a lot of resistance to this. In fact, the Renaissance subfield was the one least likely to be happy with this approach in our department. Other people found this kind of resistance with their schools, so we gathered energy from each other. There were also some men who did see this and participate in it, many of them psychoanalytic critics who were used to reading for sexual nuances and then saw that male characters were expressing these very problematic attitudes toward women. Like Richard Wheeler, Murray Schwartz.

McNaron: When I started wanting to teach lesbian literature, I had no difficulty getting a course called Lesbian Writers. Lesbian Critical Theory, Virginia Woolf & Emily Dickinson as Lesbian Thinkers—those went through with a breeze! But when I wanted to teach Milton and said that I wanted to look at that from a lesbian-feminist perspective, there was *much* more objection and nervousness and anxiety . . . and I understand that perfectly. Because a course in lesbian literature is a ghettoized activity that they can just blow off and not think about. But to see that you're going to re-look at one of the giant figures of English literature as if a lesbian-feminist perspective might add something to how we understand Milton! The same thing was true about Shakespeare. When Mimi, Shirley, or I wanted to do seminars on feminist examinations of Shakespeare, there was *much more* concern about that. *Don't take on the meat an' potatoes of this discipline.*

Sprengnether: Toni was the first faculty member on this campus to offer a course that dealt with lesbianism. She may have been the first out faculty member. When I came here it was understood that you kept your sexuality under cover or there would be serious negative repercussions. Homophobia and anti-feminism were spoken openly. And Toni was . . . her impact on this campus as a whole was tremendous. She just did things that nobody else would do. And then other people would say, “Well maybe I can come out in my department.” She opened so many doors.

That's what gets lost with the success, that these things that we take for granted did not exist until somebody made them come into being—and that took a huge amount of energy and resistance and serious individual courage. These initial steps were all fought—and fraught [laughs]. I don't think we had thick skin: it just hurt.

Endings / Beginnings

McNaron: It lost some of its edge because it wasn't edgy anymore. Everybody could offer any of those [feminist subfield] courses without any trouble within their own disciplines. They didn't need visibility. But I also think that the energy that was so compelling in the early years was simply because that we knew we were doing something subversive. There's always a loss when you become mainstream, there just is. It's not just wonderful to get to stop yelling.

continued on page 8

Book List

An essay I first published in *Hurricane Alice* later became a chapter in *Authoring a Life: A Woman's Survival In and Through Literary Studies* (1998). This was the beginning of my efforts to understand trauma theory. . . . It has been used as bibliotherapy for women struggling with addictions, many of whom are survivors of sexual abuse. — **Brenda Daly.** Daly is also the author of *Lavish Self-Divisions: The Novels of Joyce Carol Oates* (2002).

Shirley Garner has co-edited several books including *Is Feminism Dead? Theory in Practice* (2000), *Antifeminism in the Academy* (1996), *Shakespearean Tragedy and Gender* (1996), and *The (M)other Tongue: Essays in Feminist Psychoanalytic Interpretation* (1985).

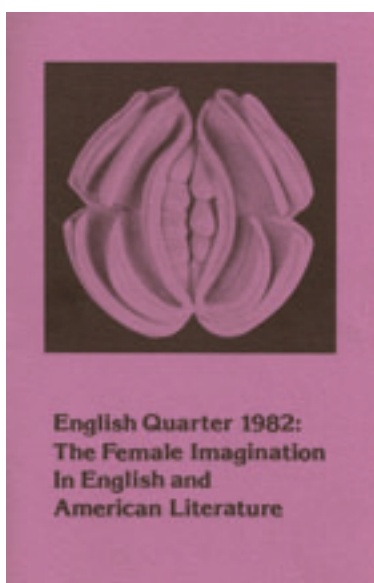
Toni McNaron is the author of *Poisoned Ivy: Lesbian and Gay Academics Confronting Homophobia* (1996), *New Lesbian Studies: Into the 21st Century* (1996), and *I Dwell in Possibility: A Memoir* (1992), and co-editor of *Voices in the Night: Women Speaking about Incest* (1983).

Maureen Reddy is the author of *Traces, Codes, and Clues: Reading Race in Crime Fiction* (2002) and *Crossing the Color Line: Race, Parenting, and Culture* (1994), among others, and co-editor, with Martha Roth and Amy Sheldon, of *Mother Journeys: Feminists Write About Mothering* (1994).

Madelon Sprengnether is the author of *The Angel of Duluth* (2006), *Crying at the Movies: A Film Memoir* (2002), and *The Spectral Mother: Freud, Feminism and Psychoanalysis* (1990), and co-editor of *Revising the Word and the World: Essays in Feminist Literary Criticism* (1993) and *The (M)other Tongue: Essays in Feminist Psychoanalytic Interpretation* (1985), among others.



Professor Toni McNaron with Vice President of Human Resources Carol Carrier at McNaron's 2001 retirement



The Future

I find that the English department is more and more open to broader interpretations. With the question of “what counts as literature?” I am seeing looser interpretations of course material (theory, essays, music, film, graphic novels), and by default, interpretation of such material has also widened. There has always existed a definite hierarchy of what is “worth looking into.” If we keep thinking that way, we lose a lot in terms of different ways of seeing, different ways of knowing, different ways of reading. Perhaps this is just my own fancy, but I find this more inclusive education a consequence of feminist activism working to examine various different facets—I have always seen feminism as working towards inclusionism and nudging out elitism. — **Cindy Koy, undergraduate, double major in English and Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies**



Professor Madelon Sprengnether with visiting author T. C. Boyle in 2006

Garner: The way I think it began to fade is that the faculty who joined us located their work outside feminism *and* [that] to some extent it’s inconceivable now that any professor who taught in, say, the 19th century would exclude women in various capacities—culturally, historically, in literature, whatever. So it began to take, in a sense.

I frankly don’t know how all of the women faculty position themselves now in relation to feminism, because once there began to be the question “What is a woman, and are there women? Do women exist?”—that changed the conversation in such a way that it made it very hard to say exactly what you were doing the way we had been able to say what we were doing: not for me, but for others.

Sprengnether: To some extent back then there wasn’t a clear dividing line or as much of a separation as I feel there is now between what was going on in academia and what was going on outside in the larger social, political environment. There was the sense that one thing fed another. As the field became more respectable, became more incorporated into the regular academic regime, it also lost some of its connection to the outside world. And also the language of feminist criticism along with the language of other critical work became less and less accessible to the ordinary educated reader.

I think the pendulum is swinging back away from the extreme theory-based philosophically-oriented kinds of writing that dominated the Eighties and Nineties. I think that’s a healthy movement, because if you cut yourself off too dramatically or narrow your audience too much, you don’t have influence. As the notion of feminism has embraced a whole range of other issues it has also moved away from the very simple and primary focus we had at the beginning, which was: “Let’s teach women writers. People will know who they are. The research will be done in these areas.” There may be some kind of circling back to some of these interests.

Daly: I am pleased that feminist theory and literary studies have become “mainstream” in college classes; however, I am disappointed that, as [University of Minnesota English professor] Ellen Messer-Davidow argues in *Disciplining Feminism*, the academy has been so successful at containing feminist activism. The university reward system, its tenure and promotion policies, discourages community work. Happily, as director of Iowa State’s Center for Excellence in the Arts and Humanities, I am now engaged in an effort to promote “public scholarship”—partnerships between the public and the university—which has the potential to allow activist scholars to be rewarded for serving the “public good.” I just attended a conference where feminist scholars, among others, told stories about how they used their critical skills to advocate on behalf of rape victims, prisoners, and the poor.

Reddy: I knew Shirley and Toni much better than Mimi, and both had a huge impact on me. In particular, they gave me examples of women whose political and personal commitments played out in their careers. They gave me hope that an academic life in which my political principles remained central could be possible.

Eaton: Toni figured out how my coordinating the details of a conference could count as continued employment by the University, thus continuing my insurance the term my baby was due. I watched Shirley successfully mentor other graduate student friends, so she served as a model for me in many ways. I owe my academic career to Mimi. After I took a class from her as an “adult special,” she strongly encouraged me to apply for graduate study (something I secretly wanted to do but was hesitant to try). She was my mentor and friend throughout my studies in numerous, significant ways, guided me through my first publications, and served as my dissertation director. She then helped me establish my career through advice and countless recommendation letters. I asked her once how I could ever repay her. Her answer was “Pass it on.” I have worked ever since with my students to do so. ■

Back in the Forties, if a woman wanted a career, she either went into teaching or nursing,” Virginia Glenn McDavid (BA 1946, MA 1948, PhD 1956) says bluntly; “I had no interest in nursing.” Raised an enthusiastic reader in Northeast Minneapolis by a primary school teacher and a railroad man, Virginia Glenn thought she would teach high school English, probably in Minnesota. It was not to be.

“I had a good advisor,” McDavid recalls, on the phone from her current home in Colorado, “and when she saw my grades, she suggested that I look at other kinds of teaching.”

In the Forties, a teacher’s education included a three quarter class entitled *The History of English*, from Harold B. Allen. “There was a feeling that you can’t teach English too effectively if you don’t know what’s going on with the language,” McDavid notes tartly. Allen also taught American English, in which McDavid then enrolled. “I had a major in History as well as English,” she says, “and when I saw how language difference and development related to historical events, that was it for me.”

Harold Allen had recently taken his PhD at the University of Michigan, a hotbed of linguistics, and had worked on the Early Modern English Dictionary project and done atlas fieldwork in Ohio and Illinois for A. H. Marckwardt’s projected *Linguistic Atlas of the North-Central States*. Allen’s class represented the beginning of a journey that would take McDavid into small towns around the north-central Midwest, then onto Chicago.

“Linguistic geography is a fairly old branch of linguistics,” explains McDavid, “going back to Germany in the 19th century.” But what entranced the young student was the immediacy of the scholarship in America. At Michigan’s Summer Institute of Linguistics in 1947, she studied dialectology with Hans Kurath, the architect of American folk speech fieldwork who had just published *The Linguistic Atlas of New England* (1939–1943). Allen was attending the Institute to plan his *Linguistic Atlas of the Upper Midwest* surveys. Work was underway on the Middle and South Atlantic states; and the students got to meet one of the main fieldworkers there—later the editor of that area’s atlas. His name was Raven I. McDavid, Jr., and Virginia married him in 1950.

Amid this flurry of activity, McDavid learned how to find informants, conduct interviews through Kurath’s questionnaire, and record data. She did fieldwork with Allen in Minnesota in the late Forties; she and Raven interviewed in southern Ontario. Remembers McDavid: “Our students would furnish good leads: ‘You should hear my Grandpa down in ____.’ Small local newspaper offices in a town, they would know the talkative old people. County clerks were good as well. We wanted people from the town, not travelled too much and not too highly educated.

“We would ask how life was in the old days. If possible you’d get somebody who just loved to talk about that. At this time, people were fearful: They were afraid that their intelligence was being tested. What we emphasized in talking to them was that vocabulary from olden times was changing. They would concentrate on the vocabulary. And we would pick up the grammar and punctuation sort of incidentally.” For Raven, working in the South, the concerns were a bit different: “The great fear was that he’d be taken for a revenue agent,” McDavid reveals.

The first of many articles co-authored by the McDavids was “The Relationship of the Speech of American Negroes to the Speech of Whites” (1951). McDavid says that while Raven interviewed many southern blacks, the numbers were not up to today’s data standards. Women’s voices were lacking as well: “Many people of less education wouldn’t let their wives or womenfolk participate.” For her dissertation, McDavid used Allen’s and Marckwardt’s data to write about verb forms in the north-central states and the Upper Midwest. A pioneer in noting gender differences in speech, she marvels at the nuances of gendered speech scholarship today—on the level of sentence style, for instance. “Now that may be changing,” she observes carefully. “By the time your results are published, they’re really historical data.”

walk the TALK

Sixty years ago alumna Virginia McDavid jumped the high school teacher track for an adventurous life in dialectology



It’s clear she’s witnessed—and charted and analyzed—no small amount of change. McDavid’s other main area of scholarship has been dictionaries, which she both contributed to and theorized. She became well-versed in slang, a topic in the course Language and Culture she taught at Chicago State University, where she was a faculty member from 1957 (when it was Chicago Teachers College) until retirement in 1985. (Raven was a professor at the University of Chicago; he died in 1984.) “Teachers don’t really know what slang is,” McDavid says with some heat. “They use ‘slang’ as a one word condemnation for what they don’t like.”

McDavid has a former composition instructor’s respect for Standard English. Yet she continues to be enthralled by variations, subgroups, and shifts in English—which appear to her to be thriving despite the omnipresence of the Inland Northern dialect (her own) on television and radio. “There’s been some loss in limited regional terms, say in the Hudson Valley,” she allows. “But new ones appear. I can hear all kinds of differences that I suspect many people just gloss over and don’t notice at all.” She notices clergy speech; she notices the speech of her daughters-in-law (two children live in Colorado Springs, where she moved in 2001, and one in Roseville). For this Dictionary Society of North America Fellow, the fascinating journey that began in Harold Allen’s classroom continues still. ■

In 2008 Virginia McDavid established the Virginia Glenn McDavid English Fellowship, in honor of the graduate fellowship which allowed her to focus on finishing coursework more than 50 years ago.

Faculty

American Academy of Arts and Sciences

Regents Professor Patricia Hampl was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in spring 2007. Hampl was one of only two new fellows elected for accomplishment in the writing of literature.

Award for Outstanding Contributions to Post-Baccalaureate Graduate and Professional Education

Professor Maria Damon was recognized in 2007 for excellence in instruction, student engagement in research, advising and mentoring.

Award of Merit for the Short Story

In spring 2007 Edelstein-Keller Professor in Creative Writing Charles Baxter received the American Academy of Arts and Letters' Award of Merit for the Short Story, which grants \$10,000 and a medal to an outstanding short story writer.

