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MUSINGS

The Graduate Newsletter
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From the Desk of the Chair . . .

Christopher Herbert

As interim chair of the English Department during Betsy Erkkila's leave of absence in 1999-2000, I am happy to use this new edition of "Musings" to greet the extended departmental family and to be able to report that morale in University Hall these days is to all appearances, excellent. For one thing, the fall season, still at its zenith as I write, has been memorably lovely and spirit-uplifting this year; I am storing up mental images of the gaudy maple tree outside my office window to tide me over in monochromatic February. For those aware of their miraculous presence, the pair of peregrine falcons that have taken up residence on a church tower a couple of blocks down Hinman Avenue have provided a daily sense of wonder. My own personal morale has been much improved, also, by my return to the department this fall after five years of wandering in the desert of College administration. Not to be maudlin about it, it's been wonderful for me to rediscover my faculty colleagues, to begin to reestablish contact with students, and to be able to take stock anew of what a strong, lively, richly-textured collectivity the Northwestern English Department continues.

This is a place for highlighting some of the significant achievements of the department and of members thereof in the past year. Most significant of all has been our success in hiring a trio of exceptionally gifted assistant professors. Susannah Gottlieb (Ph.D. 2000, University of Chicago) is a specialist in twentieth-century poetry and philosophy with a sideline in Asian-American literature and culture. Jay Alan Grossman (Ph.D. 1992, Penn), who has taught at Harvard, Amherst, and Boston University, is an Americanist who works on Emerson and Whitman and on issues of sexuality. Dorothy Wang Ph.D. 1998, Berkeley), previously on the faculty of Wesleyan University, is another Asian-Americanist; she is on a postdoctoral fellowship in California in 1999-2000 and will join us next fall. The hiring of these three young scholars gets the departmental year off to an auspicious start. We also welcome Josh Weiner (B.A. 1985, Northwestern; Ph.D. 1998, Berkeley), a much-published poet, essayist, and reviewer, who joins us as Visiting Assistant Professor.

Along with these arrivals, I must announce one retirement: Alfred Appel, a distinguished scholar of twentieth-century literary and visual art and a celebrated classroom teacher at Northwestern since the eventful year of 1968, has decided to retire from the faculty in order to devote himself as fully as possible to his current writing projects. Happily, he will continue to teach one course per year as Professor Emeritus for several years, and will, I hope, remain a departmental presence for a long time to come. Good luck to Alfred!

The following pages of this newsletter will bring you up to date on many recent accomplishments of faculty and graduate students in English. In the former category, Larry Lipking's election as a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences deserves special notice. In the latter, let me just note collectively the very impressive record of publications and professional appearances compiled over the past year by our graduate students, whose precocious professional capabilities never cease to amaze me. Congratulations are particularly in order for those who have landed teaching positions in the teeth of the ever-dismaying academic job market, or who have taken other kinds of academic or non-academic post-graduate paths, or who have lately been promoted. To past students of the department now scattered around the country at different institutions and in different pursuits, let me urge you to let us know what you are up to. We are eager to use this newsletter as a means of maintaining a community of those of you who have been associated with the department, no matter how far-flung you may be or how divergent your career paths may have proved to be. Be in touch! And best wishes to all for a productive and satisfying millennial year.

New Ph.D. Students 1999-2000

Ashley Byock
Laura Derbenwick

Emily Drugge

Leah Guenther

Bryan Hampton

William Howell
Hyun-Jung Lee
Glenn Suchich

Carrie Wasinger

University of California, Santa Cruz
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
MA - University of Chicago
Harvard University
MA - Shakespeare Institute of University of Birmingham
MA - Brown University
University of Pittsburgh
MA - University of Alabama
Montana State University
MA - Religious Studies- University of Chicago
Cornell University
Seoul University
University of California, Berkeley
MA - Loyola University
Pomona College

New MA Students

Sean Johnston
Vikas Turakhia

University of Missouri
Ohio University

Ph.D. Graduates

Carla Arnell
Medieval Illuminations: Patterns of Medievalism in the Fiction of Jeanette Winterson, Iris Murdoch and John Fowles

Josh Charlson
Writing the Void: The Holocaust, Representation, and American Culture

Brad Deane
The Making of the Victorian Novelist: Authorship, Ideology, and the Mass Market.

