

Future Traditions

A PUBLICATION FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS OF RUTGERS ENGLISH

SPECIAL DOUBLE ISSUE | WINTER 2006 - SUMMER 2007



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Future Traditions

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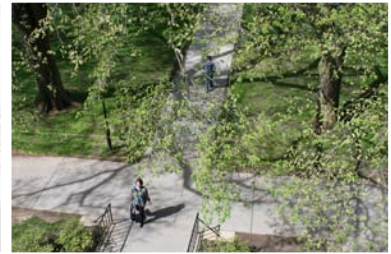
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about RUTGERS ENGLISH

The Department of English is the largest humanities department in the School of Arts and Sciences at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. Our faculty strives to instill students with a deep and lasting understanding of literature and literary traditions. Each year, more than 11,000 undergraduates receive instruction in humanistic reading and writing through our writing program. Our comprehensive undergraduate program reaches more than 900 majors and enrolls more than 8,000 students annually. Our top-ranking graduate program provides the next generation of literary scholars and teachers with rigorous professional training. Home to the Plangere Writing Center, the Center for Cultural Analysis, and the newly-established Writers House, the Department of English sponsors lectures, conferences, and readings for the university community and the general public.

about FRIENDS OF RUTGERS ENGLISH

Members of Friends of Rutgers English (FoRE) include alumni of our undergraduate and graduate programs, faculty, current students, staff, and other supporters of the Department of English. Cheryl A. Wall established FoRE in 1998 during her tenure as departmental chair. Richard E. Miller, who resumes his position as departmental chair in July 2007, serves as the executive director of the organization. FoRE raises public awareness about the value of studying literature and the literary arts, broadly construed. The organization also raises funds to support the scholarly and pedagogical endeavors of Rutgers English faculty and students.



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From the Acting Chair of Rutgers English

Intersections

by Kate Flint



A network of paths converges at the front door of Murray Hall—or, seen another way, they lead away from it, to other departments, the Alexander Library, the Zimmerli Art Museum, the train station: out into the world.

These intersecting walkways provide an extraordinarily apt metaphor for the internal life of the English department itself. Our discipline is a place where many avenues cross, and from which many questions spin out, in their ramifications, to all manner of ethical, aesthetic, material, psychological, and political issues. Writing of the webs of connections that she saw threading the world, George Eliot refers in *Middlemarch* to “that tempting range of relevancies called the universe.” English, it often seems, is a disciplinary space that leads one, profitably, down these paths of temptation.

The intersections that we draw are sometimes international ones. Our faculty members are currently exploring how books traveled across the nineteenth-century Atlantic, and the visits that Native Americans made to Victorian Britain. Some are studying the place of bilingual writing in 1930s Shanghai, Hong Kong, New York, and London; others are examining working-class writing in South Asian countries that were once part of the British empire. From these projects emerge the theoretical implications of transnationalism and cosmopolitanism.

These crossovers also operate on an interdisciplinary, as well as a cartographic, plane. Other research projects involve examining the language in which medical narratives are told; the natural history of the late eighteenth-century Caribbean and its relationship to the discourse of slavery; the transformation of fiction into film—and these are just some of the projects that bring together science, history, and differing media. If there is a center in all of this, it is located in the exploration of language. Even here, however, we variously consider its imaginative deployment, its rhetorical power to persuade or inform or antagonize, its capacity to captivate and to entertain.

And the “steps we take/steps we trace”—to borrow the lyrics of Patti Smith’s “Paths That Cross”—also lead backwards and forwards. If many of us are firmly committed to historic contextualization, whether of Anglo-Saxon queens or Victorian organicism, Milton’s political thought or eighteenth-century domesticity, the questions that we ask of our material, and that we discuss with our students, are highly relevant to today’s changing and complex social, philosophical, and moral debates. One of the most exciting things about teaching English is the open-endedness of many of the issues that are raised in the classroom, and their obvious bearing on lives that will continue outside the academic setting.

Rutgers English is proud of its work in re-interpreting and re-evaluating literatures in English, whether these appeared centuries ago or last year. Both the well-established Writers at Rutgers Reading Series, and the newly launched Writers from Rutgers Reading Series, offer eloquent testimony to our investment in contemporary writing. And we continue to build for an exciting future. Through the generous support of a Friend of Rutgers English and Rutgers President Richard L. McCormick, the department is launching Writers House this fall. As one of the first new undergraduate learning communities, Writers House will provide new accommodations for



faculty and students. The ground floor of Murray Hall will be dedicated to three seminar rooms, a digital composition laboratory, a student lounge, and two offices for young writers in residence who will teach creative writing courses. Renovation will be complete in mid-August, in time for the new academic year. Writers House will construe “writing” broadly, offering courses not only in fiction, poetry, drama, and creative nonfiction, but also in web authoring, multimedia composition, documentary filmmaking, and various forms of professional writing.

Our intentionally oxymoronic departmental slogan, “Future Traditions”—one which we adopt as the new title of our departmental newsletter—reflects our vast commitment to all forms of literacy. Our activities lead, like the pathways in front of Murray Hall, in many directions. We hope that you enjoy reading about these new projects, and about much else that is going on in the department, in the pages of this newsletter. We would like to invite you to make a contribution in support of the department, thus helping us develop new opportunities and cultivate scholarly and teaching excellence among members of the Rutgers English community. And, as Richard E. Miller suggested on this page last year, if you value the work of the department, of Rutgers University, and of higher education more generally, please consider writing to your New Jersey state representatives or to Governor Jon S. Corzine and sharing your views on the importance of state funding to support our mission. □

Keep in touch,



From the Executive Director of Friends of Rutgers English (FoRE)

Why Paris?

by Richard E. Miller



This question is inescapable. In the months before I started my sabbatical, neighbors, colleagues, and students would invariably invite me to explain my plans. And, since I've settled in here, the question inevitably emerges with each new social encounter.

So, what is a writing teacher doing in Paris? I have a range of short answers: why not Paris? To put a large body of water between me and my life as an administrator. To clear my head. Because I get more visitors here than I do in New Jersey.

But, these answers don't really get to the heart of the matter. As an essayist, I need the distance; Paris holds archives of value to my wife's research; my daughters get to spend a year immersed in another culture; every little piece of life is productively jostled.

Point of view changes everything: the aerial view of Voorhees Mall found on the cover is not available when you are heading to class or your office or the library. At those times, there's what's in front of you and there are your thoughts about your destination. The shift in perspective reveals a pattern; there's more than what's ahead—the next appointment, the next paper to grade, the next phone call to make—there's what's going on in every direction; there are options.


This is what I have been working on over here; I am writing about how the essay can be used to make options visible. That's one project. Another involves a collaboration with my friend Mark Sheridan-Rabideau, who has just joined the music faculty at the University of Wyoming, on social entrepreneurialism and the humanities. Mark and I have spent years talking about the fundamental changes that are taking place in the funding of higher education and we share a commitment to thinking about the value of the humanities in everyday life. We are exploring the overlap between creativity in the arts and the creativity of the entrepreneur, with an eye towards providing a practical guide for launching sustainable ventures that have, as their highest aim, not the generation of profit, but contributing to the social good. (By chance, I ended up with another example for this ongoing project as a result of the week I spent at the Connemara Center for Creative Arts and Natural History in County Galway, Ireland, on the way over to France. A labor of love, a vision, an effort to preserve and revivify the cultural heritage and the rural traditions of the Connemara region: Dearbháil Standún and Charlie Troy's *Cnoc Suain* is a testament to the ways that landscape, horizon, and worldview intersect with language, song, and story.) And, finally, Kurt Spellmeyer and I are preparing the third edition of *The New Humanities Reader*, which mostly requires, at this point, that we both indulge our love of reading to find ways to further improve our textbook.

This has been a milestone year for *The New Humanities Reader*: royalties from the sales of the textbook have now contributed more than \$60,000 to fund initiatives in the writing program; these funds have supported advanced training for teachers, travel to conferences for graduate students, and the purchase of new equipment. And last year, quite by chance, we learned that Azar Nafisi, author of *Reading Lolita in Tehran*, one of the books excerpted in *The New Humanities Reader*, was coming to campus to give a reading. Carolyn Williams and Rick H. Lee contacted the folks in charge of the event and volunteered their expertise in running the Writers at Rutgers Reading Series. What followed was something that Kurt and I have talked about for years, but could never quite manage to pull off: hundreds of first-year students got a chance to listen to and ask questions of an author whose work they, themselves, had read and

written about with care. (Nafisi was featured in the recommended sequence for expository writing.) And Dr. Nafisi? She found herself speaking to an overflow crowd, with more than 750 people in attendance. One way to define the value of the humanities is as the endless flow of such evanescent events.

There are other projects, too, but the most important one involves the launch of the current capital campaign. I am co-chairing the Capital Campaign Faculty Advisory Roundtable with Carl Kirschner, who has served as the dean of Rutgers College since 1995. We are charged both with making certain that faculty have a strong voice in this campaign and with making certain that those faculty who are interested are provided with the resources to participate in the campaign productively. In the department, at this early stage, this has meant drafting numerous proposals that are to go in our "Book of Dreams." This has been a valuable exercise, for it has given faculty the opportunity to put into words what they believe would help to bring about significant change in the department and at Rutgers more generally. And this, too, is another way to define the humanities, I would say, as training in the arts of imagining a better world.

I'm happy to talk about these projects at any time in August or thereafter upon my return. Just drop me a line; or, better yet, stop by. □



PS: As this photo taken in the courtyard of the Louvre shows, some Friends of Rutgers English took my offer to drop by quite literally!



Alex Kasavin, Gordon Stankavage, Elvira Katic, and Richard Miller

[New Faculty Profiles]

[Christopher P. Iannini]

by Myra Jehlen

Chris Iannini joined our department last fall as an assistant professor of American literature. Professor Iannini came to Rutgers following a year as a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Pennsylvania's McNeil Center for Early American Studies. Before that he was at the Graduate Center at the City University of New York, where he earned his doctorate in 2004 for a dissertation entitled "Fatal Revolutions: U.S. Natural Histories of the Greater Caribbean, 1707–1856."

Some of the most interesting literary analyses of recent years have been of texts that are not strictly speaking literary, but in which the writing matters as such, being an instrument not only of communication but of interpretation. How such texts are written is as important as how a novel or a poem is written. In this larger field of writing, some of the most fascinating works have been scientific—natural histories probably foremost among these. The factual orientation of such descriptive writings seems to provide the stuff of exceptionally rich and resonant *belles lettres*. In Iannini's analysis of one such work, William Bartram's *Travels through North and South Carolina, Georgia, and East and West Florida*, it becomes clear how Coleridge could have been inspired by Bartram's work and used it in his poetry.

Professor Iannini's own work with such texts, while it begins by taking them as literature and, indeed, treats them throughout as literature, extends into history and politics. The following passage from "The Vertigo of Circum-Caribbean Empire," a wonderfully titled 2003 article in the *Mississippi Quarterly*, defines the precise but enormous stake of his work:

The culture of the early republic begins to read very differently when placed on a Caribbean-centric map of the New World in the long eighteenth century. The influence

of Thomas Jefferson's *Notes on the State of Virginia* testifies to the importance of natural history to early American culture. Yet its very prominence has obscured a strong sub-current within the discourse. American natural historians as important as John Bartram, St. John de Crèvecoeur, William Bartram, and John Audubon presented the greater Caribbean as source of an ardently desired yet disruptive abundance. In exotic narratives and images of the region, they both extolled the benefits of the West India trade and circum-Caribbean expansion and warned of its potentially corrosive effects on national borders and beliefs.

Virtually all the issues of colonial and early American history are engaged in this passage, and by the materials it treats. In some previous scholarship, the rhetoric of colonization and national expansion has tended to be taken at its word—with the historian or critic not always pointing out where this rhetoric failed to match reality, as is often the case, for instance, with Jefferson's nationalistic rhetoric. In this passage, Iannini looks at the reality of the situation of colonization, as well as at its rhetoric, and the result is both a completely different sense of the facts and a completely different reading of the texts.

The traditional view of the coastal colonies that became the founding coastal states, and of how these founding states constituted and defined the first and forever identifying avatar of the nation, is revised literally when we see that the national coastline descending south is not a single coast facing an open sea. Rather, it is part of a complicated geography that includes a collection of coasts across the Caribbean. The issue, thus, is not of lone self-making, but of relations. If scholarship has one foremost value, it is brilliantly demonstrated in this article and in Professor Iannini's work generally, which provides the terms and the materials for re-thinking, and therefore for thinking. □



"Students often come into a course on early American literature expecting to learn something about the origin of the United States. And as people who were born here, or moved here, or live here for the moment, they expect to learn something about themselves too. I try to impress upon them that for most of the colonial period people in the Americas had no idea that something called the 'United States' would ever exist, or that they were 'progressing' toward it. They inhabited a different world that needs to be understood on its own terms. When the class goes well, they do learn something about origins, but not in the way they expected."

—Chris Iannini



[Gregory S. Jackson]

by Michael Warner

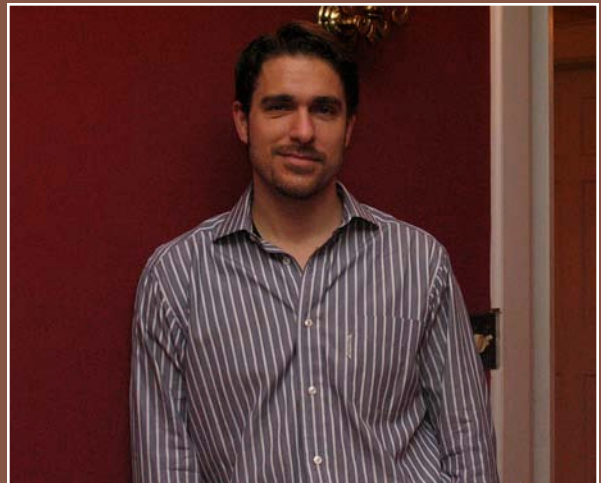
Greg Jackson comes to Rutgers from the University of Arizona, where he has been an assistant professor of English since 2000. We are delighted to have lured him away from Arizona, as he is a scholar rapidly winning admirers around the country. He has published articles in several leading journals (*PMLA*, *Representations*, *American Literary History*), and the book he is working on promises to be a major new statement in the field of American literary studies.

Rutgers English already ranks among the top graduate programs in American literature; Professor Jackson adds to that strength, and to our undergraduate offerings as well, both because of his scholarly reputation and because of his versatility as a teacher. He has experience in teaching all periods of American literature, from the colonial—in which he has also published some notable scholarship—to the twentieth century.

His field of concentration, however, is in the later nineteenth century. This is the focus of his book manuscript, *American Pilgrim: Protestant Experience and the Progress of Narrative*, which is already completed but for minor revisions. *American Pilgrim* is a timely book, showing just how deeply the culture of evangelicalism has shaped the literary tradition in America. Jackson traces the surge of socially minded evangelical novels of the period—including the perennial favorites *In His Steps*, by Charles Sheldon, and *If Christ Came to Chicago*, by William Stead. These extremely popular novels still resonate in contemporary consciousness, not least in the catchphrase “What Would Jesus Do?” But they are not widely regarded as landmarks of American literature. He shows that this evangelical culture, with its strong taste for vivid narrative, left its stamp on the more secular literature of progressive reform, in writers such as Jacob Riis and Stephen Crane, both of whom had evangelical roots. What the realist authors and progressive reformers learned from the evangelicals was not just a set of ethical interests in poverty and suffering, but a set of narrative devices for representing those interests and organizing collective response. In order to substantiate this point, Jackson devotes considerable space to a history of evangelical preaching. The homiletic tradition, which he traces from the early eighteenth century to the end of the nineteenth, had developed a rich repertoire of narrative devices for interesting people in the strangers around them. The writers of the Gilded Age learned from the preachers before them, and were able to tap into a ready-made audience in so doing. Jackson’s book has a wide canvas, allowing us to see

unexpected movement between religious and secular cultures, between sermons and novels, between conservative and progressive orientations.

Professor Jackson has a remarkable warmth and energy that make him doubly welcome at Rutgers. This energy must be one reason why he won not one, but two different major teaching awards at Arizona. He immediately immersed himself in our undergraduate program, volunteering to teach some of our largest and most labor-intensive classes. His success as a teacher surely has some connection to the wide range of topics on which he can speak with experience and passion—including veterinary science, firefighting, and bricklaying! There must be a topic on which he doesn’t have some prior experience and interest, but we’re still trying to find it. □

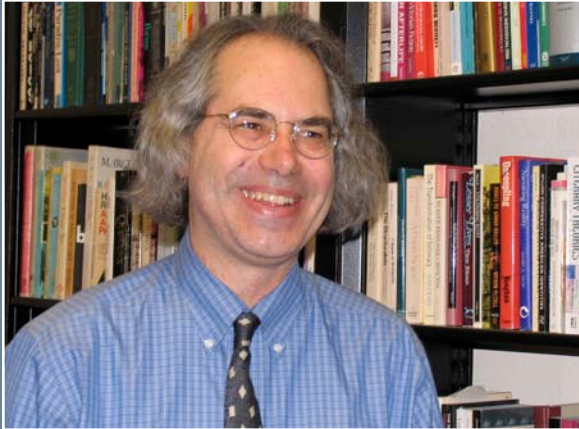


“In my courses I try to instill a sense of community among my students in the midst of what, at a vibrant research institution, can sometimes seem like an impersonal environment. Making unfamiliar literature and historically distant cultures relevant and ‘respectable’ to a diverse body of students—and making those objects of study worthy of their time and energy—is a challenge that I enjoy. I’m especially gratified when my students learn, and even come to love, these unfamiliar texts and contexts.”

—Greg Jackson

[John Kucich]

by Barry V. Qualls



"I used to try to interest students in Victorian culture by proving that it resembles our own, despite appearances to the contrary. Now I try to show them that it was even more different than they think."

—John Kucich

The first of the English department's hires supported by the Mellon Foundation's recent million-dollar grant, John Kucich comes from the University of Michigan, where he taught for twenty-seven years. The author of four books and numerous articles, Kucich is one of the world's eminent specialists on Victorian literature and culture.

The titles of his books indicate something of the focus of his scholarship: *Imperial Masochism: British Fiction, Fantasy, and Social Class*, *The Power of Lies: Transgression in Victorian Fiction, Repression in Victorian Fiction: Charlotte Brontë, George Eliot, and Charles Dickens*, and *Excess and Restraint in the Novels of Charles Dickens*. Professor Kucich's current project considers "why Victorian writers on all sides of the political spectrum idealized organic social hierarchy."

Kucich asks tough questions about cultural and literary issues we too often take for granted in thinking about the Victorians. As he explains, "I focus on psycho-social dynamics traditionally considered to be characteristic of Victorian culture—so characteristic that no one bothers to think about them anymore—and then ask what's unsatisfactory about the explanations that have always been given for those dynamics." Thus in considering *The Power of Lies*, he looks at Victorians' beliefs that the nation's moral and industrial progress was found in earnest "veracity," which indeed was a quintessential definition of Englishness, at least in the minds of the English middle class. His recent study, *Imperial Masochism*, demonstrates the crucial role masochistic fantasies of suffering, self-sacrifice, and painful defeat played in the British understanding of

colonization and class identity. Here we discover why Stevenson, Schreiner, Kipling, Conrad, different as they are as novelists, "were the writers most instrumental in moving colonialism from the periphery of serious British culture, to its center." Despite their diverse political views, together these authors made imperialism and social class central concerns for the middle class reading public.

Throughout his work, Kucich uses novels as his chief source of evidence. His compelling reasons remind us anew of fiction's centrality in forming the ideas and values of middle class Victorians. "No other form of writing in Victorian culture so powerfully brought together discourse about history and politics with psychological discourse," he writes. A splendid introduction to his way of approaching cultural questions raised in the Victorian novel is his essay, "Intellectual Debate in the Victorian Novel: Religion, Science, and the Professional," included in *The Cambridge Companion to the Victorian Novel*. Noting how religion and science are the focal points of well-nigh all intellectual debates of the period, Kucich makes us aware how seldom religion is a subject in the pages of Victorian fiction, even as "religious concerns saturate the fiction, and religious doubt, in particular, helped to shape the way novels represent scientific ideas themselves." For him, the absence of religious discussion in Victorian novels reveals an intriguing paradox, namely, that contemporary religion and science "coincide in their quest for some grounds of consoling belief in either social or moral order." Yet it is also true that the professional intellectual, whether a lawyer or doctor or other member of the educated class, had begun "to replace the clergyman as a source of moral counsel and disinterested advice." At the same time "the professional secularization of knowledge sometimes made professional authority seem irreverent or even fraudulent."