Best Director of Graduate Studies

Associate professor Lois Cucullu shared the inaugural "Best DGS" award for 2008 with John Campbell (Psychology). A special committee appointed by the dean of the University of Minnesota Graduate School selects the recipients. Each receives a \$1,000 honorarium and a plaque.

John Nicholas Brown Prize

Associate professor Andrew Scheil's book *The Footsteps of Israel: Understanding Jews in Anglo-Saxon England* (University of Michigan

donor to reward a faculty member's excellence in scholarship or creative activity.

Education Minnesota Foundation Grant

Professor Geoffrey Sirc received a \$5000 grant to develop a summer hip hop/spoken word writing camp for local high school students and teachers in partnership with Minnesota Spoken Word Association. Two University entities, the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, and the Urban Research and Outreach/Engagement Center, each followed up with \$5000 grants. The institute, "In Da Tradition," took place June 2008.

Graduate School Summer Faculty Research Fellowship and McKnight Summer Fellowship for the Arts and Humanities

Professor Madelon Sprengnether was granted a full summer semester of research, through a McKnight Summer Fellowship and a Graduate School's Faculty Summer Research Fellowship, to work on a memoir project titled *My Ghostly Stepfather*.

Guggenheim Fellowship

Associate professor David Treuer received a 2007-08 Guggenheim Fellowship. These fellowships were initiated in 1925 to help provide Fellows with blocks of time in which they can work with as much creative freedom as possible. In 2008 the Foundation awarded 190 United States and Canadian Fellowships out of more than 2,600 applicants.

Institute of Advanced Study Fellows

Each year up to 20 Minnesota faculty members are selected as Residential Fellows. Fellows are released from all teaching

a winning RECO

Press, 2004) was awarded the Medieval Academy of America's 2008 John Nicholas Brown Prize for a first book in the medieval field judged to be of outstanding quality.

Ruth Christie Distinguished Teaching Award in English

Assistant professor Siobhan Craig received the Ruth Christie Distinguished Teaching Award for English for 2008-10. The prize is decided by undergraduate students voting within the Department of English. The previous winner was associate professor Brian Goldberg.

Dean's Medalist, College of Liberal Arts

Professor and Chair Paula Rabinowitz was honored February 13 as the 2008 CLA Dean's Medalist by interim CLA Dean James Parente. The CLA Dean's Medal was created by an anonymous

obligations and are in residence in the Nolte Center, where they can share their work across disciplines. Professors Maria Damon and Ellen Messer-Davidow were chosen to be IAS Fellows during 2007-08. Associate professors Jani Scandura and Charles Sugnet were selected for 2008-09.

McKnight Presidential Fellow Award

Associate professor Andrew Scheil received this award, targeted to the most promising faculty granted tenure and promotion to associate professor at the University of Minnesota. Associate professor David Treuer won a McKnight in 2006.

Minnesota Book Awards

Edelstein-Keller Professor in Creative Writing Charles Baxter won the 2008 Award for General Nonfiction for *The Art of*

Subtext: Beyond Plot (Graywolf Press). Regents Professor Patricia Hampl won the 2008 Award for Memoir & Creative Nonfiction for *The Florist's Daughter* (Harcourt). (The memoir was also named a *New York Times* Notable Book of 2007.) In spring 2007, professor Julie Schumacher won for her young adult novel *The Book of One Hundred Truths* (Delacorte).

Arthur "Red" Motley Exemplary Teaching Award, CLA

In spring 2007, associate professor Rebecca Krug won the Arthur "Red" Motley Exemplary Teaching Award. The award recognizes faculty "who give of themselves generously in advising, counseling, and directing projects, and who create an active classroom atmosphere." She joins six active English professors with this distinction.

The Mullen/Spector/Truax Women's Leadership Award

Professor Shirley Garner, who is associate dean of the Graduate School, won the Mullen/Spector/Truax Women's Leadership Award for 2007. The award, established in 1997, is given annually to a faculty or staff woman at the University who has made outstanding contributions to women's leadership development. This award honors women not only for their own leadership qualities, but also for their efforts to develop leadership within others.

National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship

Assistant professor Tony C. Brown and associate professors Andrew Scheil and David Treuer received 2007-08 NEH Fellowships, U. S. government grants which support individuals

pursuing advanced research that is of value to scholars and general audiences in the humanities. Recipients usually produce articles, monographs, books, digital materials, archaeological site reports, translations, editions, and other scholarly tools. Fellowships support continuous full-time work for a period of six to 12 months.

NEH Summer Seminar

Associate professor Lois Cucullu was selected to participate in the NEH Summer Seminar "The Oscar Wilde Archive" that took place in June and July 2007 at UCLA's William Andrews Clark Memorial Library. Each year the NEH offers teachers opportunities to study humanities topics in Summer Seminars and Institutes. Travel, research, and living expenses are covered.

Regents Professorship

Professor Madelon Sprengnether was named one of four new Regents Professors in summer 2008. The designation is the highest level of recognition given to faculty by the University. Sprengnether has published poetry (*The Angel of Duluth*), memoir (*Crying at the Movies*), and criticism. She joins Tom Clayton and Patricia Hampl as Department of English Regents Professors; the only other department with three is Chemical Engineering.

Charles A. Ryskamp Research Fellowship

Associate professor Lianna Farber won a Ryskamp research fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies for spring and fall 2008. These fellowships (12 annually) support advanced assistant professors in the humanities and related social sciences whose scholarly contributions have advanced their fields and who have well-designed and carefully developed plans for new research. In addition, Farber received a CLA Research Fellowship Supplement.

RD: 2007-08 was a banner year of awards for English faculty, staff, and students

Andrew Scheil Hits



"I'm honored and a bit overwhelmed at the same time," says associate professor Andrew Scheil of winning NEH and Solmsen fellowships, the McKnight Presidential Fellow Award, and the John Nicholas Brown Prize over 14 months. The fellowships allow Professor Scheil to focus on his next book project, "a history of the image and meanings of the city of Babylon from the classical period to the present." It's a "rather oversized, idiosyncratic book," confesses Scheil, and the Brown Prize will help attract a publisher.

Single Semester and Sabbatical Leaves

University of Minnesota faculty development leaves are provided as an opportunity to acquire new skills and knowledge, to enhance communication of knowledge to students and society, and to create new uses for the knowledge made available. Leaves are awarded competitively and include salary and benefits. Genevieve Escure, Maria Fitzgerald, Brain Goldberg, Rebecca Krug, and John Wright went on sabbatical in 2007-08; Fitzgerald continues hers through fall 2008. Lianna Farber, Patricia Hampl, David Haley, Michael Hancher, Natasha Tinsley, and John Watkins took single semester leave for 2007-08; Siobhan Craig and Geoffrey Sirc received single semester leave for 2008-09.

Solmsen Fellowship

Associate professor Andrew Scheil received a fellowship for academic year 2008-09 at the Institute for Research in the

continued on page 12

a winning **SEASON**, *continued from page 11*

Humanities at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. The Institute offers three one-year Solmsen Postdoctoral Fellowships to scholars from other universities working on literary and historical studies of the European Classical, Medieval, and Renaissance periods up to about the year 1700. The award this year is \$40,000.

Administrative Staff

Professional and Administrative Outstanding Service Award, College of Liberal Arts

Rebecca Aylesworth won a 2007 CLA Outstanding Service Award for her work as assistant academic advisor for the departments of English and Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. These awards honor employees who have gone beyond consistent high performance to make innovations and outstanding contributions to enhance the objectives of their departments, the college, the University and/or higher education. Creative writing coordinator Kathleen Glasgow won a 2006 Outstanding Service Award.

Students

Alumni Association Student Leadership Award

Graduating English major Amanda Steepleton was selected for this scholarship, awarded to undergraduate student leaders for academic achievement, personal character, leadership qualities and contributions to the University of Minnesota.

Selmer Birkelo Scholarships

Selmer Birkelo donated funds for the College of Liberal Arts' most prestigious scholarship award, which provides scholarships for CLA's most talented and highest achieving students. Of the 14 2007–08 winners, two were English majors: Libby Issendorf, who also majored in Journalism, and Amanda Steepleton. English had three majors among the 2008–09 winners: Molly Boggs, Jamie Kreil, and Carl Martin, who is also majoring in Cultural Studies and Comparative Literature.

FLAS Fellowship

The Foreign Language and Area Studies program in the U. S. Department of Education provides funds to assist graduate students in acquiring foreign language and either area or international studies competencies. MFA candidate Ben Doty and PhD candidate Eun Joo Kim received 2008 fellowships.

Harold Leonard Memorial Fellowship in Film Study

PhD candidate Mitchell P. Ogden won this 2007–08 fellowship, administered by the Graduate School for graduate students researching film history, criticism, theory, or aesthetics.

Loft Mentor Series

This Loft Literary Center program offers advanced criticism and professional development opportunities to 12 writers each year in the genres of poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction. MFA candidate Emily Freeman and MFA alumna Margie Newman

Melissa Shelsby's Fulbright

Graduating Honors English major Melissa Shelsby received a 2008 Fulbright, allowing her to spend this next year as a teaching assistant in Korea. Sponsored by the U. S. Department of State, the Fulbright Program aims to increase mutual understanding between the peoples of the United States and other countries, through the exchange of persons, knowledge, and skills.



won for 2007–08. MFA candidate Emily Bright and MFA alumna Stephanie Resnik won for 2008–09.

Mellon Fellowship

PhD candidate Maurits van Bever Donker won an Andrew W. Mellon Foundation fellowship to support graduate studies.

Minnesota State Arts Board Grant

The Artist Initiative program supports artists at various stages in their careers. It encourages artistic development, nurtures artistic creativity, and recognizes the contributions individual artists make to the creative environment of the state of Minnesota. MFA candidates Dhana-Marie Branton and Laura Owen were awarded 2008 State Arts Board Grants, Branton for nonfiction and Owen for fiction. Three MFA alumni also won grants: Michael Seward, Jay Orff, and Kate Hopper.

President's Student Leadership and Service Award

In 2008 graduating English major Amanda Steepleton won this award, which recognizes the accomplishments and contributions made by outstanding student leaders at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. It is presented to approximately one-half of one percent of the student body.

SASE Emerging Writer Fellowship

Funded by the Jerome Foundation, these fellowships support emerging and mid-career writers. MFA candidate Dhana-Marie Branton received a 2008 award. MFA alumni Laura Flynn, Rachel Moritz, and Charlie Conley also won 2008 fellowships.

Steven J. Schochet GLBT Studies Award for Excellence in Creativity and Scholarship

In spring 2007 MFA candidate Emily August won this award, administered by the GLBTA Programs Office here to recognize student papers and projects in the field of GLBT Studies.

Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program

The goal of UROP is to help undergraduates become involved in research and creative activity with faculty mentors. Four English majors were approved for 2007–08 projects: Mark Andrews, Emma Johnson, Max Mose, and Limh Phuong Nguyen. □

For department graduate fellowships and awards, see pages 19 and 27; for scholarship winners, see page 31

Publishing

The Department of English's goal of creating a program in publishing received a big boost from a variety of ground-breaking accomplishments over 2007–08. In summer 2007 the department met with the University of Minnesota Press—one of the premier university presses in the world—to establish two year-long, eight-credit publishing internships exclusively for English majors. The interns spend one semester working on editorial tasks and one semester on projects from the Production, Marketing & Sales, IT, Operations, and Journals Departments. Kari O'Connor and April Terwedo (2007–08) and Alyssa Lochner and Erin Warholm-Wohlenhaus (2008–09) received Paul and Lucienne Taylor Internship Grants as UM Press interns.

All three of the department's print publications—*Ivory Tower*, *Dislocate*, and *Luna*—released new issues and updated their web presences (see page 32). *Ivory Tower* is the undergraduate literary and art magazine produced by students in the year-long Literary Magazine Production and History lab. The English department's Advisory Board, especially Garrison Keillor and Paul Taylor, provided fundraising advice and contacts and contributed funds

toward *Ivory Tower* printing costs. The students responded by fashioning an issue with more color, more pages, more art, and greater diversity of submissions than ever before, while also reaching out to other CLA departments (Music, Art, and Theatre) to create the journal's first ever compact disc.

Additional student opportunities in publishing arose when associate professor Katherine Scheil became Book Review Editor of *Theatre*

Survey journal. Research assistantships with Professor Scheil will involve contacting reviewers, cataloguing incoming books for review, proofreading, and editing. In addition, the Department of English was the recipient of a Delmas Foundation Grant for the Humanities, which fosters another collaboration with the University of Minnesota Press: the future publication of select speeches from the 50 year history of the Joseph Warren Beach Lectures in Literature.

New literacies, literatures, and immigrant communities

In the summer of 2008, English inaugurated two outreach programs centered on encouraging literacy in local high school youth. English professor Geoffrey Sirc, who for 15 years has taught academic research, analysis, and writing through a focus on hip hop, partnered with the Minnesota Spoken Word

Association to create a four-day June summer camp called “In Da Tradition” using spoken word and hip hop to teach academic and creative writing to high school students and teachers.

In July, the department worked with the Givens Foundation for African-American Literature to start another new tradition: a three-day workshop assisting Minneapolis high school students with college and scholarship application essays. Professor Rabinowitz and Givens Foundation chair Archie Givens, Jr., were impressed by the effectiveness of other such programs in encouraging matriculation amongst urban youth—especially those youth without support at home for the development of the personal essay, an essential part of many college applications. The University's K-12 Consortium provided generous support.

progress REPORT

An update on three Department initiatives announced last year by chair Paula Rabinowitz

The department's popular courses with civic engagement components continue to be successful in both preparing our students for teaching and enriching our community partners' literacy and youth education programs. Visiting professor and poet Mark Nowak brought a new angle to service learning with his “The End of Ford(ism) in America” senior seminar in spring 2008. His students engaged in “amazing June Jordanesque ‘poetry for the people’ workshops out in the community,” Nowak reports. The students instigated and recorded verse-writing among returning Iraq veterans at the VA hospital, UPS workers, Iron Range residents, and elementary schoolchildren at the American Indian Center, among other projects.