Lorri Nandrea
Texturing Eros: The Aesthetics Of Singularity And The Practice Of Sensibility In Sterne, Austen, Bronte, And Woolf

Kathleen Peterson
Polymorphous Perversities: Appearances of Petrarchism in Non-Lyric Genres

M.A. Graduates

Kimberly Alise
Gendered Autobiography and Semiotics: Textual Entropy in the Maria Jolas Autobiography

Britta Awe
"You Your Own Woman:" Redefining Corporeal and Psychological Boundaries in Gayl Jones's *Corregidora*

Jason Elzaurdia
The Search for Balance and Relation To The Universal Mystery In D. H. Lawrence's *The Rainbow*, *Women In Love*, *Aaron's Rod*, and *The Plumed Serpent*

Amy Melnicsak
The Preparation of Possibilities

Margaret O'Neill
Alternating Visions: Interpretations of the "moment" in Katherine Mansfield's *Prelude*

Lorena Mattson
"A Sympathetic Kinship": Sexual Desire in George Eliot's Heroines

David Ready
Steven & Aquinas

Dissertation Year Fellowships 1999-2000

Elizabeth Fekete

Virgil Heltzel DYF - "I felt like the girls in books": Female Readers, Communities and Bestsellers in America, 1850-1870.

Karen Leick

The American Reception of Gertrude Stein, Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot.

Ben Pauley

Justice and Human Felicity: Elaborations of sensibility and the law in Eighteenth-Century Britain.

Kimberly Segall

Memory and the Process of Constituting a Nation: Post-Apartheid South Africa & the Construction of National Identifications.

Papers Presented

Barbara G. Anderson

"'The Past is the Future': Dialogic Temporality in Joy Kogawa's *Obasan*" at the Narrative Conference at Dartmouth College on April 29, 1999.

Presented at the interdisciplinary *Frontiers of Memory* conference at the University of London in September of 1999.

Laura Braunstein

"Dickens and the Inquest," at the Nineteenth-Century Studies Association's 19th Annual Conference, Philadelphia, PA, March 20, 1999.

Produced a new, improved version of the Northwestern University English Department's TA Handbook.

Michael Bryson

"'That be far from thee': Divine Evil and Milton's Attempt to Justify the ways of God to men" at the Conference on John Milton in Murfreesboro, TN on October 22, 1999.

Marcy J. Dinius

"Silent Pictures: Narrative and the Gothic in Cindy Sherman's Photography" at the Narrative Conference at Dartmouth in April.

Joe Kraus

"Popeye: Ethnic Gangster with a Southern Accent" as part of the William Faulkner panel at the Central New York Conference on Language and Literature at SUNY-Cortland on October 3, 1999.

Karen Leick

"'To swear resoundingly and spit like a man': Personality and American Marxists in the 1930s" at the American Culture Association / Popular Culture Association conference in San Diego on April 1-3.

Eric LeMay

"The Master Letters and *The Master Letters*" at the Innovation in Contemporary American Poetry: Where the Lyric Meets Language conference at Barnard College in April.

Lorri Nandrea

"Giving Up the Ghost: Science and its Others in Oliphant, Eliot, and Edwards," at the 1999 British Woman Writers Conference in September.

Anne V. Sullivan

"Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*: Where the Boys Are." at the Medieval Conference in Kalamazoo last May, 1999.

Prizes Awarded

Joshua Charlson and Claire Waters have both been awarded the Jean Hagstrum Prize for their outstanding dissertation work. Joshua is currently a Visiting Assistant Professor at Northwestern, and was recognized for his work on his dissertation, titled *Writing the Void: The Holocaust, Representation, and American Culture*. Claire has a tenure-track position at the University of New Mexico, and was recognized for her dissertation, *Doctrine Embodied: Gender, Performance, and Authority in Late-Medieval Preaching*.

Elizabeth Fekete won the NYCEA Graduate Student Essay prize for her paper "'Freely Adapted,' or, How I Learned To Stop Worrying and Love Roland Joffe's *The Scarlet Letter*," which she presented at the New York College English Association Fall Conference in October.

Katie Gucer was awarded a research grant from the Center for International and Comparative Studies.

Eric LeMay has been awarded the 1999 "Discovery" prize in *The Nation* for a collection of his poetry.

Publications

Michael Bryson

"The Horror Is Us: Western Religious Memory and the Colonialist God in *Heart of Darkness*" forthcoming in the Fall/Winter 1999 issue of a *Henry Street* (8.2).

