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English at Pitt

2003-2004 Academic year

Dear Friends and Graduates of the English Department,

Greetings. This is the newest addition of our newsletter, designed to keep you up-to-date on the department and its activities.

Milestones: I note with sadness that **Mary Elizabeth David** passed away on November 17, 2003. She was 79 and had been hospitalized for kidney failure. On the 15th, she asked to be released to see the Globe Theater production of Twelfth Night, which she saw with pleasure and delight. She was, herself, the host of an annual Twelfth Night party. Mary Elizabeth received her BA from Wells College, her MA from Ohio State, and her PhD from Radcliffe College, Harvard University in 1956. She joined our faculty in 1970 after teaching at Bryn Mawr and Indiana University. Mary Elizabeth was trained as a medievalist. At Pitt, she taught courses in Old English, Middle English, the survey of Medieval Literature, Chaucer, the Pearl poet, Arthurian Literature, and History of the English Language. She prepared pronunciation tapes of Old English and Middle English for the university's language laboratory. In addition, she had a deep interest in Children's Literature. Mary Elizabeth published two editions of fairytales (Signet, 1964, and reissued by Indiana UP, 1974), and she helped to develop the earliest form of our program in Children's Literature, which she directed until her retirement in 1995.

Colin MacCabe was promoted to Distinguished Professor. Colin's promotion recognizes not only the range and innovation of his scholarly contributions to English studies but also his contributions to contemporary film. The nomination letter said, "MacCabe's scholarship is innovative and of crucial importance to the larger concerns of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. As the referees attest, the work is recognized and valued all over the world. With an impressive scholarly career, and a long-standing commitment to literature and literary study, he has also given his time and talent to the development of British Independent cinema, some of the most important movie-making of the last decades. There are few individuals who can work consistently at the highest level in such disparate fields."

Shalini Puri was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure. Shalini works on the literature and culture of the Caribbean and other postcolonial sites; she will be sponsoring a major, international conference on "Comparative Postcolonialities: Aesthetics, History, Locality" in the Fall Term, 2005. We'll have more to say about this conference in a later newsletter.

Contents include:

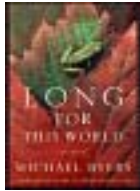
Departmental News
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Endowments

www.english@pitt.edu



Colin MacCabe signing books at MOMA in New York.

Harry Mooney resigned after a long and distinguished career. **Lorraine Higgins** resigned to take a position at Worcester Polytechnic Institute; **Tony Hoagland** resigned to take a position at the University of Houston; **Jaime Harker** resigned to take a position at the University of Mississippi.



In Spring 2003 we completed a very successful search for a fiction writer and this Fall we welcomed our new colleague, **Michael Byers**. Michael received his MFA from the University of Michigan; he was a Stegner Fellow at Stanford from 1996-1998. He has taught at Michigan, the University of Washington, and at Oberlin College. He is the author of two books: a story collection, *The Coast of Good Intentions* (Houghton Mifflin, 1998), which won the Sue Kaufman Prize for First Fiction from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and a novel, *Long for This World* (Houghton Mifflin) which was listed as a 2003 New York Times Notable Book of the Year. Professor Byers moved to Pittsburgh with his wife Susan and their two children. He is currently working on a novel and is teaching fiction writing to graduates and undergraduates.

We had four visiting faculty members joining us in 2003/2004. Two were poets: **Jean Valentine**: *The Cradle of Real Life* (Wesleyan, 2000) and *Growing Darkness, Growing Light* (Carnegie Mellon, 1997). And **Honoree Fannone Jeffers**: *The Gospel of Barbeque* (Kent State, 1999) and *Outlandish Blues* (Wesleyan, 2004). **Cindy Skrzycki** joined us as a Journalist in Residence. She is a business columnist with the Washington Post and author of *The Regulators: Anonymous Power Brokers in American Politics* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2003). Skrzycki is an informal contact with our students--doing guest spots in classes and meeting with students in conferences to talk about her work, their work, and about the life of a journalist. Some students will have the opportunity to assist her and to participate in the work of a weekly columnist. **Andrea Hibbard** joined us as a Visiting Assistant Professor in 2003/2004. Andrea received her PhD from the University of Virginia (2000). Her publications include "Displaying Work and Manufacturing Art at the Great Exhibition of 1851" (forthcoming in *Victorian Prism: Refractions of the Crystal Palace*) and "Vivian Gray and the Silver-fork

Etiquette of Authorship," in *Genre* (1999). We hired **Carolyn Luck** as the new Managing Director for the Western PA Writing Project.

