

The Peripatetic Observer

Volume 7

SUNY College at Geneseo, Department of English

Summer 2004

Geneseo Literary Forum

The newly-formed Geneseo Literary Forum had a very productive year. Students responded with excitement, and over 60 people attended each reading. **Matt Derby**, '95, returned to Geneseo on October 16th for a reading in the Lederer Gallery. Matt, a native of Geneseo, is currently living in Providence, RI. His short story collection, "Super Flat Times" was published in May 2003 by Back Bay Books, a division of Little Brown. On October 21, Native American (Abenaki) writer **Cheryl Savageau**, a poet and fiction writer who grew up on Lake Quinsigamond, read from her works (*Dirt Road Home*, *Muskrat Will Be Swimming*). During the Spring semester, the Department hosted three writers: Non-fiction writer **Faulkner Fox** (*Dispatches from a Not-So-Perfect Life, or How I learned to Love the House, the Man, the Child*) read from her works on March 3; **Liz Rosenberg**, a poet, fiction writer, and Professor from SUNY Binghamton, read from her award winning stories; fiction writer **Leslie Pietrzyk**, author of *A Year and A Day* and *Pears on a Willow Tree*, visited on April 6. All the readings were followed by receptions so the authors could meet with students and interested faculty, staff, and townspeople. The writers' visits were supported by English Department Foundation funds that alumni have donated; the English Department, and grants from the New York State Council on the Arts.

Thanks for your continued support.



Welcome!

Dr. Alice Rutkowski
Professor of English

(see p.3, *From the Chair* for more information)

Jerry and Patricia Smith Faculty Incentive Award

Jerry and Patricia Smith have created a program of incentive grants at the College and have honored the English Department by asking it to choose one of its faculty members to receive the first award. The Smiths' daughter **Kimberly** graduated in 1996 with a degree in English and is now a lawyer in Pennsylvania. A department committee set criteria for the award that included leadership in work that furthers the department mission and goals; evidence of sound scholarly activity; strong teaching; and junior faculty rank.

We are delighted to announce **Caroline Woidat** is the first recipient of the **Smith Faculty Incentive Award**. Caroline has been instrumental (along with Rachel Hall) in creating the new Creative Writing track in the major. She has made a significant contribution to revising our course sequence in American literature and teaches a wide variety of courses – including new classes in Colonial American and Native-American Literature. She has published essays on Willa Cather, Native-American Literature, Toni Morrison, and others, and she is a published poet. The award recognizes her most recent research on the contribution of writing by Ursuline nuns to the development of New World societies.

Congratulations to Dr. Woidat and many thanks to the Smiths for their generosity.

Living Forge

Jon Senchynne, '04, grew up in a suburb of Buffalo listening to the rhythmic sounds of the steel mills close by. He and his friend Jerod J. Sikorskyj have started a non-profit corporation to identify, collect, and publish literature and art of Rust Belt Cities. "Living Forge" is their first venture.

While attending SUNY Geneseo, Jon received a UUP scholarship and was granted The Rosalind Fisher Award for Student Teaching in English. He will begin work on his Master's degree in Fall 2004 at Syracuse University.

Former Students Return

Besides Matt Derby's visit, two former English majors returned to give talks and speak with students.

Yvonne May Graser, '93, gave an informal talk on "What To Do With an English Major (Besides Teaching)" and **Cheryl Wilson**, '00, talked about her graduate work combining Dance and English.

If you are interested in returning to campus to visit new students and "old" faculty please contact us.

A.D. Scoones Award

Ken Cooper has been selected to receive this year's A.D. Scoones Award, established by A.D. Scoones, '75, in honor of Ron Herzman, Bill Cook, and Ed Janosek. Ken's project, provisionally entitled "Links," takes as its focus the ways in which golf links and the gated communities that have grown up around them function as a cultural metaphor. Ken would want us to think about this matter next time we move to a technological link, the cultural etymology of which Ken's project will help identify.

Ken has recently presented several conference papers related to his work in Cultural Studies--on the Beats, on the Seventies, and on Seventies' economy and popular fiction. He read his essay "Microwaves" at a recent departmental colloquium. *Modern Fiction Studies* is bringing out his article "Jonathan Livingston Seagull and The New Economy."

Please join us in congratulating Ken on his well-deserved award.

Local Soldier/Geneseo Student Home from Iraq

Justin Cormier still needed two 300-level English courses in the Spring of 2004 to graduate from SUNY Geneseo with a degree in English and Computer Science. He was also fulfilling a duty to his local National Guard unit. But he finished those English courses long-distance. Justin's Guard unit, the 427th Transportation Company out of Chili, NY, was activated on January 15, 2003 to join the 719th Transportation Company to go to Kuwait. For the past year, Justin has been driving and maintaining trucks in Kuwait and Iraq.

