HIGHLIGHTS

“Nomenclature,” a graduate conference sponsored by the Department of English and Graduate Student Government and organized by GEO, is set for Friday, March 5th and Saturday, March 6th in Tawes! This year’s conference features six panels of graduate students from DC Consortium universities, roundtable discussions with Maryland MFA students, a professionalization panel on archival research, and a Friday reception.

There will be two keynote lectures: Kavita Daiya (George Washington) will be speaking on “Taxonomies of Violence” and Tita Chico (Maryland) will be speaking on “Why Details Matter.”

This year’s GEO Conference will also feature faculty respondents for each panel. The impressive team of respondents consists of Jonathan Auerbach, Jane Donawerth, Michael Israel, Keguro Macharia, Peter Mallios, and Brian Richardson. Also on the agenda is a professionalization panel discussion on archival research led by Carla Peterson and Martha Nell Smith.

Please plan on attending if you can! For more information, please see the conference website.

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

The Graduate Studies Forum will meet on Monday, 2/22/10 at 12:15PM in Tawes 1121. The subject will be doctoral qualifying exams.

Writers Here & Now is back with poet Kimiko Hahn and fiction writer Joseph O’Neill. Wednesday, 2/24/10 at 7:00PM in Ulrich Recital Hall, Tawes.

The CLCS Works in Progress Series welcomes Brian Richardson for a talk titled “The Fate of Reading in the Twentieth Century.” Thursday, 2/25/10 at 2:00PM. Location TBD.

Dympna Callaghan (Syracuse University) will be speaking on “Marlowe’s Last Poem” for Renaissance Reckonings, Friday, 2/26/10 at 12:30PM. Tawes 3132.

Sandra Bermann (Princeton University) will give a lecture titled, “In the Light of Translation: Insights from Dante’s Commedia” for the Comparative Literature Lecture Series on Friday 2/26/10 at 3:00PM. The lecture will be preceded by a faculty workshop from 10:00-11:30AM on curricular and institutional issues related to translation and comparative literary studies.

Also on Friday, 2/26/10 at 3:00PM, Critical Theory Colloquium welcomes Douglass Ishii (PhD candidate in American Studies) for a research presentation: “this baggage of essentialist expectation: Un-Critical Multiculturalism, Neoliberal Time, and APA Identity Politics.” Tawes 3132.

The LGBT Studies Lecture Series continues with Mel Chen (UC Berkeley), presenting “Racial Animacies” on Thursday, 3/4/10 at 5:00PM in Tawes 1101.

The Transatlantic Poetics Lecture Series welcomes Charles LaPorte (University of Washington) for a talk, topic TBA. Monday, 3/8/10 at 4:00PM. Location TBD.

Center for Teaching Excellence will be running a workshop on “Creating and Preparing Students for Formal Writing Assignments,” Thursday, 3/11/10 at 2:00PM. Location TBD.
The snowmageddon has left many professors scrambling. Syllabi need to be restructured, class time needs to be made up, events and lectures need to be scheduled anew. Not so for Matt Kirschenbaum’s Engl 758C “Simulations” class.

While the rest of us were shoveling our way to eternity and avoiding Stephen King-esque delirium, “Simulations” carried on as scheduled. How, you ask? They put theory into practice and met in Second Life (class picture below)! "It seemed 'right' discussing Baudrillard within the simulated world of Second Life," says student Peter Grybauskas. "But I was still reprimanded when I interrupted discussion to take a few pot shots at classmates with my new blaster."

One student's reportedly “adorable” cat-eared avatar is missing from the class photo. "Ironically, I was having some trouble flying on top of that damn giant cat," says Rebecca Wise.

More articles on recent department activities are available on our web site! If you have an idea for an article, please e-mail englweb@umd.edu

Arnold Publishes New Volume of Poetry; Wins Lowell Scholarship

A flurry of good news for Elizabeth Arnold: she has published a new book and she has won a major award! Associate Professor of English Elizabeth Arnold’s third volume of poetry has just been published by Flood Editions. Effacement is a powerful sequence of poems that think about the wounded body. Effacement addresses such difficult topics as disfigurement, surgery, war, and cancer.

“In this remarkable new book, Elizabeth Arnold focuses on what certain bodies undergo against forces that efface them,” writes James McMichael. “Physical law has it that ‘what pokes out gets hit.’ Limbs, noses, and jaws are blown off. There are mastectomies. Prosthetic reconstruction is ‘flesh displaced.’ Some of those who experience it learn that there is now between them and the ones they love a wall of cancelled desire.”

Read more about Effacement here.

In other news, Arnold was recently selected (from nearly 400 applicants) winner of the 2010-2011 Amy Lowell Travelling Scholarship. This award, which is adjudicated by a member of the Harvard English department, along with two nationally prominent poets, is well known in the poetry world and has been won by some of the country’s most distinguished writers. Past winners include Elizabeth Bishop, Robert Bly, Phillis Levin, and Adrienne Rich. The single requirement of the award is that the winner must spend the twelve months of the award outside the United States.