And I am pleased to note that I have been elected to serve a third term as Department Chair.

Carnegie Initiative on the Doctorate: The English Department was one of seven selected by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Learning to participate in the Carnegie Initiative on the Doctorate, a multi-year research and action project aimed at improving doctoral education in the U.S. The goals of the project are to "support and study experiments in doctoral education with leading graduate programs, to document and analyze the character of those initiatives and, working with these innovative departments, to help the disciplinary community create models and evidence of success to inform others in the field." The other departments are from Columbia University, Duke University, Indiana University, Texas A&M, Ohio State University, and the University of Michigan.

The English Majors: While the number of English majors is declining at schools across the country, our numbers continue to build. As I am writing this, we have 1,024 major and certificate students, up from 807 in 2000. The numbers distribute across the programs as follows: 233 in Literature, 459 in Creative Writing, 234 in Film, with 98 certificates in Children's Literature. In the 2003 survey of rising juniors about 10% were seeking certification as elementary or secondary school teachers and about 20% planned to do graduate work (MA, MFA, or PhD in English; or graduate programs in Law, Business, and Medicine). Some are looking for careers in writing and publishing, including technical writing and public relations. The majority of the film majors hoped to be involved in film production. Of the majors, only 36% were "undecided," a higher number than usual and perhaps linked to the state of the economy.

Special Lecture Series or Colloquia: In Spring, 2003, we sponsored a conference in memory of our colleague: The James Snead Memorial Conference: "Racist Traces: European Pedigree and African Contagions." Featured speakers were: **Colin MacCabe** (Pittsburgh), Hortense Spillers (Cornell), Stephen Heath (Jesus College, Cambridge), Maud Ellman (Kings College, Cambridge) and Tom Gunning (Chicago). The second day included papers by University of Pittsburgh graduate students and responses by Cornell West (Princeton) and Isaac Julien (University of London). The lectures addressed the major areas of Snead's work: English, German and American Literature, Film, and African-American literature and culture. The conference included a night out at the Crawford Grill, with a performance by Sean Jones, one of the most talented, young jazz trumpeters in the nation. Isaac Julien directed a video of the conference, which may be part of a longer

film on James Snead's life.

And in Fall Term 2003, our department was closely involved with a special interdisciplinary conference: "Innocence, Terror, Public Policy: The September 11th Anniversary," sponsored by the Pitt-London Consortium. This was a five-day seminar at Birkbeck College, University of London. The English Department speakers were **Colin MacCabe, Ronald Judy, Eric Clarke, Adam Lowenstein, Anustup Basu, and Richard Purcell.**

Also, during the Fall Term 2003, the University of Nebraska Press published **Lee Gutkind's** new memoir: *Forever Fat: Essays by the Godfather*. (Several years ago Lee was proclaimed the "godfather" of Creative Nonfiction by Vanity Fair.) We hosted a reading and book signing, one of the first events in the nationwide "Godfather Tour."

New Undergraduate Initiatives:

Literature Major: Last year we made two important revisions to the structure of the major: (1) The addition of two period courses: *Early Modern Literatures in English* and *Emergence of Modern America*; (2) The addition of 14 new (or newly numbered) courses at the 600 level. The 600 level courses allowed us to expand and diversify the choice of electives available to the major. Early indications suggest that some of these courses (*Detective Fiction, Sexuality and Representation, Science Fiction, and Satire*) are already very popular. The School of Arts and Sciences have also approved a new course, *Lectures in Literature*, a large lecture course featuring a series of lectures by department faculty and discussion sections led by both graduate and undergraduate teaching assistants.