Translation minor

While the department is still in the early stages of creating a minor in translation and poetics, a special series of eNow! events emphasizing translation has been building enthusiasm and connections with University language departments. A 50th anniversary celebration of Allen Ginsberg's *Howl* in fall 2006 and a “Beckett 101” birthday party in December 2007 brought University faculty, students, alumni, and friends together for dramatic enactments and readings in a variety of languages—from Bulgarian to Yiddish. Up next: celebrations of the 400th birthday of John Milton and the 100th anniversary of Gertrude Stein's publication of *Three Lives*. ■



Graduate student Ryo Yamaguchi sports a “Beckett 101” t-shirt



John Meyer and Jessica Siefer are among seven Ivory Tower staff members to secure publication internships in the Twin Cities over the past two years

On Monday May 12, 2008, English faculty, staff, and current and former students crowded into the Campus Club Dale Shepard Room to celebrate two-time English chair Kent Bales, who has taken on the title “Professor Emeritus.” Professor Michael Hancher welcomed the group and announced cryptically that Professor Bales’ retirement gift was not yet finished. Bales had cleared out his office in part by offering books to undergraduate and graduate students, Hancher explained: the task now was to rebuild his library with recommended titles for Bales’ retirement reading

DUS, 1999–2000) as well as the University (Director of Graduate Studies, Liberal Studies, 1994–1996; Chair, Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs, 1997–1999; Chair, Senate Joint Committee on Faculty Appointments, 1997–2000).

As an administrator, Hirsch said, “Kent was not hemmed in by ordinary strictures.” Indeed, Bales provided critical support for controversial initiatives on



Former chair Michael Hancher presents former chair Kent Bales with a bookstore gift certificate

with mirth and **LAUGHTER** *Celebrating Kent Bales’ 41 years of service*

pleasure (underwritten by a gift card to the University of Minnesota Bookstore). A booklet was passed throughout lunch for suggestions, which eventually ranged from Macaulay’s *History of England* (Hancher’s idea) to Patrick O’Brian’s 20 volume Aubrey/Maturin series.

Bales, who joined the Department of English in 1967, was the subject of many glad reminiscences from the attendees. Professor Gordon Hirsch claimed to have known him the longest—having met Bales in a Berkeley Medieval seminar 45 years before. Hirsch cited Bales’ long and varied service to the department (Chair, 1983–88, 2000–03; DGS, 1991–94;

creative writing and feminist studies during his tenure as chair.

Professor Ellen Messer-Davidow and Professor and Chair Paula Rabinowitz (one of five current and previous English chairs present) thanked Bales for his warm welcome and thoughtful advice when they joined the staff. Professor Don Ross applauded Bales for “the gracefulness of his writing.”

Professor Ed Griffin shared an office with Bales in their early years here. Once, Griffin recalled, Bales asked him for his opinion of some lines in a poem. His response was glib. Bales responded that he thought there was more in there and went on to provide a reading Griffin remembers as “revelatory.” Although Bales was an assistant professor at the time, he insisted on sharing authorship of the eventual article on the poem with his teaching assistant. “The article is still the definitive reading of this text,” said Griffin. “And I’ve always remembered that kind of generosity to the people who worked for him.”

Professor Charles Baxter, who joined the staff four years ago, said he’d known of Bales 30 years before. He had a friend who was into Hawthorne, and one day he’d asked him what he was doing. “I’m reading the work of Kent Bales,” the friend responded. How do you like it? Baxter wondered. Responded the friend: “It’s very intimidating.”

Former undergraduate and graduate student Jane Leach praised Bales for his meaningful assistance as the head of her PhD committee. Now chair of English at Minneapolis Technical and Community College, Leach said she wishes for a “WWKD?” (What Would Kent Do?) bracelet to remind her of his calm competence. Another former student, in a letter read by Hancher, thanked Bales profusely for help on his dissertation, and then confessed that he had not heeded his final advice about revision—a revelation met with hoots and laughter from those gathered.

Bales’ wife Maria was also present, and many speakers included her in their addresses. Regents Professor Patricia Hampl noted that she had known Bales as both a colleague and a student. Speaking as the former, she was grateful to Maria and him for “the best parties ever.” Speaking as an undergraduate, “I want to report that all the girls in class had a crush on Kent.”

As Professor Bales rose to thank the crowd, the screen behind him flashed scenes from his 41 years of service here. The photograph that provoked the most comment—and, in this context, poignancy—showed two hands holding up a t-shirt printed with a message: “GO ASK KENT.” ◻



Longtime department secretary Rose Hendrickson enjoys the historical slide show

summer

2008

newsletter

Last year's ten-year anniversary celebration of the MFA in Creative Writing included a series of panels, one of which was titled "Life After the MFA." Former MFA graduate students discussed the sometimes difficult transition from the creative/academic "cradle" to the workplace. They talked about the absence of deadlines ("three poems due Wednesday!") and the sudden lack of mentor groups and literary peers and advisers. Many of them wondered upon graduating from the workshop environment, *Will I be able to write?*

life after the MFA

by Julie Schumacher,
Creative Writing Program Director



The MFA program is not necessarily the most productive literary period in a writer's life, and it doesn't guarantee artistic success. But most student writers find that this three-year period allows them to ignore the call of the workplace (and sometimes the "practical" advice of family and friends) in favor of a marvelous hiatus during which they are encouraged to explore the relationships between language and meaning and the larger world.

Despite dire warnings about declining literacy and an ever-smaller number of readers, more and more people—judging by the skyrocketing number of applications to our program, which now accepts only five percent of those who hope to be admitted—seem to crave the two- or three-year artistic parentheses that an MFA program provides.

But once the thesis is finished and the degree is in hand, what do most of our MFA graduates do? Some—a few—quickly sell and publish their manuscripts. A large majority continue to work on what they hope will become a publishable book, while making the transition back to the workplace. Here's a rough breakdown of what recent Creative Writing graduates from the University of Minnesota are doing:

- Teaching: 15 percent
- Academic administration: 30 percent
- Media: 20 percent
- Arts administration: 20 percent
- Technical writing/editing or self-employed: 10 percent

It's difficult to predict how many of our graduates will continue to incorporate the writing of fiction or poetry or creative nonfiction into their lives, but the current statistics are impressive: during the ten years of the MFA's history, graduates of the program—virtually all of whom are gainfully employed—have published 35 books. In the past 15 months alone, MFA alumni have sold or published 16 books.

The three-year parentheses of the MFA seems to demonstrate to our students that leading a "dual life"—a life that includes creating literature and making a living—is difficult but possible. More important, it's enriching.

Now that our MFA program is heading into its second decade, we hope to continue to instill in our students as well as alumni the idea of the value of the creative parentheses: whether it's three years in a life, or three hours in a day. □

Creative Writing Program

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Photo by Adam Tetzloff

After Amy Shearn (MFA 2005) graduated from the Creative Writing Program, she moved to New York and began work on a novel. In early 2006, she also started a blog about books—in part because she missed graduate school and “those lengthy, winding conversations you have about reading and writing.” Shaye Areheart/Random House published the novel *How Far Is the Ocean From Here?* in August 2008. The lively, addictive blog—*Moonlight Ambulette*—is available anytime at <http://www.moonlightambulette.blogspot.com/>. Shearn generously answered via email our driving questions about the blogging life.

One of the things that makes Moonlight Ambulette stand out among book blogs is that you write about books as a writer—it’s like those “Reading as Writers” classes in the MFA program.

I think it’s exactly like a “Reading as Writers” course. . . .

that makes me think, *Oh, I want to write about this on my blog.* I’ll read a passage in a book and like something about it and not know quite what that something was until I’ve tried to write a blog entry about it—it makes me slow down and articulate my thoughts in way I wouldn’t necessarily otherwise.

I know it’s silly to write a blog and expect no one to read it or take it seriously, but I am always both flattered and alarmed whenever someone does. Maybe what’s surprised me most about writing a blog has been the really lovely ways in which it’s connected me with other people. On one hand, several of my MFA classmates are now bloggers—Kevin Fenton’s wonderful *Unprintable Version* really inspired me to start mine, and I love Kate Hopper’s *Mother Words* and Amanda Fields’ *When in Cairo*. On the other hand, I’ve met some wonderful new people through my blog.

Your blog is not focused on “you” or even what you are writing: it’s focused on what you are seeing/hearing/reading. It’s reminiscent of one side of the correspondence between two 19th century writers: how do you envision the other side of that correspondence?

In a way I’m taking notes for these imaginary literary essays I keep thinking I’ll write some day. Like right now, I’m reading this vast, 12-volume, now-out-of-print Modernist novel called *Backwater*, and I think it will take me a long time to get through the whole thing, so I want to take note of my experiences reading it. I don’t think anyone else (in the whole world, maybe!) is reading this book right now, and I really don’t know if my blog readers care at all, but it’s helpful for me.

Then again, it can be really satisfying and interesting to write about a book or short story that other people are reading,

your hypothetical PE

MFA alum Amy Shearn blogs about the books she’s reading—bu

One of my favorite books is Nabokov’s *Lectures on Literature*—it actually teaches you how to read as a writer, picking apart scenes and stories with the precision of a scientist and the excitement of an explorer. Of course, it’s both a blessing and a curse, that way of reading. Once it kicks in, you never experience books quite the same way.

In a cyberspace crammed with blogs, many of which are under-read, what keeps you going? What have you experienced as a blogger that you didn’t expect?

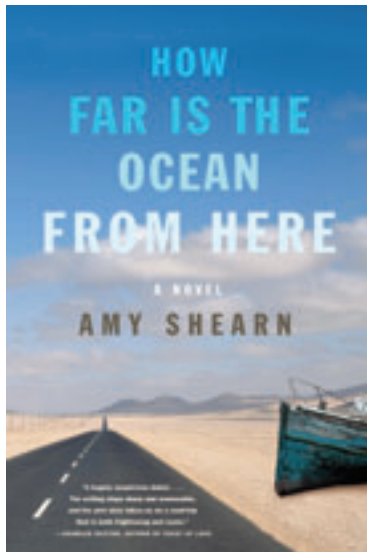
I’ve always been vaguely embarrassed about keeping a blog. It just sounds so self-indulgent and MySpace-y. There are so many excellent book blogs, many much more comprehensive and thoughtful than mine. In the end, I keep doing it because every time I stop posting for a while I come across something

and engage in blog-conversations-of-sorts about it. Sometimes I feel like I’m writing to a potential reader; I get very bossy about books I love, and I want everyone to read them. It often seems to me that there are smart people who want to read but just can’t find the good books—because sometimes they’re hard to find, you know? The most interesting stuff isn’t always on that first table at Barnes & Noble.

Then again, sometimes it is more of a correspondence with the books themselves. I often think of my fiction writing in that way. A book contains an image or idea or line that speaks to you and you want to speak back, somehow.

At one point in the blog you mention Pandora. When a computer program can generate lists of recommended titles/artists, what need is there for critics or bloggers?

Pandora—I was briefly really fascinated by the gimmick of it. I found that it kept serving me up music I hated; it had no feel, unsurprisingly, for nuance. Listen, just because I like Cat Power doesn't mean I like Sheryl Crow! But Pandora goes, "Oh, lady singing and playing guitar, these two are analogous." Same with Amazon. It's like taking reading suggestions from that coworker who barely knows you at all but declares out of nowhere, "Oh,



you would love this." Usually it's something so wrong you're sort of mortified, wondering if that is really what people think of you.

So, yes, of course there's still a place for reviewers and blogs, though there is that discussion that's been brewing for a while about whether blogs are undermining print reviews, which truthfully strikes me as being a little silly—as if one could cancel out the other.

What particular teacher facilitated your learning here at Minnesota?

Charlie Baxter's classes felt, honestly, like a blessing—he is a truly gifted teacher, dispensing some of the most wise, practical and helpful writing (and teaching) advice I've ever encountered.

He was also an invaluable help as my thesis advisor. Maria Fitzgerald was my other thesis advisor. With incredible patience and unrelenting honesty, Maria helped me work and rework this novel I was trying to write, forcing me to think hard about

structure. That novel ended up not exactly working as I wanted it to, but the drills she ran me through taught me how to write a novel, and I really believe made it possible for me to then write *How Far Is the Ocean From Here*.

I feel so lucky to have gone through the MFA program at the U. I was lucky to have really smart, unpretentious, earnest and thoughtful classmates, too, which I think is (sadly) maybe unusual for a writing MFA program! I have to admit I came into the program sort of pre-disillusioned with grad school but wanting to avoid the world for a while, and it ended up being way more helpful and important to my writing and reading than I could have imagined. ■

For more of our interview with Amy Shearn, go to <http://english.cla.umn.edu/alumni/>. Shearn reads October 23 at the University of Minnesota Bookstore, Coffman Memorial Union, 4 pm.

how to build a dynamic creative writing program in **TEN (NOT-SO-) EASY STEPS**

- 1) Locate yourself in what has been named in 2008 "the most literate city in America."
- 2) Create an intimate program within a major research institution that boasts an enormous array of offerings, from theater and journalism to mathematics and physical education and political science (all of which our students are currently enrolled in).
- 3) Admit selectively as your program grows. (In 2008, our admissions committee chose among 291 applicants for 13 slots.)
- 4) Continue to offer admitted students three full years of financial support via TAships, fellowships, and grants—and offer that support to all so as to foster a noncompetitive climate; allow students to teach a range of classes from composition to humor writing.
- 5) Offer students "perks" such as literary awards, travel funds, and residencies at the Andersen Center in Red Wing, Minnesota, via the generosity of such donors as James and Teddy Gesell and Michael O'Rourke.
- 6) Work with departments and programs across the University (GLBT Studies, the Humphrey Institute, Journalism, the Medical School, and Mortuary Science, for recent examples) to bring to campus diverse emerging and established writers.
- 7) Hire and retain accomplished writer-faculty members. (During the past decade, Creative Writing faculty have published over 60 books; garnered a Pulitzer Prize nomination, a Guggenheim Fellowship, and multiple National Endowment for the Arts Fellowships, Pushcart Prizes, and Minnesota Book Awards; and seen a novel turned into a Hollywood film.)
- 8) Mentor students one-on-one but also encourage them to work independently, creating a balance of nagging and deadlines on the one hand and internal motivation on the other.
- 9) Boast of graduate publications and awards: 35 books in ten years!
- 10) Keep in touch with alumni. Find out what sort of work they're engaged in and what their lives contain. (So far, we know of three MFA marriages and two offspring!)