More articles on recent department activities are available on our web site! If you have an idea for an article, please e-mail englweb@umd.edu

Catching up with our alumni...

Lara Vetter (PhD ’03), assistant professor at Univeristy of North Carolina - Charlotte, is publishing two books this year: Modernist Writings and Religio-scientific Discourse: H.D., Loy, and Toomer (in Palgrave’s Modern and Contemporary Poetry and Poetics Series edited by Rachel DuPlessis) and Approaches to Teaching H.D. (MLA, and edited with another Maryland alum, Annette Debo (PhD ’98), who holds tenure at Western Carolina University).

Jon Reiner (MFA ’87) has signed a contract with Simon & Schuster for a memoir, a book-length expansion of his recent piece in Esquire, “The Man Who Couldn’t Eat.”

Michelle Brown’s (PhD ’08) article, “Bleeding for the Mother(Land): Reading Testimonial Bodies in Nuruddin Farah’s Maps,” has been accepted by Research in African Literatures.

Jay Dougherty’s (MA ’84) PhotoCamel.com continues to grow steadily, now boasting over 40,000 members, making it one of the Internet’s largest sites catering to professional and enthusiast photographers. His other online venture, PoetryCircle.com, will release its first anthology in 2010. PoetryCircle Press, recently started, will begin publishing books by selected PoetryCircle poets later this year.

Todd Oakley (PhD ’95) has been appointed chair of the Department of cognitive science at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, OH.
FACULTY NEWS


Two new books from Neil Isaacs: a novel, The Doaker’s Story, was released by Drinian Press in November; and a clinical study of couples, The Package and the Baggage, is due out from Blue Dolphin Publishing early this year. Visit Neil’s website for details on both books.

Sheila Jelen and Seth Himelhoch have announced the birth of a new daughter, Meirav Sarit, on Saturday the 9th of January at 5:04PM, weight 8 pounds 13 ounces. Meirav joins her older siblings Malka, Nava, and Akiva.

Matt Kirschenbaum was quoted on the digital future of libraries for the New York Times Online’s Room for Debate blog.


Brian Richardson delivered an invited lecture, “Narrative Space in Postmodern Texts,” at the Ohio State University and another on “Unnatural Narratives: Theory and Practice,” at Aarhus University in December. At MLA he read a paper on “Modernism, Interpretation, and Duplicity: Reading and Misreading in Lolita,” at a Nabokov Society session. In January, he gave a talk on “The Book in the Jungle: Conrad and Intertextuality,” at the Conrad in California Conference. His article, “Postmodern Narrative Theory,” appears in the current issue of Foreign Literature Study (Wuhan, China); another article, “Unnatural Naratives, Unnatural Narratology” (co-authored with Jan Alber, Stefan Iversen, and Henrik Skov Nielsen) appears in the upcoming issue of Narrative; and his review of Eric Bulson’s Novels, Maps, Modernity is in the current issue of Novel. In January, he acceded to the position of Vice President of the Joseph Conrad Society of America.

STUDENT NEWS

An article by Sara Schotland “Defiled and De-Sexed: Dickens’s Portrayal of a Woman Waging War in Victorian England” appears in the American Journal of Legal History 49.4: 438-455. The article concerns Sally Brass, the dishonest female law clerk who functions as de facto lawyer in Charles Dickens’s Old Curiosity Shop.

NAME THAT LIBRARY!

Emperor Pedro II laid the first stone for this library’s foundation in June of 1880. Statues of Pedro Alvares Cabral, Luís de Camões, Henry the Navigator, and Vasco da Gama watch over the main entrance.

Answer on Page 4!
Writers Here & Now has become a hallmark of the English Department, reflecting the department’s keen interest in foregrounding contemporary literature’s most important voices. The series began in 1970 as Poets Here & Now under the direction of Roderick Jellema as a complement to the growing interest in creative writing in the department.

Jellema was joined by a generation of creative writing faculty that had profound impact on the shape of the department. In 1969, Rudd Fleming, Edward Gold, Jellema, J.R. Salamanca, Peter Van Egmond, and Reed Whittemore spearheaded the development of an M.A. degree with a creative emphasis, a precursor to the department’s MFA program.

The program’s first graduate was Carolyn Banks. She went on to teach at Bowie State before turning to a full-time writing career. Banks is the author of numerous short stories and eight novels, notably her series of equine-themed mystery novels (Death by Dressage and Groomed for Death now rank among my most favorite book titles ever).

Banks’ success is made clear by the bragging done by her hometown of Bastrop, Texas. Bastrop’s wikipedia page proudly claims as its most famous residents WWE wrestler The Undertaker, country singer Tres Womack, and Banks.

Following Banks’ graduation, many more incredible writers have graced the halls of Taliaferro, Susquehanna, and now Tawes. A small sampling of their award-winning output can be seen here. Writers Here & Now has carried on as well, a tradition that continues this coming Wednesday, February 24, with poet Kimiko Hahn and fiction writer Joseph O’Neill. Click here for details!