Justin's mother called the English Department office in September 2003 asking what could be done to help him finish his degree. When an email was sent out to the department asking if anyone could help or had any ideas, several faculty members offered to do a directed study long distance with Justin. He chose Maria Lima's Caribbean Literature class, and for Ed Gillin's directed study he read literature about war and its consequences and kept a journal of his own experiences in the military.

Justin stopped by Maria Lima's office on April 15th to deliver the last assignment in person for a change. Although he missed the participation so crucial in Lima's classes, he will be able to pass the course. Lima said he was happy to be home, and we welcome him back and offer our thanks for his service.

2004 English Department Honors and Awards

Graduating Senior Awards

The William T. Beauchamp Literature Award

Jesse Curran

The Patricia Conrad Lindsay Memorial Award

Fiona Lee

The Rosalind R. Fisher Award for Student Teaching in English

Jonathan Senchyne

The Walter Harding American Studies Award

Nicole Marsland and Christine Dollinger

The Calvin Israel Award in the Humanities

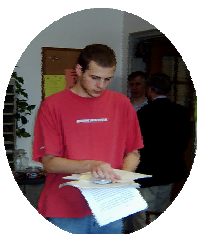
Jonathan Senchyne

The Joseph M. O'Brien Memorial Award

Regina D'Arcangelis



Award Recipients (l to r): Rachel Bush, Whitney Crispell, Mike Chin, Theresa Couchman, Colleen Butler, Brynn Speer and Fiona Lee



Honorary department photographer and work-study, Mike Powers



Dr. Walter Freed congratulates Caitlin Langelier

Scholarships

The Bonnie C. Henzel Memorial Scholarship

Colleen Butler and Caitlin Langelier

The Hans Gottschalk Award

Class of 2004: *Mary Jane DiStasio*

Class of 2004: *Rue Kenyon*

Class of 2006: *Greg Fair*

The Jesse Rodgers Scholarship

Theresa Couchman

The Natalie Selser Freed Memorial Scholarship

Caitlin Langelier

The Don Watt Memorial Scholarship

Jessica Allen

Annual Writing Awards

The Jérôme de Romanet Award in African American Studies

First place: Jesse Curran

Second place: Brynn Speer

The Creative Non-Fiction Award

First place: Katie McDonough

Second place: Ashley Pankratz

Third place (co-winners): Whitney Crispell and Alyssa Jordan

The John H. Parry Award in Critical Essay

First place: Colleen Butler

Second place: Fiona Lee

Third place: Andrew Costanza

The C. Agnes Rigney Award in Drama

Andrew Campbell

The Lucy Harmon Award in Fiction

First place: David Small

Second place: Anna C. Balok

Third place: Pete Lobczowski

The J. Irene Smith Award in Freshman Writing

First place (co-authors): Christine Biermann and Maria Gigante

Second place: Justin Murphy

The Mary A. Thomas Award in Poetry

First place: Colin Pope

Second place: Rachel Bush

Third place: Michael Chin



"We love being English majors!"
Casey Demmer, Jessica Allen, and Pete Lobczowski



Professors Herzman, Finkelstein, and Cooper (l to r) enjoy an afternoon off



Maria Lima congratulates recipients (l to r) Greg Fair, Ana Guimaraes, Fiona Lee, Regina D'Arcangelis, (Maria Lima), Jesse Curran, and Colleen Butler

Phi Beta Kappa

The English Department is pleased to congratulate our majors who were part of the inaugural class inducted into the oldest (1776) and most prestigious Liberal Arts Honor Society in the United States, Phi Beta Kappa

Martha Barrett (English Literature minor)

Christine Borrelli

Sarah Brancatella

Jessica Curran (dual major: English/History)

Regina D'Arcangelis (dual major: English/History)

Carol DeMartino

Ana Guimaraes (Theatre English)

Rue Kenyon (dual major: French/English)

Fiona Lee (dual major: Communications/English)

Padraic McConville (dual major: English/Economics)

Jonathan Senchyne (English w/Adolescent Education)

Brynn Speer (dual major: English/Sociology)

Sarah Taylor (dual major: English/Art Studio)

From the Chair....

I'm delighted to tell you that, thanks to our splendid students, hard working faculty, and loyal alumni, we are continuing to build on our strengths. While we are enhancing our core program in English and American Literature, we have also been working hard in response to requests for change that we hear from students and alumni like you.