Emily August won a 2007 Steven J. Schochet GLBT Studies Award for Excellence in Creativity and Scholarship. Her poem “The Magician, Reversed” appeared in the January 2008 issue of *Paradigm. The Nature of Dogs*, a book she co-ghost-wrote, is out on Simon & Schuster. She was also a finalist for an SASE Emerging Writer Fellowship.

Swati Avasthi published her short story “Swallow” in *Water-Stone Review*.

Dhana-Marie Branton was awarded a fellowship to the 2008 Key West Literary

Cook and Nate Slawson’s collaborative manuscript *December’s Architects* are published in the first Horse Less Press print anthology in fall 2008.

Benjamin Doty received a FLAS fellowship to study in Turkey. He published the story “The Chicken” in the spring 2008 issue of *Whistling Shade*. His short story “Max is Dead” was in the winter 2008 issue of *r.k.v.r.y.* He made the top 25 list in *Glimmer Train’s* December 2007 Open Fiction Competition for his short story, “Velvet Wolves.” That story was also a finalist for the Katherine Anne

Americans in WWII; the grant will enable Leo-Keast to travel to LA and conduct archival research at the National Japanese American Museum. In addition, Leo-Keast won the Scribes for Human Rights Fellowship for 2008–2009.

Arlene Kim will publish her debut poetry collection with Milkweed Editions.

Ann Linde publishes her chapbook *Courting Light* with Finishing Line Press in 2008. She is also partnering with Intermedia Arts to form a poets’ collective to foster and promote member writing.

Laura Owen received a Minnesota State Arts Board Grant in fiction for 2008 and was also a finalist for an SASE Emerging Writer Fellowship. Her story “The Prince” was published in the summer 2008 issue of *Whistling Shade*.

Luke Pingel publishes a chapbook *The Storm That Killed the Tree* with Pudding House Press. Several poems from that collection are also appearing in *Further Adventures Journal*.

Ethan Rutherford was nominated for Best New American Voices 2008 (fiction). He published the short fiction “Camp Winnesaka” in *Faultline* and “The Saint Anna” in *VERB*, an audio-literary journal. His short story, “Peripatetic Coffin,” was published in the spring 2008 issue of *American Short Fiction*.

Amy Mae Schimpf published her poem “Body (#2)” in *Paradigm’s* April 2008 issue. She has two poems in *Front Porch Journal* No. 7.

Nate Slawson published a section of his long poem “Suburbia: A Story in Anecdotes” in *Copper Nickel*. His poem, “The Punk Rock Where Your Heart Should Be,” is featured in issue No. 8 of the on-line journal *H_NGM_N*. Five poems from Slawson and Thomas Cook’s collaborative manuscript *December’s Architects* are published in the first Horse Less Press print anthology in fall 2008.

See pages 24–30 for updates on MFA alumni and faculty

current STUDENT NEWS

Seminar to attend one workshop and participate in a New American Voices symposium. She also received an SASE Emerging Writer Fellowship and a Minnesota State Arts Board Grant in nonfiction for 2008. An excerpt of her creative nonfiction thesis will be published in Kore Press’s forthcoming anthology of writing by military women. Finally, she was awarded the Phillips Fellowship for 2008–2009; she will be working with the archives at the Givens Collection of African American Literature within the University Libraries.

Emily Bright is a 2008–09 Loft Mentor Series Awards winner in fiction. She published the chapbook *Glances Back* on Pudding House Press. Her article “An Ocean Away” appeared in the January 2008 *Rake*. She was the Scribe for Human Rights in 2007–08.

Thomas Cook publishes a chapbook, *This I’d Know of Birds*, in 2008 by Pudding House Press. This prose poem collection was a finalist for the Elixir Poetry Award. The chapbook *Anemic Cinema* was published in spring 2008 by Horse Less Press. Two of his prose poems, “Valentines” and “Failed Passwords,” were published in the January 2008 issue of *Arch Journal*. He has two poems (“Office Park” and “Modern Lighting”) published in the fall/winter issue of *The New Orleans Review*. Five poems from

Porter Prize, sponsored by *Nimrod*. He published the short story “Orange” online in Long Beach City College’s literary journal *Verdad*. His short story “The Concert” is forthcoming in the anthology *Families: The Frontline of Pluralism* (Wising Up Press). His poetry appears in Volume 16 of *Drumvoices Revue*. He also has poetry at www.hoboeye.com.

Libby Edelson was nominated for Best New American Voices 2008 (fiction).

Emily Freeman is a 2007–08 Loft Mentor Series Awards winner in fiction. She was also a finalist for an SASE Emerging Writer Fellowship. She took first prize in the Artwords Contest (graduate category) sponsored by the Weisman Museum and the Creative Writing Program. She published a nonfiction piece in *Touchstone*, the literary journal of Kansas State University, and an essay in *The Morning News*.

Katie Leo-Keast publishes her chapbook *Attempts at Location* with Finishing Line Press in 2008. The chapbook was a finalist for the Tupelo Press Snowbound Award. She also received a Cultural Collaboration Grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board in collaboration with Stages Theatre Company in Hopkins. She has been commissioned to adapt the children’s book *Baseball Saved Us*, about internment camps for Japanese

Shantha Susman took second prize in the ArtWords contest (graduate category) sponsored by the Weisman Museum and the Creative Writing Program. She published a poem in *Touchstone*.

Ryo Yamaguchi published poems in the following journals: *Tin House*, *New Delta Review*, *Notre Dame Review*, *Diagram*, *Hayden's Ferry Review*, *Cincinnati Review*, *Natural Bridge*, *42Opus*, *Spout*, *Word For/word*, *Failbetter*, *Blackbird*, *The Ninth Letter*, and *Faultline*. He read at *Hayden's Ferry Review's* 20th Anniversary Celebration at the 2008 AWP Conference in January.

Congrats to MFA GRADUATING CLASS 2008

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| Karen Ahn | Ann Linde |
| Emily Bright | Andrew Luckham |
| Tara DaPra | Marcia Lynx-Qualey |
| Emily Freeman | Jake Mohan |
| Philip Fuller | Nate Slawson |
| Brett Gastineau | Karen Stout |
| Arlene Kim | Ryo Yamaguchi |

Congrats to AWARD WINNERS

Gesell Award for Excellence in Fiction
Ethan Rutherford (2008); Marcia Lynx-Qualey and Laura Owen (2007)

Gesell Award for Excellence in Literary Nonfiction
Kathryn Leo-Keast and Wilson Peden (2008); Eric Dregni (2007)

Gesell Award for Excellence in Poetry
Lucas Pingel (2008); Tara DaPra and Chelsie GawneMark (2007)

Gesell Summer Writing Fellowship at the Anderson Center
Ann Linde and Ethan Rutherford (2008); Emily Bright and Emily Freeman (2007)

Marcella DeBourg Fellowship
Swati Avasthi and Emily Bright (2008); Karen Ahn and Arlene Kim (2007)

Academy of American Poets James Wright Prize for Poetry
Patrick Nylen and Nathan Slawson (2008); Emily Bright and Arlene Kim (2007)

chapped LIT *New and upcoming alum and candidate chapbooks*

Emily Bright (MFA 2008), *Glances Back* (Pudding House Press)

Thomas Cook (candidate), *This I'd Know of Birds* (Pudding House Press) and *Ane-mic Cinema* (Horse Less Press)

Lightsey Darst (MFA 2003), *Ginnungagap* (Red Dragonfly Press)

Katie Leo-Keast (candidate), *Attempts at Location* (Finishing Line Press)

Alex Lemon (MFA 2004), *Abacadavar* (*Black Mountain Review*)

Ann Linde (BA 2003 *summa cum laude*; MFA 2008), *Courting Light* (Finishing Line Press)

Luke Pingel (candidate), *The Storm That Killed the Tree* (Pudding House Press)

Karen Rigby (MFA 2004), *Savage Machinery* (Finishing Line Press)

Michael Walsh (MFA 2005), *Sleepwalks* (Red Dragonfly Press)

Shana Youngdahl (MFA 2006), *Donner: A Passing* (Finishing Line Press)

One of the premier artist communities in the Upper Midwest, the Anderson Center in beautiful Red Wing, Minnesota, has hosted writers and artists from across the United States and abroad.

Applications are now being accepted for May – October.

For a residency application and deadlines:
Anderson Center
P.O. Box 406, Red Wing, Minnesota, 55066
651-388-2009 www.andersoncenter.org

Member of Alliance of Artists' Communities
RES ARTIS: International Association of Residential Arts Centres



Anderson Center
at Tower View

Charles Baxter
The Soul Thief
Pantheon, 2008



Baxter's novel focuses on graduate student Nathaniel Mason's tangled up relationships with three people, including Jerome Coolberg, who seems to have appropriated parts of Nathaniel's past

new PAGES from faculty and alumni

that Nathaniel cannot remember having told him about. It is Jerome who seems to trigger the events that precipitate Nathaniel's total breakdown, and Jerome who shows up 30 years later to suggest that Nathaniel's identity may in fact not be his own. Maureen Corrigan of the *Washington Post* wrote: "*The Soul Thief* is so craftily constructed that to appreciate how liberally Baxter plants creepy hints of what's to come a reader really should savor this short book twice. Not a chore, since Baxter writes not only cleverly but with the emotional intelligence that has distinguished his best short stories and novels."

Charles Baxter
The Art of Subtext: Beyond Plot
Graywolf Press, 2007

Baxter inaugurates *The Art of*, a new series on the craft of writing which he is editing. *The Art of Subtext* discusses and illustrates the hidden subtextual overtones and undertones in fictional works haunted by the unspoken, the suppressed, and the secreted. Winner of a Minnesota Book Award.

James Berg, editor (BA 1986; MA 1992; PhD 1996)

Isherwood on Writing
University of Minnesota Press, 2007

In the Sixties, Christopher Isherwood gave an unprecedented series of lectures

at California universities on the theme "A Writer and His World." During this time Isherwood, who would liberate the memoir and become the founding father of modern gay writing, spoke openly for the first time about his craft—on writing for film, theater, and novels—and on spirituality. These lectures present, in editor Berg's words, "an example of a man, comfortable in his own sexuality and self, trying to talk about himself and his own life in a society that is not yet ready to hear the whole story."

Michael Dennis Browne
Panthers
Indulgence Press, 2008

Panthers contains 31 previously unpublished poems. The poems are brief and act as suggestions for larger thoughts brought by the reader. Ample space is provided around each poem. The text shifts from horizontal on one page to vertical on the next. The reader must physically turn the book to read it. This action creates a rhythm for the reader that is physical.

Peter Firchow
Strange Meetings: Anglo-German Literary Encounters from 1910 to 1960
Catholic University of America, 2008



Building upon his earlier book *The Death of the German Cousin* (1986), Firchow focuses *Strange Meetings* on major modern British writers from Eliot to Auden and explores the development of British conceptions and misconceptions of Germany and Germans from 1910 to 1960. "Firchow convincingly shows that for the so-called Thirties Generation of British literary intellectuals, Berlin had become for a brief moment in the twilight of the Weimar Republic what Paris had been for the Lost Generation during the Twenties."—Hans H. Rudnick, Professor Emeritus, Southern Illinois University

Peter Firchow
Modern Utopian Fictions from Wells to Murdoch
Catholic University of America, 2007

While tracing the development of fiction in the writing of modern utopias, especially in Britain, Firchow's book seeks to demonstrate in specific ways how those utopias have become increasingly literary—possibly as a reaction not only against the "social scientification" of modern utopias but also in reaction against the modern attempt to institute "utopia" in reality, notably in the former Soviet Union but also in consumerist, late-20th-century America.

Laura Flynn (MFA 2006)
Swallow the Ocean: A Memoir
Counterpoint, 2008



In her debut work, Flynn shares childhood memories of her charismatic mother's harrowing mental deterioration. Flynn and her two sisters escaped into their imaginations to de-

flect the danger threatening their fragile family. Juliet Wittman of the *Washington Post* writes: "Flynn loved her mother as much as she longed to get away from her, and a great deal of this book's strength lies in her childish attempts to sort out the reality her mother presented to her from the reality she understood to exist outside their home."

Patricia Hampl
The Florist's Daughter
Harcourt Press, 2007



Daughter of a debonair Czech father, whose floral work gave him entrée into St. Paul society, and a distrustful Irishwoman with an uncanny ability to tell a tale, Hampl remained, primarily and passionately, a daughter well into adulthood. Here she traces the arc of

faithfulness and struggle that comes with that role from the postwar years past the turbulent Sixties. Selected Notable Book for 2007 by the *New York Times*. Writes the *Chicago Tribune*: “If anyone can restore the memoir to glory, it’s Patricia Hampl. . . . Read Hampl and you will forget about Frey.” Winner of a Minnesota Book Award.

Marianne Herrmann (MA 1990)

Signaling for Rescue
New Rivers Press, 2007



Winner of the Many Voices Project Award, these stories reveal the misguided, often dangerous ways our families teach us to navigate our world and dramatize the harrowing path from fear or abuse to hope and redemption. Erin Wisness of the *Minnesota Women’s Press* writes: “The seven stories in the collection touch on difficult subjects . . . with writing that is concise and intimate, encapsulating the drama of her characters’ lives with the emotionally charged, vivid details that are the hallmark of a talented short story writer.”