Pitt in Hollywood: This is a successful, student-based organization designed by **Carl Kurlander** to encourage interaction between the university community and the entertainment industry. There have been regular appearances by actors, directors and producers like David Conrad (NBC's *Mismatch*), Bob Kusbit (MTV), Peter Argentine (writer/director), and Ed Driscoll (writer/producer). Pitt students also have held internships with the Hollywood industry. See: www.pittinhollywood.org

Awards and Special Recognition:

Neepa Majumdar won the "Outstanding Dissertation Award" from the Society for Cinema Studies. Her dissertation examined "Female Stardom and Cinema in India, 1930s to 1950s." She completed her PhD at Indiana University in June 2001.

Jim Seitz won the 2003 Tina and David Bellet Teaching Excellence Award. **Geeta Kothari** won the 2004 Tina and David Bellet Teaching Excellence Award. This is the highest award for teaching within FAS.

Paul Kameen won the 2004 Chancellor's Distinguished Teaching Award. This is the highest award for teaching in the University for outstanding contributions to the teaching of writing.

Kimberly Latta was awarded an Ahmanson-Getty Fellowship at the Clark Center for the 17th and 18th Century Studies, UCLA. The international competition is for specialists in 17th and 18th century British, American, and European history, literature, music, and art history. This year's program is entitled "The Age of Projects: Changing and Improving the Arts, Literature, and Life during the Long Eighteenth Century, 1660-1820."

Toi Derricotte has just been named a 2004 Guggenheim Fellow, among the highest honors available to artists and scholars working in the US and Canada. This recognition of Toi's work and her promise for the future brings new distinction to an already distinguished career.

Stefan Wheelock was awarded a Career Enhancement Fellowship from the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation. The fellowship, funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, is awarded through a national competition and it recognizes the importance and significance of Stefan's current research project on slavery in the context of enlightenment philosophy.

Gifts, Scholarships, and Prize Funds: We were very pleased to receive substantial gifts from William D. Andrews (in support of the composition program), Scott Turow (in support of the Turow/Kinder Fiction Award), Marilyn Hollinshead (to establish an endowed scholarship), and Jane Bilewicz Allred (to establish an endowed fund in support of the composition program). The good work of this department is well served by such generous gifts. The department's Planning and Budget Committee continues to target the Nancy Anderson Fellowship in English, a graduate fellowship, as a focus for development. The PBC has, in addition, established an endowed account, the English Department Advancement Fund, to receive gifts in support of our teaching and research. You may direct gifts into either account.

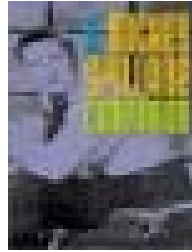
Finally: Please keep in touch. We'd like to know where you are and what you are doing. If you have questions for me (thoughts or concerns), please call or write. My e-mail address is barth@pitt.edu. On the internet? Be sure to check our new homepage: www.english.pitt.edu. We sponsor a variety of events on campus, several a month, including lectures, readings, films, and colloquia. You can find a schedule of events on our homepage. We'd love to see you on campus.

Sincerely,
David Bartholomae
Professor and Chair

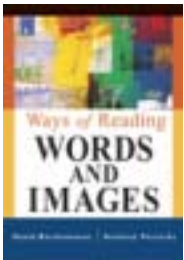
Faculty



Adiele, Faith. *Meeting Faith: The Forest Journals of a Black Buddhist Nun*. New York: W.W. & Norton.



Gale, Robert (ed.). *A Mickey Spillane Companion*. Westport: Greenwood.



Bartholomae, David and Petrosky, Anthony. *Ways of Reading: Words and Images*. New York: Bedford/St. Martins.



Gutkind, Lee. *Forever Fat: Essays by the Godfather*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.



Fischer, Lucy. *Designing Women: Cinema, Art Deco and the Female Form*. New York: Columbia University Press.



Gutkind, Lee (co-ed.). *On Nature: Great Writers on the Great Outdoors*. New York: Tarcher.



Fischer, Lucy and Landy, Marcia (Co-ed.). *Stars: The Film Reader*. London: Routledge.