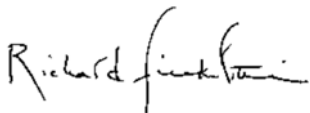
It's exciting to report that next September we will bring to Geneseo the first speaker in what will become the annual Walter Harding Lecture series. Internationally recognized as the most prominent scholar of Henry David Thoreau, Dr. Harding taught at Geneseo from 1956 until his retirement in 1983. At his retirement he held the rank of Distinguished University Professor, a position held by only a handful of SUNY professors statewide. Dr. Harding was the author of numerous books and articles on Thoreau and others, including *The Days of Henry Thoreau*, published in 1983 and considered the definitive biography of this great American writer. We are deeply grateful to Professor Harding's widow, Marjorie Harding, and her family for establishing the lecture series endowment. Professor Joel Myerson of the University of South Carolina will inaugurate the Harding Lecture Series on Tuesday, September 14. Please join us if you're in the area. Currently one of America's most distinguished scholars of nineteenth-century American Literature and himself the author of several books, Professor Myerson told me that he was proud to inaugurate the lecture series because of his respect for Professor Harding and for Geneseo. This lecture series will increase the visibility of our department and will increase opportunities for our students, who will have the opportunity each year to meet one of the country's most distinguished scholars.

Honoring our historical strengths in American Literature, we have also enriched our curriculum by adding several new courses in that area, including two that will situate American Literature in the broader cultural traditions of our republic and others that push the boundaries of American literature as far back as the first encounter between Columbus and the groups he met when he arrived in North America. We were lucky last spring to hire a splendid new faculty member, Dr. Alice Rutkowski of the University of Virginia, which has one of the nation's most distinguished English departments. Bringing strengths in nineteenth-century American literature, women's literature of that period, and Civil War literature, Professor Rutkowski has quickly won a loyal following among our students.

We have long heard from students both in the major and from across the college of a wish to major in Creative Writing. I'm thrilled to tell you that this wish is about to become reality. Our new "track" will parallel the Literature major that has always been the center of our program. Probably the most significant programmatic change that we have made in a generation, our stepped-up attention to Creative Writing is long overdue. It will enrich the literature major, diversify our offerings, and provide students eager to gain an MFA with improved preparation for graduate school. By carefully marshalling our resources and drawing on the talents of new faculty eager to participate, we will be able to bring about these changes while actually enhancing our American and British Literature offerings.

We can make these changes largely because we are operating from a position of strength. We have solid enrollments built with some of Geneseo's best students. We have one of the most distinguished departmental faculty in the college (it's only humility that keeps me from saying the *most* distinguished). We have taken leadership roles in sponsoring new programs, such as film, and in building a committed community of learners. The support we get from alumni has both encouraged and enabled our success. I hope that you can continue your generous support, and please—send an e-mail to keep in touch.

Best wishes for the coming year,



Richard Finkelstein
finkelst@geneseo.edu

Alumni News Is No News Without You... Tell us about yourself; we'd like to know.

Name: _____ Date graduated: _____

Email: _____ May we share your email with other Alumni? _____

Home address: _____

Employment & title: _____

My news is: _____

Would you be interested in mentoring a current English major? _____

If yes, how would you prefer to be contacted:

By Department or Student: _____

Preferred method of contact (mail, phone, email, etc.): _____

Other information: _____

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Geneseo

The Peripatetic Observer
Department of English Newsletter

Editor * Dr. Walter B. Freed, Jr.
Associate Editor * Michele E. Feeley

Visit us on the Web: <http://english.geneseo.edu>

Voices from Past & Present.....Alumni News

MARY SUE GAGE BROWN (1972) is living in Plano, Texas, where she teaches fifth grade at Carlisle Elementary School. In addition to being involved with mathematics and the integrated curriculum, she enjoys teaching the advanced Language Arts class and hosting local authors who yearly visit her class to discuss creative writing. Mary Sue is married to THOMAS K. BROWN who is also a Geneseo graduate.

HEATHER BURNS (1995) is enrolled at Teachers College at Columbia University where she teaches part-time on-campus in the office for a pre-school program.

JASON CAPILI (1999) is relocating to Washington, DC, to work for an organization known as the Equal Employment Advisory Council. Before joining EEAC, Jason served as equal employment opportunity consultant at MetLife and EEO and affirmative action compliance specialist at The McGraw-Hill Companies.

ASHAKI CHARLES (1998) has worked with McGraw-Hill in college publishing as an editorial coordinator with the Arts and Humanities group in New York City. Now relocated in Miami, Florida, as a publisher's representative, she is responsible for selling, promoting, and marketing "soft-side" titles and for recruiting authors for Humanities, Social Sciences, ESL, and World Languages.