Bruce Henricksen (BA 1963)

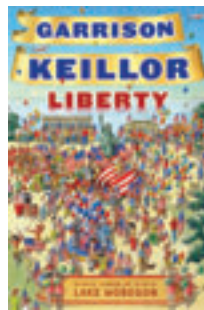
After the Floods
Lost Hills Books, 2007



Henricksen’s first novel is set in post-Katrina New Orleans and in a fictional Minnesota town that has suffered its own watery disaster. Susan Larson of the *New Orleans Times-Picayune* writes: “Sometimes the reader feels she has wondered into Garrison Keillor’s Minnesota, sometimes John Kennedy Toole’s New Orleans. It’s a short, thoroughly enjoyable flight of fancy, filled with sweet wisdom about the way we lean on—and crash into—one another.”

Garrison Keillor (BA 1966)

Liberty
Viking Press, 2008



Clint Bunsen is the treasurer of the Lutheran church and the auto mechanic who starts your car on below-zero mornings in Lake Wobegon. He has turned the Fourth of July parade into an event of dazzling spectacle. Then the town hears of Clint’s ambition to run for Congress. They’re embarrassed for him. They know him too well. Writes Thomas Mallon of 2007’s *Pontoon* in the *International Herald Tribune*, “[R]eaders who venture into Lake Wobegon in search of security or nostalgia will, as always, be brought up short by surprisingly large measures of sadness and dread.”

Calvin Kendall, emeritus

On Genesis: Bede
Liverpool University Press, 2008
“Bede: On Genesis” is the first English-language translation of Bede’s Latin commentary on the book of Genesis—the opening chapters of which he regarded as the foundational narrative of the world and through which he derived the theoretical basis for his scientific treatises.

Alex Lemon (MFA 2004)

Hallelujah Blackout
Milkweed Editions, 2008



With his second poetry collection, Lemon invokes, proclaims, decries, and serenades the world that results after the violation of identity. Avoiding the temptations of both despair and consolation, *Hallelujah Blackout* is a hymn to the decay, crimes, and promise of human life. Writes *Publishers Weekly*: “Lemon (*Mosquito*) constantly asks the reader to take his complex ecstasies in one swallow, diction and image madly comingled.”

Brian Malloy (MFA 2006)

Twelve Long Months
Scholastic, 2008
A Summer 2008 *Book Sense* Pick: “This heartfelt, funny, and surprising teen novel follows small-town [Minnesota] Molly as she heads for college in New York City and learns that her permanent crush, a handsome, artistic boy, is interested in finding a boyfriend of his own. Molly’s story is all about bouncing back, stretching her wings away from home, and finding that even cloudy heartbreak can hold the silver lining of new friendship.”

Jani Scandura

Down in the Dumps: Place, Modernity, American Depression
Duke University Press, 2008



Scandura tells the story of the United States during the Great Depression through evocative and photo-rich portraits of four different locales: Reno, Harlem, Key West, and Hollywood. In investigating these depression-era “dumps,” places that she claims contained and reclaimed the cultural, ideological, and material refuse of modern America, Scandura introduces the concept of “depressive modernity,” an enduring affective component of American culture that exposes itself at those moments when the foundational myths of America and progressive modernity—capitalism, democracy, individualism, secularism, utopian aspiration—are thrown into question.

Amy Shearn (MFA 2005)

How Far Is the Ocean From Here
Shaye Areheart/Random House, 2008
Shearn’s debut novel, writes *O: The Oprah Magazine*, “tracks quirky, love-starved Susannah Prue to a motel in the desert, where she’s found her own surrogate family (or so she thinks). Read it for the kamikaze adventure, for the bone-dry, liberating landscape, and for the stirrings of love in a barren life.”



Emily Paulson
Development Officer
612-626-5141
paulsone@umn.edu

One of the pleasures of my job is the surprise donation. And one of the best surprises this past year was a generous gift in memory of a Department of English professor.

Allison and Dan Connally of Houston, Texas, recently established the Justin and Marguerite O’Connell scholarship fund to benefit students of English in the College of Liberal Arts. “We believe in the importance of ‘giving while living,” they write in an email, “and at this stage in our lives, we are committed to concentrating

giving while **LIVING**

our philanthropic efforts on causes to which we are personally connected, including education.”

Although neither Connally is a University alum, there is a family connection: Allison’s grandfather, Justin O’Connell, taught in the Department of English for 45 years. Allison and Dan felt strongly that establishing a scholarship in memory of Justin and his wife Marguerite was a fitting way to honor the couple’s loving commitment to each other and to higher education, the University of Minnesota, and the state.



Allison and Dan Connally

Allison and Dan say they would be “overwhelmed with joy” if others—family, friends, former colleagues, and former students—contributed to this scholarship: “We are hopeful that our story might inspire other Minnesotans and Americans to consider contributing to a scholarship fund—either by establishing their own or joining with us in this scholarship—as a way to honor loved ones and ensure that their qualities persist for generations.”

I hope that you, as alumni and friends of the College and the Department of English, will think about giving. Allison and Dan are able to maximize their giving in two ways. When their scholarship fund reaches \$25,000, the President’s Scholarship Match program kicks in a dollar-for-dollar contribution. In addition, Allison’s firm, Ernst & Young LLP, matches employee donations to education to \$7,500/year.

Now that’s what I call vital giving—the gift that keeps growing. □



Justin and Marguerite O’Connell

Governor John S. Pillsbury honored at **WEISMAN EXHIBIT**

Members of the Pillsbury family gathered on October 3, 2007 to view “Regent John S. Pillsbury and Architect Leroy S. Buffington: A Collaborative Vision for Campus Design,” an exhibit of architectural drawings from the University’s Leroy S. Buffington collection, and to honor the legacy of their famous ancestor.

John S. Pillsbury, who moved to Minnesota from New Hampshire in 1855 to found a hardware business, assumed a leadership role in several major business ventures: lumber, mining and grain milling. He partnered with nephew Charles A. Pillsbury to found the legendary Pillsbury Mills.



Philip W. Pillsbury, Jr., President Robert H. Bruininks, and Provost E. Thomas Sullivan

John S. Pillsbury was more than a successful businessman. He was a far-sighted civic leader, who served as Governor from 1876 to 1881 and played an indispensable role in the founding of the University of Minnesota. Rescuing this fledgling institution (established as a college preparatory school in 1856) from a crushing burden of debt, he not only secured land grant status from the State Legislature for the tiny Minneapolis campus, but also funded the construction of the magnificent Pillsbury Hall.

Speaking to the Legislature, he said: “I propose to erect and complete a hall of science at an expense of \$150,000 more or less and to present it to the state, and all I ask to know is that these land grants will be kept intact and this institution be made one that this great state can be proud of. . . .” Pillsbury was made a lifetime Regent of the University of Minnesota and is fondly remembered as the “Father of Our University.”

Pillsbury and Buffington collaborated on the construction of many buildings, including several Pillsbury family residences and the Pillsbury “A” Mill. On the University of Minnesota campus, Buffington designed and constructed Pillsbury Hall (1889), Nicholson Hall (1890), Burton Hall (1894), and Eddy Hall (1886). He worked with renowned draftsman Harvey Ellis, credited with the Richardsonian Romanesque design of Pillsbury Hall.

The Pillsbury family reception was jointly hosted by President Robert H. Bruininks, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost E. Thomas Sullivan, the Weisman Museum, and the Department of English. It was arranged in conjunction with a field session for the National Preservation Conference held in St. Paul, October 2–6, 2007. This session, titled “Stewarding the Architectural Legacy of the University of Minnesota,” was organized by Professor Madelon Sprengnether.

Pillsbury Hall has been designated as the future home of the Department of English. — Madelon Sprengnether

Photo by Patrick O’Leary

The Road to Joal

No one suffers from swollen stomachs due to the lack of didactic meter. Most English majors confront this dilemma at the end of their freshman year as friends start to plan their future career moves. Someone will inevitably say: “Oh you’re an English major. What are you going to do with that?” Most people stutter out some whisper of an answer. “Well, maybe I’ll teach.” Or: “Uhhhh . . . I don’t know.” I felt ashamed that my education wasn’t going to help anyone else.

So when I signed up for classes my sophomore year I didn’t drool over the reading list of English 3002: Modern Literary Criticism but instead moved to something concrete: English 3741 Literacy and Diversity.

Sitting through my Literacy class was like finally confronting a side of my self I knew was always there. It was finding a self that related to other people as much as it related to the literary themes of a book. The first thing we learned was what it meant to be literate. The reality of this definition almost knocked me out: I was part of a small portion of the world privileged to know how to read and write. Something we take for granted as we read *For Whom the Bell Tolls* at night.

The class also gave me a gateway for giving. I was literate, and there were people that weren’t. It didn’t mean I had to feel guilty: I could use my knowledge to help those less fortunate.



English major Josh Capodarco in Africa

In my first tutoring position at an ESL high school, most of the students were Somali or Ethiopian. They all spoke so glowingly of home. For NBC news-watching Americans like me, their home was anything but inviting: so often I watched another disaster spread across a continent that seemed doomed to constant strife.

Yet, no matter how many news reports I witnessed, I couldn’t get the students’ descriptions out of my head. I began to fill out application after application, looking for the first study abroad form that would ship me across the Atlantic. I knew what it was to help on my own terms, to live in America and teach English as a second language and know that *they* were the uncomfortable ones. I had yet to know how *I* would feel abroad.

When the hazy lights of Dakar popped out of the sunrise these histories accompanied me, haunting me even after I had left Dakar for Joal, the small fishing village where I taught English. *What are you going to do with that major?* I was going to do exactly what I could, try to help people through the knowledge I had. Of course, this confidence can’t make you completely levelheaded when you step into a classroom of 60 students, all of them fluent in at least two languages you barely understand, but it does help. Lessons from home flash through your mind as you close your eyes for a moment, wipe the blackboard clean,

and prepare a grammar point, 120 ears listening for the slightest mistake. — Josh Capodarco, English and French majors, Global Studies minor, Donald V. Hawkins Scholarship 2008–09.

Writing Food

I am the first in my family to ever attend college. It’s been tough—not because my parents can’t offer me advice on sour roommates or upper level English courses, but because they have marked me with a need for a familial support system. That’s the main reason I transferred from Madison to the University of Minnesota (*besides*, of course, the killer location, friendly instructors, etc.). I am not someone who will offer herself wholly to academia. If I’m without the ones I love for long, I resent

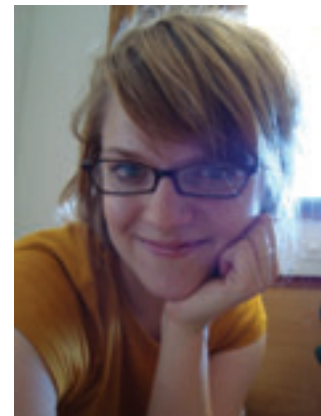
undergrad STORIES

whatever I am doing, especially if it is purely intellectual. It’s been a struggle to figure out where my desire to learn and my desire to love intersect in the best way. However, over the past three years I’ve found that the solace I usually find at home can grow in many places. Most recently, I’ve found it in food.

Last summer, at a tedious desk job, I spent a lot of time browsing the internet and avoiding all serious extracurricular reading. I was moping at being alone in the city. Then I stumbled upon a weblog by a young woman not much older than myself but with a Wordsworthian talent for capturing her daily life. And the way she did this was by writing about food. A blog is strange inspiration, I know, but I spent a week poring over her archives. They were filled with pictures of stained plum clafoutis and descriptions of birthdays dripping with ganache and of warm gin-and-tonic evenings punctuated by frittatas and friends. Right away I wanted what she had.

Mosaic family meals and eating ice cream before bed have always been happy rituals in my past. But what really spurred my interest was the idea that words can come close to describing the feeling of good food. Most people like to eat, if only because food is necessary to feel healthy and alive. But what we don’t always understand is why a crumbly bit of cornbread can make us miss our beds at home, or why a slice of cheesecake can soothe a rotten day. Food literature is where our most basic actions are linked with our irrational hearts and our more logical minds. *This* is what fascinates me—how we try to isolate primitive and fleeting joy with words.

Since last summer I have started reading M. F. K. Fisher and cookbooks before bed, finding that for centuries people have been changed by the sensual powers of food. I have asked others what they like to eat and watched their faces transform as they picture the dishes they have tried over the years. I have taken creative writing courses that have helped me explore physical sensations on paper. This



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English major Emily Schnobrich

Charles Baxter was awarded the American Academy of Arts and Letters Award of Merit for Short Story in spring 2007. His 2000 novel *Feast of Love* was made into a fall 2007 film directed by Robert Benton and starring Morgan Freeman. Baxter's novel, *The Soul Thief*, was published by Pantheon in February 2008 and was voted as one of the top books of the Spring 2008 NBCC Good Reads List by the National Book Critics Circle. In the summer of 2007, he published *The Art of Subtext: Beyond Plot*, part of a Graywolf Press series on the

Tony C. Brown received a National Endowment for the Humanities fellowship for the academic year 2007–08. He also was awarded a supplemental College of Liberal Arts Research grant.

Michael Dennis Browne published *Panthers*, a limited edition poetry collection (Indulgence Press). His poem "Mengele" is reprinted in *Blood to Remember: American Poets on the Holocaust* (Time Being Books). He also has two poems in an anthology in honor of James Wright (Lost Winds Press) published in December, 2007. *To Be Certain of the Dawn*, his post-Holocaust oratorio with music by Stephen Paulus, was performed by the Minnesota Orchestra in February 2008, then recorded by them for BIS Records. Musicians from St. Cloud State, St. Ben's, and St. John's performed the work in April at St. Cloud State and St. John's; and in May/June they toured France, Germany and Switzerland, including a performance in a former concentration camp. Browne wrote four pieces on *Splendid Jewel*, a CD of music by Stephen Paulus, issued by The Singers: Minnesota Choral Artists. Finally, he was appointed the first Kilian O'Donnell Writer-in-Residence at the Collegeville Institute, St. John's University, for winter /spring 2008.

