



# The Literature Program

Texts & Technology

## Literature and Language Newsletter

Greetings, everyone.

Since we last wrote, Stockton has completed its search for a new president. Herman J. Saatkamp, Jr. accepted the position last spring and officially began his tenure in July. A Ph.D. in Philosophy from Vanderbilt University, President Saatkamp combines long administrative experience with distinguished scholarship. He comes to Stockton from Indiana and Purdue University at Indianapolis, where he was Dean of Indiana University School of Liberal Arts and a Professor of Philosophy, Medical and Molecular Genetics, American Studies, and Philanthropic Studies. He is the country's foremost expert on philosopher George Santayana, editing a 20-volume critical edition of Santayana's works, in addition to his wealth of critical work on the philosopher. President Saatkamp also publishes and lectures on genetics.

The change in administrations has also resulted in a little spring, summer and fall cleaning. Last spring, construction began on a new presidential suite in K-wing, which is now nearing completion. Additionally, visitors to the campus will also see workmen making their way from N to A-wings, caulking, scraping, and painting the building's outer shell, as well as refurbishing the deck outside F and courtyard between J and K wings. The new fuel cell on the path leading to the parking lot outside DEF-wing is also worth a look.

## Then and There

Since our last newsletter, the literature program has completed the pilot year for our three new tracks, piloted some very interesting and successful new courses, reinstated our alumni career and graduate school panels, and hosted another successful spring bash. A summary of events follows.

The new Elementary Education and Secondary Education tracks have proven quite popular with our majors. Designed to help our students more easily meet NASDTEC standards, the tracks direct students to not only literature coursework but other cognate coursework that ensures a more efficient path through the major. These tracks have been a particular boon to transfer students, who usually come in with coursework that we may now slot into particular requirements. Additionally, courses like Mary Steinacker's popular *Introduction to ESL* and Scott Rettberg's New Media Studies courses not only satisfy program and state education requirements, but offer skills that enhance students' employment opportunities. Though we are still in the process of fine-tuning both tracks, we are satisfied that they are serving our majors in ways we had envisioned when creating them.

The New Media Studies track has also had a good pilot year. Having offered *Introduction to New Media Studies*, *Hypertext*, and *Multimedia Production* last year, Scott Rettberg has seen enrollment steadily increase. In the spring, Professor Rettberg will teach another new media course -- *Internet Writing and Society* -- in which students will analyze the ways that the Internet has affected the ways we write, communicate and create. For a look at some of the more successful New Media projects from the summer Multimedia Production course, please visit [here](#) and be ready for next summer's *The Computer as an Art Tool*, a course offered by Visual Arts Professor Wendell White. Adjunct Professor John Harford, a digital artist, will also be teaching courses in the New Media Studies track, beginning this Spring with Web Design.

Another bright spot from the spring semester was Louise Wigglesworth's screenwriting course. As Wigglesworth herself describes it,

"Thirty one students completed this new course. Each created a script of about 45 to 90 minutes in length, in the appropriate format for either stage play or film. After the semester break I introduced the students to the staged reading process, a critical step for the writer in determining how the text works off of the page. After some initial timidity, students became eager to participate both as writers and as actors in each other's work. Two authors of screenplays took the additional step of putting about 20 minutes of their scripts on film for the class to view. Five of the stage plays met guidelines for consideration for a professionally directed staged reading in the Experimental Theatre at Stockton . . . on Saturday, August 23. This event [was] sponsored by the Teachers Theatre, Inc., and is funded in part by the Atlantic County Office of Cultural and Heritage Affairs. The selected play was [literature major] Matthew Gustavsen's *Looking at a Flower*.

In my judgment, the best outcome of the class was the creation of a strong ensemble which engaged in lively discussion, stimulated ideas in one another, offered valuable criticism, and most important, gave each other the kind of support which encourages new work to find light and air."

The literature program is pleased to announce that Wigglesworth will be offering the course again next spring.