Kucich teases out such paradoxes in all his writing—and leaves his readers freshly alert to the ways that the writing of the period participated in crucial dialogues about the nature of reality, society, and cultural authority. His analyses of the major Victorian novelists begin in listening to their texts, asking questions about the obvious and the metaphorical, about the intentions of plot and story, and about the work of omniscient narrators who are so characteristic a feature of the novels. His thinking is informed by a deep historical understanding and by a profound sense of theoretical formulations, particularly those of Michel Foucault, who charted the ways of disciplinary order in modern states. What all readers take from Kucich's work is a sense of the limitless aspirations and the conceptual limitations of the Victorians, no matter what genre they were working in.

Professor Kucich teaches courses in Victorian fiction and in literary theory at both graduate and undergraduate levels. His presence at Rutgers English ensures that the department, which has long been a premier national center for the study of Victorian literature and culture, will continue to shape the future of this field. As one of his colleagues has said, reading John Kucich is to immerse oneself in "the best that has been known and thought" by present-day Victorianists. □

[Carter A. Mathes]

by Cheryl A. Wall

Carter Mathes almost came to Rutgers English in 1997 when he was accepted into the PhD program. He laughs now, as he says it's a good thing he didn't. Rutgers almost never hires its own graduates. Fortunately for him and for the English department, he went to the University of California, Berkeley, where he earned his PhD in African American studies in May 2006. He joined Rutgers English as an assistant professor in September.

A specialist in African American and African diaspora literature, Professor Mathes has taught courses in "Black Music and Literature," "Literature of the Black World," and an undergraduate seminar titled "Experiments in Sound: Black Literature and Sonic Innovation." He finds that Rutgers students bring a diverse set of critical perspectives and cultural backgrounds to the classroom. "In my courses," he notes, "students are usually being asked to consider rather complex ideas regarding racial and national identity, as well as various types of historical and cultural theory. So I appreciate their willingness to struggle with various concepts and ideas that are crucial to understanding the stakes of the writers' aesthetic projects." Professor Mathes also looks forward to teaching a graduate seminar on post-1960s literary experimentation this fall.

Mathes graduated from the University of Virginia and earned a master's degree at the University of Tennessee before beginning his doctoral studies at Berkeley. From 2003 to 2006 he was a Mellon postdoctoral fellow at Duke University, where he participated in the seminar, "The Atlantic and Global War," sponsored by the Institute for Critical United States Studies. This past year, he was a fellow in the "Cultures of Circulation" working group at the Center for Cultural Analysis.

As a scholar, Mathes continues to explore the issues he set forth in his dissertation, "Imagine the Sound: Modalities of Resistance and Liberation in Post-Civil Rights Movement Black Literature." The dissertation examines the creative use of sound in black literature as both a form of aesthetic innovation and of political resistance in texts written against the backdrop of the shifting racial climate in the United States from the 1960s to the 1980s. It focuses on writers such as Toni Cade Bambara, Henry Dumas, Gayl Jones, and Larry Neal, whose work was critical to the social and artistic consciousness of the era. In his words, "clearly, sound has a long history as a mode of musical, oral, and environmental representation in African American literature, and my work basically asks how these encounters between the literary and sonic realms of black experience amidst a certain political moment might provide insight into theoretical and metaphysical aspects of black radical thought."

Although he is in the vanguard among critics theorizing the relationship between literature and sound, Mathes is a traditional scholar who has long been fascinated by archival research. While

a graduate student, he consulted Berkeley's Bancroft Library in their efforts to make the papers of jazz poet Ted Joans available for scholarly inquiry. Since relocating to the East Coast, he has started working with the Larry Neal papers at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in Harlem. A poet and playwright, Neal was perhaps the most important theorist of the Black Arts Movement. With Mae Henderson of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Mathes organized "'Don't Say Goodbye to the Pork Pie Hat': Re-evaluating Larry Neal's Creative and Critical Vision of the Black Aesthetic," a conference held at Brooklyn College last October. It was a tremendous success, bringing together participants in the Black Arts Movement of the 1960s, Neal's students, and young scholars who spent two days revisiting and analyzing the aesthetics and politics of a formative era in African American culture. In addition to the volume of conference papers he is co-editing with Henderson, Mathes is at work on two articles, "Toni Cade Bambara and Black Radicalism in the 1970s" and "Black Internationalism in the Short Fiction of Henry Dumas."

On a personal note, he feels that "taking the job here is a nice sort of homecoming because I spent a lot of time in New Jersey as a child. My mother's family lived all over New Jersey—Newark, Montclair, Wayne, Englewood, a small town in the pine barrens called Dorothy, and East Orange, where I live now with my wife, children, and great aunt. I pay a lot of attention to these kinds of movements, and the ties they represent, so being here feels right to me on all kinds of levels." □



"In my teaching and through my writing, I try to convey the ways in which literature may often be in conversation with, and echo within, other forms of sensory representation such as music and sound. In my first year at Rutgers, I've been particularly impressed by my students' enthusiasm in engaging with these complex ideas."

—Carter Mathes

[Dianne F. Sadoff]

by Carolyn Williams

In the fall of 2006 we welcomed Dianne Sadoff to our department. Before coming to Rutgers, Professor Sadoff taught at Antioch College, Colby College, the University of Southern Maine, and Miami University, where she also served as chair of the Department of English and associate dean in the College of Arts and Sciences. In the summer, she has regularly been appointed to the faculty of the Bread Loaf School of English. Sadoff has received grants to support her scholarly work from the Ford Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Guggenheim Memorial Foundation.

Her scholarship represents expertise in several fields—Victorian studies, feminist and psychoanalytic theory and criticism, and film (particularly films that remake nineteenth century texts).

Sadoff is the author of two significant books, both of which address the relations between psychoanalysis, nineteenth century literature, and feminism. Her first book, *Monsters of Affection: Dickens, Eliot, and Brontë on Fatherhood*, examines the struggle between fathers and children embedded in the work of these three Victorian novelists. Writing about Dickens, she concentrates on the son's rivalry with the father, while in Eliot she explores the daughter's desire for the father, and in Brontë the daughter's punishment by the father.

Sciences of the Flesh: Representing Body and Subject in Psychoanalysis, her second book, demonstrates the importance of both literary and historical approaches to the understanding of psychoanalysis. In the words of Carolyn Dever, of Vanderbilt University, "Sadoff's Freud is a narrative Freud." Her book engages the rhetorical, metaphorical, and narrative strategies that underwrote the development of Freud's theory, as well as the particular social, clinical, and political contexts within which psychoanalytic theory developed.

In both these books, Sadoff is (in her own words) concerned with "the relation between psyche and soma." In her analysis, she interweaves current and past feminist theory with current and past psychoanalytic theory in a mutually critical relation. Dianne Fuss, of Princeton University, puts it this way: "in the first [book], Sadoff reads the scene of metaphor psychoanalytically, in the second she reads the scene of psychoanalysis metaphorically."

Sadoff has also co-edited two important essay collections. With William E. Cain, she published *Teaching Contemporary Theory to Undergraduates*, the best source on that difficult endeavor; and with John Kucich, she published *Victorian Afterlife: Postmodern Culture Rewrites the Nineteenth Century*, a fascinating collection of essays about the survival of Victorian texts, themes, and cultural attitudes in the present.

Professor Sadoff is an experienced administrator, having served both at Miami University and in professional organizations. When she was president of the Association of Departments of English, she led a workshop for new departmental chairs that was a model of effective mentorship. She has been a regional delegate to the Modern Language Association; has served on the executive committees of the Dickens Society and the Society for the Study of Narrative Literature; and has served as a curriculum consultant and an external reviewer many times.

She is completing a book entitled *Victorian Vogue: The Nineteenth Century British Novel on Screen*. She will be teaching from this research this fall, when she will offer a graduate seminar on "Nineteenth Century British Fiction on Film" and an undergraduate course on representations of vampires, past and present. Sadoff's reputation as a teacher precedes her. Fuss has described Sadoff as "a catalyzing class presence who knows how to promote discussion and how to push the level of discussion up several notches." Fuss' experience of a tutorial with Sadoff at Colby College was "a life-changing experience" that propelled her into graduate school and inspired her career. We are lucky indeed to be able to offer our students ready access to Professor Sadoff's "model of rigorous scholarly excellence and generous professional mentorship." □



"I'm the type of life-long learner who likes to learn a new discourse for every project. I take pride in my ability to teach students the pleasures and skills of interdisciplinarity. My students learn to apply the discourses of political science and history to the study of fiction and the tools of gender studies, psychoanalysis, and the history of feminism's emergence to the study of women writers. In my film and literature classes, I teach students to read film through the lens of aesthetic, visual-culture, and historical analysis and to understand the difference that media makes to the study of narrative structure and situation. By teaching my students in an interdisciplinary way, I hope to inspire them to become life-long learners too."

—Dianne Sadoff

RUhappenings

events in murray hall and around campus

THE PREACHER'S FOOTING

Michael Warner Delivers Annual Opening Lecture

by Marianne DeKoven

In his well-received lecture, "The Preacher's Footing," Professor Michael Warner provided a new analysis of "the social imaginary of various forms of preaching, concentrating on an eighteenth-century moment in which evangelicalism took shape." Drawing on sociologist Erving Goffman's notion of "footing," Warner analyzed the complexities of the relative positioning of those who speak and those who hear within a variety of locutionary situations in early eighteenth century Protestant preaching, both in the American colonies and in England. Positing the modernity of evangelicalism's emphasis on individual revival, awakening, and personal conviction, he suggested that the performative nature of preaching in these itinerant sermons of evangelicals constitutes a form of what historians are now calling "lived religion": not ecclesiastical doctrines or beliefs, but "intensities" experienced at a remove from institutionalized theology.

Ultimately, Warner's emphasis fell on the primacy of the publication of sermons that were preached as if extempore, and on the various modes of circulation of these published documents, different in the colonies and in England (the colonies were, in fact, more similar to provincial England than to London in this regard). What would appear to listeners to be the results of the preacher speaking directly from divine inspiration were often in fact memorized, published sermons. This fact led Professor



Warner to question the effect of the preaching of published and publicly circulated sermons on "the preacher's footing." The first effect is to de-emphasize, in fact to eliminate, "originality" as a desirable quality for a sermon.

This "process of oralization" of printed sermons creates for the preacher "the opposite of an expressive identity." In evangelical preaching of this kind, the preacher is submissive to the printed text, and the listener is rigorously secluded in a personal, private space despite her or his participation in a performance of collective hearing.

Warner argued that the norms and standards of public preaching, based on the circulation of printed sermons in evangelicalism led, paradoxically, to the breakdown of the textual tradition of preaching in the culture of evangelicalism. One way to explain this paradox is to note that the prophetic, conversion-seeking mode of evangelical preaching was initiated by "the normalization of a conversionistic address to strangers." This normalization arose from itinerant preaching's disruption of the cohesion of the local parish as community. Thus, he concluded, "far from being a primordial orality," or deeply individual expressiveness, as evangelical preaching is most often seen to be, this mode of address arises directly from the public-sphere media environment of the circulation of printed sermons. □



Kate Flint, Michael Warner, and Marianne DeKoven

Editor's Note: Over 100 people attended Professor Warner's lecture at the Alexander Library Teleconference Lecture Hall on September 27, 2006. Next year's Opening Lecture, scheduled for Wednesday, September 19, 2007, will be delivered by Kate Flint, who will speak on "Modernity and the Native American in Victorian Britain."

This page

1. Ann Jurecic and Kurt Spellmeyer share a laugh at the Plangere Writing Center's fifth anniversary reception
2. Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs Karen Stubaus, George Levine, Carolyn Williams, and Barry Qualls celebrate the publication of Levine's latest book, *Darwin Loves You*
3. Dianne Sadoff, Alex Kasavin, and John Kucich bond at the department's annual welcome reception
4. Friends of Rutgers English Charles Barker and Ellin Barker return to campus to ring in the new academic year
5. Barry Qualls, SAS Executive Dean Ziva Galili, and William Galperin at the Zimmerli Art Museum
6. SAS Associate Vice President of Development Amy Kirner, Paul Hammond, Heather Robinson, Friend of Rutgers English Jules Plangere, Kate Flint, and Michael Goeller commemorate the fifth anniversary of the Plangere Writing Center



Opposite page

7. Rutgers University President Richard McCormick congratulates Cheryl Wall on being named Board of Governors Professor of English
8. Alumna Rachel Hollander, George Levine, alumna Tanya Agathocleous, and Devin Griffiths display promotional bumper stickers for Levine's new book
9. Richard Dienst shares images during a multimedia presentation on global poverty held at the Plangere Writing Center
10. Eileen Faherty, Quionne Matchett, and Cheryl Robinson greet guests at the department's annual welcome reception
11. SAS Dean of Humanities Ann Fabian converses with American Studies Professor Leslie Fishbein at a reception following a Sexuality Speakers Series lecture by Alice Echols
12. Audience members listen attentively at a Sexuality Speakers Series lecture by Heather Love



HITLER'S LIST

A Lesson on German Art

by Michael McKeon

On September 20, 2006, the Rutgers community was treated to a lecture of unusually broad appeal by Professor Gregory Maertz of the Department of English at St. John's University. Professor Maertz's topic was "Hitler's List and the Real Canon of Nazi Art." Delivered in the stunning surrounds of the Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum, the lecture chronicled Professor Maertz's recent discovery of a hitherto unknown cache of paintings at the Haus der Kunst in Munich. The significance of these paintings, represented by an ample and fascinating selection of slides taken on site by Maertz, is that they transform our understanding of the range of art produced under the Third Reich. Long associated only with a narrowly realist and nationalist purpose, Nazi art is now known, thanks to Maertz's work, to have been ambitiously engaged in the modernist experiments to which the rest of Europe was committed during the first half of the twentieth century.

Professor Maertz began by describing the complex relationship that developed over the course of the 1930s between Adolf Hitler and his functionaries, the ideologies of Nazi culture, and the fostering of German art, a relationship deeply embedded in and resonant with the rise of the Third Reich. He then recounted the detective work that led to his discovery: how he first came to suspect the existence of this "secret" cache, his discreet and diplomatic efforts to gain access to the Haus der Kunst, and the hours spent photographing paintings under makeshift conditions and persistent uncertainty that his work would be authorized by museum and government officials (it was).

The heart of the lecture was Maertz's ingenious display of and commentary on the paintings themselves. This included an informal mini-course on modernist art, subtly interwoven with comparisons between examples of the conventional canon of Nazi art and selected works, often radically different in style and theme, from the Haus der Kunst collection. The audience was invited to engage directly in thinking about the comparison between the two bodies of work when Professor Maertz asked periodically for a vote on which of two slides, displayed side by side, derived from which of the two collections.

The vast appeal of the lecture was evident in the fact that it was sponsored not only by the English department, but also by the art history, German, comparative literature, and history departments, as well as by the Center for European Studies and the School of Arts and Sciences. The questions that followed the lecture also reflected the range of subjects and fields Maertz's research illuminated. After the question-and-answer period Professor Maertz circulated among audience members as they, and he, partook of the sumptuous spread that we at Rutgers have become accustomed to enjoying in conjunction with intellectual nourishment of the sort provided by "Hitler's List and the Real Canon of Nazi Art." □



Photos from the Graduate Alumni Lecture
 Top: Marianne DeKoven and Peggy Phelan during the Q & A
 Middle: Richard Dienst, John McClure, Ann Jurecic, and William Galperin
 Bottom: Cheryl Wall, Mary Ellen Phelan, Peggy Phelan, Marianne DeKoven, Carolyn Williams, Kate Flint, and Barry Qualls

MOMENTS IN TIME

Daniel Ellsberg Calls for Civic Courage

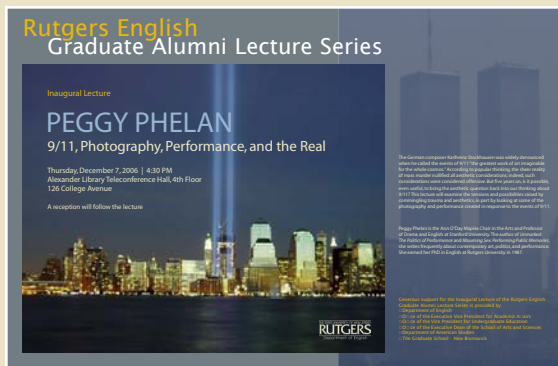
by John A. McClure

The timing couldn't have been better. Daniel Ellsberg, the dean of Vietnam War protesters, spoke at Rutgers to an audience of several hundred students, faculty, and alumni, on Wednesday, November 8, 2006. It was the day the nation learned the results of an election that had become a referendum on another unpopular war, the day that Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld resigned. The event took me back. Thirty-five years ago, as I was returning from a two-year stint with the Peace Corps in Kenya, Ellsberg took the protests against the Vietnam War to a new level by releasing what came to be known as "The Pentagon Papers," some 7,000 pages of classified documents that gave the lie to two administrations' propaganda on the war. To me, Ellsberg was a hero, but not to everyone. At a "welcome home" party in the Washington suburbs, I listened as two high government officials ripped into Ellsberg for

NEW TRADITIONS

Graduate Program Launches Two New Lecture Series

by Marianne DeKoven



This year the graduate program launched two exciting new lecture series: the Graduate Alumni Lecture Series, with Professor Peggy Phelan (PhD 1987) as its inaugural speaker, on December 7, 2006, and the Sexuality Speakers Series, which was kicked off by Professors Alice Echols, Heather K. Love, and Patrick R. O'Malley.

Phelan, who is the Ann O'Day Maples Chair in the Arts and a professor of drama and English at Stanford University, spoke on "9/11, Photography, Performance, and the Real." Phelan's

lecture examined the privileged place of film, as opposed to still photography, in our constructions of the "reality" of 9/11 and of traumatic experience in general.

Echols, an associate professor of English, gender studies, and American studies at the University of Southern California, and a visiting professor in the English department at Rutgers this past spring, lectured on the emergence of post-Stonewall gay hypermasculinity around disco music and club culture. Love, the M. Mark and Esther K. Watkins Assistant Professor in the Humanities at the University of Pennsylvania, discussed what she calls "compulsory happiness" in contemporary liberal constructions of queer culture, using *Brokeback Mountain* as her central text. O'Malley, an associate professor of English at Georgetown University, discussed the construction of marginalized sexual identities and its relation

to marginalized religious identities during the Victorian period. These lectures were co-sponsored by the Nineteenth Century Studies Group and the Twentieth Century Studies Group. □



Alice Echols



David Kurnick and Heather Love

being a publicity-seeking turncoat and traitor. Not a word, from these Washington insiders, about the terrible costs of the war and the substance of Ellsberg's charges. For them, the only issue was his disloyalty to the administrations he had served in the Departments of Defense and State.

As it turns out, Ellsberg himself was troubled by the issue of loyalty. For years, he believed that the oaths of secrecy he had taken as a government employee compelled him to keep silence about the truth of the war. Finally, however, he decided that, by keeping the government's secrets from the American people, he was violating a second and higher oath: the oath he had taken, as a government employee, to uphold the Constitution of the United States. It was then that he copied the documents and released them first to members of Congress and then to the press.

In his talk at Rutgers, "Averting the Next War: A Call for Civic Courage," Ellsberg revisited these historical events to draw parallels with the present. He is very much afraid that in spite of the groundswell of opposition to the Iraq War, the war itself will not end. By 1968, he reminded his audience, a majority of Americans opposed the war in Vietnam. But the war did not stop. Instead, it dragged on into the mid-1970s, through two administrations, killing over 20,000 more Americans, and countless Vietnamese,

as politicians spoke of exit strategies and escalated the violence. And, echoing a recent series of *New Yorker* articles by Seymour Hersh, he also fears that the Bush administration is planning to launch a massive air attack on Iran, possibly with the use of nuclear weapons. To prevent this, Ellsberg argued, individuals inside the government will have to have more foresight, and more courage, than he did. They will have to put the Constitution first and release the secret war planning documents to Congress and the people before attacks actually begin. Then and only then can Americans approach the hard choices between war and peace as the framers of the Constitution intended them to do, through debate rather than executive fiat.