Evelyn Nien-Ming Ch'ien published "English Is Getting Weirder. R We?" in the online journal *Politics and Culture*. The article can be found at <http://aspn.conncoll.edu/politicsandculture/page.cfm?key=610>

Tom Clayton, who is currently serving as chair of the Classical Civilization Program, was the inspiration for the new Tom Clayton Undergraduate Classical Civilization & Classics Scholarship. He published "Politics, Ethics, and Aesthetics in and out of Three Tragedies by Shakespeare: *Julius Caesar*, *Hamlet*, and *Coriolanus*" in *Politics and/in Aesthetics*, edited by Litsa Trayiannoudi; and "Justice Poetic and Pragmatic, and Aspects of the Endplay, in *King Lear*" in *King Lear: New Critical Essays*, edited by Jeffrey Kahan (Routledge).

Siobhan Craig received the Ruth Christie Distinguished Teaching Award in English for 2008–10.

Lois Cucullu was named co-winner of the first Outstanding Director of Graduate Studies Award at the University of Minnesota. She also was awarded a Graduate School Grant-in-Aid of Research, Artistry and Scholarship 2008–09. She was selected to participate in the 2007 NEH Summer Seminar "The Oscar Wilde Archive" at UCLA's William Andrews Clark Memorial Library. She presented two conference papers fall 2007: one entitled "Uncorseted and Inhospitable" for the Modernist Studies Association 9th Annual Conference, where she also serves on the association's board; and the second entitled "Sleep Deprived and Ultra Modern: How Novels Turned Dream Girls into Insomniacs" at a special conference "Theories of the Novel Now" in Providence, RI, celebrating the 40th anniversary of the journal *Novel: A Forum on Fiction*.

Maria Damon publishes *Poetry and Cultural Studies: A Reader* with University of Illinois Press in 2008. She will serve as Director of Undergraduate Studies in 2008–09.

Lianna Farber received a CLA Research Fellowship Supplement to support her Charles A. Ryskamp Research Fellowship for 2008.

Peter Firchow published *Modern Utopian Fictions from Wells to Murdoch* and *Strange Meetings: Anglo-German Literary Encounters from 1910 to 1960* (both Catholic University of America Press). He also wrote the essay "Norman Douglas as Seen Through Aldous Huxley's Eyes," published in *Norman Douglas: 4. Symposium*, edited by Wilhelm Meusburger and Thomas G. Natter (Bregenz). His reviews included "Lothar Fietz, *Aldous Huxley: Prätexte und Kontexte*" and "Ulrich Pallua, *Eurocentrism, Racism, Colonialism in the Victorian and Edwardian Age: Changing Images of Africa(ns) in Scientific and Literary Texts*," both in *Germanic Notes and Reviews* (37.2, 2006).

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craft of writing which he is also editing; the book won a 2008 Minnesota Book Award for General Nonfiction.

Tim Brennan published the book *Empire in Different Colors/Another Finger Exercise*, with Szacsva y Pál (Revolver Press). Among essays published: "The Sublimation of Poverty" in *A Fiesta of Tough Choices: Contemporary Art in the Wake of Cultural Policies*, Tirdad Zolghader and Robert Stasinski, editors (Torpedo Books); "Postcolonial Studies and Globalization Theory" in *The Postcolonial and the Global*, Revathy Krishnaswami and John C. Hawley, editors (University of Minnesota Press); and "Settling Scores: The Philologists Strike Back" in *Race & Class* (January 2007). His invited lectures included: "The Making of a Counter-Tradition," at the "Waiting for the Barbarians: the Legacies of Edward Said" Conference, Istanbul, Turkey, May 28, 2007; "Classical Knowledge and Conventional Wisdom," at the Seminar on Secularism, Democracy, and Cosmopolitanism convened by Partha Chatterjee, Akeel Bilgrami, and Nicholas Dirks, Columbia University, September 14, 2007; and "Intellectual Labor," at Ontario's Carleton University, September 28, 2007. Verso will publish his next book *Secular Devotion: Afro-Latin Music and Imperial Jazz* in October 2008.

M. J. Fitzgerald published “Callings” in *Literary Imagination* (9:3, 2007).

Shirley Garner was awarded the Mullen/Spector/Truax Women’s Leadership Award for 2006–07. She is currently associate dean of the Graduate School.

Ray Gonzalez published an essay on prose poetry in *Truth in Non-fiction*, an anthology edited by David Lazar (University of Iowa Press). Gonzalez edited a special feature on the prose poem, which includes interviews with several poets and reviews of new books of poetry books, in the March/April 2008 issue of *The Bloomsbury Review*. His third book of nonfiction, *Renaming the Earth: Personal Essays*, appears October 2008 from the University of Arizona Press.

Edward M. Griffin published “Stubborn Loyalists: Calling on the Daughters of Dr. Byles” in *Common-Place*, the electronic journal of the American Antiquarian Society and the Department of History, Florida State University, July 2007 (<http://www.commonplace.org>). He also published “Hoops and Hurdles: The Unlikely Story of How I Learned How I Learn” in the October 2007 *Transform* (http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/transform/october2007/Transform_v2_n2_final.pdf). He presented “Loyalism Alive in Boston, 1820’s & 1830’s: Lydia Maria (Francis) Child and Eliza Leslie Visit the Daughters of Dr. Byles” at the American Literature Association annual meeting, Boston, May 25, 2007. He also chaired the “Worthy of the Word” session at the international meeting of SHARP (Society for the History of Authorship, Readership and Publishing), July 14, 2007, Minneapolis. Finally, he presented “Mentoring Graduate Students” over two workshop sessions for the New Faculty Orientation Program, University of Minnesota, August 22, 2007.

Patricia Hampl was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in spring 2007. She celebrated the publication of her fifth memoir *The Florist’s Daughter* (Harcourt) with a reading (and music) at the Fitzgerald

Theater on October 7, 2007. The book won a 2008 Minnesota Book Award for Memoir & Creative Nonfiction and was a *New York Times* Notable Book for 2007.

Michael Hancher chaired the Planning and Program Committees for the 15th annual conference of SHARP (Society for the History of Authorship, Readership and Publishing) entitled “Open the Book, Open the Mind,” July 10–14, 2007, University of Minnesota.

Calvin Kendall (emeritus) published a translation of the Venerable Bede’s *On Genesis* with Liverpool University Press.

Rebecca Krug won the College of Liberal Arts Arthur “Red” Motley Exemplary Teaching Award for 2006–07.

Nabil Matar became a professor of English at Minnesota in fall 2007, hired from the Florida Institute of Technology under the Presidential Initiative on Arts and Humanities. He publishes *Europe through Arab Eyes, 1578–1727*, in 2008 (Columbia University Press). He continues to work with Gerald MacLean of Exeter University on *Britain and the Muslim World, 1558–1713*, forthcoming from Oxford University Press in 2009. He was invited to present “Christ and the Abrahamic Legacy in Naguib Mahfouz’s Work” at the Early Modern Mediterranean conference, University of Toronto, October 2007. His other invited lectures include: “Islam and the ‘Birth of a Great Power’: Britain and North Africa, 1688–1713,” the Centre for Maritime Historical Studies, Exeter University, December 2007; “Christianity and Christians through Arab-Muslim Eyes in the Early Modern Period,” the University of Warwick’s Centre for the Study of the Renaissance, March 2008; and “Magharibi Travelers” at the L’Aillerus de l’autre conference, University of Nantes, June 2008. He presented “The ‘Arab’ Identity in the Early Modern Mediterranean,” Middle East Studies Association, Montreal, November 2007. He and Raul Marrero-Fente, Department of Spanish and Portuguese Studies, received funding from the CLA Scholarly

Events Fund for the fall 2008 program “Exile 1609: A Retrospective.”

Toni McNaron (emerita) published “Poisoned Ivy: Lesbian and Gay Academics from the 1960s through the 1990s,” in *Feminist Waves, Feminist Generations: Life Stories from the Academy*, Hokulani K. Aikau, Karla A. Erickson, and Jennifer Pierce, editors (University of Minnesota Press) and “Post-Lesbian? Not Yet” in *Journal of Lesbian Studies* (11.1/2, 2007).

Dan Philippon was elected vice president of the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment, a scholarly organization with approximately 1000 members from 23 countries. He becomes president in 2009.

Paula Rabinowitz received the 2008 College of Liberal Arts Dean’s Medal for excellence in scholarship. She gave the following lectures: in January, the 2008 Provost Lecture at the Institute for the Study of Culture and Society at Bowling Green State University, Ohio, entitled “Epidemics of Collapse: Notes on Documentary and the Post-Industrial Sublime”; in February the 2008 CLA Dean’s Medalist address: “Chairs: Frida’s Hair; Vincent’s Ear”; in March the keynote address to the Marxist Research Group of the University of Florida’s conference “Wither Culture? Toward Histories, Futures, Theories and Productions of the Social,” a talk entitled “Epidemics of Collapse: Toward an Understanding of the Post-Industrial Sublime”; in April, the James M. Benson Endowed Lecture at the University of Illinois entitled “Two Prickes’: Agee’s Colons; Evans’s Lenses”; in June, the plenary address at the Association of Departments of English Summer Seminar at West Virginia University entitled “Academic Freedom and Academic Labor”; also in June, the keynote address to the American University of Paris’s international conference “Celebrating 100 Years of Richard Wright,” a talk entitled “Savage Holiday: Documentary Noir and True Crime in *12 Million Black Voices*.” In May, she gave a gallery talk at the Walker Art Center on Richard Prince’s work

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entitled “Fetishism.” Finally, her essay “L’America: Woman, Artist, Landscape—Frida Kahlo, Georgia O’Keeffe and Emily Carr, Painters as Theorists of the National Imaginary” appeared in the special issue “Class, Culture and Public Intellectuals” of the online journal *reconstruction: studies in contemporary culture* 8 (2008).

Jani Scandura published *Down in the Dumps: Place, Modernity, American Depression* with Duke University Press.

Andrew Scheil was selected a McKnight Presidential Fellow at the University of Minnesota. The award includes three years of research support. Scheil received a National Endowment for the Humanities fellowship for the academic year 2007–08. He also was awarded a supplemental College of Liberal Arts Research grant. In spring 2008 his book *The Footsteps of Israel: Understanding Jews in Anglo-Saxon England* (University of Michigan Press, 2004) was awarded the Medieval Academy

of America’s 2008 John Nicholas Brown Prize for a first book in the medieval field judged to be of outstanding quality. Scheil has also received a Solmsen Fellowship for academic year 2008–2009 at the Institute for Research in the Humanities at the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Katherine Scheil received a Bibliographic Society of America Fellowship.

Julie Schumacher won a 2007 Minnesota Book Award for her young adult novel *The Book of One Hundred Truths* (Delacorte). Her latest book for juvenile readers *Black Box* is published in September by Delacorte Press. Her short story, “Patient, Female,” appears in the summer 2008 fiction issue of the *Atlantic Monthly*.

Madelon Sprengnether was named University of Minnesota Regents Professor. She received a 2008 Graduate School Summer Faculty Research Fellowship and a McKnight Summer

Fellowship for the Arts and Humanities, both in support of a book-length memoir project titled *My Ghostly Stepfather*.

George T. Wright (emeritus) gave the annual T. S. Eliot Memorial Lecture to the T. S. Eliot Society in St. Louis, Missouri, September 2007.

Michelle Wright published “A Brief History of Blackness in the United States” in *Black Inc.*, Stefania Tiberini, editor (University of Rome Press). She also published “Postwar Blackness and the World of Europe” in the special issue “Blackness, transnational” of the *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaften* (Austrian Journal of History) (17.4, 2006). Wright and four other CLA professors received funding from the CLA Scholarly Events Fund for the spring 2008 program “Black Europe: The African Diaspora in Europe—Lecture Series.”

PhD candidate NEWS

Renee DeLong (PhD candidate) spoke at the Conference on College Composition and Communication’s annual convention, New York City, March 2007. She presented “Writing the Dissonance” during the session “Writing the Dissonance: Using collaborative texts to enhance service learning.”

Kate Hannah (PhD candidate) taught a 2007 May session class for undergraduates entitled *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* which utilized the University of Minnesota Libraries’ extensive Sherlock Holmes Collection; Hannah’s students presented papers in a “convention” at the Andersen Library at the session’s end.

Kelly Hulander (PhD candidate) read her paper “[Her] Kindness . . . Was Inexhaustible’: Condescension and Entitlement vs. Cross-Class Friendship in British New Woman and Socialist Fiction” at the 2007 British Women Writers Conference, University of Kentucky in Lexington, April 2007.

Chris Kamerbeek (PhD candidate) published the article “Parks and Wreck: Anxiety and Amusement at Turn-of-the-Century Coney Island” in *Popular Culture Review* (summer 2007).

Gregg Murray (PhD candidate) presented the following papers: “(The Joking Voice, a Gesture I Love): Familiarizing Discourse in Elizabeth Bishop’s ‘Manuelzinho’” at the PCA/ACA Conference, Boston, Massachusetts, April 2007 and “‘I Say No More and Walk Barefoot’: Feet in Jean Genet’s *Le Miracle de la rose*” at the Graduate Symposium in Romance Languages at the University of Minnesota, March 2007.

Mitchell P. Ogden (PhD candidate), recipient of the Harold Leonard Memorial Fellowship in Film Study for 2007–8, traveled to Thailand in September 2007 for three weeks with a Hmong American filmmaker, Moua Lee, on his film shoot there.



*Fantasy Matters Conference speakers
Neil Gaiman and Jack Zipes*

English doctoral students Kathleen Howard, Jennifer Miller, and Lindsay Craig organized the first **Fantasy Matters Conference** the weekend of November 16–18, 2007, at the University of Minnesota Law School. Nearly two hundred people from all over the world attended the conference, which was envisioned as a dialog including both the academic and creative aspects of fantasy literature. It featured two particularly apt keynote speakers: eminent fantasy scholar (and University of Minnesota German professor) Jack Zipes and award-winning and best-selling author Neil Gaiman. Organizers Howard, Miller, and Craig hope to make the conference a biennial event.

