



# BYWORDS

Department of English Newsletter

“ Deep summer is when laziness finds respectability -- Sam Keen ”



Welcome back!

[www.english.umd.edu/bywords](http://www.english.umd.edu/bywords)

## HIGHLIGHTS: PLUMLY FEST IS HERE



It would seem that rumor regarding the literary event of the Fall has reached the Governor’s Mansion. Preceding a two day conference to be held in his honor, **Stanley Plumly** has been appointed Poet Laureate for the State of Maryland by Governor Martin O’Malley. Plumly will be the second Maryland professor to hold the post this decade, following Michael Collier’s term from 2001-2004.

The conference, **“A Celebration of Stanley Plumly and Poetry at the University of Maryland,”** to be held October 29-30, will bring distinguished speakers such as David Baker, Duncan Wu, Michael Dirda, Morris Dickstein, Ten Genoways, Linda Gregerson, and others to campus. A full schedule and biographies of the participants are available [here](#).

## FOR YOUR CALENDAR

The **Center for Teaching Excellence** will run a development workshop. Wednesday, 9/23/09 at 2:30PM, location TBA.

The **Theory Reading Group** will discussing Heidegger’s “The Origin of the Work of Art.” Wednesday, 9/23/09 at 3:30PM, Tawes 2123.

**Kelly Cresap** will lead a discussion on John Fowles’s novel *Daniel Martin*. Thursday, 9/24/09 at 2:00PM, location TBA.

**Renaissance Reckonings** welcomes Julia Schleck (University of Nebraska, Lincoln) for a practicum on the study of travel literature. Friday, 9/25/09 at 12:30PM, Tawes 3136.

**Local Americanists** welcomes Joel Pfister (Wesleyan University) for talk titled, “Reading American Literature as American Studies.” Friday, 9/25/09 at 3:30PM, Tawes 1107.

**Digital Dialogues** welcomes Zita Nunes (from the second floor of Tawes) for talk titled, “The Harlem Renaissance in Second Life.” Tuesday, 9/29/09 at 12:30PM at McKeldin B0135, the MITH Conference Room.

**Writers Here & Now** welcomes poet Fady Joudah and fiction writer Anthony Doerr. Wednesday, 9/30/09 at 7:00PM in Tawes 1121, Ulrich Recital Hall.

The **Reading the Lyric Series** welcomes James Longenbach (University of Rochester) for a talk titled, “Tone Poems: Poetic Sequence and Poetic Series.” Thursday, 10/1/09 at 4:00PM at Tawes 1121, Ulrich Recital Hall.

## UPCOMING DEADLINES and DEPARTMENT MEETINGS

The **Library of Congress** welcomes graduate student researchers from the University of Maryland. The Library’s Humanities & Social Science Division will offer regular research orientations to the library throughout the fall. Sessions are offered 10:00-11:30am on the following Monday: 9/21, 9/28, 10/5, 10/19, 10/26, 11/2, 11/16, and 11/23. The orientations are free but registration is required. For more information, click [here](#) or contact Abby Yochelson at 202-707-2138.



## Center for Literary and Comparative Studies Launches Fall Series

Under the directorship of **Bob Levine**, the inaugural season of programming at the Center for Literary and Comparative Studies has begun. **“Reading: Histories, Practices, Futures”** will be theme for Center programming in 2009-2010 with lectures from David Baker, James Longenbach, and David Gewanter headlining the fall calendar. There will also be several discussions on Works-in-Progress and Book Launch celebrations.

For the spring three conferences are planned: one on “Reading Comparatively,” a second on Thornton Wilder and classical influences, and a third on “Re-reading Poets Reading.”

The Center encourages you to bookmark their [new website](#), designed to publicize all of the exciting upcoming events. Stay tuned for more information!

## Symposium on Second Language Writing Convenes in October

All are invited to attend a symposium designed to open discussion on the issue of second language writing. The October 9 symposium will examine the challenges and strategies for success in teaching second language writing. The Keynote speaker will be **Paul Kei Matsuda** (Arizona State University), an internationally known expert in the field. Matsuda is the founding chair of the NCTE's Committee on Second Language Writing and Past Chair of the Nonnative English Speakers in TESOL Caucus.

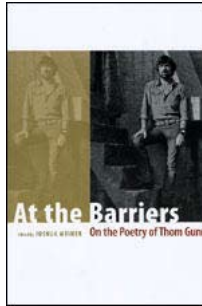
The conference schedule and registration information can be found [here](#).

Interested parties may contact Professor Shirley Logan ([slogan@umd.edu](mailto:slogan@umd.edu)) for more information.

*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](mailto:englweb@umd.edu)*

## Weiner Publishes Collection of Essays on Thom Gunn

Editor **Joshua Weiner** has brought together leading poets and scholars for an assessment of Thom Gunn in *At the Barriers: On the Poetry of Thom Gunn* (Chicago, 2009). Weiner, Associate Professor of English at the University of Maryland, draws new critical attention to Gunn's place in Anglo-American letters with significant attention to Gunn's literary and personal involvement in the "social upheavals of the 1960s, the existential possibilities of the late twentieth century, and the tumult of post-Stonewall gay culture."



With Gunn's "life as it was and his works as they are, he's an obvious candidate for a volume of retrospective and critical essays, and this one is first rate," says Stephen Burt.