A wiry, silver haired man in his 70s, Daniel Ellsberg could still pass, in his tailored blue suit and tie, for a State department officer. But he exudes a quieter, more reflective energy. His Rutgers address combined argument with personal anecdote. Story begat story, and the effect was to conjure up a vivid sense of the vast and intricate world of Washington. As he guided his audience through that world, Ellsberg seemed at times to slip back into those corridors of power, and to be wandering there, like Diogenes in the ancient Greek *agora*, in search of an honest man. He received a standing ovation from the audience. □

WHAT THE DICKENS?! A Report on the Dickens Universe and the Dickens Project Conference

by Carolyn Williams

Every summer a group of Rutgers English faculty and graduate students travel to Santa Cruz, California, to be a part of the Dickens Universe, an annual conference dedicated to the work of Charles Dickens, sponsored by University of California and now in its twenty-seventh year. Each summer, the Dickens Universe focuses on one Dickens novel, bringing together more than 200 scholars, graduate and undergraduate students, high school teachers, and members of the general public for an intensive week of study. In 2006, the novel was *Nicholas Nickleby*, and this summer, it will be *The Pickwick Papers*, with our very own Meredith L. McGill as one of the featured speakers.



Earlier this year, Rutgers English hosted the Dickens Project spring conference. Traveling outside California for the first time, it was held at the Plangere Writing Center the first weekend of April 2006 and showcased the work of graduate students who had attended the *Nicholas Nickleby* Universe in Santa Cruz. □



Photos from the Dickens Project conference
 Top left: Sarah Kennedy
 Top right: Victorian studies luminaries Janice Carlisle, Eileen Gillooly, John Kucich, Amanda Claybaugh, Gerhard Joseph, John Jordan, and Bob Patten continue the discussion over lunch
 Bottom left: Bob Patten, Kate Flint, Carolyn Williams, and Sarah Kennedy
 Bottom right: Renée Fox, Jeff Jackson, Anne McCarthy, and Jonathan Grossman

Thanks to a generous gift from alumna Caroline Huber (PhD 1992), two graduate students from Rutgers are awarded fellowships to the Dickens Universe conference each year. Last summer, the English department sponsored two undergraduate students for the first time as well. Read more about Dr. Huber's generosity to Rutgers English on page 51. Pictured at left: Matthew Kaiser, Carolyn Williams, Alia Habib, Meredith McGill, Joe Harper, Tanya Agathocleous, and Jeff Kessler

SHAKESPEAREAN NOTES The Bard and Rutgers English

by Rick H. Lee

Last fall, the English department sent out its first Thanksgiving card, which included a pledge card with a quotation from William Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*: "I can no other answer make but thanks, and thanks." We were quite gratified by the response and thank you all for your generosity. A number of our Friends included with their gifts a query about the fidelity of the *Twelfth Night* quotation, pointing out that we had neglected the third instance of *thanks*. How could this have happened?



We turned to Professor Ron Levao for an explanation, which we are happy to provide here:

There seems to be an error in the first printed version we have, the Folio (now called the First Folio) of 1623. That is the version quoted on the Thanksgiving pledge card. The second line is two syllables short of pentameter and these two lines were thus dropped in the Second Folio of 1632, but then "corrected" by later editors, as editors sometimes do to difficult lines in Shakespeare. The version our Friends quoted was provided by Lewis Theobald in 1733. Modern editions sometimes follow the Folio, sometimes Theobald. Roger Warren and Stanley Wells in *The Oxford Shakespeare* follow the Folio, explaining that the missing words signify the speaker, Sebastian, stumbling in embarrassment over his need to hold off the affectionate Antonio, to whom he owes his life. *The Arden Shakespeare* includes a full description of these changes.

In sum, everyone is right—to which we can only add, and thanks!

MACHIAVELLIAN MINDS

A Report from the CCA

by Colin Jager

This past year members of the English department had an opportunity to learn how other disciplines think about the human mind. The Center for Cultural Analysis (CCA) sponsored a year-long working group entitled “Mind and Culture” which aimed to bridge the gap between cognitive science and the humanities. The group, directed by Jonathan Kramnick and myself, included faculty and graduate students from the English, clinical psychology, anthropology, philosophy, history, and sociology departments. Recent years have witnessed a boom in thinking about cognition, including a spate of recent books on consciousness, on evolutionary psychology, and on the possible neurological basis of morality. Much of this research is taking place here, in departments such as philosophy and psychology and at the Rutgers University Center for Cognitive Science. And yet, for a variety of reasons, the humanities have not been a part of this conversation.

Blakey Vermeule, of Stanford University, is one of the few literary scholars working to integrate literary study with cognitive psychology. Last September, Vermeule visited Rutgers as a keynote speaker for *Belief: Faith, Knowledge, and Credulity in the Eighteenth Century*, a conference organized by graduate student Saladin Ahmed and sponsored by the Transatlantic Eighteenth Century Studies Group. Professor Vermeule’s lecture inquired into the conditions under which we come to believe that other people possess minds—and thus possess beliefs, feelings, desires, and hopes. She likened certain character traits in eighteenth century fiction to the quality of so-called *mindblindness*, an idea taken from

autism researchers, who propose that people with autism are unable to imagine other people as possessors of minds.

A few days later, in her presentation to our working group, Professor Vermeule offered a complementary interpretation of literary character. She proposed that if certain fictional characters are mindblind, others are so mind-aware that they are Machiavellian—that is, they are always able to anticipate what other people will feel, desire, and hope, and they use that knowledge to their own advantage. Most provocatively, she proposed that such characters—Milton’s Satan, for example—are the most memorable and resonant characters in literature. Her conclusion, then, is that our relationship to literary character, and particularly the pleasure we take in Machiavellian characters, is deeply written into the neurobiology of the brain itself.

If some version of this idea is correct, then a whole range of questions emerges for literary scholars and for humanistic inquiry more generally. Along with visitors to the group, including Alan Leslie and Alvin Goldman from the Rutgers psychology and philosophy departments, we explored these questions. Professors Leslie and Goldman represent the two leading schools of thought concerning how we understand other minds. Leslie believes that young children develop a “theory of mind,” a cognitive mechanism that enables them to understand other people as possessors of minds. Goldman’s idea, by contrast, is that they learn about other minds by “simulating” the people around them. Goldman’s hypothesis is particularly relevant for students of eighteenth century literature, since early versions of simulation theory were proposed by the British empiricist philosophers David Hume and Adam Smith, and arguably influenced the development of narrative fiction in the eighteenth century. Such possibilities, at any rate, suggest avenues we will continue to explore during the second year of the “Mind and Culture” working group. □

The department’s commitment to the Bard mirrors that of our Friends. This year we hosted two events promoting Shakespeare’s work. On Thursday, March 22, the undergraduate program organized a colloquium on Shakespeare’s sonnets for teachers of advanced placement English classes. Professors Ann Baynes Coiro and Thomas Fulton shared their expertise with over 50 high school teachers from across the state. Then, on Friday, April 13, Rutgers English hosted the Shakespeare in East Asia conference, which was organized by English honors student Ching Wen Rebecca Hu, who was then completing her thesis with Professors Ron Levaio and Thomas Fulton. Professor Bi-qi Beatrice Lei, of Taiwan National University, and Professor Alexander C. Y. Huang, of Penn State University, University Park, gave presentations on the reception, adaptation, and influence of the Bard’s plays in East Asia. The conference concluded with a performance of *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)* by the College Avenue Players, a student theater troupe. □



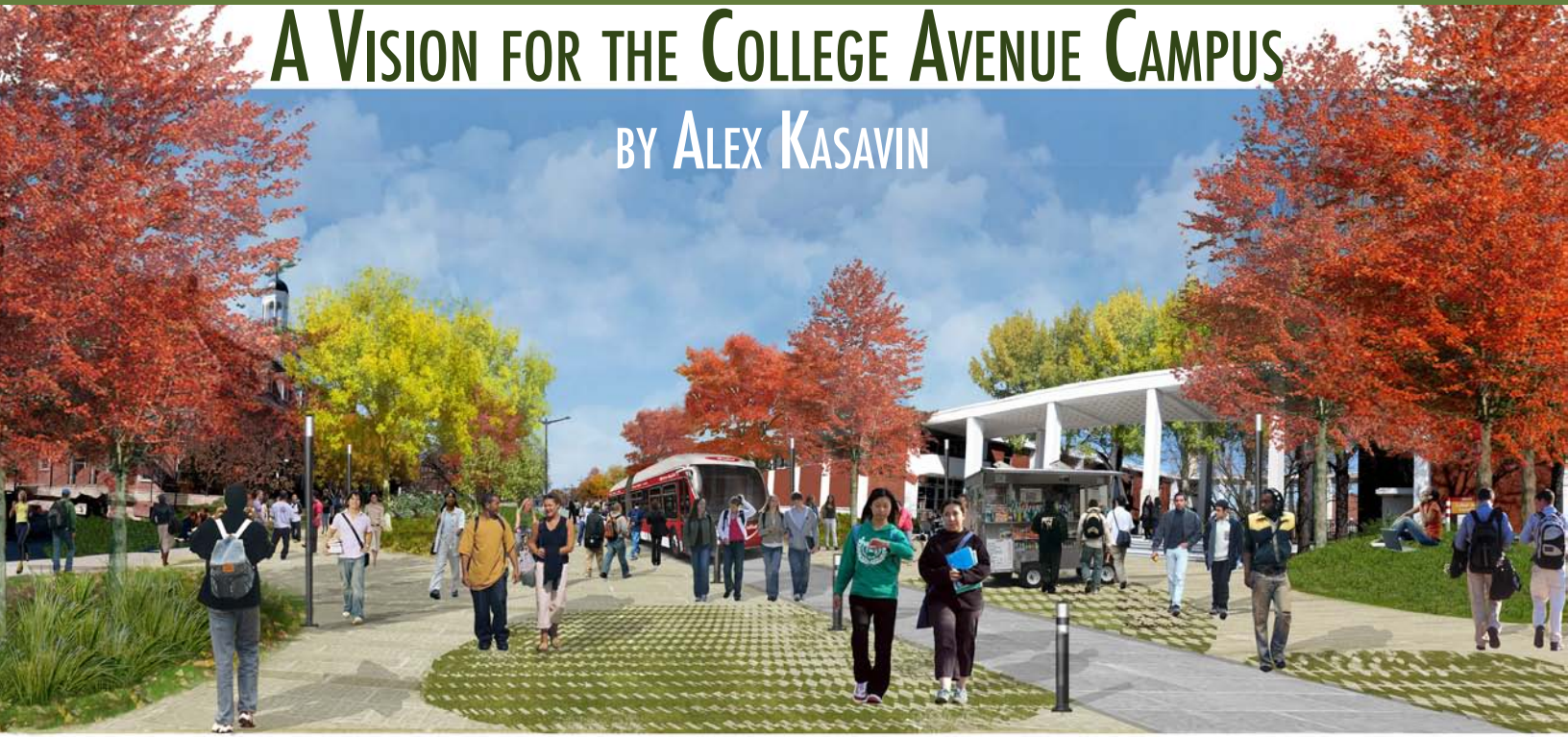
Thomas Fulton at the Shakespeare colloquium



Shakespeare in East Asia conference: Jacqueline Miller, Bi-qi Beatrice Lei, Ching Wen Rebecca Hu, Alexander Huang, Ron Levaio, and Barry Qualls

A VISION FOR THE COLLEGE AVENUE CAMPUS

BY ALEX KASAVIN



Literature has a distinct architecture and an evocative landscape. From Steinbeck’s California to Dickens’ London, from Poe’s house of Usher to Conrad’s riverside huts, literary spaces invite us to experience them as imagined by the authors and experienced by the characters. As students—of literature or other subjects—we receive another invitation: to enter universities, commonly characterized as “ivory towers” or “cathedrals of learning” and allow our experiences to be shaped by a different group of structures and landscapes. At universities, we are asked to engage in intellectual work—producing new knowledge, generating new solutions to old (and new) problems. And, as Virginia Woolf reminds us in *A Room of One’s Own*, the spaces designated for such work should be commensurate with the quality and significance of the work itself.

In February 2005, President Richard L. McCormick called on members of the Rutgers community to meet the challenge of aligning our intellectual values with our physical circumstances. Issuing a new “vision” for the College Avenue campus, he invited the university community to begin a conversation about his proposal. In addition to creating a Steering Committee from the upper ranks of university leadership, he invited Rutgers English Professor Richard E. Miller to lead a Campus Advisory Committee made up of students, faculty, administrators, and staff.

From the start, Miller recognized that, with the exception of faculty who specialize in planning or architecture, most committee members would be unfamiliar with the issues at stake in the project. Consequently, he structured the committee’s meetings that summer as a series of seminars. At the end of the summer, the Campus Advisory Committee provided feedback to the Steering Committee,

offering information about the architects who had accepted Rutgers’ invitation to apply and strategies for engaging the university and New Brunswick communities in the design competition.

From the winnowing process that began that summer, five teams were selected to offer plans for the College Avenue campus. From December 2005 to March 2006, these teams immersed themselves in Rutgers culture to generate plans according to the university’s needs. However, the university’s budget crisis delayed the display of the designs. The Bank of America, enthused about the plan to transform the campus, donated \$1 million to Rutgers in June. Now able to complete the competition, the university unveiled the designs at the Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum in September.

Though the teams offered drastically different interpretations of the aesthetic direction Rutgers should take, their plans had some common themes, including the need to reconnect the campus with the Raritan River. The team of Beyer Blinder Belle Architects and Planners, Ateliers Jean Nouvel, and Oehme, van Sweden & Associates, proposed a “Great Lounge” on the riverside; Eisenman Architects, working with Field Operations, offered a horizontal tower that stretched to the river; Antoine Predock and the Olin Partnership sought to place riverfront dining on the Raritan, in addition to linking Old Queen’s with “New Queen’s” by way of a riverside “Bow”; Morphosis-Thom Mayne and Hargreaves Associates planted a floating island on the river, as well as an amphitheater on the banks; TEN Arquitectos—Enrique Norton and Wallace Roberts & Todd placed their Arts and Sciences tower on the riverbank as well, extending a sloping park to the river’s edge.

Mixed responses greeted the plans, and no clear front-runner



Proposed designs by TEN Arquitectos

emerged during the museum display. While the teams shared similar goals—to incorporate green space into the fabric of the campus, bring the river closer to campus, and improve the transportation situation—they all imagined radically different embellishments for the campus. Beyer Blinder Belle and Jean Nouvel proposed a “MiniMetro” connectivity system, as well as a range of outdoor improvements across the campuses. Cook and Douglass would feature open air meeting rooms, College Avenue residents would be able to engage their environment through “free expression walls,” and Busch students could lounge on outdoor carpets and enjoy electronic screens. Peter Eisenman’s team also embraced the idea of outdoor rooms as a way to encourage social interaction, integrating better-defined courtyards into the campus. Predock and Olin expressed their consideration for the outdoors differently, emphasizing environmental stewardship and sustainability in their plan. In addition to an amphitheater on Voorhees Mall, the Predock team incorporated water prominently into their vision by proposing a created tributary and a series of reflecting pools where Scott Hall now stands. Finally, of all the teams, Morphosis-Thom Mayne seemed to focus the most on the overall flow of buildings across campus, offering various phasing options to bring about gradual but substantial change in orienting how people would move across campus.

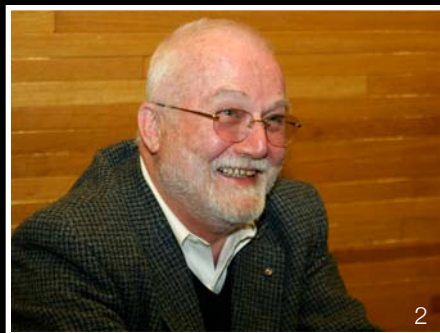
A series of public symposia (modeled on Professor Miller’s summer seminars) culminated in a public forum at which the teams presented their plans to the whole community. The TEN

Arquitectos-Enrique Norton team distinguished itself from the other teams with the compelling description of its vision, and President McCormick ultimately designated it the winner of the competition. The team, whose designs appear above, proposed a crystalline cylindrical Arts and Sciences Tower astride an east-west Raritan Mall. The Mall slopes to the river, serving as a bridge over George Street and providing room for subterranean parking—both of which are means of alleviating traffic problems, along with the proposed bus rapid-transit system.

The president emphasized that Rutgers is “not selecting every detail” of the winning proposal but rather entering into a “partnership” with the team that best understands the university’s wishes and needs. As a writing teacher, Miller affirms this approach, because “you always throw the first draft away, and you start over.” Despite the president’s insistence that Rutgers has chosen a partner without committing to a plan, some are highly critical of what they have seen so far. An alumni group called Rutgers 20/20 (collaborating with Rutgers English Professor William C. Dowling) rallied in defense of “the graceful Georgian lines and Palladian proportions” that characterize colonial university architecture. Yet, arguing from her vantage as an architectural historian and chair of the jury that voted on the plans, Carla Yanni believes that “the next academic building ought to be—and will be—a model of an academic building for the twenty-first century.”

Whether the Rutgers administration follows through on the winning team’s suggestions or jettisons them in favor of a more traditional course remains to be seen. Nevertheless, the university’s diverse architectural history confirms Professor Yanni’s belief that “you can do great intellectual work in a wide variety of settings.” Through his participation in the design competition, Professor Miller has come to believe that redesigning the campus is, ultimately, part of the university’s commitment to promoting great intellectual work. “The quality of the space where you work,” he points out, “has a direct influence on the quality of the work you produce in that space.” Consequently, a university must provide its students with a campus that promotes “sustained educational development.” Having started this conversation, Rutgers University is that much closer to creating a physical environment worthy of the intellectual work already taking place on campus. □

WRITERS AT RUTGERS READING SERIES





JAY WRIGHT READING

1. Jay Wright at the podium
2. Friends of Rutgers English Diana Dumont and Phil Dumont with Marianne DeKoven
3. Audience members in the Zimmerli Art Museum Lower Dodge Gallery
- 4, 5. Guests enjoy dinner in the Upper Dodge Gallery



AZAR NAFISI READING

1. Azar Nafisi autographs books
- 2, 5. Audience members in the Rutgers Student Center Multipurpose Room
3. Nafisi talks with dinner guests at the Rutgers Club
4. Assistant Dean of Student Life Ghada Endick, Carolyn Williams, and Dr. Farideh Tehrani



KATRINA BENEFIT READING

1. Katrina photo display in the Rutgers Student Center Main Lounge
2. Evie Shockley introduces poets Selah Saterstrom and Kalamu ya Salaam
3. Lori Smith and Amy Johnson, directors of student programming
4. Rutgers faculty at the reading
5. Selah Saterstrom and Evie Shockley



RUSSELL BANKS READING

1. Russell Banks answers audience questions with John McClure as moderator
2. Russell Banks
3. Abena Busia and Wesley Brown
4. Russell Banks signs books for guests
5. Hillary Chute and Richard Dienst



SUSANNA MOORE READING

1. Susanna Moore at the podium
2. Susanna Moore, Michael McKeon, Carolyn Williams, and Alex Kasavin
3. SAS Dean of Humanities Ann Fabian converses with Moore at the Rutgers Club
4. Guests mingle before dinner with the author
5. Friend of Rutgers English Bob Atkyns in conversation with students

Jay Wright

by Brent Hayes Edwards

I first encountered the work of Jay Wright when I was a freshman in college. One chilly winter day, I was poking around the periodical room in the library and came across a journal of “African diasporic arts and letters” called *Callaloo*. The particular issue I picked up contained an essay by Jay Wright, a writer I’d never heard of, called “Desire’s Design, Vision’s Resonance: Black Poetry’s Ritual and Historical Voice.” It was a fortuitous find. The voice of the essay dazzled me: it was critical and scholarly but also idiosyncratic and arresting, magisterial and unapologetic in its referential range and its demands on the reader. The essay did not deign to explain who or what “Obatala” was. It did not pause to translate its quotation of Ramón Xirau: “*Todo poesía se acerca a lo sagrado.*” I liked the idea that “black poetry” was something this capacious—an ocean this wide and treacherous—and so I didn’t mind the extra homework that sent me to the stacks. In fact, I’m still there, in Wright’s bibliography, with Wilson Harris, Christopher Okigbo, Marcel Griuale, Suzanne Langer, J. B. Danquah.

Along with another essay in the same issue, Nathaniel Mackey’s “Sound and Sentiment, Sound and Symbol,” Wright’s essay completely exploded my notions of what it meant to write about literature. Right from its very first lines: “Ancestors enjoy the disturbances they create in us. They have special ways of twisting the spirit and inhibiting contrary desire.” I sat with those words for weeks. The fact that Wright and Mackey were both poets and critics, that conjunction—between a poetry that reflects on its own form, and a criticism that attends to its own aesthetics—was to me an anchor and a starting point, rather than a distant ideal.