STEPHAN P. CLARKE (1966) retired from the Spencerport (New York) Central School District in 1999 where he taught twelfth grade English for twenty-nine years following graduate school at Bowling Green State University in Ohio and service in the United States Navy. He is currently working on the second edition of THE LORD PETER WIMSEY COMPANION that will be published in Britain by The Dorothy L. Sayers Society. This volume is Steve's third publication.

CRAIG COLLINS (1991) After serving in the United States Navy for six years, Craig earned his Master of Arts in Education from National University in California. He teaches English at Chula Vista High School, grades eleven and twelve.

EMILY DeFRANKS (2002) is completing her Master's degree at Syracuse University with a specialty in Writing and Composition. She is planning to continue her graduate studies by pursuing a degree in Higher Education Administration.

LISA DeLaMATER (1999) graduated from Columbia University with a Masters of Social Work in May 2002 and is working in a mental health clinic in Harlem. Lisa is a certified social worker.

MARC DiPAOLO (1997) is an adjunct faculty member at Drew and Kean Universities in New Jersey where he teaches Humanities I and II. He is completing his Ph.D. at Drew and writing his dissertation on Jane Austen. He assisted in editing the literary anthology THE CONSCIOUS READER, 9th ed. He is a former reporter for the Staten Island ADVANCE.

JOHN W. EGAN (2003) is pursuing his Juris Doctorate at the Emory University School of Law in Atlanta, Georgia.

KEVIN FRYLING (2003) is employed as a copy editor and reporter for the Warsaw Country COURIER, a weekly newspaper that covers Wyoming County. He conducts interviews, gathers information on police reports, and covers regional events in addition to his proofreading responsibilities.

KATHERINE FUSCO (2003) is attending Vanderbilt in the graduate program.

RAEF GRANGER (1991) is an attorney in private practice near Concord, New Hampshire.

JENNIFER HATCH KIRCHOFF (1988) is teaching at East Syracuse Minoa Central High School where she has been asked to oversee the English 10 Honors curriculum, as well as to continue teaching English 10 Regular.

NIKKI ASSAD LEONARDI (1994) earned her National Board Certification.

JAMES MANNING (1999) is a world traveler as a team leader for AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps. He has taught English in South Korea and has run arts programs for students in Boston. His next destination is Australia where he plans to write and travel.

GARY MARSHALL (2001) has been accepted into the graduate programs at City College of New York and at Hunter.

CORINNE MCKAY (1993) is living in Boulder, Colorado, and is enjoying a career as a freelance writer and French translator. She is involved with academic and business translations and writing about technology, fitness, and nutrition for a variety of regional and national magazines.

STEPHEN NORTH (1973) has been promoted by the SUNY Board of Trustees to Distinguished Teaching Professor. He has taught in the Department of English at Albany since 1981.

LISA LEHN PERKOWSKI (1993) is the Library Media Specialist at Liberty High School in Port Jervis, New York. She is the Region Three representative to SLMS, a branch of the New York Library Association for School Librarians and is the President of the regional branch of SLMS, which serves the seven counties in lower Eastern New York.

KELLY RODRIGUEZ (1993) is a real estate attorney with offices in Long Island, Bronx, and New Jersey. He represents institutions, landlords, and sellers/purchasers of residential and investment properties.

DENISE ROMANO (1989) has moved to New York City and works for the Hudson River Trust.

MIKE SHEEHAN (2003) is attending graduate school at St. Johns in New Mexico.

CHRISTINE SIMPSON (1995) had her short film shown at the Little Theater in Rochester as part of their series of Emerging Filmmaker Series. Entitled TEA (or THE INCREDIBLE TRUE STORY OF TWO COMPLETE STRANGERS WHO STUMBLED INTO EACH OTHER'S LIVES & WERE TOO OBLIVIOUS TO REALIZE IT). The

film is an adaptation of the Echo and Narcissus myth and is set in modern-day New York City.

IVAN SPANAGEL (2002) is teaching English at Rush-Henrietta (New York) High School.

BEN STEIN (2003) is working on his MA in Creative Writing at SUNY Brockport.

SKYE L. SUTTIE (2001) is currently working towards her Master's degree in English Literature at Clemson University in South Carolina where she is a Graduate Assistant.

DEANNA TRELLA (2003) is a Graduate Assistant at Bowling Green State University in Ohio.

MARK TURVIN (1987) is with Goldfish Publishers in Phoenix, Arizona.

MATTHEW VANHOUTEN (1999) is living in Park Slope, a neighborhood of Brooklyn.