Leah Guenther

"Luhmann's Top 40 Shakespeare and the Crisis of Shakespearean Consumption" in the Spring 1999 issue of the *Journal of American Culture*.

Lorri Nandrea's

"'Graffiti Taught Me Everything I Know About Space': Urban Fronts and Borders" was published in the January issue of *Antipode: A Radical Journal of Geography* (31.1).

Vikas Turakhia

A freelance fiction reviewer for the Cleveland Plain Dealer, his recent reviews include *An Equal Music* by Vikram Seth, *Cinnamon Gardens* by Shyam Selvadurai, *Homework* by Suneeta Peres da Costa, *The Dangerous Husband* by Jane Shapiro, and *Thumbsucker* by Walter Kirn.

What did our Grad Students do over the summer?

Michael Bryson divided the summer between teaching first-year composition at the Chicago branch of the DeVry Institute of Technology and a Consulting/Research position for Technology Marketing Solutions in Skokie.

Marcy Dinius took part in "Text and Context: Interpreting the Sources of Early Modern Political Thought", the Mellon Summer Seminar with History Professor Timothy Breen.

John Martin received a summer graduate fellowship at the Erasmus Institute, where he enriched his work on the relation among gothicism, religion, psychology, and politics in American literature.

Erin Redfern spent part of her summer studying with Leo Bursani and Judith Butler at the Berkeley Summer Seminars at the University of California, Berkeley. In the course of the seminar, she presented on "The Madness of Lived Experience": Freud, Bollas, and Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*.

From NU Press:

The new issue of *Renaissance Drama* has just been published. Devoted to the topic "The Space of the Stage," this special issue of the annual journal was edited by Jeffrey Masten and Wendy Wall. Profs. Masten and Wall have now assumed the ongoing editorship of the journal, following Prof. Mary Beth Rose's twelve-year tenure as editor. The special issue includes essays on space and meter in Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, the space of the feminine in *The Duchess of Malfi*, colonialism in Fletcher's plays, the humanist idea of the theater, and the non-existence of "heath" scenes in early texts of *King Lear*, among others. *Renaissance Drama* is published by and available from Northwestern University Press.

Placements and Promotions

Carla Arnell (Ph.D., 1999) has accepted a tenure-track job at Shimer College in Waukegan.

Kathleen Carmichael (Ph.D., 1997) has accepted a job at Fastweb.com.

Belinda Edmondson (Ph.D., 1993) is an associate professor in English at Rutgers University.

Robert Fanuzzi (Ph.D., 1993) is an associate professor in English at St. John's University in Staten Island, New York.

Bishnupriya Ghosh (Ph.D., 1994) is an associate professor in English at Utah State University, Logan, Utah.

Joan Gillespie (Ph.D., 1996) has been promoted to Senior Program Manager at the Institute of European and Asian Studies in Chicago.

Lisa Limburg (Ph.D., 1997) has a full time job at the Center for Talent Development

Lorri Nandrea (Ph.D., 1999) is a Lecturer in Advanced Writing at University of Southern California.

Kathleen Peterson (Ph.D., 1998) is the Manager of Editorial Services at Fastweb.com.

Rachel Rosenberg (Ph.D., 1997) has a job in development at the University of Chicago Law School.

Carl Smeller (Ph.D., 1997) has accepted a tenure-track position at Texas-Weslyan University in Fort Worth, Texas.

Tom Tipton (Ph.D., 1997) is an associate professor in English at the College of DuPage in Glen Ellyn, Illinois.

Mary Trotter (Ph.D., 1996) is an Assistant Professor of English at the Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis. Her manuscript, *Ireland's National Theatres: Dublin Political Performance and the Origins of the Irish Dramatic Movement* has been accepted by Syracuse University Press as part of their Irish studies series.

Claire Waters (Ph.D., 1998) has accepted a tenure-track Assistant Professor position at the University of New Mexico.

Faculty in the Spotlight

Upon completing his term as a Visiting Assistant Professor in the Writing Major, Jim Armstrong accepted a tenure-track position as Assistant Professor of English and Poet in Residence at Winona State University in Minnesota. This news follows close on the acceptance of Jim's first book of poetry, *Monument In A Summer Hat*, by New Issues/Western Michigan Press, and, somewhat earlier, the birth of his second daughter. He has also won an Artist Grant in poetry from the Illinois Arts Council.