There is too much to say about the “dimensions” in Jay Wright’s work (to describe it with one of its own key structural metaphors) and what it has meant to me over the years. I am daunted by the prospect of even attempting to catalogue its range, and the voices that inhabit it: penitent, postulant, correspondent, initiate, seeker, lover. So I’ll confine myself to the facts.



Jay Wright was born in Albuquerque, New Mexico. After playing minor league baseball in the San Diego Padres organization and serving in the military, he earned a bachelor’s degree in comparative literature at the University of California, Berkeley, and a master’s degree in the same subject here at Rutgers. So I suppose that in a sense I can invoke the title of Wright’s first book and say that I am a certain kind of “homecoming singer” this evening, welcoming him back to campus. He also studied music, and I think is still very much a bass player, an activity that reverberates in his remarkable, vocalese-inflected poetic tributes to jazz musicians.

In one interview he comments that, “for me, the multicultural is the fundamental process of human history,” and you can take that as a certain kind of autobiographical statement as well, from a poet who has lived for extended periods in Mexico and Scotland in addition to the many places in the United States he has called home, including Vermont, where he has resided for many years now. He has taught regularly at universities too numerous to mention, but has mainly devoted himself to his writing, above all poetry and drama. His books include *The Homecoming Singer*, *Soothsayers and Omens*, *Dimensions of History*, *The Double Invention of Komo*, *Explications/Interpretations*, *Elaine’s Book*, *Boleros*, and *Transformations*. In case you thought you already knew the “complete” Wright, I should mention that he has a few books on the way, including one called *Music’s Mask and Measure*.

His awards are too many to mention, but I’ll list a few: a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Merrill Foundation Award, an American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters Literary Award, a MacArthur Fellowship in 1986. He was named a fellow of the Academy of American Poets in 1996, and in 2005 won one of the major prizes in American poetry, the Bollingen Prize from Yale University, which celebrates lifetime achievement. Most recently he received another lifetime achievement award from the Before Columbus Foundation. These honors recognize the poetry that discovers in myth a “mode of knowledge” rather than a suitcase or a badge, that takes the earth not as property or foundation but as “parchment and intention.” Like the pianist Art Tatum in one poem in *Boleros*, this verse “tunnels through the dark,” stealthy and patient, to “come out of the right side of the song.” □

Editor’s Note: Jay Wright launched last year’s Writers at Rutgers Reading Series on September 20, 2006. Held at the Zimmerli Art Museum, the reading drew and captivated a crowd of over 125 people. Brent Edwards delivered a version of these remarks at the reading.

Azar Nafisi

by Kate Flint



Azar Nafisi's *Reading Lolita in Tehran: A Memoir in Books* has proved extraordinarily popular. Appearing at the top of the *New York Times* bestseller list for over 100 weeks, it has been translated into over thirty languages. When its author visited Rutgers,

we were treated to a passionate exposition of the ideas about the transformative power of literature that animate this work. Literature has the capacity, Nafisi argued, to awaken what Saul Bellow called the "sleeping consciousness," and to take us directly into the lives and minds of others, enlisting "the alternative eye of imagination."

Reading *Lolita in Tehran* is at once a personal picture of life in Iran during the 1980s and 1990s, focusing in particular on the increasing number of external restrictions placed on women, and a testimony to the liberatory, transgressive potential that lies in the act of reading. It also, by way of background, introduces us to Nafisi's own life: born in Iran, educated there, in England and America (with a PhD from the University of Oklahoma), she returned to teach at the University of Tehran in 1979. Expelled from the university in 1981 for refusing to wear the veil, she taught there again from 1987 to 1995, when she started the informal reading group in her home that lies at the heart of her cultural memoir. In Iran, she also taught at the Free Islamic University, and at Allameh Tabatabaei. She moved to the United States in 1997, and is currently a visiting fellow and a professorial lecturer at the Foreign Policy Institute of the Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies in Washington, DC. There, she is centrally involved with the Dialogue Project, an initiative designed to promote the development of democracy and human rights in the Muslim world.

Professor Nafisi's writing has not been uncontroversial. Her detractors have accused her of privileging Western literature and its values above the writings of other cultures, and of presenting an unduly pessimistic picture of contemporary Iran. When she spoke, Nafisi did not engage head-on with such viewpoints. But as a more subtle tactic of rebuttal, she drew attention to the importance of national literatures to an individual's sense of identity, to Iran's heritage of strong women, to the importance of discussion and disagreement, and to the importance of ensuring that the societies in which we live allow the freedom of debate—including the freedom to disagree about the value of literature.

She is currently working on two projects, a memoir exploring her mother's life and the role of women more generally, entitled *Things I Have Been Silent About*, and a further book about the emancipatory power of literature: *The Republic of Imagination*.

During her lecture, she never let us forget that behind her slogan—"Readers of the World, Unite"—lies a profound commitment to human rights. Reading, in other words, is always, in the broadest sense, a political activity. Her message about the importance of reading as something that can link people together, open their minds, excite their curiosity, and engage their empathy was a salutary one for lovers of literature to hear. □

Editor's Note: Azar Nafisi visited Rutgers on Monday, October 23, 2006. Co-sponsored by the Department of English and the Rutgers College Office of Student Development and College Affairs, Nafisi's lecture drew a record-breaking crowd: over 750 members of the university community and general public attended. Kate Flint also wrote about *Reading Lolita in Tehran* in a review essay, "Women and Reading," in the winter 2006 issue of *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*.

fall semester

2007

Jayne Anne Phillips

Wednesday, September 26

Mark Doty

Wednesday, October 17

Joyce Carol Oates

Monday, November 12

Sherman Alexie

Wednesday, November 28

spring semester

2008

James Surowiecki

Wednesday, February 6

Colson Whitehead

Wednesday, February 20

Alison Bechdel

Wednesday, March 5

Li-Young Lee

Wednesday, April 2

Amitav Ghosh

by Sonali Perera

How do we think “how many are we?” outside the cold calculations of the state and its officiating bureaucrats—outside internalized racism and the partitioning of the mind? How do we develop an “historical imagination” over and against the mechanical conveniences of map-making—lines drawn in the sand by dominant history? Good writers compel us to confront such questions. When you pick up any one of Amitav Ghosh’s texts—his meticulously researched historical novels; his mixed genre works combining travelogue, slave narrative, contemporary history, and ethnography; or his activist journalism—you are immersed in his process—the process of developing an historical imagination. According to Meenakshi Mukherjee, “each of Amitav Ghosh’s books . . . invariably focuses on themes in history and connections across geography that have seldom been explored before, and does so with imagination supported by archival research.” The ethics implicit in such acts of writing (and also reading) allow us to touch the distant and the unfamiliar through acts of literature.

Ghosh’s novel *The Hungry Tide* moves its readers by creating these encounters. Set in the Sunderbans (“beautiful forests”), an archipelago of islands between the sea and the plains of Bengal, on the easternmost coast of India, his most recent book is a beautifully complex novel which pits ecologists and conservationists against refugees—politics against ethics. The passage below brings home the question “how many are we?” Nirmal, a disillusioned revolutionary tired of sloganeering politics, strains to connect to a cause that makes sense to him. He witnesses firsthand the defiance of refugee-settlers who refuse to move even as armed state officials seek to evict them from the tide-country island (now designated a protected area for the Bengal tiger):

“*Amra Kara? Bastubara.*” Who are we? We are the dispossessed.

How strange it was to hear this plaintive cry wafting across the water. It seemed at that moment not to be a shout of defiance but rather a question being addressed to the very heavens, not just for themselves but on behalf of a bewildered humankind. Who, indeed, are we? Where do we belong? And as I listened to the sound of those syllables, it was as if I were hearing the deepest uncertainties of my heart being spoken to the rivers and the tides. Who was I? Where did I belong? In Calcutta or in the tide-country? In India or across the border? In prose or poetry?

Then we heard the settlers shouting a refrain, answering the questions they themselves had posed: “*Morichjbapi Charbona.*” We’ll not leave *Morichjbapi*, do what you may.

Standing on the deck of the bhotbhoti, I was struck by the beauty of this. Where else could you belong, except in the place you refused to leave.

In his essay “Beyond Human Rights,” Giorgio Agamben postulates that the refugee (not asylum seeker) is the paradigmatic figure of our age. To be sure, in the aftermath of so many wars, so many tsunamis, so many Katrinas, his generalization seems apt—and, sadly, only too familiar. Ghosh imagines a way of connecting with this standpoint in his portrait of refugee-settlers in contemporary India. He draws upon the specifics of South Asian history in order to draw us out of ourselves to consider the meaning of “belonging.”

I’ve long admired Ghosh’s ability to present us simultaneously with a sense of South Asia’s particularity and its universality. He manages this to different ends in works like *Shadowlines*, *The Circle of Reason*, *The Calcutta Chromosome*, and *The Glass Palace*. *The Glass Palace* was nominated for the Commonwealth Book Award—a prize that he refused. Ghosh withdrew his name from consideration, maintaining that it would “betray the spirit of [his] book if he were to allow it to be incorporated within that particular memorialization of Empire that passes under the rubric of commonwealth,” adding that “the ways in which we remember the past are not determined solely by the brute facts of time. They are also open to choice, reflection, and judgment.” In my postcolonial studies classes, I like to call my students’ attention to these statements and to the rationale behind this principled refusal of recognition and validation.

But I also wonder if his expansive and generous vision of South Asia might have something to do with all the South Asian spaces he has called home. Ghosh was born in 1956 in Calcutta, India. He has lived in Dhaka, Sri Lanka, New Delhi, Kolkata, and Brooklyn. Besides calling these places home, he remains deeply committed to the intellectual life, communities of thought, and social justice organizations found there. In the aftermath of the December 2004 tsunami, he traveled to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and “reported” from the refugee camps of Port Blair. In his reportage and commentary he called our attention to a place hard-hit but somehow overlooked in the scheme of crisis management photo opportunities.

Professor Ghosh’s ethical commitments are rooted in his global education. He received his bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Delhi University and his doctoral degree in social anthropology from Oxford University. He has taught classes worldwide, in departments as varied as English, comparative literature, sociology, and anthropology. While continuing to write and publish in English, he remains committed to promoting literary works composed in South Asian languages as well. □

Editor’s Note: Amitav Ghosh was a plenary speaker for Being and Becoming: Perspectives on Global South Asia, a conference that took place on November 10, 2006. The English department co-sponsored this lecture; Sonali Perera delivered a version of these remarks.

Gulf Coast Poets Read for Katrina Relief

by Evie Shockley



November 15, 2006

We are just a couple of months past the anniversary of one of the most devastating catastrophes in American history—Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath—and our gathering this evening shows that we have not forgotten so quickly what this nation lost. We are here to remember a region demolished, a city destroyed. We are here to remember that the floods washed away thousands of lives and, what's more, a way of life. The Gulf Coast may not be in the headlines every day anymore, but we know that's not because there's no news. There is a lot of work to be done to recreate New Orleans, to put the people of that city and the Gulf Coast region back on both feet.

But before we do that, we are going to feed our souls and our brains with some of the best writing that the Gulf Coast has to offer—and, given the creatively charged gumbo of African, French, Spanish, and Anglo cultures that has stewed in the bayous and deltas under steamy southern suns for the last couple hundred years, that's saying a lot! So prepare your minds for literary language—words that are ramped up, shaken up, amplified, inverted, dressed in costume or stripped to the bone, and told to “go play.” Words intended to make you feel something, to make you see something, to make you think something, to re-make you.

I'm going to get things started by reading a few poems from my new book, *a half-red sea*, so that when our guests—Selah Saterstrom, Kalamu ya Salaam, and Brenda Marie Osbey—come up to the microphone, you'll be ready to go wherever they take you! Now, don't be misled—I'm not a Gulf Coast poet, as much as I might wish I'd had the pleasure of living in New Orleans somewhere

along the road that brought me here to New Jersey. But I claim kin with the spirit of New Orleans and its people, and I hope my voice won't sound too out of place among these others.

The poems I've selected to read are not all about the Gulf Coast or the hurricane, though one is. Rather, I've selected poems that relate thematically to the things I think about when I think about New Orleans and Katrina. The first is a meditation on race and cities:

elocation (or, exit us)

the city is american, so she
can map it. train tracks, highways slice through, bleed
only to one side. like a half-red sea
permanently parted, the middle she'd

pass through, like the rest, in a wheeling rush,
afraid the divide would not hold and all
would drown—city as almighty ambush—
beneath the crashing waves of human hell.

the city's infra(red)structure sweats her,
a land(e)scape she can't make, though she knows
the way. she's got great heart, but that gets her
where? egypt's always on her right (it goes

where she goes), canaan's always just a-head,
and to her left, land of the bloodless dead.

Selah Saterstrom



I was introduced to Selah Saterstrom and her work about a year ago, at the North Carolina Writers conference. I had the pleasure of hearing her read from her book *The Pink Institution*. In a deceptively quiet voice, she gave us a tale about a young girl, an eraser, and God. I won't try to explain the relationship between these three—I can't do it justice and I hope you'll seek out the story yourself—but what I came away with was a real sense of awe. Saterstrom took a fairly mundane item and a fairly uneventful plot and, by using stunningly precise language to capture this little moment in the world through the eyes of a young girl, somehow produced a powerful meditation on the meaning and location of God that left me reeling. The pressure she puts on language makes diamonds out of coal.

Saterstrom is also the author of *The Meat & Spirit Plan*. Her work has appeared in *Cranbrook Magazine*, *14 Hills*, *Tarpaulin Sky*, and *The American Book Review*. Her education at the undergraduate and master's level was in theology, which she studied in her native Mississippi and at the University of Glasgow. She went on to earn an MFA from Goddard College (which makes her the perfect person to write a captivating story about an eraser and God). She has been the Case Writer-In-Residence for Western Illinois University and Artist-In-Residence at Warren Wilson College in North Carolina. She currently lives in Denver where she is an assistant professor in the creative writing program at the University of Denver.

Kalamu ya Salaam



Kalamu ya Salaam is not simply a writer, but an arts institution in himself. A native New Orleanian, he was a key player in the Black Arts Movement's southern incarnation, along with his mentor, the late Tom Dent. Following Dent's lead, Salaam has been founding and nurturing arts organizations in the black community for years. He is a co-founder (with Kysha Brown) of Runagate Multimedia publishing company, the founder and director of the Neo-Griot Workshop, a New Orleans-based black writers workshop, and the moderator of e-drum, a listserv of over 1600 black writers and supporters of literature. He and his son Mtume ya Salaam operate Breath of Life, a website devoted to black music. He is co-director of Students at the Center, a writing program in the New Orleans public schools. The list of places he has traveled with his work—from Korea to Ghana, from Guadeloupe to Germany, from Cuba to China—is staggering.


His most recent publications include the anthologies *From a Bend in the River: 100 New Orleans Poets* and *360: A Revolution of Black Poets*, and the spoken word CD *My Story, My Song*. I had a chance to hear him read his poetry at the Furious Flower Poetry Festival a couple of years ago, and was deeply invigorated not only by the power of his voice, but also by the quality of thinking that his language displays. In his Katrina Reports, essays that he sends out on e-drum to chronicle life in post-Katrina New Orleans, he consistently probes at the most sensitive issues. He has written about how we define love across religious difference, about not taking our nearest and dearest people for granted when the world has turned upside down, and about the need to nurture ourselves in times of crisis so that we can maintain the energy to do for others all that we want to do.

Brenda Marie Osbey



Brenda Marie Osbey is the Poet Laureate of Louisiana and the recipient of numerous awards and honors, including a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Academy of American Poets Loring-Williams Prize, and the Associated Writing Programs Poetry Award. Most recently, she held a fellowship from the Camargo Foundation, which enabled her to spend the spring of 2004 in Cassis, France working on what will be the first Afro-francophone book by a New Orleanian since 1845. She has taught literature and creative writing at Tulane University and UCLA, and was on the faculty of Dillard University at the time of the flood. She has since taught at Louisiana State University. Her books include *In These Houses*, *Desperate Circumstance*, *Dangerous Woman*, and *All Saints: New and Selected Poems*, winner of the 1998 American Book Award.

Osbey has an incredibly resonant and musical voice; she can create a mental picture, a mood, a scene so vivid that you'd imagine you could touch it; she is a historian of New Orleans culture. But Osbey's poems walk the line of danger. They recall dangerous people; they wield dangerous words. Her work will speak to you of the familiar in ways that make it strange; it will speak to you of the unfamiliar in terms that you know you've heard before. She inhabits the figures in her poems, and makes the phenomenally distant Nina Simone as knowable as the supposedly ordinary women who inhabited the streets of the Faubourg Trémé. Take nothing for granted, her poems teach us, and mind your rituals. Reading Osbey's work, we learn how to mourn New Orleans properly and how to keep it alive.



January 3, 2007

I find it difficult, now, to recap what our guests presented, in part because I generally don't believe in treating poetry as if it can be paraphrased, and in part because the event was so powerful that it was, in a sense, ineffable. But if I were to gesture toward what stood out for me about each of their readings, in a word, I would say of Selah Saterstrom: *repetition*—the repetition of words and phrases in her text reminding us of the painful redundancy of water in the Gulf Coast, historically and during the crisis, and the repetition of empty promises made by the government to the people who survived Katrina; of Kalamu ya Salaam: *body*—his highly embodied performance style insisting that we think not only of the loss of property and opportunity caused by Katrina, but also of the very psychosomatic trauma of living through the hurricane and its aftermath; and of Brenda Marie Osbey: *memory*—her words sounding an incantation designed to etch into our minds the scenes, people, and rituals of the New Orleans that dissolved in Katrina's floodwaters, because we cannot afford to let them also sink into the mud of forgetfulness.

I'm deeply grateful to the English department—especially Carolyn Williams, who coordinates the Writers at Rutgers Reading Series with great vision; Rick H. Lee, who makes it all actually happen; and our acting chair, Kate Flint, who supported this event enthusiastically. The support of the Committee to Advance Our Common Purposes (represented by Cheryl Clarke) and the Rutgers College Office of Student Development and College Affairs (represented by Lori Smith) helped to bring this very important event to fruition. Not only did we raise hundreds of dollars for the Twenty-First Century Foundation, which will distribute our donations along with those of many others to grassroots organizations working to rebuild the Gulf Coast and the lives of its people, but we also raised awareness on campus of the continuing importance of this situation. It is far from resolved and we still have not learned the lessons it has to offer us. □

Editor's Note: This benefit reading took place on November 15, 2006. Held in the Rutgers Student Center, the reading drew a crowd of 100 people and raised close to \$800 for the Twenty-First Century Foundation's Hurricane Katrina relief fund. Evie Shockley delivered a version of these introductory remarks at the reading and appended some reflections earlier this year.

Russell Banks

by John A. McClure

When *The Darling*, Russell Banks' most recent novel, came out in 2004, *The Nation* described its author as "one of America's most important living writers, one of a handful with the daring and the talent to plumb our history and the human heart for their deepest meanings."

As readers we are indebted to writers across the centuries for their gifts of vision and art. But surely we owe a special debt of gratitude to our contemporary writers, for they enable us to see our own times, which we inhabit but mostly do not understand, with greater social and moral clarity. When I was a young reader encountering the great writers of the past for the first time, I remember pausing to wonder whether any writer could render the world I inhabited. Given the turbulence of things, the visceral power of all sorts of events, and my bottomless bafflement at their significance, it seemed highly unlikely. And it seemed even less likely that any writer would choose to chronicle the lives of the communities and people I knew: working class and lower middle class communities, unglamorous and anonymous people subject to ordinary forms of anger, confusion, and desire.

Then the books began to emerge. I read Banks' *Continental Drift* shortly after it appeared and was elated. It is a novel in the great American mode of epic romance: Michiko Kakutani called it, in the *New York Times*, "a visionary epic about innocence and evil and a shattering dissection of American life"; anyone who has read it will concur. But *Continental Drift* is also a visionary treatment of present, mostly quotidian, American realities; not the realities of Manhattan and Hollywood and their privileged suburbs, but of the rural Rust Belt towns of the Northeast and the new strip towns of Florida. Middle and working class towns, working class anger and despair, working class dreams and migrations ("continental drift"). I knew these worlds firsthand, but in the haphazard, unfocused, and deeply conflicted way that we often know the places closest to us, the ones we are struggling to escape. In an utterly unnostalgic way, Banks brought these

worlds into focus, mapped the powers and passions that shape them, endowed the lives they foster with moral significance and stark beauty. He did not make me want to stay at home in these worlds, but he kept me from dismissing as worthless the ways of being I thought I could not endure.