Congrats to GRADUATE AWARD WINNERS

Graduate School's Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship

Kathleen Chen, Amy Griffiths, Stephen Healey, Christopher Kamerbeek, Jessica Knight (2008); Becky Peterson, Stoyan Tchapravov, Elizabeth Weixel, Maria Zavialova (2007)

Mary Sue Comfort Dissertation Fellowship

Laura Zebuhr (2008)

Ruth Drake Dissertation Fellowship

Madhurima Chakraborty and Elizabeth Ketner (2008); Lauren Curtright and Sara Berrey (2007)

Samuel Holt Monk Memorial Prize for Published Scholarship

Jayashree Kamble and Stoyan Tchapravov (2008); Liz Hutter, Marie-Therese Sulit, Mitch Ogden, and Eric Daise (Lecturer), and Anca Parvulescu (2007)

Audrey Christensen English Library Acquisition Prize

Erik Carlson and Nick Hengen (2008); Lindsay Craig and Lucia Pawlowski (2007)

FLAS Fellowship

Ben Doty and Eun-Joo Kim (2008)

P.E.O. International Peace Scholarship

Je-Won Woo (2008)

Graduate School Thesis Grant Award

Becky Weaver (2008)

CLA Graduate Research Partnership Program Recipients

Swati Avasthi with Professor Julie Schumacher, Thomas Cook with Professor Christophe Wall-Romana, Sheena Fallon with Professor Ray Gonzalez, Amy Griffiths with Professor Maria Damon, Chris Kamerbeek with Professor Jani Scandura, Chang-Hee Kim with Professor Rachmi Diyah Larasati, Annemarie Lawless with Professor Christophe Wall-Romana, Keith Mikos with Professor Don Ross, Nick Robinette with Professor Tim Brennan, Adam Schrag with Professor Paula Rabinowitz (2008); Lauren Curtright with Professor John Wright, Mitch Ogden with Professor Jigna Desai, Ethan Rutherford with Professor Julie Schumacher, Lisa Trochmann with Professor Paula Rabinowitz (2007)

Department Awards for Outstanding Graduate Teachers

Amy Griffiths and Ryo Yamaguchi (2008); Chang-Hee Kim, Lisa Arrastia, Kelly Hulander, Jake Mohan (2007)

See current MFA student news and awards on pages 18–19.

dissertations completed SPRING 2007–SPRING 2008

Ariane Balizet, “Blood on the Early Modern Stage: Marriage, Murder, Mythmaking.” She has a tenure-track appointment at California Lutheran University.

Sara Berrey, “Generations in Print: Revision in American Literature 1850-1900.” She has a tenure-track appointment at St. Vincent College.

Anne Carter, “Dreadful Plots: Conspiracy Narratives and Political Struggle in Early Nineteenth-century British Writing.”

Megan Casey, “Postcolonial Ecocriticism and the Cultural Politics of Nature in Belize.” She was the 2007–08 CIC post-doc fellow at Ohio State University.

Brenda Helt, “The Work of Bisexuality in Modernist Women’s Writing: Sexual Epistemology, Modernist Aesthetics, Feminist Politics.”

Jean Jacobson, “How Should Poetry Look? The Printer’s Measure and the Poet’s Line.”

Yaliang Jin, “Asian American Citizenship through Interracial Relationships.”

Younkyung Kim, “‘The Poet’s Time’: Examination of John Milton’s Early Works and Edmund Waller’s Poetry in the Caroline Context.”

Leni Marshall, “All Over: The Identities of Old Age.”

Megan McGurk, “A Press of Their Own: Irish Women and Modernist Print Culture 1896–1920.”

Rachel Mordecai, “Narrative Wars with My Cousin: The 1970s in Jamaican Literature.” She has a tenure-track appointment at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Alexander Mueller, “Translating Troy: Roman Revival in Middle English Alliterative Poetry.” He has a tenure-track appointment at SUNY-Plattsburgh.

Manisha Nordine, “Jammin’ with Resistant Music and Popular Culture in Bob Marley’s Jah-Public.”

Mitch Ogden, “Refugee Utopias: (Re)Theorizing Refugeeism through the Cultural Production of the Hmong Diaspora.”

Diana Ostrander, “An Anglo-Indian in Search of Wisdom: W. D. Arnold’s India Pilgrimage.”

Jennifer Roberts, “Getting an Earful: The Place and Process of Hearing in Early Modern England.”

Christina Schmid, “Strategies of Dissociation: Negotiating Cultural Memory in Late 20th-Century German and Austrian Experimental Film and Video.”

Robert Stark, “Ezra Pound: A Jargoner’s Apprenticeship, with an Appendix on the Origin and Significance of Birds Symbolism.”

Karen Steigman, “Fictions of Security: Rereading the Political Thriller in the Era of Globalization.” She has a tenure-track appointment at Otterbein College in Ohio.

Marie-Therese Sulit, “Hunger for Home: Contemporary Women Writers of the Philippines Imagining Community in the Diaspora.” She has a tenure-track appointment at Mount Saint Mary College in New York.

Emily Swanson, “Natural Arguments: Popular Discourse and Environmental Legislation 1945–2007.”

Marge Barrett (MFA 2005) received a 2007 Annual Award for Creative Work at the Abigail Quigley McCarthy Center for Women at the College of St. Catherine's for her short story, "Upturn." Her poem "Hold On" was published in the inaugural issue of the *Broome Review* in April, 2008. Her essay, "A Floater on the Course," has also been selected for publication in *Hot Metal Bridge* number 3 (<http://www.hotmetalbridge.org/>).

James Berg (BA 1986; MA 1992; PhD 1996) relocated from Lake Superior

alumni NEWS

College to the Palm Springs area in August 2007 to become Dean of Social Sciences and Arts at the College of the Desert. The position brings him closer to his research interests: Christopher Isherwood's papers are at the Huntington Library in Pasadena, CA. In late 2007, Berg published *Isherwood on Writing* (University of Minnesota Press), a collection of lectures Isherwood gave in the Sixties to California college audiences.

Melinda Braun (BA 2006) published *Luella* (Savage Press), a picture book starring a duck, two adventurous sisters, and Pancake, the family dog.

Scott Carlson (BA 1998) won first prize for Beat Reporting: Small Media or Market in the Education Reporting Awards for his article "Libraries and Archives," published in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. The awards are sponsored by the National Education Writers Association. Carlson is a senior reporter at *The Chronicle of Higher Education* who also writes for *Dwell* and *Preservation*. He was the keynote speaker at a conference about "logging the academic life" for the Pennsylvania Library Association. He was also a speaker at the annual conference for the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture, where he talked about environmentalism and sustainability on college campuses; the conference was

called "Preparing for the Inconvenient Truth" and was organized by the University of Minnesota's College of Design.

Charlie Conley (MFA 2006) received a 2008-2009 Fellowship from the Provincetown Fine Arts Work Center and an SASE Emerging Artist Fellowship for 2008.

Haddayr Copley-Woods (MFA 2000) had her short story "Desires of Houses," originally published in *Strange Horizons*, anthologized in both *Best New Romantic Fantasy of 2007* (Juno Books) and *Best of Best American Erotica 2008* (Touchstone/Simon & Schuster), edited by Susie Bright. She also published the short story "Meeting" in *Say . . . What's the Combination?* (June 2007).

Amanda Coplin (MFA 2006) received a 2008-2009 Fellowship from the Provincetown Fine Arts Work Center.

Carlos L. Dews (PhD 1994) completed another graduate degree (MFA in Fiction Writing from The New School University in New York) and accepted a new position as Chair of the Department of English Language and Literature at John Cabot University in Rome, Italy.

Brooks Doherty (BA 2005 *magna cum laude*) is serving as Managing Editor of Twin Cities' new on-line arts and literary magazine *Pike* (www.pikemag.com). Showcasing fiction, poetry, music, and "visuals," *Pike* also features a blog which is often penned by Doherty. In addition, he co-wrote the novella *Shawn Shook* with his late uncle Ellis Worth, which was published through *Pike*.

Eric Dregni (MFA 2007) publishes his memoir *In Cod We Trust: Living the Norwegian Dream* with the University of Minnesota Press in fall 2008. He has accepted an assistant professor, tenure-track appointment at Concordia University in Saint Paul (writing). He won the 2007 James Valentine Award for his book, *Zamboni: The Coolest Machines*

on *Ice*. The award is given annually by the Southern California Chapter of Automotive Historians.

Amanda Fields (MFA 2005) was nominated for a Pushcart Prize for her short story, "Boiler Room," featured in the *Indiana Review*. She received writing grants from the American University in Cairo and the Elizabeth Ireland Graves Foundation. She was accepted to the VCCA summer residency program at Moulin a Nef in Auvillar, France.

Laura Flynn (MFA 2006) published "Visiting Hours" in *The Rake* (April 2007). This piece came about through her work as the 2006 Scribe for Human Rights, a joint project of the Creative Writing and Human Rights programs. She received an SASE Emerging Artist Fellowship for 2008.

Sari Fordham (MFA 2007) received honorable mention in the *Atlantic Monthly* student contest in nonfiction.

Julie Gard (MFA 2000) has published her first chapbook with Finishing Line Press. *Obscura: The Daguerreotype Series* is a collection of prose poems.

Bruce Henricksen (BA 1963) founded Lost Hills Books, Minnesota's newest small literary press, located in Duluth. Through Lost Hills he published his first novel, *After the Floods* and a collection *From the Other World: Poems in Memory of James Wright*, edited by Robert Johnson and Henricksen.

Leigh Herrick (BA 1988) published two poems in *Cost of Freedom: The Anthology of Peace & Activism*, Michael Annis, Whitney Trettien, and Mike Palecek, editors (Howling Dog Press). See Herrick's page at www.mnartists.org/Leigh_Herrick.

Marianne Herrmann (MA 1990) won the 2006 New Rivers Press Many Voices Project Award for her short story collection, *Signaling for Rescue*. The collection was published in 2007 and was placed on the longlist for the Frank O'Connor International Short Story

Award. Only eight writers from the U.S. were nominated. She was also a finalist in the 2006 Short Story Contest sponsored by *The Journal*.

Kate Hopper (MFA 2003) received a 2008 Minnesota State Arts Board Grant.

Nicole Johns (MFA 2006) will publish her memoir with Seal Press in spring 2009. She published the poems “Myrtle Street” in the fall/winter 2006–2007 issue of *Iodine Poetry Journal* and “Uncle Carmine’s Used Cars” in *Ellipsis* (runner-up in the annual *Ellipsis* poetry contest).

Cheri Johnson (MFA 2005) was granted a \$25,000 McKnight Artist Fellowship through the Loft Awards in Creative Prose. Novelist Jane Hamilton judged submissions. Johnson was awarded a seven-month fellowship (in fiction) to the Fine Arts Work Center at Provincetown in 2007–2008.

Jen Johnson (MFA 2007) has had poems published in *HazMat Review* and by *Yes Press*. She placed two poems in *Camas: The Nature of the West*. She also received an emerging artist fellowship from the Blacklock Nature Sanctuary.

Sam Kean (BA 2002 *summa cum laude*) wrote “Uncommon Reading,” about common-reading programs for freshmen, for the September 2007 *Writer’s Chronicle*. Kean contributes to *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* and *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. He has also covered books and the arts for the *Washington Post*, *Science*, and *The New Science*.

Shirley Strum Kenny (MA 1957) retired as president of the State University of New York at Stony Brook after 14 years.

Ian Leask (MA 1980), publisher of *Scarletta Press, Inc.*, celebrates the *New Writer’s Handbook 2007* being awarded *Forward Magazine’s* Book of the Year Award (Career Category).

Sherry Quan Lee (MFA 1996) published the book *How to Write a Suicide Note: serial essays that saved a woman’s life* with Mod-

ern History Press.

Alex Lemon (MFA 2004) publishes the poetry collection *Hallelujah Blackout* with Milkweed in 2008 and has sold a memoir to Scribner for 2009. His poem “from Hallelujah Blackout,” which appeared in *Agni*, will be included in the 2008 edition of *Best American Poetry*, selected by Charles Wright. His chapbook *Abracadaver* appeared in *Black Warrior Review*. Another chapbook, *At Last Unfolding Congo*, was released by Horse Less Press.

Eireann Lorsung (BA 2003 *summa cum laude*; MFA 2006) published two poems in *Prairie Schooner* and three poems in *Diode* (January 2008). She was a finalist for the 2007 Minnesota Book Award for Poetry for *music for landing planes* by.

Brian Malloy (MFA 2006) had his novel, *Brendan Wolf*, nominated for a 2008 Ferro-Grumley Award for Lesbian and Gay Fiction. Fellow finalists include Armistead Maupin and Sarah Schulman. He also published the young adult novel *Twelve Long Months* with Scholastic.

Nancy Manahan (BA 1969) and her life-partner **Becky Bohan** (BA 1974) published *Living Consciously, Dying Gracefully: A Journey with Cancer and Beyond* (Beaver’s Pond Press) about Diane Manahan, a nursing professor at Minnesota State University, Mankato. Bill Manahan (BA 1962), married to Diane for 37 years, wrote the foreword. He is currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health, University of Minnesota Medical School. Nancy Manahan is a retired community college English, women’s studies, and film studies teacher. Bohan is the retired Vice-President of Knowledge Design and Delivery, Inc., a training consulting company.

Bruce Maylath (PhD 1994) has become a professor in the English Department at North Dakota State University, which recruited him to help launch a new PhD in English: Practical Writing. He comes to NDSU from the University

of Wisconsin’s polytechnic campus, UW–Stout, where he helped found the technical communication program in 2000 and served as its director for its first seven years. His current research focuses on international technical communication, particularly translation issues. Last year he finished eight years on the executive committee of the Council for Programs in Technical & Scientific Communication, for which he served as president in 2002–04.