Kinder, Chuck. *Les noces: Une histoire édifiante*. Paris: Rivages (French translation of *The Honeymooners: A Cautionary Tale*).

Publications



Laskas, Jeanne Marie. *The Same Exact Moon: Fifty Acres and a Family*. New York: Bantam Publishing.

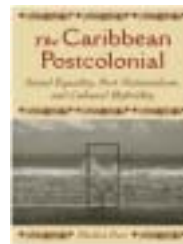


Novy, Marianne (ed.). *Imagining Adoption: Essays on Literature & Culture* (2nd edition). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.



MacCabe, Colin. *Godard: A Portrait of the Artist at Seventy*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

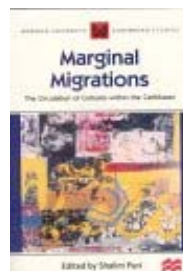
Nordan, Lewis. *Breakdown*. Salt Lake City: Cats Paw Press. (book cover unavailable).



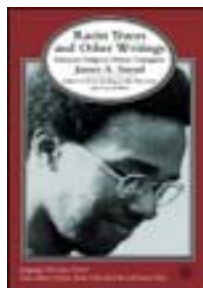
Puri, Shalini. *The Caribbean Postcolonial: Social Equality, Post-Nationalism, and Cultural Hybridity*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.



MacCabe, Colin. *James Joyce & the Revolution of the Word* (2nd edition). New York: Palgrave.



Puri, Shalini (ed.). *Marginal Migrations: The Circulation of Cultures within the Caribbean*. Oxford: MacMillan.



MacCabe, Colin (co-ed.). *Racist Traces and Other Writing: European Pedigrees/ African Contagions*. New York: Palgrave.



Salvatori, Mariolina. *Pedagogy: Disturbing History* (2nd ed.). Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Writers Cafe

by Geeta Kothari

Last spring, the Writing Center began the Writers Café, an informal writing group that makes use of our new space and the talents of our consultants. Since the spring, over 100 students have participated in the Writers Café. Twice a month, two or three practicing writers in the English Department and the Writing Center host the Café which is open to anyone interested in writing. The sessions go for two hours; facilitators generally lead a couple of group writing exercises that focus on poetry, fiction and creative nonfiction. After writing and sharing their work, writers can split into small groups for workshop or continue writing exercises. The idea of the Café is to allow people to write without the pressure of a class or grades; we particularly encourage students who are not writing majors to attend. Students can come as many times as they want and, if they want to work more intensively on their writing, they can request an appointment at the Writing Center with a consultant who specializes in their chosen genre.

Professional Written Communication Certificate

by Jean Grace

Students in majors across the University are excited to learn about the Composition Program's new certificate in Public and Professional Writing (PPW). The 18-credit certificate allows undergrads to learn about writing in non-profit and commercial settings. Over a hundred students have expressed interest in the certificate, and the first group of PPW students will graduate with a PPW certificate in April 2005.

Students are drawn to the program's courses: Persuasive Writing in Advertising and Fundraising and Writing for Advocacy, for example. They value the sense of community they have with other students and the opportunity to network with expert practitioners who visit their classrooms and talk to them about writing and learning in particular fields. Students can also apply for writing-intensive internships, which have been a huge success from both the students' and the sponsoring organizations' point of view. PPW Associate Director Pam O'Brien helps interns find sites that are right for them and meets with them regularly to offer support as they navigate workplaces and use the writing conventions of those fields. To learn more about PPW, visit www.english.pitt.edu/ppw.