Banks works a similar magic again and again in his fiction. One set of his novels—*Continental Drift*, *Rule of the Bone*, *The Darling*, and *Cloudsplitter*—consists of big, epic works that track human movement across America or from American zones of threadbare sufficiency to starkly desperate places such as Haiti, Jamaica, and Liberia. A second set, including *Affliction* and *The Sweet Hereafter*, are sharply focused, emotionally intense studies of local lives in ruinous small town America. But I don't mean to create a false dichotomy here. Banks' global imagination is grounded in local settings and psyches. And his local worlds open onto other, larger realms. His novels are political in the best sense of the word: they trace the registration of contemporary social forces on human minds and hearts. And they are utterly persuasive. "I trust [Russell Banks'] portrait of America more than any other," writes Michael Ondaatje, adding that "You will read America differently after these books."

Many of us know that two of Banks' novels have been made into films. *The Sweet Hereafter*, directed by Atom Egoyan, won the Grand Prize at Cannes in 1997; *Affliction*, directed by Paul Schrader with Nick Nolte in the lead, won an Academy Award in 1999. These are terrific films, true to the psychological and visual intensities of the novels themselves. But if you are just discovering Banks' work, by all means read the novels first. Because Russell Banks is a splendid writer. The magic is in his words. □

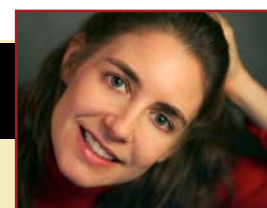
Editor's Note: Russell Banks read in the Rutgers Student Center on February 19, 2007. John McClure delivered a version of these remarks at the reading.

Building on the continuing success of the Writers at Rutgers Reading Series, the English department launched the new Writers from Rutgers Reading Series in spring 2007. This new series will feature writers who teach or study at Rutgers and those who have taught or studied at Rutgers in the past. Purvi Shah and Lara Tupper were our first guest speakers.

Shah's first book of poetry, *Terrain Tracks*, won the 2005 Many Voices Project Prize. Her poetry focuses on migration and multicultural belonging—as well as the longing they produce. Her po-

ems conjure trains, travel, and the many forms of bodily motion that result in loss, but also in future potential; they are sensual and intellectually rich, offering a number of lenses through which to see, feel, and imagine the immigrant experience.

Born in Ahmadabad, India, Shah moved to Chicago with her family when she was two, and grew up in Illinois, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, and Virginia. She currently lives in New York, where she is the executive director of Sakhi for South Asian Women, a com-



Susanna Moore

by Carolyn Williams

Susanna Moore's fiction is sexy and violent, yet also subtle, funny, and compassionate. In all her novels, she asks why people—including, and perhaps even especially, highly intelligent people—are often compelled to step into dangerously self-destructive scenarios. As *Time Out New York* put it, Moore “has a penchant for lurking around the darker alleys of human psychology.”

At Rutgers, Moore read from *The Big Girls*, a work that was then in proofs but has since been published. The narration intertwines four vivid voices: Helen Nash, a psychotic inmate at Sloatsburg women's prison, incarcerated for killing her children; Dr. Louise Forrest, the newly-appointed chief of psychiatry at Sloatsburg, a recently divorced mother of an eight-year old son; Angie Mills, an aspiring Hollywood starlet and Louise's ex-husband's girlfriend, whom Helen believes is her own long-lost sister; and Captain Henry (“Ike”) Bradshaw, a corrections officer, formerly a New York City narcotics detective, with whom Louise becomes involved. Moore was assisted in her reading by Andrea Kuhar, a Rutgers English honors student specializing in creative writing, who read the part of Helen.

This new novel is getting fabulous reviews. In *Publisher's Weekly*, the reviewer notes that reading *The Big Girls* is “like watching a train wreck while dialing for help on your cellphone. You can't turn away.”

Early in her career, Moore published three novels set in her native Hawai'i, sometimes called her “Hawai'ian trilogy”: *My Old Sweetheart*, *The Whiteness of Bones*, and *Sleeping Beauties*. These novels lovingly evoke their locale, while exposing the complexities of family function and dysfunction. They are also semi-autobiographical, as Moore's readers discovered when she recently published a nonfiction travelogue, *I Myself Have Seen It: The Myth of Hawai'i*.

With the publication of *In the Cut*, Moore's fame increased dramatically. Set in New York City, this novel features an English teacher who accidentally witnesses a woman engaged in a sexual

act in a sleazy bar, only to find later that the woman has been murdered and disarticulated, or pulled apart at the joints. Thus the novel links language—the perils and pleasures of education; the disparate languages of street slang, police lingo, and standard English; the desperate effort to master a reality too complex to be articulated—with sexual violence and detection to produce a very unsettling mixture. *In the Cut* was later made into a film directed by Jane Campion and starring Meg Ryan and Mark Ruffalo.

One Last Look is Moore's first historical novel, set in colonial India during the early nineteenth century. Narrated through the diaries of Lady Eleanor, who travels to India along with her sister Harriet and her brother Henry, the newly-appointed Governor General, this novel details the vicissitudes of attraction and repulsion that mark their early days in their new culture. Those crude early feelings are replaced by more complex ones as the siblings try to understand their involvement with colonial inequality and attempt various modes of assimilation. Like *The Big Girls*—and, in fact, like all Moore's work—*One Last Look* explores the primal violence within families, the determining force of psychological realities, and the disparities of power and access that arise within the field of sexual and cultural difference. □

Editor's Note: Susanna Moore read on March 28, 2007, to an intimate and engaged audience of 100 people. Moore interacted warmly with our undergraduates: she not only invited Andrea Kuhar to assist her during the reading, but she also gave away her galley proofs of *The Big Girls* to Alex Kasavin. Carolyn Williams delivered a version of these remarks at the reading.

WRITERS FROM RUTGERS READING SERIES

munity-based organization that supports survivors of domestic violence. She holds a master's degree from the Rutgers Graduate Program of Literatures in English.

In Tupper's debut novel, *A Thousand and One Nights*, protagonist Karla takes a job as an entertainer on board a cruise ship, where she meets Jack. Together they form a duo. When Karla leaves the ship to travel with him on land, singing in the United Arab Emirates and Shanghai, she feels herself more and more “at sea.” Thus, the novel's title refers to the nights Karla and Jack spend on stage

as their story—and especially hers—unfolds.

A former lounge singer, Tupper has performed at sea in the Mediterranean and Caribbean, and on land in Thailand, Japan, China, and the UAE. A graduate of Wesleyan University and Warren Wilson College, Tupper teaches in the writing and creative writing programs at Rutgers, New Brunswick. She lives in New York and is a frequent reviewer for *The Believer*. She has published many short stories and is currently working on a second novel, written from the point of view of Mette, Paul Gauguin's wife. □

1964 - 1965
 Frederick Seidel, Susan Sontag, and Muriel Spark teach honors seminars in the English department

1963



Professor Richard Poirier joins Rutgers English as chair of the department, aspiring to build a curriculum in “literary history”

William Phillips, co-founder of *The Partisan Review*, joins the English department and makes Rutgers the journal’s new home



Leaving Morrell Street, Rutgers English moves to Scott Hall

1960

1960 - 1963
 The Rutgers English graduate program’s popularity skyrockets; the number of enrolled students nearly doubles to 156

61

62

63

64

65



1962 - 1964
 Ralph Ellison joins Rutgers English as a visiting professor of creative writing

1965



Professor Paul Fussell publishes *Rhetorical World of Augustan Humanism*, which wins the Phelan Prize

Rutgers English hosts a summer institute funded through a United States Office of Education grant secured by Professor Thomas R. Edwards

1964

Thomas R. Edwards joins the English department as an associate professor from the University of California, Riverside

For the first time English honors students can enroll in junior and senior honors seminars that the university now offers as part of its honors program

Rutgers in the Late 1960s: Selective Reflections

by Ron Levao

My undergraduate life at Rutgers was as variegated as most other periods, but the sense of novelty and invigorating pleasure is what I most recall, or would most like to recall—having so much time to spend with strange, new books, meeting (sometimes strange) new friends. Those years offered an intellectual and emotional context where curiosity could be indulged, ideas tested, attitudes explored. My instructors were a group of brilliant, often charming, and highly individualized men and women, and when I tally the roster now—Richard Poirier, David Kalstone, Marius Bewley, Tom Edwards, Paul Fussell, George Dardess, Dan Howard, Julian Moynahan, Jack Spector, Maurice Charney, John Huntington, Rene Webber, Katharine Jobses, Alicia Ostriker—I am grateful for how many wonderful critics, writers, and educators lectured to or chatted with my scruffy self. It was the sheer revisibility of



perception that first impressed me about my studies, and since I was a neophyte, I was under no obligation to be cautious or coy about beguiling, half-baked ideas, or about antiquities that could be endlessly reanimated, debunked or reconfigured. A morning lecture on why Aristotle’s notions of plot were still powerful gave way to an afternoon seminar (with another instructor) about why Aristotle was tedious and irrelevant.

And then would come other mornings and afternoons. I loved my English courses; art history and philosophy classes were special treats as well: campus architecture, New Brunswick sunsets, and the hamster-like scurrying of my mind took on unsuspected contours and tracings after a week studying Neoclassicism or Impressionism, Descartes or Kant.

Many of us could be disciplined (and probably should have been more so), but lingering over ideas, drifting and daydreaming,

Looking Back Rutgers in the 1960s



1966 - 1967
Film studies courses are introduced into the curriculum and prove an instant hit with students

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68

69

1970

1967

In his annual report on the English department, Professor Richard Poirier praises the faculty for “participating in the creation and maintenance of a first-rate organization”

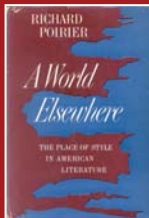
1968 - 1969
The New Brunswick Department of English is formed to improve communication between each college’s English department

Looking Ahead

Class of 1970 Lecture featuring
Joyce Carol Oates

November 12, 2007
7:30 PM
Rutgers Student Center
Multipurpose Room

1966



Richard Poirier publishes *A World Elsewhere: The Place of Style in American Literature*

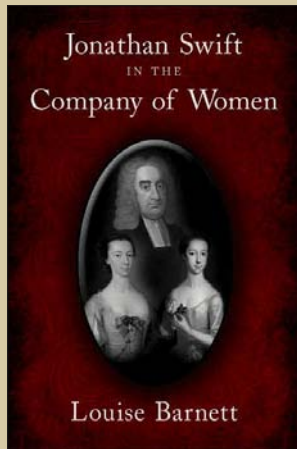
The Association of American University Professors bestows the Meiklejohn Award on Rutgers President Mason W. Gross for his defense of academic freedom at the university

was no less essential. There were days when I drifted too far, and found myself in class having to survive by my wits; that has made me rather tolerant of those who sometimes do likewise. But these were also the 60s; pop culture and a fascination with paradox were everywhere—The Beatles, Jorge Luis Borges, Muhammad Ali, and Robert Crumb seemed to be adding new steps to everyone’s cultural choreography. “Serious play,” a slippery formulation used by some Renaissance humanists to describe mental work, was very much the order of the day for undergraduates and graduate students alike. My twin brother, with whom I was close and have over the years become even more so, was busy exploring his own version of the university landscape. My daily companions, discovered in classes, dormitory life, the campus literary magazine, student government, or just hanging around, were a diverse crew from different departments and of various temperaments—cynical, sentimental, idealistic, perversely ingenious—but all provoked delight and affection. I was also lucky to fall in with a group of English PhD students, and long evenings spent laughing over books, music, and mental games made continuing on to graduate

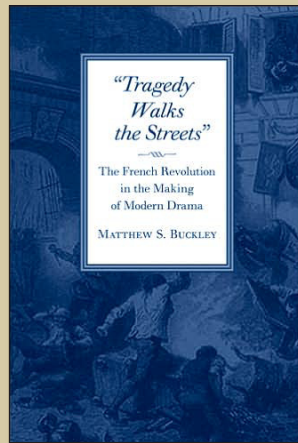
school seem like a very attractive proposition.

I am, of course, excluding a great deal here—frustrations and misunderstandings both petty and important, fulfilling and failed friendships and affairs, cringe-provoking self-indulgences and the looming reality of more mature academic responsibility, and above all the grim social and political upheavals that surrounded, and at times reshaped, the experience of those years. But I dedicate these few hundred words to what I most want to recall: the complex pleasures and challenges that helped me find what mattered to me, a field of possibility that would not, like Little Nemo’s Slumberland, disappear in the morning light but which, however qualified, still remains as an underlying motivation for the scholarship and teaching I have enjoyed at other universities, and now again at Rutgers, ever since. □

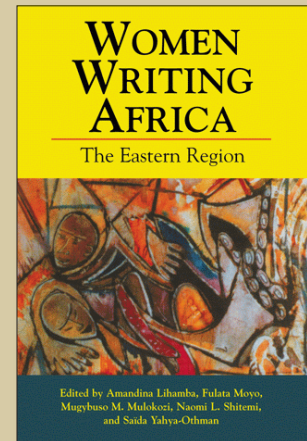
Editor’s Note: Ron Levao graduated from Rutgers College in 1970 and began graduate work at the University of California, Berkeley, that same year. He joined the faculty at Rutgers University in 1989.



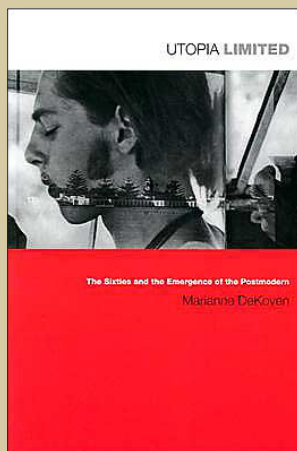
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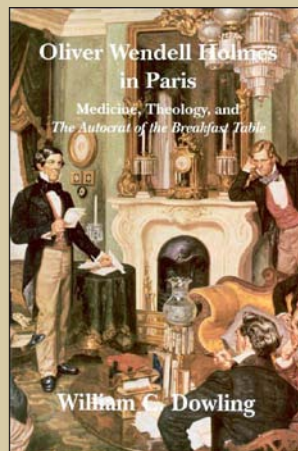
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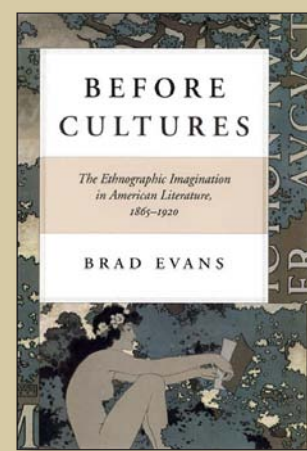
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1. **LOUISE BARNETT**

Jonathan Swift in the Company of Women
Oxford University Press, 2007

2. **MATTHEW S. BUCKLEY**

"Tragedy Walks the Streets": The French Revolution in the Making of Modern Drama
Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006

3. **ABENA P. A. BUSIA**

Series Editor
Women Writing Africa: The Eastern Region
The Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 2007

4. **MARIANNE DEKOVEN**

Utopia Limited: The Sixties and the Emergence of the Postmodern
Duke University Press, 2004

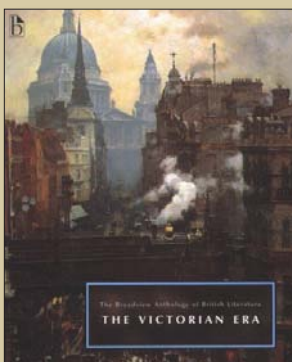
5. **WILLIAM C. DOWLING**

Oliver Wendell Holmes in Paris: Medicine, Theology, and the Autocrat of the Breakfast Table
University of New Hampshire Press, 2006

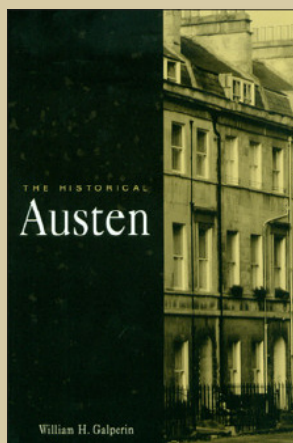
6. **BRAD EVANS**

Before Cultures: The Ethnographic Imagination in American Literature, 1865-1920
University of Chicago Press, 2005

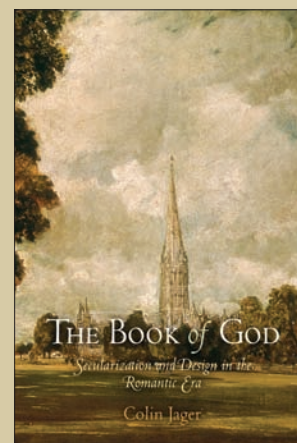
RECENT AND FORTHCOMING FACULTY BOOKS



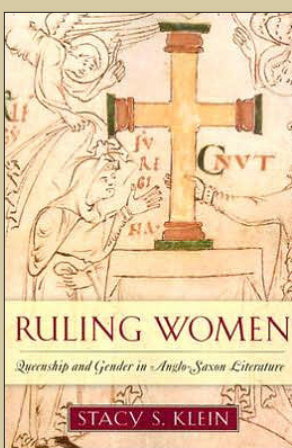
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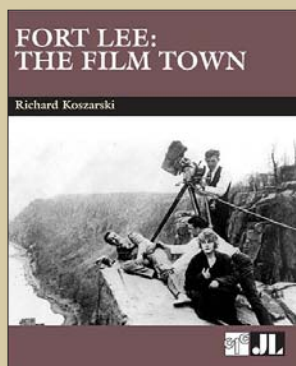
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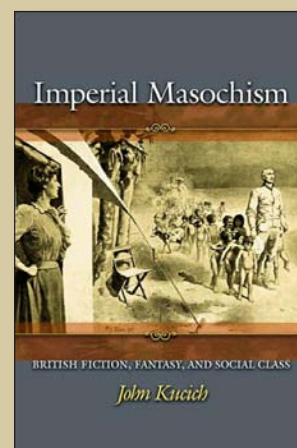
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7. **KATE FLINT AND BARRY V. QUALLS**

Editors
*The Broadview Anthology of British Literature:
The Victorian Era*
Broadview Press, 2006

8. **WILLIAM H. GALPERIN**

The Historical Austen
University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002 (paperback, 2005)

9. **COLIN JAGER**

*The Book of God: Secularization and Design
in the Romantic Era*
University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006

10. **STACY S. KLEIN**

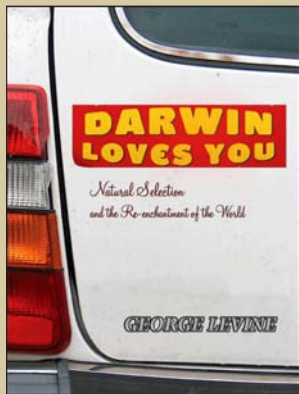
*Ruling Women: Queenship and Gender
in Anglo-Saxon Literature*
University of Notre Dame Press, 2006

11. **RICHARD KOSZARSKI**

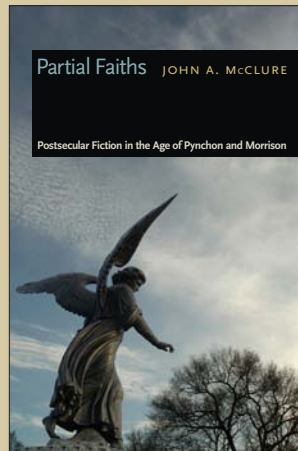
Fort Lee: The Film Town
John Libbey Publishing, 2004

12. **JOHN KUCICH**

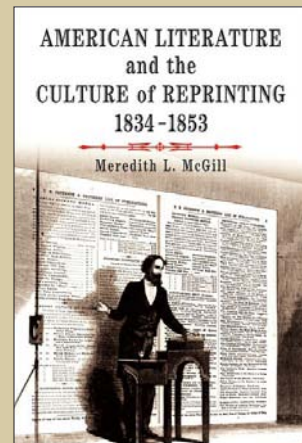
*Imperial Masochism: British Fiction, Fantasy,
and Social Class*
Princeton University Press, 2006