HEIDI BOLLINGER (2003) is in a Ph.D. program at University of Rochester.

JULIE WALINSKI is a graduate student at the University of Rochester. She is completing her Master's degree with her thesis on Don DeLillo and Contemporary American Literature.

EMILY WALTON (2000) is working for the BOZEMAN DAILY CHRONICLE in Montana as its Advertising Representative.

LAUREN WALTON (2003) is living in Syracuse and is a Business Sales Associate with Liberty Mutual Insurance.

JENNIFER WEG (1996) is a middle school English teacher in East Irondequoit, New York.

RACHEL WHEELOCK (2003) is attending Columbia.

CHERYL WILSON (2000) is working on her Ph.D. at the University of Delaware where she teaches English and Women's Studies. Her dissertation examines the relationship between nineteenth-century women's writing and nineteenth-century social dance. Having received an International Travel Grant, Cheryl will be traveling to England to conduct research at the British Library.

LOUIS WITTIG (2002) is completing his studies in the Professional Writing Program at the University of Southern California. His Master's thesis is a non-fiction book. He works part-time as an English Tutor at an immigration law firm in Los Angeles.

KELLY WYANT (1999) is teaching ninth and twelfth grade English classes at Haverling High School in Bath, New York. Kelly will be taking her comprehensive examinations in August and is planning a July wedding to MATTHEW KRAUSE (1998) in July.

ROBIN ZIMPEL (2000) received her Juris Doctorate from the Syracuse University College of Law.

From the Editor.... *Facts and Moments*

A long-time admirer of Augustus Saint-Gaudens, I managed recently to present myself at Rochester's Memorial Art Gallery to take a gander at items by the artist, many loaned by other institutions. I know something of Saint-Gaudens' life and times, but I learned more about him and his artistic impulse during my visit, all very factual. But my recollections of another time and place moved those historical enumerations aside, momentarily.

My first glimpse of his work came about because of play, the joyous physical exertions of a ten-year-old boy and his companions as I and they shouted and pushed our way across the hills and dales of Rock Creek Park in the District of Columbia. My family and I lived in Washington during the middle and late 1950s; those years were wonderment for me, and I was aware of enchantment.

That day in the park, rapidly running out of breath and feeling a stitch in my side, I turned a corner. If my feet had been tires, they would have squealed. We, my friends and I, were engaged in hide and seek with set and limited perimeters. As I positioned myself within the confines of holly shrubs, hiding my skinny little body so that Neil would have been hard pressed to tag me and declare me it, I looked up and saw that I was not alone in my chosen, sheltering place. There, to my right, there not far from me, there a person sat alone and removed as I was. The figure was draped in cloth and hooded; only the face showed and one arm with the hand held close to the face. I was aghast and mesmerized as if I had paid my twenty-five cents to see the "H-Man" at RKO Keiths downtown. The sun was low in the sky so shadows had moved in upon the figure obliquely, but I could tell that the eyelids were heavy and the head slightly bowed. The whole thing was strange, and I was afraid. Just as I was about to leave as quickly as I had come, I realized that the person was not a person at all, but a monument, a memorial. I could recognize a monument.

The nation's capital, of course, is filled with statues and busts and carved horses and many columns as if a timeless community had established itself within another city caught up very much in time. Yet, this figure seated so near to me seemed somehow to know me, to know my energy and spirit, my light-footedness, my fear, to know my time. There the two of us were. I was trying my best not to be found, but found out I was, not by Neil but by Augustus Saint-Gaudens and this product of his imagination. A boy, himself, once, born ninety-nine years before I was born, who, as I, knew the wildness and the meadows of this place and who had been commissioned to create in stone and bronze a memorial to the wife of Henry Adams, great-grandson and grandson of presidents.

I was drawn to this form, life-sized with that one arm and hand up to its right cheek. I felt sorrow and compassion although after my first fright I had not a clue why. Perhaps our introduction stands as my first true comprehension of the power of art's emotional tug. During my museum visit, I was as smoothly transported to that past time as seamlessly as the semi-circular bench opposite remains fixed. Except for ninety-nine years nothing much separates Saint-Gaudens, his statue, and me and my being ten years old and in the park. The statue untitled but known as "Grief" or "Nirvana" or "The Mystery of Life," the figure seemed so perfect in its calmness. I felt no calm then but a shock that I came later to know as recognition. Later still, I could link myself to the beauty of this casting by Saint-Gaudens and to know that it and time and I were one and the same, wrapped up in some same emotion, perhaps impossible fully to title but absolutely palpable.

Walter Freed, Jr.

Walter Freed Jr.

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