Last year we involved our alumni in two events for majors, a fall career panel and spring graduate school panel. In the fall, Patty Hanahoe-Dosch, a Cumberland County College literature and journalism professor, Pam Wirstad, ad copywriter and project coordinator of creative services at Elsevier Publishing, Nicole Pensiero, Corporate Director of Communications at Kennedy Health Systems, and Douglas Skinner, Library/Computer guru at Gateway Regional High School talked to our majors about their careers and in what measure their literature degrees prepared them for them. They took questions, offered advice, and even offered themselves as contacts for the students in attendance. In the spring, program graduates participated in a panel about graduate study. Matthew Merlino (Ph.D. program, English, UPenn), Shannon Baker (M.A. program, Library Science, Drexel), Todd Parisi (Law School, Northeastern), and Paul Victor Winters (MFA program, creative writing, Indiana University) spoke about the requirements and rigors of their various programs of study. They dispensed a good bit of worthwhile advice about getting into and surviving graduate school. We appreciate the willingness of our alumni to put themselves at the service of our current majors. Their good will and generosity in sharing their time

and experience contribute to our program's success. We appreciate them more than we can say.

The spring bash was another success. Well-attended (we think we squeezed over 60 fun-loving majors, alumni, faculty and loved ones into G-208, stretching the seating capacity considerably). The food, catered as always by program faculty, was good, the conversation lively, the music well-chosen, the readings as impressive and entertaining as ever. And happily for those who submitted critical and creative writing, the awards were bigger, several of the sponsors having graciously increased their contributions. Additionally, this year the program instituted its first annual weblog award. Here's a list of all of the winners:

- Feyt/Armstrong Critical Essay Prize: Rob Schmitt
- Virginia Woolf Critical Essay Prize: Kevin Hutchins
- Michael J. Lanza Poetry Award: Joe Williams
- Janet Taillie Kowalski Creative Non-Fiction Award: JoAnne Henderson
- R.J. Corradino Love Poetry Award: Bridget Gage-Dixon
- The Courter Award for Fiction: Micah J. Robbins
- Jeannette Gottlieb Poetry Award: EvaMarie DiGiorgio
- Caxton Weblog Award: Alicia Guarracino

We congratulate the winners and thank everyone who attended the bash for coming. We look forward to seeing current and past majors at the bash. We offer a standing invitation to all alumni. Look for the spring bash date in the next newsletter.

The literature program was also well represented among the distinguished graduates and scholarship recipients at last year's fall and spring commencements. For the record, we give you our award winners:

#### 2002 Fall Commencement:

- Leon Sangster was awarded 4 scholarships.
- Robin DiFabio was awarded 2 scholarships.
- Linda Procida was awarded a Phi Theta Kappa; she graduated with honors.
- Dan Darmachwal was a Stockton Scholar.
- Alfred Breed graduated with honors.

#### 2003 Spring Commencement:

- Amanda and Jaimie Vigue were class Salutatorians; they were listed in Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges, were awarded College Scholars Scholarships, and were named Presidential Scholars.
- Kevin Hutchins was awarded the Stephen Dunn Scholarship. He graduated with honors.
- Concetta Burzo was awarded a Phi Theta Kappa Scholarship.
- Barbara Somers was awarded a Phi Theta Kappa Scholarship and the Tustin Memorial Award; she graduated with honors.
- EvaMarie DiGiorgio was named a Presidential Scholar and awarded the Reynolds Journalism Scholarship; she graduated with honors.

- Jennifer Varela Rivas was named a Presidential Scholar.
- Jennifer Lenz graduated with honors.
- Megan Mazzarella graduated with honors.
- Samuel Wear graduated with honors.

Over the spring and summer, the faculty kept themselves busy with teaching and scholarship.

Deborah Gussman published two essays this year: "Equal to Either Fortune': Sedgwick's Married or Single? And Feminism" in *Catharine Maria Sedgwick: Critical Perspectives, Past and Present* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2003) and "The One Who Got Away: Reflections on a Teacher's Remorse" in *Conflicts and Crises in the Composition Classroom* (Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 2003). Over the summer, she completed another essay, "O Savage Where Art Thou?': Rhetorics of Reform in William Apess's Eulogy on King Philip," which is now under review at *New England Quarterly*. She gave a presentation on and participated in a roundtable discussion on Sedgwick at the Catharine Maria Sedgwick Society meeting in Stockbridge, Massachusetts in June. She was also elected to the society's Executive Board as Vice-President for Membership and Finance at that meeting. She notes that she continues "to keep a weblog and to explore the possibilities of weblogs for teaching and learning. This spring, [she] set up a [weblog portal](#) for [her] Literary Methodologies class, which made it possible for students to read and respond to each others' work and ideas.