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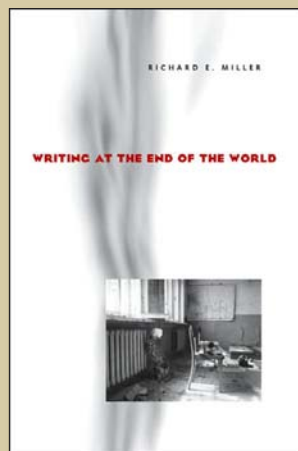
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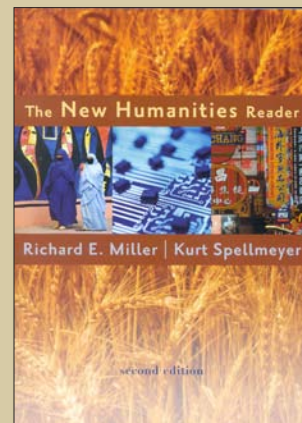
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13. **GEORGE LEVINE**

Darwin Loves You: Natural Selection and the Re-enchantment of the World
Princeton University Press, 2006

16. **MICHAEL MCKEON**

The Secret History of Domesticity: Public, Private, and the Division of Knowledge
Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005 (paperback, 2006)

14. **JOHN A. McCLURE**

Partial Faiths: Postsecular Fiction in the Age of Pynchon and Morrison
University of Georgia Press, 2007

17. **RICHARD E. MILLER**

Writing at the End of the World
University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005

15. **MEREDITH L. MCGILL**

American Literature and the Culture of Reprinting, 1834-1853
University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002 (paperback, 2007)

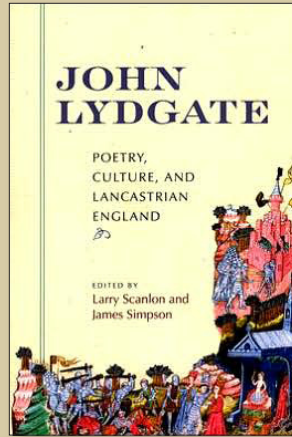
18. **RICHARD E. MILLER AND KURT SPELLMEYER**

Editors
The New Humanities Reader, Second edition
Houghton Mifflin, 2005

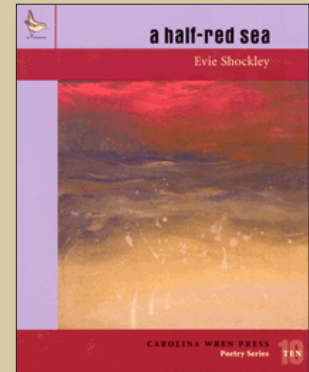
RECENT AND FORTHCOMING FACULTY BOOKS



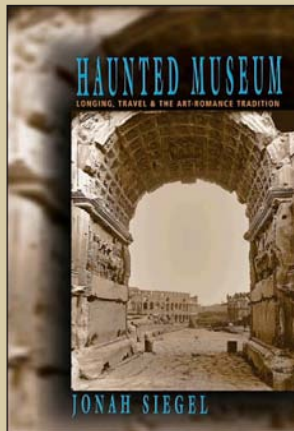
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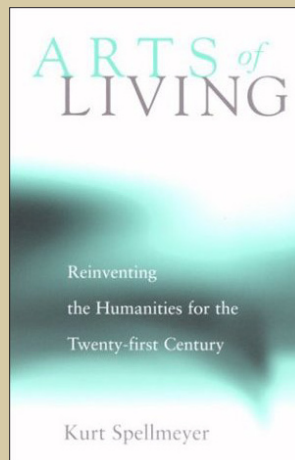
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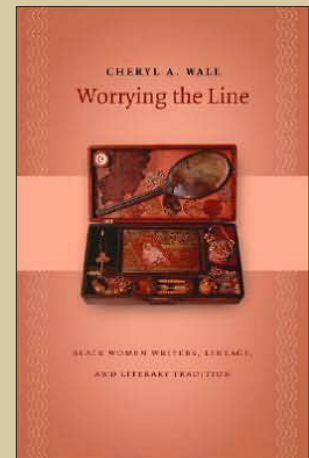
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19. **ALICIA SUSKIN OSTRIKER**
No Heaven
University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005

20. **LARRY SCANLON**
Editor
*John Lydgate: Poetry, Culture,
and Lancastrian England*
University of Notre Dame Press, 2006

21. **EVIE SHOCKLEY**
a half-red sea
Carolina Wren Press, 2006

22. **JONAH SIEGEL**
*Haunted Museum: Longing, Travel,
and the Art-Romance Tradition*
Princeton University Press, 2005

23. **KURT SPELLMEYER**
*Arts of Living: Reinventing the Humanities
for the Twenty-first Century*
State University of New York Press, 2003

24. **CHERYL A. WALL**
*Worrying the Line: Black Women Writers,
Lineage, and Literary Tradition*
University of North Carolina Press, 2005

John Belton spent the past year on a Guggenheim Fellowship presenting papers from his book project on digital filmmaking. He lectured at the Nice Observatory, the University of Zurich, Cologne University, Bochum University, Bauhaus University, the University of Hamburg, and the Free University of Berlin.

Matthew S. Buckley published "*Tragedy Walks the Streets*": *The French Revolution in the Making of Modern Drama* and was promoted to associate professor of English with tenure in spring 2007.

Abena P. A. Busia served as acting director of the Rutgers Center for African Studies during the 2006-07 academic year.

Marianne DeKoven published an article on contemporary feminist criticism in *PMLA* and co-edited, with Hillary Chute, a special issue on graphic narratives for *Mfs: Modern Fiction Studies*.

Elin Diamond delivered a paper on J. L. Austin and Zora Neale Hurston at the University of Texas at Austin in April 2006. She participated in the plenary panel on performance and temporality at the American Society of Theater Research meeting in November. She recently published work on Caryl Churchill in *The Blackwell Companion to Modern British and Irish Drama*, on Adrienne Kennedy, Freud, and Brecht in *Twentieth Century American Drama*, and on Hurston and Brecht in *Against Theatre: Creative Destructions on the Modernist Stage*. She sits on the executive committee of the MLA's drama division.

Brad Evans published an essay on Franz Boas and the Harlem Renaissance in *Central Sites, Peripheral Visions: Cultural and Institutional Crossings*. This April, he gave an invited lecture on ephemera and the little magazines of the 1890s for an *ELH* colloquium at Johns Hopkins University. He is an advisory member of the Modernist Journals Project, an online resource for early twentieth century periodical literature.

Kate Flint received the 2007 Board of Trustees Award for Excellence in Research and will be a fellow at the National Humanities Center next year. She gave an invited lecture last October on photography and the sublime at Temple University's Center for the Humanities, and delivered the keynote lecture entitled "Seeing Italy" at the Dickens, Victorian Culture, and Italy conference in Genoa in June 2007. She has written an essay for *The Cambridge Companion to Wilkie Collins* on Collins and disability. She will deliver the English department's Opening Lecture this September, drawing upon her book, *The Transatlantic Indian, 1785-1930*, due out from Princeton University Press in 2008.

Sandy Flitterman-Lewis recently published work on the French film *Army of Shadows* in *Cineaste*, on feminism and media studies in *Camera Obscura*, and on feminist film theory in *1895*.

William H. Galperin published an article on Jane Austen in *ELH*. He will direct the Center for Cultural Analysis next year.

Christopher P. Iannini gave an invited lecture at the College of William and Mary's Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture in March 2006 and another for Brown University's Americanist lecture series in October.

Gregory S. Jackson published an article on Charles Sheldon's novel *In His Steps* in *PMLA* and organized a conference on aesthetics in American literary history for the Huntington Library in May 2007.

Colin Jager published *The Book of God: Secularization and Design in the Romantic Era* and was promoted to associate professor of English with tenure in spring 2007. He also published articles on secularism and romanticism in *Public Culture* and on the poetics of dissent in *Theory & Event*.

Ann Jurecic published articles on autism and writing instruction in *College English* and *Literature and Medicine*. A fellow at the Rutgers Institute for Research on Women, she delivered the keynote lecture at this spring's New Jersey Writing Alliance conference, was recently appointed for a three-year term to the board of the journal *Pedagogy*, and serves as the book review editor for *Literature and Medicine*.

Stacy S. Klein won the 2005 International Society of Anglo-Saxonists publication prize for her article on Cynewulf's *Elene* in the *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*.

Jonathan Brody Kramnick has an article on empiricism, cognitive science, and the novel forthcoming in *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation*.

John Kucich published *Imperial Masochism: British Fiction, Fantasy, and Social Class*. He is organizing a conference on master narratives to be held at Rutgers in March 2008, which will feature plenary lectures by Nancy Armstrong, Catherine Hull, Suvir Kaul, and Dror Wahrman.

John A. McClure received the 2006 Warren I. Susman Award for Excellence in Teaching. His book, *Partial Faiths: Postsecular Fiction in the Age of Pynchon and Morrison*, is forthcoming from the University of Georgia Press.

Meredith L. McGill organized a symposium on the poetry of Sterling Brown for the Center for Cultural Analysis in March 2007; it featured papers by Joanne Gabbin, Robert O'Meally, James Smethurst, and Robert Stepto, as well as by Rutgers faculty Brent Edwards, Brad Evans, Evie Shockley, and Cheryl A. Wall.

Michael McKeon published a review essay on recent scholarship in the long eighteenth century in *SEL: Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*. Last year, he was invited to discuss his book *The Secret History of Domesticity* at Carleton University, the University of Toronto, the University of Lyon, and the Sorbonne.

HONOR ROLL faculty news

Richard E. Miller delivered the keynote lecture entitled “Worlds End and Worlds Begin: The Future of the Humanities in Our Apocalyptic Age” at Clemson University’s Celebration of the Humanities conference in February 2007. This July, he will deliver keynote lectures at the Literacies of Hope conference in Beijing and at the Renewals: Refiguring University English in the Twenty-first Century conference at the Royal Holloway, University of London.

Barry V. Qualls was named the New Jersey Professor of the Year by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education.

Evie Shockley published the poetry collection *a half-red sea*. She participated in a symposium on poetry and the law at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign’s College of Law in February 2006. Awarded fellowships by the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture and by the American Council of Learned Societies, she will continue work on a book project on aesthetics and formal innovation in African American poetry next year. Her essay on Kincaid’s *Lucy* and Brontë’s *Villette* appeared in *Jamaica Kincaid’s Caribbean Double Crossings*.

Jonah Siegel was elected president of the Northeast Victorian Studies Association in 2006. Last October, he gave an invited lecture on the Brownings and Italy for the Browning Society.

Cheryl A. Wall was named Board of Governors Professor of English in December 2006. This April, she was awarded a Rutgers University Human Dignity Award for her commitment to promoting the value and importance of diversity at Rutgers and in society. She delivered keynote lectures for black history month at Lafayette College and for a James Baldwin conference at the Queen Mary, University of London, in June 2007.

Carolyn Williams organized the International Walter Pater Society conference at Rutgers last July. She directed the session on the genre of public lectures for the English Institute last October and organized the panel on theorist autobiographers at the MLA convention. This past spring, she organized, with graduate student Sarah Kennedy, the Dickens Project conference at Rutgers. She is overseeing the creation of Writers House in Murray Hall.

Edlie L. Wong recently published work on Julia Collins’ novel *The Curse of Caste* in the *African American Review*, on Doris Salcedo’s art installation in *The Image and the Witness: Trauma, Memory, and Visual Culture*, and on Nellie Bly in *American Literary Geographies: Spatial Practice and Cultural Production*.

IN MEMORIAM

JAMES GUETTI passed away at the age of 69 on January 11, 2007 at the Leverett, Massachusetts home he shared with his wife Laura. Professor Guetti taught at Rutgers from 1964 until his retirement in 2000. He is the author of several academic books—*The Limits of Metaphor: A Study of Melville, Conrad, and Faulkner*, *Word-Music: The Aesthetic Aspect of Narrative Fiction*, and *Wittgenstein and the Grammar of Literary Experience*—as well as the novel *Action* and the memoir *Silver Kings*.

NICHOLAS HOWE, who taught as an assistant professor of English at Rutgers from 1978 to 1985, died of complications from leukemia on September 27, 2006 in Oakland, California. He was 53. After leaving Rutgers, Professor Howe went to teach at the University of Oklahoma, the Ohio State University, and the University of California, Berkeley. He is the author of *Migration and Mythmaking in Anglo-Saxon England*, *Home and Homelessness in the Medieval and Renaissance World*, and the autobiographical travelogue *Across an Inland Sea: Writing in Place from Buffalo to Berlin*.

RETIREMENT NEWS

CAROL H. SMITH retired from Rutgers University this past spring after more than three decades of teaching and service. A specialist in modernism and women’s writing, Professor Smith is the author of *T. S. Eliot’s Dramatic Theory and Practice*. A key figure at Douglass College, she served as chair of that campus’s English department from 1974 to 1979, as acting dean of the college in 1985, and as the director of the Institute for Research on Women from 1986 to 1992. More recently she served as the director of the Graduate Program of Literatures in English from 1998 to 2001. Professor Smith says she will remain active as a scholar and teacher after her retirement. She has a new article on Eliot forthcoming in *A Companion to T. S. Eliot* due out by Blackwell Publishing in 2008, and she will continue to teach courses for the English department as a professor emerita for the next three years. Rutgers English is delighted to have Professor Smith stay on in this capacity.

DEPARTURES

BRENT HAYES EDWARDS, a specialist in African American literature, will join the Department of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University.
MARC MANGANARO has been appointed Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Gonzaga University.
PAULA MCDOWELL, a specialist in eighteenth-century women’s writing, will join the Department of English at New York University.
MARÍA JOSEFINA SALDAÑA-PORTILLO, a specialist in Latino studies, will join the Department of Social and Cultural Analysis at New York University.
MARY SHERIDAN-RABIDEAU will join the faculty at the University of Wyoming as an associate professor of English with tenure.
MICHAEL WARNER will join the Department of English at Yale University.

award-winning faculty scholarship **HONOR ROLL**

<p>Matthew S. Buckley</p>	<p>“A Dream of Murder?: <i>The Fall of Robespierre</i> and the Tragic Imagination” <i>Studies in Romanticism</i> 44.4 (Winter 2005)</p> <p>Keats-Shelley Association of America Award for the Best Essay in the Area of the Godwin Circle and Later British Romanticism (2007)</p>	
<p>Marianne Dekoven</p>	<p><i>Utopia Limited: The Sixties and the Emergence of the Postmodern</i> Duke University Press (2004)</p> <p>Society for the Study of Narrative Literature Barbara Perkins and George Perkins Award (2005)</p>	
<p>John Kucich</p>	<p>“Sadomasochism and the Magical Group: Kipling’s Middle-Class Imperialism” <i>Victorian Studies</i> 46.1 (January 2004)</p> <p>North American Victorian Studies Association Donald Gray Prize for the Best Essay in the Field of Victorian Studies (2005)</p>	
<p>Michael McKeon</p>	<p><i>The Secret History of Domesticity: Public, Private, and the Division of Knowledge</i> Johns Hopkins University Press (2005)</p> <p>Association of American Publishers Professional and Scholarly Publishing Award in Communication and Cultural Studies (2005)</p>	
<p>Richard E. Miller</p>	<p><i>Writing at the End of the World</i> University of Pittsburgh Press (2005)</p> <p>National Council of Teachers of English James N. Britton Award for Inquiry within the English Language Arts (2006)</p>	
<p>Cheryl A. Wall</p>	<p><i>Worrying the Line: Black Women Writers, Lineage, and Literary Tradition</i> University of North Carolina Press (2005)</p> <p>Zora Neale Hurston/Richard Wright Foundation Nominee, Hurston/Wright Legacy Award for Nonfiction (2006) New Jersey Council for the Humanities Honor Book (2006) Association of College and Research Libraries <i>Choice</i> Outstanding Academic Title (2005)</p>	

HONOR ROLL graduate program placement



Dr. Hillary Chute (PhD 2007)
 Harvard University Society of Fellows (postdoctoral fellowship)
Dissertation: “Contemporary Graphic Narratives: History, Aesthetics, Ethics”
Committee: Marianne DeKoven (Director), Carolyn Williams, and Harriet Davidson

Dr. Christopher Crosbie (PhD 2007)
 Trinity University (tenure-track position)
Dissertation: “Philosophies of Retribution: Rethinking Early Modern Revenge Tragedy”
Committee: Emily C. Bartels (Director), Ann Baynes Coiro, and Ron Levao

Dr. Benjamin Johnson (PhD 2007)
 University of Central Missouri (tenure-track position)
Dissertation: “The Varieties of Aesthetic Experience in American Modernist Literature”
Committee: Marcia Ian (Director), Marc Manganaro, and Michael Warner

Dr. Lauren Lacey (PhD 2007)
 Edgewood College (tenure-track position)
Dissertation: “Fantastic Times: Contemporary Women Rewriting the Past and Writing the Future”
Committee: Marianne DeKoven (Director), Richard Dienst, and John A. McClure

Christopher Pizzino (PhD expected 2007)
 University of Georgia (non-tenure-track position)
Dissertation: “Religion in Postmodern Science Fiction: A Case Study in Secularity”
Committee: Barry V. Qualls (Director), Marianne DeKoven, and Richard E. Miller

Dr. Maria Rice (PhD 2007)
 College of Staten Island (tenure-track position)
Dissertation: “Migrations of Memory: Postmemory in Twentieth Century Ethnic American Women’s Literature”
Committee: Cheryl A. Wall (Director), Marianne DeKoven, and Brent Hayes Edwards

Alison Shonkwiler (PhD expected 2007)
 Cornell University (non-tenure-track position)
Dissertation: “The Financial Imaginary: Dreiser, DeLillo, and Abstract Capitalism in American Literature”
Committee: Marianne DeKoven (Director), Richard Dienst, and John A. McClure

Dr. Alexandra Socarides (PhD 2007)
 University of Missouri-Columbia (tenure-track position)
Dissertation: “Lyric Contexts: Emily Dickinson and the Problem of Genre”
Committee: Meredith L. McGill (Director), Virginia Jackson, and Carolyn Williams

Richard Squibbs (PhD expected 2007)
 California Institute of Technology / The Huntington Library (postdoctoral fellowship)
Dissertation: “Conversing with Books: Reading the Eighteenth Century British Periodical Essay in Jeffersonian America”
Committee: William C. Dowling (Director), William H. Galperin, and Myra Jehlen

Dr. Sunny Stalter (PhD 2007)
 Auburn University (tenure-track position)
Dissertation: “Underground Subjects: Public Transportation and Perception in New York Modernist Literature”
Committee: Elin Diamond (Director), Matthew S. Buckley, Harriet Davidson, and Meredith L. McGill

Kathryn Steele (PhD expected 2007)
 University of Oklahoma (non-tenure-track position)
Dissertation: “Navigating Interpretative Authorities: Women Readers and Reading Models in Eighteenth Century England”
Committee: Paula McDowell (Director), Michael McKeon, and Jonathan Brody Kramnick

Dr. Daveena Tauber (PhD 2006)
 Portland State University (tenure-track position)
Dissertation: “‘Jews Natural,’ ‘Jews Virtual’: Milton and the Problem of Typological Hermeneutics”
Committee: Jacqueline T. Miller (Director), Ann Baynes Coiro, and Emily C. Bartels

ANDREW W. MELLON FOUNDATION DISSERTATION FELLOWS

Paul Benzon

Dissertation: "Spaces, Cuts, Codes: Postwar Technology and the Mediation of Writing"

Director: Richard Dienst

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Director: John A. McClure

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Dissertation: "Right Spelling and Rent Bodies: The Discourse of Magic in Renaissance Drama"

Director: Ann Baynes Coiro

Jennifer Garrison

Dissertation: "Eucharistic Theology in Middle English Devotional Literature"

Director: Larry Scanlon

Miriam Jaffe-Foger

Dissertation: "Cross-Ethnic Mediums and the Rhetoric of Individuality in American Fiction"

Director: Brent Hayes Edwards

Regina Masiello

Dissertation: "Rooms of Invention: The Prison Poems of Wyatt, Surrey, and Raleigh"

Director: Ann Baynes Coiro

Piia Mustamaki

Dissertation: "Redefining Political Theater: Masochism and the Problem of Identity"

Director: Elin Diamond

Jacob Nellickal

Dissertation: "Histories of the Visual Image in Nineteenth Century Literature"

Director: William H. Galperin

Megan Ward

Dissertation: "The Sensing Subject: Sensory Perception in Victorian Literature and Culture"

Director: Kate Flint

Madhvi Zutshi

Dissertation: "Virtue, Sensibility, and 'The Man of Feeling' in the Eighteenth Century"

Director: Michael McKeon

ANDREW W. MELLON FOUNDATION RESEARCH FELLOWS

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Katherine Snead

Centre for Medieval Studies, University of Toronto

Sunny Stalter

John Hay Library, Brown University

Scott Trudell

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GRADUATE PROGRAM STAFF NEWS



Eileen Faherty and Cheryl Robinson received this year's Graduate School–New Brunswick Staff Excellence Award. The faculty and students in the Graduate Program of Literatures in English salute and thank them for their extraordinary commitment to the program—and

congratulate them on winning this well-deserved award!