The Pittsburgh Contemporary Writers Series

A glimpse at the 2003-2004 Season

Chuck Palahniuk -Novelist
(*Fight Club, Choke: A Novel, Survivor*)
Tuesday, September 16, 2003

Richard Rodriguez -Essayist
(*Hunger for Memory, Brown*)
Monday, September 29, 2003

Joel Brouwer -Poet
(*Exactly What Happened, Centuries*)

Anahita Firouz -Novelist
(*In the Walled Garden*)

Mark Rotella -Essayist
(*Stolen Figs*)
Monday, October 13, 2003

Drue Heinz Literature Prize Reading

Rick Moody -Author
(*The Ice Storm, Purple America*)

Suzanne Greenberg -Novelist
(*Speed-Walk and Other Stories*)
Wednesday, November 5, 2003

Tony Earley -Author
(*Jim the Boy, Here We are in Paradise*)
Wednesday, February 11, 2004

Judith Vollmer -Poet
(*Level Green, Reactor*)

Joe Weil -Poet
(*The Pursuit of Happiness, In Praise We Enter*)
Thursday, March 4, 2004

Elizabeth Alexander -Poet
(*Antebellum Dream Book, Body of Life*)

Harryette Mullen -Poet
(*Sleeping with the Dictionary, Muse & Drudge*)

Marilyn Nelson -Poet
(*The Fields of Praise, The Homeplace*)

These readings take place at
8:30 p.m. in Frick Fine
Arts Auditorium, Room 125.

~ The English Department Endowments ~



The *Nancy C. Anderson Memorial Fund* was established in 1990 by her parents. It honors Nancy Anderson who worked in the department as an advisor and an Assistant to the Dean of FAS. The fund supports a graduate Teaching Assistant or Fellow for tuition, transportation, and health fees over two terms.

The *Block Endowment* financially supports a distinguished visiting writer in the Pittsburgh Contemporary Writers Series. This endowment has gone to visitors such as Terry Tempest Williams and Richard Rodriguez.

Dorothy D. Burkhart and Alumni Scholarship Fund: An award given to a junior English major for use in their senior year from Dorothy Burkhart's estate which was established in 1976.



The *Charles Crow Memorial Fund* was initiated to support a small reading room in the department. It is in honor of Charles Crow, a Shakespeare specialist who taught from 1931 until his retirement in 1973. The fund reached endowment status in 1997 and is maintained by Ann Ronchetti, the department bibliographer. This funds books, equipment, and audio-visual materials for the Crow Room.



Carol Kay Memorial Fund: This fund honors Carol Kay, an eighteenth century specialist who taught in the department from 1989 until her death in 1998. Jonathan Arac, her husband and fellow faculty member, established the fund to support a prize for the best essay written on English Literature from 1500-1900.



The *Fred Koloc Fund* was established in 2000 and provides money for a student achievement award in the form of a gift certificate at the University of Pittsburgh Book Center. The student is chosen based on exceptional progress shown in the Intensive Composition Workshop.



Allison McDowell Memorial Fund: "Al" McDowell's media colleagues in Pittsburgh set up this fund in 1995 in memory of their co-worker, an English and Journalism major (BA 1952). It supports a partial annual scholarship for an outstanding junior in the nonfiction writing program.

The *J.K. & Gertrude Miller* is an annual prize that funds the TA/TF Distinguished Teaching Award.



James Snead Memorial Fund: This fund, established by his family in 1991, honors James Snead, who taught from 1987 until his death in 1989. A \$500 prize is given for the best undergraduate essay in African-American Literature, American Literature, German Literature, or African-American Film. These four areas were of particular interest to James Snead.



Dr. Myron Taube Scholarship in Fiction Writing: Mrs. Marion Taube organized this fund in honor of her husband's retirement in 1995. The fund honors Myron "Mike" Taube who taught creative writing for 30 years. A \$500 prize is awarded to an undergraduate junior or senior for excellence in creative writing.



The *Barbara Nietzsche Tobias Memorial Fund* honors the spouse of English department Professor Richard Tobias. Barbara Nietzsche (MLIS, 1967) worked in the University Archives. The fund supports a dissertation fellowship.

If you have not contributed this year and would like to make a gift to the English Department, please complete the form below and mail it to: Institutional Advancement/ University of Pittsburgh/ 4200 Fifth Avenue/ Pittsburgh, PA 15213-9972. You can also make a gift by visiting the Pitt online giving site at www.giveto.pitt.edu. Just follow the appropriate links and designate your gift to the English Department fund of interest. If you have any questions about your gift, please call (412) 624-5691.

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