Michael Medrano (MFA 2006) publishes his first book of poetry with Bilingual Review Press. His essay “Confessions of a Chicano Lit Student” was featured in *In the Grove*. His story “The Brown Blur of Her Face” and the poems “Mountain Lake” and “a Familia des Centaures Morsupiaux” appeared in *Pachuco Children Hurl Stones*.

Russ Meyer (PhD 1976) spent six years as Chair of the Department of English at Emporia State University before moving to Pueblo, Colorado, to be Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Colorado State University–Pueblo. In July 2006, he became Interim Provost at CSU–Pueblo (and Interim President for about a month), and continued in that position until March 2007 when he became Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Interested in discussing books with Department of English faculty? We are starting a new book club for alumni in the Twin Cities, and we would love to hear from you. Contact Terri at 612-626-1528 or sutt0063@umn.edu.

Jake Mohan (MFA 2008) contributes regularly to *Reveille Magazine* (<http://www.reveillemag.com>) and the *Utne Reader*. He has also had pieces published in *Spry Magazine* (<http://sprymag.com/toc.php>).

Rachel Moritz (MFA 2006) won an SASE Emerging Artist Fellowship for 2008.

Scott Muskin (MFA 1998) won the Parthenon Prize for Fiction for his novel

alumni News, continued

The *Annunciations of Hank Meyerson, Momma's Boy and Scholar*. Muskin received an \$8,000 award and publication by Hooded Friar Press (January 2009). The judge was Tony Earley.

Margie Newman (MFA 2007) was selected in the nonfiction category of the 2007–08 Loft Mentor Series.

Tim Nolan (BA 1978) publishes his debut poetry collection with New Rivers Press in fall 2008. A long-time partner at the now-dissolved Rider Bennett in Minneapolis, Nolan has joined McGrann Shea Anderson Carnival Straughn & Lamb. Nolan is spotlighted in a Department of English website feature “Alumni Stories” at www.english.cla.umn.edu/alumni.

Send **your news** to sutt0063@umn.edu or 207 Lind Hall, 207 Church St. S.E., Minneapolis, MN 55455.

John O'Brien (PhD 1995), academic vice president at Century College in White Bear Lake, MN, has been appointed acting president of the college effective July 1, 2008. O'Brien will serve as acting president for one year while the current president, Larry Litecky, is on a sabbatical. O'Brien has served as academic vice president at Century College since 2005. Previously, he was associate vice chancellor for instructional technology in the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Office of the Chancellor.

Michael Opperman (MFA 2002) was a finalist for *Margie Review's* Editor's Prize for best poem. “Fireman's Funeral” and “My First Lover” are published in the autumn 2008 issue.

Jay Orff (MFA 2003) received a 2008 Minnesota State Arts Board Grant.

Steve Pacheco (MFA 2005) is a featured author in the anthology *Shedding Skins: Four Sioux Poets* (Michigan State University Press, 2008).

Leland D. Peterson (BA 1954; MA 1956; Ph.D 1962) is Emeritus Professor of English & Latin since 1992 at Old

Dominion University, where he taught for 31 years. At 82, he is still publishing.

William Reichard (PhD 1997) was a finalist for the Minnesota Book Award in Poetry for *This Brightness*.

Stephanie Resnik (MFA 2007) is a 2008–09 Loft Mentor Series Awards winner in fiction. She won second place in the 2008 Wisconsin People and Ideas/Harry W. Schwartz Bookshops Short Story Contest and is published in the fall 2008 issue of *Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters* magazine.

Karen Rigby (MFA 2004) publishes the chapbook *Savage Machinery* with Finishing Line Press in September 2008. A poem of hers is included in *Hunger and Thirst*, a City Works Press anthology. Her poem “The Lover” is included in *Best New Poets 2008*. She published poems in *Mid-American Review*, *Phoebe: A Journal of Literature and Art*, *Black Warrior Review*, and *Anti-* (<http://www.anti-poetry.com>).

Suzanne Rivecca (MFA 2004) had her short story “Uncle” selected for the 2008 edition of *Best New American Voices*.

Karen Roggenkamp (PhD 2001) was admitted to a summer seminar at the American Antiquarian Society entitled “The Newspaper and the Culture of Print in the Early American Republic.” She was also awarded the Paul W. Barrus Award for Excellence in Teaching at Texas A&M University, Commerce, where she is assistant professor in English.

Mike Rollin (MFA 2007) was an Honorable Mention for the 2008 McKnight Artist Fellowships in Poetry.

Michael Seward (MA 1998; MFA 2001) won a 2008 Minnesota State Arts Board Grant.

Danika Stegeman (BA 2005 *summa cum laude*) published the poem “Here, 1,475' above the Ocean” in the *Denver Quarterly* (Vol. 41:4). Stegeman is an MFA candidate at George Mason University.

Timothy Sweet (PhD 1988) won the 2006 Richard Beale Davis Prize for the best article published in *Early American Literature* in a publishing year. Sweet's prize-winning article is “What Concernment Hath America in These Things!” Local and Global in Samuel Sewall's Plum Island Passage” (41:2: 213-40). Sweet is Associate Chair of the Department of English at the University of West Virginia. Richard Beale Davis was a foremost scholar of early Southern literature and intellectual history.

Yuko Taniguchi (MFA 2001) had her debut novel *The Ocean in the Closet* (Coffee House Press) chosen as one of the 2008 Kiriya Prize Notable Books.

Josh Wallaert (MFA 2007) has a free online chapbook of machine-human poems at Beard of Bees Press (www.beardofbees.com). Other stories and poems are published at *Black Warrior Review*, *Caketrain*, *Lamination Colony*, and *Thieves Jargon*. He enjoyed the DVD release of his documentary film *Arid Lands* by Bullfrog Films.

Michael Walsh (MFA 2005) publishes his second chapbook of poetry with Red Dragonfly Press. His poems “On Kissing My Husband at a Gas Station” and “Three Self-Portraits in a Dress” appeared in *Meridian* and “Quilt Rags” and “Weekly Horoscope” in the *Chattahoochee Review*.

Dave Wehner (PhD 2006) started a tenure-track position in 2007 at Mount Saint Mary's University, in Emmitsburg, Maryland. He had been a Post-Doctoral Associate at the University of Minnesota's Center for Teaching and Learning.

Mary Winstead (2008) published “Churchill's Dog” in the May/June 2008 issue of *Minnesota* magazine. Another essay, “Up in Smoke,” that appeared in the July/August issue of *Minnesota* was anthologized in *Subject and Strategy: A Writer's Reader* (Bedford St. Martin's, 2008).

Shana Youngdahl (MFA 2006) published her long poem *Donner: A Passing* as a chapbook with Finishing Line Press.

Edward Savage, professor emeritus of English at the University of Minnesota, died of cancer April 4, 2008, in St. Paul. He was 84. “Edward’s learning was broad and deep and the range of his cultural interests remarkable,” notes professor emeritus Norman Fruman. “He was a passionately dedicated teacher and greatly admired by students of all ages.”



Professor Emeritus Edward Savage

Savage taught Shakespeare and medieval literature at the University from the mid-Sixties until 1991. He also taught in Turkey, Egypt, and Austria. After his retirement, he continued to teach through the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute and the Twin Cities Elder Learning Institute. As devoted to learning as instruction, he enjoyed expanding his knowledge of music, literature, theater, and history through study and travel. He supported University theater and even appeared in an early Nineties University production of *The Cherry Orchard*. In March, while in hospice care, he attended a five-hour simulcast of the New York Metropolitan Opera’s production of *Tristan and Isolde* (the subject of his doctoral dissertation).

in **MEMORIAM**

Professor Emeritus Edward Savage

Dr. Savage was born in Bonesteel, SD, and received his BA at Hamline University. He served as a United States Navy officer in 1942–43. He earned his MA in 1953 and his PhD in 1959 from the University.

Dr. Fruman, a long-time neighbor of Savage’s—both in University Grove and Falcon Heights—describes him as “modest, generous, and a loyal friend.”

Regents Professor Patricia Hampl remembers being a new faculty member warmly welcomed by Dr. Savage. “Ed was always eager to talk about books and writing,” she recalls. “He was indeed a beautiful soul and lived wonderfully well, enjoying music passionately and maintaining friendships with a gracious spirit.” □

Savage taught Shakespeare and medieval literature at the University from the mid-Sixties until 1991. He also taught in Turkey, Egypt, and Austria. After his retirement, he continued to teach through the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute and the Twin Cities Elder Learning Institute.

As devoted to learning as instruction, he enjoyed expanding his knowledge of music, literature,

undergrad **STORIES**, *continued from page 23*

fall, in an honors English thesis course, I plan to further study the connection between these two favorite things: eating and sharing food and the English language. After three years at the University, it is easy to be desensitized to the power of words. But when they conjure something that comes close to the comfort you find in your family and friends, words again become well worth exploring. I can’t wait to continue. — Emily Schnobrich, English major and Martin B. Ruud Scholarship winner for 2008–09. □

Congrats to **UNDERGRADUATE WINNERS**

CLA Selmer Birkele Scholarships: Molly Boggs, Jamie Kreil, Carl Martin (2008–09); Libby Issendorf, Amanda Steepleton (2007–08)

Jessie M. Comstock Scholarship: Rachele Cordova (2008–09); Jenna Krause (2007–08)

Martin B. Ruud Scholarship: Timothy Engelstadt, Emily Schnobrich (2008–09); Rebecca Oberg, Elizabeth Keely Shaller, Melissa Shelsby (2007–08)

Captain DeWitt Jennings Payne Scholarship: Amanda Hecksel-Read, Emily Lind (2008–09); Brittany DuMonceaux, Lindsay Handtke, Jamie Kreil, Ryan Magee (2007–08)

Donald V. Hawkins Scholarship: Joseph Capodarco, Larisa Garski, Lindsay Handtke (2008–09); Larisa Garski, Davina Noffke (2007–08)

Anna Augusta von Helmholtz Phelan Scholarship: Holly Harrison (2008–09); Katharine McMillen (2007–08)

Moses Marston Scholarship: Allyson Carey (2008–09); Justin Alt, Allyson Carey, Lisa Lipschultz (2007–08)

Robert E. Moore Scholarship: Rachele Cordova, Lindsay Handtke (2008–09); Lindsay Handtke, Laura Schlichting (2007–08)

English Alumni Fund Scholarship: Davina Noffke (2008–09)

Sharon Borine Scholarship: Katherine Ruzsa, Jennifer Sherman, Nicole Swisher (2008–09)

Beverly Atkinson Scholarship for Non-Traditional English Majors: Sarah Choy, Chad Walker (2008)

Mark David Clawson Thesis Awards: Diana Heim, Maria Stracke (for thesis completed in 2007)

Marcella DeBourg Awards: Katharine McMillen, Kassandra Simon (2008)

Paul & Lucienne Taylor Internship Grants: Katharine McMillen, Stephanie Wilkes (2008)

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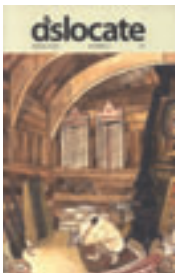


VG/Voices from the Gaps provides web resources about women artists and writers of color through its international academic community: <http://voices.cla.umn.edu/>

affiliated PUBLICATIONS



Ivory Tower is the University of Minnesota undergraduate art and literary magazine created through a two-semester English course. Read Volume 19 at <http://www.ivorytower.umn.edu/>



Dislocate is edited and produced by MFA graduate students in English. The fourth issue is published fall 2008. For purchase, submission information, and updates, go to <http://www.dislocate.org/>



LUNA: a journal of poetry and translation is edited by professor Ray Gonzalez and MFA alum Alex Lemon. Volume 8 is now available. Please visit <http://lunapoetry.blogspot.com/> for ordering information.

english@minnesota is now published once annually. For ongoing news, announcements, and stories about faculty, students, and alumni, go to <http://english.cla.umn.edu/>.

english@minnesota is interested in what you are doing. Let us hear from you! Contact us at sutt0063@umn.edu or at 207 Lind Hall, 207 Church St. S.E., Minneapolis, MN 55455.

Oct 7: Nin Andrews and Peter Johnson, Weisman Museum, 7:30 pm
Edelstein-Keller Visiting Writers read prose poetry from their respective collections *Sleeping with Houdini* and *Eduardo & "I."*

Oct 28: A Good Societies Dialogue: Andrea Elliott, Coffman Theater, 7:30 pm
New York Times writer has published several series exploring the lives of Muslims in the U.S. With Lawrence R. Jacobs, Walter F. and Joan Mondale Chair in Political Studies.

Oct 29: Junot Diaz, "We Are the New America," Coffman Theater, 7:30 pm
Diaz's debut novel *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* won the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Critics Circle Award for Best Novel of 2007. Esther Freier Endowed Lecturer.

Sept 22: eNow! presents: Ray Gonzalez and Debra Blake, Lind 207A, 3:30 pm
Celebrating Gonzalez's forthcoming *Renaming the Earth: Personal Essays* and Blake's *Chicana Sexuality and Gender: Cultural Refiguring in Literature, Oral History, and Art.*

Nov 3: An Evening with Thomas Lynch, Cowles Auditorium, 7:30 pm
Thomas Lynch is an essayist, poet, and funeral director, whose work has been cited as inspiration for the TV series *Six Feet Under*. Edelstein-Keller co-sponsorship with Mortuary Science.

Oct 6: eNow! presents: Robert Meeropol, Lind 207A, 2:30 pm
Meeropol (younger son of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg) will speak on literary representations of the Rosenbergs. He is the author of *An Execution in the Family*.

Nov 13: An Evening with Ethan Canin, Weisman Museum, 7:30 pm
Edelstein-Keller Endowment presents the author of the short story collection *Emperor of the Air* and this year's novel *America America*.

Nov 10: eNow! presents: Tom Raworth, Lind 207A, 2:30 pm
Poet, publisher, and translator since the late Fifties, the English writer has published over 40 books of poetry and numerous works of prose.

Dec 5: Milton at 400, Lind 150, 7 pm
Celebrating John Milton's 400th birthday with mass readings, translations, short academic presentations, and other linguistic mayhem!

calendar