Eileen retired from Rutgers this past spring after twenty-

five years of dedicated service to the university. This award thus came at an auspicious time, marking the culmination of decades of professional and personable service. Equally generous dispensing treats as she was with giving advice, Eileen provided consistent and patient assistance to faculty and students alike. Having joined the English department in December 2002, she worked with Myra Jehlen, Meredith L. McGill, and Marianne DeKoven during their tenure as directors of the graduate program. Everyone in Murray Hall will miss Eileen, and we bid her fond adieu and send our best wishes for her retirement.

HONOR ROLL undergraduate program awards

Nick Bujak

- Irving D. Blum Prize (for the best essay written in coursework)
- Jamima Dingus Qualls Prize (for the best essay on women writers or feminist issues in British or American literature)

Zach Bushnell

Enid Dame Memorial Poetry Prize

Carolyn Foley

Mitchell Adelman Memorial Scholarship for Creative Writing

Sara Grossman

Irving D. Blum Prize (for the best essay written in coursework)

Ching Wen Rebecca Hu

John and Katherine Kinsella Prize (to support honors thesis research)

Andrea Kuhar

Edna N. Herzberg Prize (for an outstanding original composition)

Janet LaBelle

- Edna N. Herzberg Prize (for an outstanding original composition)
- Ernest W. Thomas Memorial Prize (for the best essay on Shakespeare)

Dan Marchalik

John and Katherine Kinsella Prize (to support honors thesis research)

Greta Nelson

Jordan Lee Flyer Honors Award (for outstanding promise and achievement in the study of language and literature)

Samantha Plasencia

Toni Cade Bambara Prize (for outstanding accomplishment in African American literature courses)

Anna Pokazanyeva

Jaroslav M. Burian and Grayce Susan Burian Achievement Award in English

Meagan Ratini

- Julia Carley Poetry Prize
- Honorable Mention, Enid Dame Memorial Poetry Prize

Malya Schulman

Mitchell Adelman Memorial Scholarship for Creative Writing

Kellie Walsh

John and Katherine Kinsella Prize (to support honors thesis research)

Victoria Whitfield

Edna N. Herzberg Prize (for an outstanding original composition)

Grant Wythoff

Jordan Lee Flyer Honors Award (for outstanding promise and achievement in the study of language and literature)

HONOR ROLL graduate program fellowships & awards

Candice Amich

Jacob K. Javits Fellowship (2006-2009)

Sarah Balkin

The Dickens Universe, University of California, Santa Cruz

Tyler Bradway

Jacob K. Javits Fellowship (2007-2010)

Riccardo Capoferro

Lane Cooper Fellowship

Ja Yun Choi

Samsung Fellowship

Christopher Crosbie

- Honorable Mention, Catherine Moynahan Prize (for the best essay on a literary topic)
- Honorable Mention, Spencer L. Eddy Prize (for the best literary essay accepted in a professional journal): "Fixing Moderation: *Titus Andronicus* and the Aristotelian Determination of Value," in *Shakespeare Quarterly*

Vera Eliasova

Spencer L. Eddy Prize (for the best literary essay accepted in a professional journal): "A Cab of Her Own: Immigration and Mobility in Iva Pekárková's *Gimme the Money*," in *Contemporary Literature*

Michael Gavin

Graduate School–New Brunswick Special Study Award

Devin Griffiths

Middlebury College Summer Immersion Program for Intermediate French

Patrick Jehle

The Dickens Universe, University of California, Santa Cruz

Meghan Lau

Daniel Francis Howard Travel Fellowship

Carrie Malcolm

Marius Bewley Prize (for the best essay written in coursework)

Jacob Nellickal

Catherine Moynahan Prize (for the best essay on a literary topic)

Beth Perry

Barry V. Qualls Dissertation Fellowship

Debapriya Sarkar

Honorable Mention, Marius Bewley Prize (for the best essay written in coursework)

Erick Sierra

Catherine Musello Cantalupo Prize (for the best essay on literature and religion)

Benjamin Singer

Point Foundation Scholarship

Elliott Souder

Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Writing Program by a Teaching Assistant

Paul Yeoh

Graduate School–New Brunswick Dissertation Teaching Award

Tanya Agathocleous (PhD 2003), an assistant professor of English at Yale University, published an article on teaching world literature in *Pedagogy* with Karin Gosselink (PhD 2006).

Eric Gary Anderson (PhD 1994), an associate professor of English at George Mason University, published an article on the Atlanta child murders in a *PMLA* special issue on cities.

Vinessa Anthony (BA 1995) published her short story “De-tour” in the January 2006 issue of *Void* magazine.

Alex Bain (PhD 2004) will join the faculty at the University of Oklahoma as an assistant professor of English.

David Bartholomae (PhD 1975), professor and chair of the English department at the University of Pittsburgh, won the 2006 Exemplar Award given by the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC). His book *Writing on the Margins: Essays on Composition and Teaching* received the 2005 Mina Shaughnessy Prize given by the Modern Language Association.

Danielle Bobker (PhD 2007) will join the faculty at Concordia University as an assistant professor of English.

Max Cavitch (PhD 2001) published *American Elegy: The Poetry of Mourning from the Puritans to Whitman* and was promoted to associate professor of English with tenure at the University of Pennsylvania. He will be a fellow at Cornell University’s Society for the Humanities during the next academic year.

Barbara Crooker (BA 1967) published her poetry collection, *Radiance*, which won the 2005 Word Press first book competition, and was a finalist for the 2006 Paterson Poetry Prize.

Ann C. Dean (PhD 2000), an assistant professor of English and the director of the college writing program at the University of Southern Maine, published an article on newspapers and court culture in eighteenth century London in *ELH*.

Soyica Diggs (PhD 2006), after a year of postdoctoral work at Stanford University, will join the faculty at Dartmouth University as an assistant professor of English.

Joshua Fausty (PhD 2004), an assistant professor of English at New Jersey City University, received tenure in 2006. As assistant chair of English, he coordinates the composition program; he also serves on the editorial board of *Transformations*.

Karin Gosselink (PhD 2006), a lecturer in English at Yale University, published an article on teaching world literature in *Pedagogy* with Tanya Agathocleous (PhD 2003).

Natasha Hurley (PhD 2007) has accepted a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Alberta.

Andrew Krivak (PhD 2003) will return to Rutgers in March 2008 as part of the Writers from Rutgers Reading Series to read from his forthcoming memoir *A Long Retreat: In Search of a Religious Life*.

Marie T. Logue (PhD 1983) has been appointed Assistant Vice President for Academic Engagement and Programming at Rutgers University.

Kathleen Lubey (PhD 2005), an assistant professor of English at St. John’s University, published articles on Eliza Haywood in *Eighteenth-Century Studies* and on pornography in *differences*.

Katherine Lynes (PhD 2004) will join the faculty at Union College as an assistant professor of English.

Saikat Majumdar (PhD 2005) will join the faculty at Stanford University as an assistant professor of English.

Brian Norman (PhD 2004), an assistant professor of English and the co-director of the women’s studies program at Idaho State University, has published articles on James Baldwin in the *African American Review*, *Women’s Studies*; and *MELUS*; on Helen Hunt Jackson in the *Canadian Review of American Studies*; and on feminist anthologies in *Frontiers*. His book *The American Protest Essay and National Belonging: Addressing Division* is forthcoming from SUNY Press in October. He will be a visiting research fellow at Wesleyan University’s Center for the Humanities in spring 2008.

Martin Joseph Ponce (PhD 2005), an assistant professor of English at The Ohio State University, published articles on Carlos Bulosan in the *Journal of Asian American Studies* and on Langston Hughes in *Modern Language Quarterly*. Last July, he gave an invited lecture on the Filipino diaspora at the University of Washington-Seattle. As the coordinator of OSU’s Asian American studies program, he organized the national East of California conference last November.

Raymond Ricketts (PhD 2006) has accepted a visiting lectureship at Bryn Mawr College.

Chanette Romero (PhD 2004) will join the faculty at the University of Georgia as an assistant professor of English.

Jason Rudy (PhD 2004), an assistant professor of English at the University of Maryland, published an article on Mathilde Blind in *Victorian Literature and Culture*. His article on spasmodic poetry, which appeared in *Victorian Poetry* in 2004, received an honorable mention for the North American Victorian Studies Association’s 2006 Donald Gray Prize for the best essay in Victorian studies.

Purvi Shah (MA 2000), published her poetry collection *Terrain Tracks* and inaugurated the Writers from Rutgers Reading Series last spring.

HONOR ROLL alumni news

Nicole D. Smith (PhD 2005), an assistant professor of English at the University of North Texas, published an article on *The Parson's Tale* in *Studies in the Age of Chaucer*.

Ken Urban (PhD 2006), a preceptor in expository writing at Harvard University, published an acting edition of his play *I ♥ Kant*. His play *2 Husbands* opened in April 2007; two others—*Musbroom* and *The Private Lives of Eskimos*—will open in September.

Alexander G. Weheliye (PhD 1999), an associate professor of English and African American studies at Northwestern University, published *Phonographies: Grooves in Sonic Afro-Modernity*, which was awarded the MLA's 2005 William Sanders Scarborough Prize for an outstanding scholarly study of black American literature or culture.

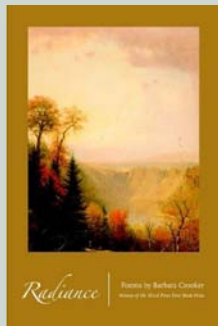
got news?

Help us stay up to date with your accomplishments. Contact us at for.english@rutgers.edu or at 732.932.9896 and we'll try to include them in the future.

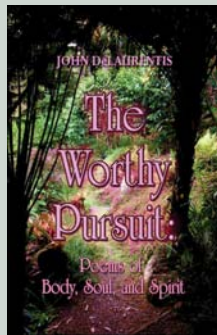
RECENT AND FORTHCOMING ALUMNI BOOKS



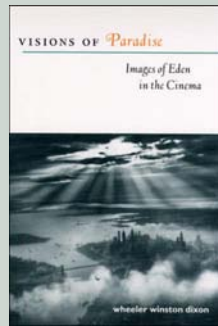
- DAVID BARTHOLOMAE** (PhD 1975)
Professor and Chair of English, University of Pittsburgh
Writing on the Margins: Essays on Composition and Teaching
Palgrave Macmillan, 2005
- MARGARET SÖNSER BREEN** (PhD 1993)
Associate Professor of English, University of Connecticut
Butler Matters: Judith Butler's Impact on Feminist and Queer Studies (Editor)
Ashgate, 2005
- CHARLES CANTALUPO** (PhD 1989)
Professor of English, Penn State University, University Park
Who Needs a Story? Contemporary Eritrean Poetry in Tigrinya, Tigre, and Arabic (Editor and Translator)
Asmara: Hdri Publishers, 2006
- MAX CAVITCH** (PhD 2001)
Associate Professor of English, University of Pennsylvania
American Elegy: The Poetry of Mourning from the Puritans to Whitman
University of Minnesota Press, 2007
- CHERYL CLARKE** (PhD 2000)
Director, Office of Social Justice Education and LGBT Communities, Rutgers University
The Days of Good Looks: Prose and Poetry, 1980-2005
Carroll & Graf, 2006



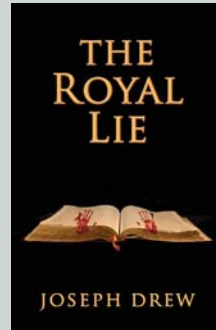
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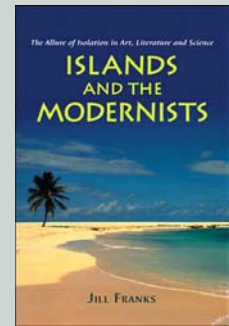
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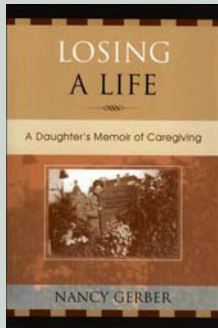
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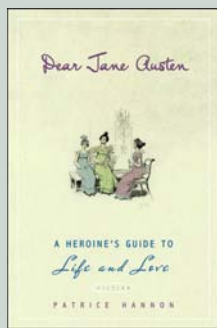
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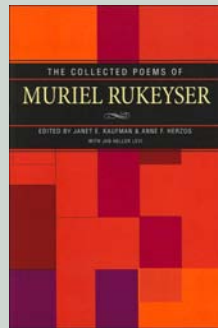
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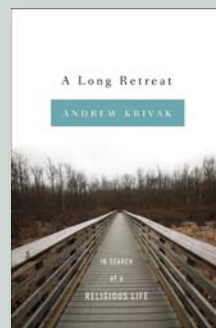
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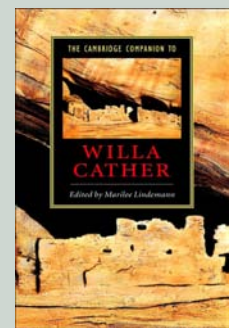
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6. **BARBARA CROOKER** (BA 1967)*Radiance*

Word Tech Communications, 2005

7. **JOHN DELAURENTIS** (BA 2006)*The Worthy Pursuit: Poems of Body, Soul, and Spirit*

PublishAmerica, 2005

8. **WHEELER WINSTON DIXON** (PhD 1982)James Ryan Professor of Film Studies,
University of Nebraska, Lincoln*Visions of Paradise: Images of Eden in the Cinema*

Rutgers University Press, 2006

9. **JOSEPH DREW** (BA 2007)*The Royal Lie*

Charleson & Associates, 2007

10. **JILL FRANKS** (PhD 1992)Associate Professor of English, Austin Peay State University
*Islands and the Modernists: The Allure of Isolation
in Art, Literature and Science*

McFarland & Company, 2006

11. **NANCY GERBER** (PhD 1999)*Losing a Life: A Daughter's Memoir of Caregiving*

Hamilton Books, 2005

12. **PATRICE HANNON** (PhD 1990)*Dear Jane Austen: A Heroine's Guide to Life
and Love*

Wytherngate Press, 2005

13. **ANNE HERZOG** (PhD 1993)Associate Professor and Chair of English,
Westchester University of Pennsylvania*The Collected Poems of Muriel Rukeyser* (Editor)

University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005

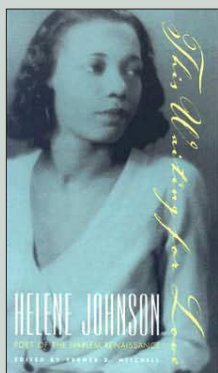
14. **ANDREW KRIVAK** (PhD 2003)*A Long Retreat: In Search of a Religious Life*

Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008

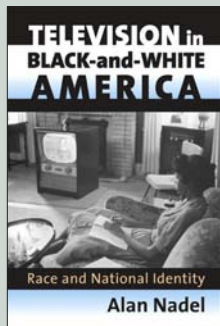
15. **MARILEE LINDEMANN** (PhD 1991)Associate Professor of English and Director of the LGBT
Studies Program, University of Maryland, College Park*The Cambridge Companion to Willa Cather* (Editor)

Cambridge University Press, 2005

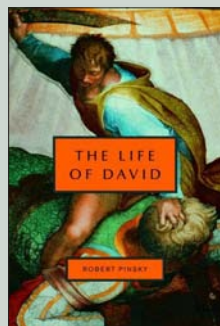
RECENT AND FORTHCOMING ALUMNI BOOKS



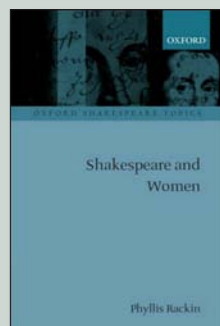
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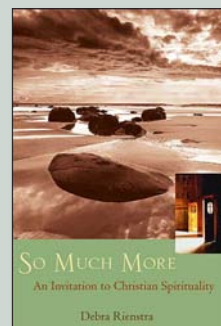
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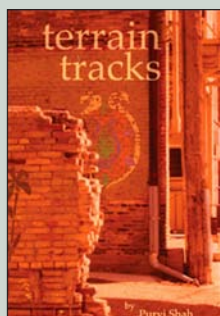
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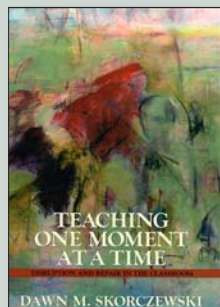
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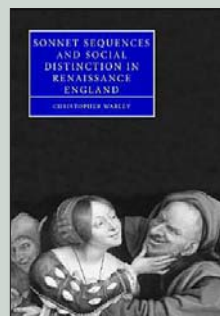
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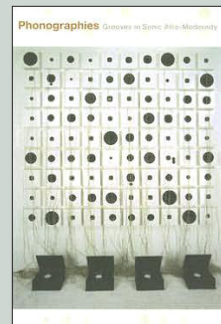
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16. **VERNER D. MITCHELL** (PhD 1995)

Associate Professor of English, University of Memphis
This Waiting for Love: Helene Johnson, Poet of the Harlem Renaissance (Editor)

University of Massachusetts Press, 2006

17. **ALAN NADEL** (PhD 1981)

William T. Bryan Chair in American Literature and Culture,
University of Kentucky

Television in Black-and-White America: Race and National Identity

University Press of Kansas, 2005

18. **ROBERT PINSKY** (BA 1962)

Professor of English, Boston University

The Life of David

Schocken, 2005

19. **PHYLLIS RACKIN** (BA 1954)

Professor Emerita of English, University of Pennsylvania

Shakespeare and Women

Oxford University Press, 2005

20. **DEBRA RIENSTRA** (PhD 1995)

Assistant Professor of English, Calvin College

So Much More: An Invitation to Christian Spirituality

Jossey-Bass, 2005

21. **MARK SCOTT** (PhD 1992)

Assistant Professor of English, College of Saint Mary

A Bedroom Occupation: Love Elegies

Lumen Books, 2007

22. **PURVI SHAH** (MA 2000)

Executive Director, Sakhi for South Asian Women

Terrain Tracks

New Rivers Press, 2006

23. **DAWN M. SKORCZEWSKI** (PhD 1992)

Associate Professor of English and American Literature
and Director of University Writing, Brandeis University

Teaching One Moment at a Time: Disruption and Repair in the Classroom

University of Massachusetts Press, 2005

24. **CHRISTOPHER WARLEY** (PhD 2000)

Assistant Professor of English, University of Toronto

Sonnet Sequences and Social Distinction in Renaissance England

Cambridge University Press, 2005

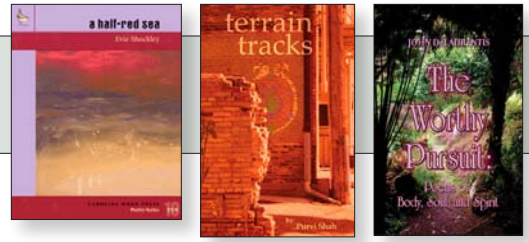
25. **ALEXANDER G. WEHELIYE** (PhD 1999)

Associate Professor of African American Studies
and English, Northwestern University

Phonographies: Grooves in Sonic Afro-Modernity

Duke University Press, 2005

BOOK REVIEWS



Poetry Trifecta

Evie Shockley, *a half-red sea* (Carolina Wren Press, 2006)

Purvi Shah, *Terrain Tracks* (New Rivers Press, 2006)

John DeLaurentis, *The Worthy Pursuit: Poems of Body, Soul, and Spirit* (PublishAmerica, 2005)

Reviewed by Harriet Davidson

New Brunswick is a good poetry town, with a thriving scene of poetry-mad students who may linger for years traversing the fertile writing corridor between New York and Philadelphia. The vital poetry culture of the English department, with its history of wonderful poets and poetry, suffered a loss when Alicia Ostriker retired two years ago. But her legacy endures in the proliferation of poetry coming out of Rutgers English, which this past year hit the trifecta, with the publication of books by Professor Evie Shockley, by graduate alumna Purvi Shah, and by undergraduate alumnus John DeLaurentis.