Lisa Honaker completed revisions on an article on Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*, "One Man to Rely On': Long John Silver and the Shifting Character of Victorian Boys' Fiction," which was accepted by the *Journal of Narrative Theory* in late July. In early September, she finished another article on Jessica Mitford for the *Dictionary of Literary Biography: Twentieth-Century British Literary Humorists*. Further, her review essay of Tessa Hadley's *Henry James and the Imagination of Pleasure* has just come out in *English Literature in Transition* 46.4 (2003). She has just resumed work on another article on Stevenson, "Revenge of a Gothic Gnome: *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and the Re-vision of Late-Victorian Romance, and plans to submit it to a refereed journal by next June.

Tom Kinsella continued to work on his bookbinding research over the summer. It continues at this time. He also taught two sections of *History of the English Language* (in the future to be known as *English Language and Grammar*). So, watch out, he says, for the approximately 60 new grammarians on local roads. Painting his house (the color: "flowing honey") took up the remainder of his summer; he hopes to get the garage done before the snow files. He will be program coordinator this year, so direct correspondence his way.

Scott Rettberg published both creative and critical work this spring and summer, including *Kind of Blue*, a serial novel for email in *frAme Journal of Art and Technology*, with the trAce online writing center, Nottingham, UK: August 2003; "Introduction: New Media Studies" and "Evangelizing the Everyday Web," a review of David Weinberger's *Small Pieces Loosely Joined*, both in *The American Book Review* 24:3 (March/April 2003). He also edited and wrote the preface for *State of the Arts: The Proceedings of the Electronic Literature Organization's 2002 State of the Arts Symposium and 2001 Electronic Literature Awards*. He also gave readings from *Kind of Blue* as well as other conference papers on electronic literature in the spring.

Ken Tompkins is still finding new technologies for classroom use. His present interests "lie with Wikis—collaborative software where each user can edit all other users' content—and with P2P (person-to-

person) software that would allow each teacher to 'broadcast' content automatically to every student in a class." He also expects "to require . . . students to make text 'annotations' or responses to their readings of literary texts in Literary Methodologies [this] fall," something he hasn't done before. He is also working with "a college faculty group as they set up weblogs for content about social issues. We have three web sites constructed and are adding content as we find it." Professor Tompkins also "set up the ARHU announcement page and a news aggregator for arts and humanities news."

## Here and Now

In addition to welcoming a new president, this fall the literature program welcomes Barbara Daniels to our faculty. A much published poet and writing teacher at Camden County College, Professor Daniels is filling in for Stephen Dunn this semester, teaching the creative writing workshops. She is also doing a series of poetry readings at Stockton, having read for the Visiting Writers Series on October 1. She will read again at Stockton's Brown Bag series at 12:30 on Thursday, October 9 in the Stockton Art Gallery.

The program kicked off the fall semester with a "meet and greet" informational session for literature majors on September 30 in the Townsend Residential Life Center. Over cookies and soft drinks, program faculty introduced themselves and the program tracks to 30 interested students. This is the second year for this event and the questions we got and were able to answer suggest its value to new and old majors alike.

We have two more events planned for the fall:

On Tuesday, October 28 at 4:30 in the Townsend Residential Life Center multipurpose room, we'll host another alumni panel on careers. Tom Kinsella, our distinguished coordinator, reminds me to ask any alumni interested in participating in this event to send him a line at [kinsella@earthlink.net](mailto:kinsella@earthlink.net).

Then on Thursday, November 20 at 4:30—also in Townsend Residential Life multipurpose room—we'll be inaugurating a series of scholarly presentations by program faculty. Lisa Honaker will be presenting a version of an essay on *Treasure Island* she has recently had accepted for publication. So if you've ever wondered exactly what professors do on their summer vacations, come and see.

Stockton's Eta Rho chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, the Literature Honor Society, begins its second year of operation under president Shaun Armstrong this fall. Having enlisted over 40 members since being revived in the spring of 2002, the chapter looks forward to obtaining funds as a campus organization from the Student Senate this year and to receiving an actual budget from the Senate next year. Last year, under president Joshua Raclaw, Sigma Tau Delta sponsored a bake sale, participated in a bowling night to build connections with other campus organizations, and offered its members a seminar on American Sign Language. Perhaps its most notable achievement was establishing an online literary magazine, [The Spectrum](#). Each issue features poetry, fiction, and photography.

For more information on the program, we direct you to our [webpages](#).

Even if you no longer measure your existence by school years, we hope the beginning of this one finds you full of energy for whatever tasks lie ahead.

And, please, let us know what you're up to. You wouldn't believe how much we love hearing from you.

Our best to you, as always,

The Literature Program

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