Paul Breslin's newest book of poetry, *You Are Here*, has been accepted for publication by NU press's *TriQuarterly Books* for Fall 2000.

Newly promoted to Full Professor in Theatre and English, Tracy Davis has been busy at work on her new book (Co-edited with Ellen Donkin) *Women and Playwriting in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, published by Cambridge University Press in June 1999.

Newly appointed Henry Sanborn Noyes Professor of English Literature, Betsy Erkkila is thoroughly enjoying her year of leave from the position of Chair of English. She is completing a book on *Mixed Bloods and Other American Crosses* and is hoping to make some progress on a book entitled *Revolution and American Culture*. Betsy gave keynote addresses last year at conferences on *Aesthetics and Difference* at the University of California, Riverside, and *The Future of American Studies* at the University of Tulsa. She has an essay on "The Poetics of Whiteness: Poe and the Racial Imaginary" forthcoming in *Romancing the Shadow: Poe and Race* (Oxford UP), is working on an essay entitled "The Emily Dickinson Wars" for the *Cambridge Companion to Emily Dickinson*, and is diligently working on an essay on "Benjamin Franklin's Body" for a special issue of *English Literary History* dedicated to Larzer Ziff, a major figure in American Studies who will be retiring this year from Johns Hopkins. She has been asked to edit a Riverside edition of the writings of Edgar Allan Poe, and is hoping to put together an edition that will have broad popular appeal. Over the last few years, Betsy has also been very active in the profession, having been elected to the MLA Executive Committee of Late 19th-Century American Literature, and this year is serving as Chair of this committee. Betsy was also elected to serve on the Advisory Council of the American Literature Section of the MLA. This year she will also be on the Program Committee for the American Studies Association: the theme of the Detroit 2000 meeting is "The World in American Studies/American Studies in the World," and is teaching a before-school "Great Books" course for 4th graders at Mc Kenzie Elementary School in Wilmette in the Winter 2000. She thinks she "may have said YES too many times, but ... leave is bliss, and I am enjoying every minute of it."

Mary Finn has been appointed to the full-time position of Assistant Dean for Curriculum in the WCAS Office of Studies, starting this Fall. As you know, Mary has served as Visiting Associate Professor of English for the past four years, teaching a wide variety of courses - she will continue to teach a course in English annually as part of her new arrangement with the College.

Christine Froula gave a conference talk titled "Translucent 'Ts': Pound's English after *Cathay*" at the Eighteenth International Ezra Pound Symposium, "Ezra Pound and the Orient," in Beijing in July. (Read more about this exciting trip in the *Focus...* section of this newsletter!)

Reginald Gibbons has received a one-year Fellowship at the Alice Berline Kaplan Center for the Humanities at NU in 1999-2000. His most recent book of poems is *Homage to Longshot O'Leary* (1999) and his translation of Euripides's *Bakkhai* will be published in 2000 by Oxford University press.

Acting Department Chair Christopher Herbert was the keynote speaker at an interdisciplinary conference at The University of Virginia on "Coherence" in September 1999.

Mary Kinzie's book, *A Poet's Guide to Poetry*, has just been published by the University of Chicago Press.

Joanna Lipking spoke at an Aphra Behn Conference held at the Sorbonne in July 1999.

Lawrence Lipking has been busy this year: the Rockefeller Foundation awarded him a Bellagio Center Residency at the Villa Serbelloni (Italy); he was elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences; and finished editing "The Restoration and the Eighteenth Century" (as well as three web sites) for the Seventh Edition of The Norton Anthology of English Literature (advance copies have already arrived, although the official publication date is 2000). He has been elected fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, joining more than 3,300 fellows who have been honored by the academy since 1780 for their distinguished contributions to science, scholarship, public affairs and the arts.

Over the last year Susan Manning has spoken at the American Studies Association, the Society of Dance History Scholars, and the Woman and Theatre Program. She is currently on leave writing a book titled *Making an American Dance: Black, White, and Queer* to be published by the University of Minnesota Press. She also is organizing a caucus of performance scholars within the American Studies Association and serving as program chair for an international conference of dance scholars to be held at the University of Surrey.