Evie Shockley's *a half-red sea* establishes her as a major poet in the tradition of African American formal innovation driven by the pressure of history, from Gwendolyn Brooks and Amiri Baraka, to Nathaniel Mackey and Harryette Mullen. The title of the book comes from "elocation (or, exit us)." This poem brilliantly shows the serious play of Shockley's work, a rich layering of the mutability of language and life with the "inerasable trace" of historical trauma. An obsolete word, "elocation" means removal from a person's control or, in a figurative sense, alienation of mind. Shockley's always punning work leads us to see the word "elocation" hovering around the unfamiliar "elocation," and the hint of "e-location" suggesting the complications of virtual worlds among our physical and figural locations. In this poem the terrain of America is mapped by slavery and racism, a map figured in Moses' escape from the slavery of Egypt. In rhyming quatrains this poem figures the psychic wound splitting America, as "exit us" puns on her need for escape by "us" from the U.S. But a better place seems "always just" inaccessible:

where? egypt's always on her right (it goes
where she goes), canaan's always just a-head,
and to her left, land of the bloodless dead.

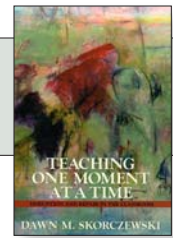
The exuberance and vitality of Shockley's poems sit uneasily with this pessimistic vision, as in the experimental fold-out poem "a thousand words" that frames a page with the repeated word *torture* and fills up this frame with a powerful list of words and phrases that leave readers shaken and astonished. But Shockley's poems also lead us into lyric moments of love and connection as she traverses the passages of life and of African American history and culture. Writing to and of Gwendolyn Brooks, Phyllis Wheatley, Billie Holiday, Miles Davis, and Ntozake Shange, Shockley lets

jazz rhythms inhabit her form. Voices from spirituals and popular culture rise and fade in her verse; words and images resonate, mutating into synonyms and homonyms, and into rhymes and figures.

Purvi Shah's *Terrain Tracks* explores journeys through space and time in beautifully sensuous lyrics charting the dislocations and locations of immigration, memory, love, and loss. The memorable title of her opening poem—"When dreams shower one part of the body, when reality claims the other"—describes this condition. Shah's poems interweave India and New York, tracing the tastes and fragrances of cultural memories, conjuring the feel of New York in its everyday restless movement, tracking women's lives from family, to work, to love, to transformation. She captures the forces of desire: for the lover traveling away or toward her, for "the sporadic seizures of spectral delight," for the subway home, standing "so flush to the track's edge/that we can taste warm bread." Her vivid images keep the reader near the concrete, making the abstract palpable: "Does the body reside with the imagination/or is it attached to land by limb and joints," she asks. The imagination and the body's touch share the same terrain in these moving poems.

John DeLaurentis takes a different kind of journey in *The Worthy Pursuit*, moving from bodily and secular love to a spiritual quest. The figure of Odysseus moves through these poems, representing the journey home that DeLaurentis fully appreciates. With his "pen turned towards the holy expanse," he extends his quest beyond the secular. His poems celebrate language—"A life full of lust is not lasciviousness,/But a lingering lovely lucid alacrity/for the lexicon of light"—and decry the soul-killing pressures of modernity. But his passion is for the spiritual: "there is mystery crafted by divine hands/molding forth creation and the soul's salvation." These inspirational poems compel readers by the sincerity of their faith and desire.

These books manifest the wide range of form and content in the poetry world today. Perhaps Ostriker can give us a final word on these intricate and competing visions of poetry, of life. In the final poem of her latest book of poetry, *No Heaven*, Ostriker tracks the tragedy and comedy "when we think about the world," the "complicated view" from above or at street level. Her lucid and passionate poetry has always guided my reading of the world, and of poetry. She concludes, "Lucky us." □



Calming the Inner Storm

Dawn Skorczewski, *Teaching One Moment at a Time:*

Disruption and Repair in the Classroom (University of Massachusetts Press, 2005)

Reviewed by Richard E. Miller

With *Teaching One Moment at a Time: Disruption and Repair in the Classroom*, Dawn Skorczewski has joined the ranks of David Bartholomae, Pat Bizzell, Bruce Hertzberg, Donald McQuade, and Linda Flowers—Rutgers English graduates who have profoundly influenced the fields of rhetoric and composition studies in the last two decades. It may seem odd that nationally recognized figures in the teaching of writing would emerge from our graduate program, but this has, in fact, long been one of the department's unacknowledged strengths. This is not to say that there's a Rutgers English school of thought or a Rutgers English approach that binds together the work of these scholars. Indeed, if there is anything that links the work of Bartholomae, Bizzell, Hertzberg, McQuade, and Flowers, beyond a shared commitment to reading student work with care, it is the sheer eclecticism of the resources they draw upon to help them think about student writing. Bartholomae introduced the field to postmodern theory; Bizzell focused on "critical consciousness" and rhetorical strategies; Hertzberg, who coedited the award-winning *Rhetorical Tradition* with Bizzell, directed the business communications program at Bentley College for many years; McQuade, the Vice Chancellor for University Relations at the University of California, Berkeley, co-authored a series of bestselling textbooks on popular writing and advertising; and Flowers was one of the very first people in the field to work on writing and cognitive science. Skorczewski, whose scholarship emerges out of her expertise in contemporary poetry, psychoanalysis, and writing studies, fits easily into this eclectic tradition.

Skorczewski's goal in *Teaching One Moment at a Time* is to represent what occurs in the writing classroom as a co-created reality, one where the only certainty is that things will break down—no one will talk; a student will be disruptive; the teacher will not be able to stop talking; someone will jump in with a *non sequitur*. While experienced teachers develop a range of strategies for responding to these inevitabilities, new and struggling teachers interpret these events as evidence that they—or their students—don't belong in the classroom. In her book, Skorczewski steers clear of the sentimentality, self-righteousness, and banality that characterize much of the work currently being done on the great mystery of how we come to learn as students and as teachers. Frustrated with the failure of the field to help her make sense of and peace with the inevitability of disruption in the classroom, Skorczewski accepted an appointment as an affiliate scholar at the Boston Psychoanalytic Society, while maintaining her position as director of the writing program first at Emerson College and,

later, at Brandeis University. At the Society, she began working with another set of professionals concerned with self-expression, shades of meaning, and misunderstandings. There, she learned of nonlinear dynamic systems theory, which provides her with "a language to capture the lessons of the difficult moments" that populate the life of any self-aware teacher.

True to her word, Skorczewski takes her readers into a range of uncomfortable situations: for instance, she introduces Sharon Olds at a reading and gets a letter from Olds a few weeks later saying that she was disturbed by Skorczewski's introduction, which she considered a serious misreading of her work. As Skorczewski untangles this situation and others, she demonstrates the value of paying careful attention to the "inner storm" that teachers experience when events in the classroom don't meet their expectations and of learning how to practice a mixture of "humility and flexibility" when confronted with such storms.

How does one acquire such a practice? An extended example in the book focuses on the breakdown of understanding at the Olds reading and its extraordinary resolution. Olds writes to apologize, acknowledging that others had also read her work in a similar way. Olds includes an original poem about this experience, detailing how writers struggle with the assumption that their readers will see the world as they do, that meaning can, ultimately, be stabilized and secured. Their correspondence continues.

In another example, a group of instructors and therapists in a Society seminar ostracize a student for a comment he made. Skorczewski details how the students worked in the next session with the instructors to uncover and make sense of the problem. She shows that interpretive work is always and inevitably most revealing when the co-production of meaning breaks down—and just as dependably, in the right hands, gets built back up. She offers writing teachers not only a theory for making sense of the emotional turbulence that this steady cycle of understanding and misunderstanding generates, but also vividly drawn examples of how to prepare for and repair such disruptions. Again, how does one acquire this practice? By joining one's mastery of a given field of study with the sense of calm that comes from an equally deep understanding of the intersubjective nature of emotional reality. And the goal? One escapes the trap of teaching the last bad class or the last good class and begins to teach the current class one moment at a time. □

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



GRETA NELSON

Greta Nelson, a Hillsborough, New Jersey native, graduated in May 2007. While at Rutgers, she studied illustrated maps in early twentieth century children's books—specifically, how these maps reflect their creators' psyches and adult fantasies rather than physical space—and completed a thesis entitled “Mapping Impressionistic Neverlands: The Cartographies of *Winnie the Pooh* and *Wind in the Willows*.” For this thesis, she won the 2007 Jordan Lee Flyer Honors Award for outstanding promise and achievement in the study of language and literature. In the fall, she will begin working towards a master's degree in the teaching of English at Columbia University's Teachers College.

How did you come up with the idea for your research?

When I first came to Rutgers, I took a seminar in children's literature that got my wheels turning and made me interested in studying the genre. That inspired me to contact different professors and librarians in the New Jersey area, including several at Alexander Library. There are some fantastic experts right here, so having that network has helped me to see what is going on in the field and what is cutting edge. Through the English department and the Douglass Scholars Program, I completed a thesis that examined maps in children's literature from a modernist psychoanalytic perspective.

In conducting your study, what experience have you had with the faculty at Rutgers?

I met Professor Marcia Ian, who has a really strong background in the kind of critical framework that my study involves, and she has been fantastic in helping me to structure my analysis. The second reader for my thesis, Professor Ellen Gilbert, taught the children's literature seminar, so their different areas of expertise helped give balance to my work. I was able to work closely with them as mentors, and it was exciting because they gave me a lot of freedom in what I was doing. It was really a unique experience, and it helped me decide that I want to pursue graduate work.

How else has Rutgers prepared you for life after college?

At the Douglass/Cook Writing Center, I tutored students taking expository writing courses. Some of the students struggle with a lot of challenges in writing, but then there are other students who know how to write but need inspiration to develop ideas. It's a great experience because you get to communicate with their professors about their progress. It's like you're really in a teaching position.

When you are not studying or tutoring, how do you enjoy your free time?

I grew up on a farm, and I always really loved the outdoors, so having the Rutgers University Outdoors Club has been fantastic

for me. They run camping and other kinds of trips throughout New Jersey, taking advantage of the many outdoor opportunities we have here. I've met some great people through the club, and it definitely helps to balance out the academic, school-oriented activities.

What is one of the most memorable experiences you have had through Rutgers?

The summer before I enrolled at Rutgers, I studied in Urbino, Italy, through the summer abroad program offered by the Italian and art history departments at Rutgers. I had a great time.

Now that you are prepared to graduate a year early, how do you feel about the choice you made to transfer to Rutgers from New York University during your freshman year?

Some colleges spoonfeed you and make it easy to get through. At other schools, you have to work for it. You don't get spoonfed at Rutgers, but if you work for it, the rewards that you reap are a lot more than you would get at any other school. I feel really well prepared, and it's because I worked hard. At the same time, I put a lot into it and people at Rutgers responded to that. I could not have just done it on my own. □

Editor's Note: This interview was originally conducted by Maggie Estephan, an assistant project manager in the Department of University Relations. It appeared as a feature article on the Rutgers homepage and is reprinted here in slightly different form.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



HILLARY CHUTE

Hillary Chute defended her dissertation, “Contemporary Graphic Narratives: History, Aesthetics, Ethics,” in 2006. It focuses on how contemporary graphic narratives consider the problem of representing history. Chute argues that the unique qualities of the medium allow authors to investigate historical trauma and to reimagine personal stories and collective histories. She is currently working with Art Spiegelman as associate editor of his book *MetaMaus*. She has an article forthcoming in *Twentieth-Century Literature* and co-edited a graphic narratives issue of *Mfs: Modern Fiction Studies* with Marianne DeKoven. Her freelance work has appeared in *The Village Voice* and other publications. In the fall, she will start a three-year postdoctoral fellowship at the Harvard University Society of Fellows.

How did you come up with the idea for your research?

Unlike a lot of people who love them, I wasn’t particularly a fan of comics growing up. I developed this interest in graduate school. In 2000, I read Spiegelman’s *Maus* for the first time in Marianne DeKoven’s contemporary literature class—that experience got me interested in studying comics seriously. I happened to sign up to give an oral presentation on *Maus*. Totally blown away by the book, I threw myself into researching my presentation and made *Maus* the subject of my final paper. Seven years later, I haven’t stopped writing and thinking about it.

In conducting your study, what experience have you had with Rutgers English faculty?

For my comprehensive oral exams, I had a list on “cross-discursive media,” which I studied with Harriet Davidson, who was incredibly supportive of my interests and motivated me to think critically about work that some might consider offbeat to study in an English department. Everyone else on my orals committee—Marianne, Elin Diamond, and John McClure—was also very supportive of my interest in comics. Marianne encouraged me to write a dissertation on comics, which I still wasn’t sure would be acceptable! When I began writing the dissertation, I took a writing seminar with Carolyn Williams, who subsequently became a reader on my dissertation committee. She suggested that I write a complete draft of the dissertation straight away, and then work back and reshape it—which worked really well for me. Richard Dienst also helped me a lot by reading a chapter on *Maus* that became the anchoring chapter of the dissertation.

How has the graduate program prepared you for an academic career?

My committee has been terrific, both in responding directly to my work, and in helping me figure out aspects of the profession. I would recommend taking the writing seminar to anyone; Carolyn trained us to write in different academic registers for contexts ranging from conference proposals to journal articles. In 2005, Marianne encouraged me to submit a proposal for a special ses-

sion on graphic narratives at the Modern Language Association annual convention, which organizers accepted. My committee suggested journals where I could submit my work, and it was their idea that I might try to edit a special issue of a journal on graphic narratives. Their confidence in me made me confident in myself.

How has working with Art Spiegelman—or interviewing Alison Bechdel—developed your understanding of graphic narratives?

I tell Art all the time that working with him feels like winning the intellectual lottery. He’s an unbelievably intellectually generous person. We’re both talkers, so our meetings are usually cushioned on either end by hours of chatting as he pulls book after book from his phenomenal comics library. But we have different perspectives on *Maus*. He’s not necessarily thinking of his work in academic terms, and talking with him about my ideas and hearing his forces me to clarify or rethink aspects of the book. We have a genuine open dialogue, which is just amazing to me. Last summer I interviewed Alison in person for a feature in *The Village Voice*, and we really clicked. I was amused to see that she wrote on her blog, “Today I had a long, intense newspaper interview with a woman who did her doctoral dissertation on autobiographical comics!” She expressed interest in my dissertation, so I sent it to her. When she walked me through her creative process I learned the crucial role that production practices play in creating graphic narratives. I was thrilled when Carolyn told me Alison was coming to read in the Writers at Rutgers Reading Series next spring—even more so when Carolyn asked me to introduce Alison at the reading.

How has your scholarship influenced you as a teacher?

I first taught *Maus* in an introductory literature course, grouping it with several canonical novels, and was really gratified that students became more critically aware of narrative strategies and devices in literature generally. The course was about narrative, and instead of deflecting attention away from the written word, including *Maus* in the syllabus invited them to consider how and why stories are structured the way they are. □



Barry V. Qualls: Teacher, Mentor, Friend

by Ernest G. Jacob

I was a student in the first Victorian literature class that Barry Qualls taught at Rutgers 35 years ago. I remember little of the actual classroom experience, but I do remember that he and I read and discussed Professor Richard Poirier's book, *The Performing Self*, as an extracurricular activity. One of these discussions took place over dinner at Barry's house, and the evening turned out to be an important learning experience for me. Barry served artichokes that evening. I had never eaten an artichoke—they were not on my family's menu as I was growing up—so Barry graciously educated me in the rather complex and delicate process of artichoke consumption. This was truly “hands-on”—rather than “book”—learning. And yet, that evening symbolizes, in a way, the manner in which Barry opened my life to wider horizons.

There is much that I took away from Rutgers and from my relationship with Barry. We had numerous discussions of books and writers, and I saw how Barry's love of the Victorians was a source of inspiration in his teaching and writing—one that he naturally passed on to his students and colleagues. One of the key realizations I made through Barry was the way in which enthusiasm for a text is the starting point for studying literature.

We became friends. I majored in English and went on to pursue graduate study in English at Northwestern University. Though I had planned to become a college professor, I ended up leaving the program with a master's degree and working in the business world. Barry played a role in this stage of my life too, and helped me see that by pursuing a business career I wasn't necessarily abandoning my interest in language and literature. Much later, he became a mentor to my wife, encouraging her to return to graduate school for her PhD—she now teaches philosophy at NYU. He more recently met with our daughter and encouraged her to attend Rutgers; however, she was intent on going out of state and we are paying private school tuition bills.

I retrieved Professor Poirier's *The Performing Self* from my bookshelf this weekend as I was thinking about what I might say today. I had underlined a quote from D. H. Lawrence about the “struggle for verbal consciousness,” which Lawrence insisted was

a central concern not only of literature but also of life. Professor Poirier then goes on to comment on this struggle, and I would like to read from the text:

Locating, then watching, then describing and participating in this struggle as it takes place in the writings of any period could be the most exciting and promising direction of English studies. It points to where language and history truly meet. Literary study can thus be made relevant to life not as a mere supplier of images or visions, but as an activity; it can create capacities through exercise with the language of literature that can then be applied to the language of politics and power, the language of daily life.

This is from a chapter entitled “What Is English Studies?” I realize that Barry never doubted that my study of English literature would be relevant to my life and my work. He was right, and his confidence on this point is one of many characteristics that make him such a good teacher.

My preference now, as then, is poetry, and Barry has continued to encourage my interest, giving me many books of poetry. Even though I did not become a college English professor, I still hold the written word quite dear. I enjoy irony and the value of subtle meaning in a text. My life has been enriched by Barry's teaching, our dialogue, and his friendship. I believe we find in him a teacher whose intelligence and spirit are sources of pride and gratitude for us all. □

“For me, good teaching—the ability to excite students about the material and provoke them to go beyond classroom presentations, and to think and read beyond the syllabus—is central to the undergraduate's experience of a research university.”
—Barry V. Qualls



Qualls' former undergraduate and graduate students return to campus to celebrate his selection as the 2006 New Jersey Professor of the Year
Top: Ernest Jacob and Barry Qualls
Bottom: Daniel Antonellis, Ernest Jacob, Napis Wong, Matthew Howard, Jane Kenny, Barry Lipinski, Barry Qualls, Katherine Birckmayer, Linda Schulze, and Darlene Fackleman

Editor's Note: Alumnus Ernest G. Jacob delivered a version of these remarks at the reception hosted by Rutgers President Richard L. McCormick, on December 12, 2006, to celebrate Barry V. Qualls as the 2006 New Jersey Professor of the Year.

The U.S. Professors of the Year program salutes the most outstanding faculty in the country—those who excel as teachers and influence the lives and careers of their students. Among the most prestigious programs honoring professors, the awards are given by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education. Two other Rutgers University faculty have held this honor: Stephen J. Greenfield, a professor of mathematics, was named the 2004 New Jersey Professor of the Year, and Clement Alexander Price, a professor of history, was named the 1999 New Jersey Professor of the Year.

Qualls, who currently serves as the vice president for undergraduate education, continues to teach undergraduate classes and publish articles on nineteenth century British literature. He has also taught seminars for high school teachers on Victorian fiction and poetry, the Bible as literature, and women writers.

GIFT STORIES

Each year since 1993, the graduate program has awarded the Barry V. Qualls dissertation fellowship to a graduate student writing a dissertation on nineteenth century British and American literature and/or on women's and gender studies. The fellowship is made possible by a generous gift from Dr. Caroline Huber, who completed her dissertation with Qualls in 1992. Past recipients of the Qualls dissertation fellowship are now teaching and conducting research at Yale University, Harvard University, the University of Maryland, Wadham College at Oxford University, Daniel Webster College, and Indiana University South Bend.

The English department is fortunate to have another gift connected to the Qualls family name. Qualls makes an annual gift in memory of his mother, Jamima Dingus Qualls, a portion of which goes to fund an annual prize for the best undergraduate essay on women writers or feminist issues in British or American literature.

Create your own gift story by making or renewing your gift to Rutgers English!

Please contact us to discuss available gift opportunities and learn how you can make a difference.

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THANK YOU

Rutgers in the Late 1960s: Selective Reflections

By Ron Levao

My undergraduate life at Rutgers was as variegated as most other periods, but the sense of novelty and invigorating pleasure is what I most recall, or would most like to recall—having so much time to spend with strange, new books, meeting (sometimes strange) new friends . . . My instructors were a group of



brilliant, often charming, and highly individualized men and women, and when I tally the roster now—Richard Poirier, David Kalstone, Marius Bewley, Tom Edwards, Paul Fussell, George Dardess, Dan Howard, Julian Moynahan, Jack Spector, Maurice Charney, John Huntington, Rene Webber, Katharine Jobs, Alicia Ostriker—I am grateful for how many wonderful critics, writers, and educators lectured to or chatted with my scruffy self . . .

Read the complete essay on pages 30 and 31

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