Barbara Newman won the Jane Dempsey Douglass Prize offered by the American Society of Church History for the best essay dealing with women in the history of Christianity in 1998. The essay is entitled "Possessed by the Spirit: Devout Women, Demoniacs, and the Apostolic Life in the Thirteenth Century." It was published in *Speculum* 73 (1998): 733-70. Barbara was elected a Fellow of the Medieval Academy of America (as of April 1999). Her article: "Intimate Pieties: Holy Trinity and Holy Family in the Late Middle Ages," was published in *Religion & Literature* 31 (Spring 1999): 77-101. She also presented a paper: "God and the Goddesses: Rethinking Medieval Allegory," at the University of Pittsburgh, Sept. 1999.

Regina Schwartz gave a lecture at recent conference, "Questioning God in the Millennium," at Villanova University. The conference featured Jacques Derrida, among other philosophers, theologians, and literary critics, who gave a paper on forgiveness. Her paper was called "The Immeasurable in Measures: Questioning Narratives of God" and was followed by an interesting discussion with Derrida. Two of our undergraduates attended the conference, with support from Undergraduate Director Lawrence Evans: Steven Rozenski (from Bristol, Connecticut) and Audrey Walton (from Boulder, Colorado). Last May, Regina gave a lecture at the University of Chicago conference on "Mystical Theology." Her essay on Milton and the eucharist, delivered at Notre Dame's annual lecture series on Religion and Literature last fall, will be published in the next journal issue of *Religion and Literature*. The Newberry Milton Symposium, which she co-organizes, is still going strong, with forty scholars attending the last event. She is now directing the undergraduate honors program for the English department.

Carl Smith currently curates a major online museum exhibition on the Haymarket bombing and trial. The project involves a collaboration between the Chicago Historical Society and Northwestern. Smith is very active in Northwestern's American Studies Program, and he is serving his final year as Assistant Dean of Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences. He continues his work on a book on cities and water in America in the 19th century.

Eric Sundquist, Professor of English and Dean of Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences, continues sporadically to pursue research on race and culture in American society is writing, slowly, a book on blacks and Jews in postwar American literature. Otherwise, his attention is focused on effecting connections between relevant departments of the university in the interests of promoting cross-disciplinary research and teaching.

Newly-arrived visiting Assistant Professor (and one-time Northwestern undergraduate) Josh Weiner has just had his book of poems accepted for publication by the University of Chicago Press. The title of the volume, quoted from a Scots ballad, is *The World's Room*.

Focus on . . .

...Christine Froula

Christine Froula positively glows with infectious enthusiasm as she talks about her recent trip to China. As an unregenerated Italophile who ordinarily could not conceive of not spending whatever time possible in Italy I must confess I was very tantalized by the possibilities of China as she described her experiences there this past summer.

Christine spent July 16 through August 8 in China, in part as a participant in a conference on Ezra Pound and the Orient in Beijing, where she delivered a paper titled "Translucent 'I's: Pound's English after *Cathay*." Seventeen countries were represented at this conference which was attended as well by Pound's daughter and granddaughter. As Christine explains, Pound was one of the first to render ancient Chinese poems into (very free) translations in modern English, an aspect of his long interest in Chinese culture. Christine's paper analyzes some of the effects that studying poetry in a language with a grammatical structure so radically different from that of western languages had on Pound's own poetics.

Apart from the purely scholarly aspects of her trip Christine was most engaging and enthusiastic about China itself, its people and sights and flourishing life. Of course she saw the Great Wall, but her account of a visit to a farm suggested a wider exposure to current Chinese life. In Beijing she met a group of young poets and artists who gave a banquet in honor of Pound's daughter, Mary de Rachewiltz, and showed their guests some precious ancient Chinese treasures. Then too, there is her tantalizing account of the fabulous array of exotic teas she encountered for the first time. To one as indifferent to tea as I am her description of these teas came as an eye-opener. Could I taste these I might revise my opinion of tea!

To those of us used to the frustrating traffic patterns of cities such as New York, Rome, and Milan Christine's account of traffic in Chinese cities is a revelation. As she describes it, traffic is dense and intense-with bicycles, cars, buses etc.-but smoothly flowing, governed by a completely different psychology than ours, in which people seem more accustomed to yielding to one another than on insisting individualistically on their "right of way." Finally, Christine encountered young guides who spoke about their generation's understanding of Mao's Cultural Revolution, which is now taught to Chinese schoolchildren as a tragic period of violent destruction that resulted from Mao's senility but does not fundamentally change his heroic stature as the man who brought China into the modern world.

—Al Cirillo

We'd like to hear what's going on with you!

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