Consisting of sixteen essays from a range of literary icons from the United States, the United Kingdom and Ireland, *At the Barriers* has an international flair appropriate for an assessment of Thom Gunn's life and work and his broad influence. Together, the essays trace "how Gunn, in both his life and his writings, pushed at boundaries of different kinds, be they geographic, sexual, or

poetic."

Coinciding with the publication of *At the Barriers*, the University of Maryland Libraries' Special Collections has debuted a digital exhibit, "**Well, I wanted a new vision...: Thom Gunn and 'Misanthropos.'**" This new exhibit provides an illuminating extension of Weiner's own essays in *At the Barriers* by highlighting key points from the unique research materials available at the University of Maryland Libraries. The University acquired the papers of Thom Gunn through in 1983 and 1995.

Read more about *At the Barriers* [here](#).

## ( FACULTYNEWS )

Former PWP instructor **Stan Dambroski** spoke June 5 at the Humorous Speech Showcase at the Toastmasters International Region VII conference in New Brunswick, Canada. He had won the District 36 Humorous Speech Contest in November with "My Dirty Little Secret," a story of being addicted to Toastmasters. On June 13 he participated in a panel on speechwriting at the American Independent Writers conference at George Washington University.

On September 12, **Amy Scott-Douglas** presented at the British Shakespeare Association conference at the Globe Theatre and King's College, London, UK. The title of her paper was "Teaching, Performing, and Race in Prison Shakespeare."

Professional Writing Senior Lecturers **Jo Findlay** and **Caroline Wilkins** will be planning workshops and informal meetings in September (and throughout the academic year). As we learned at PWP's Fall Faculty Development Day, Jo's project will focus on creating a bank of assignment sheets for each course; Caroline's work will focus on teaching students to conduct effective peer review. Look for announcements about future workshop and meetings with the Senior Lecturers.

**Mark Fitzgerald** wrote another piece for Interval International about a comprehensive road trip that played up the major To Dos and To Sees in New England. The reporting included driving from Virginia to Cape Cod, hiking in the White Mountains, visiting covered bridges in Vermont, and checking out art galleries in the Berkshires. He also attended the Squaw Valley Writers Conference. Speakers included Amy Tan, Mark Childress, and Dorothy Allison. Mark was especially struck by Gill Dennis's "Finding the Story" workshop, which sprung from three prompts: to describe 1) the most terrifying thing that's ever happened to you; 2) the most shameful thing; and 3) the most joyful moment of your life. "He told us when he was doing research for the movie *Walk the Line*, which he wrote with James Mangold, he asked Johnny Cash these same questions," Mark says.

# (NEWS cont.)

**Liz Fixen's** original composition, "Ballad for Bill," part of her quartet's repertoire, was included on this year's compilation CD by the [Baltimore Jazz Alliance](#) (BJA). The compilation includes tunes by a variety of Baltimore-area jazz musicians. Liz and her bandmates performed the tune at the BJA CD release party on July 21 at the Eubie Blake Center in Baltimore.

**Linda Freeman**, part-time lecturer in the English department, spent nearly two weeks in July in Anaheim, California as an elected lay deputy to the triennial General Convention of the Episcopal Church. This was the fourth time she had been elected deputy by the Episcopal Diocese of Washington, D.C., and she was gain appointed chair of one of the legislative committees. Also attending from the university community was first-time clergy deputy **Peter Antoci**, the Episcopal chaplain on campus and a part-time lecturer for both the English and History departments. Both deputies were happy to participate in some historic votes in July that opened up ordination opportunities for gays and lesbians and that began a process for the development of liturgies for gay and lesbian marriages.

**Cecil Goldberg** recently completed a year-long assignment editing an historical novel based on a holocaust survivor's experiences during World War II, including his incarceration in several concentration camps. The book will soon be available for publication.

**Rebecca Holden** presented a paper at the annual Science Fiction Research Association conference in Atlanta June 11-14. Her paper, "'A pregnant pause between technologies: The Re-Engineered of Cyborg Feminism in Kathleen Ann Goonan's *Crescent City Rhapsody*,'" investigated the ways in which the narrative reworks previous feminist traditions and imagines new feminist identities that come out of humanity's interactions with nanotechnology. Goonan attended the presentation and told Rebecca that she loved and appreciated the interpretation.

**Linda Kauffman** received the Graduate English Organization's award for outstanding service to graduate students in May 2009. Linda's essay, "Devious Channels of Decorous Ordering: A Lover's Discourse in *Absalom, Absalom!*" 29.2 (1983): 183-200 has been selected as one of the 18 best essays on Faulkner to be published in the last 54 years in *Modern Fiction Studies*. It will appear in an anthology edited by John Duvall, titled *William Faulkner and His Modern Fiction Studies Criticis* (Johns Hopkins University Press 2010).

**Matt Kirschenbaum's** book, *Mechanisms: New Media and Forensic Imagination* (MIT Press, 2008), has won its second major book prize, this time from the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading, and Publishing. More information is available here. Matt has also received a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to write a report entitled "Computer Forensics and Born-Digital Content in Cultural Heritage Collections," to be co-authored with two scholars from the Bodleian Library and the Harry Ransom Center. The project will result in a conference at Maryland in Spring 2010.

**Marilee Lindemann** presented two papers at conferences this summer. At the Digital Humanities 2009 conference in June, she gave a paper called "How Public, Like a Blog: The Pleasures of Academic Fem Blogging" on a session called "Blogger Grrrls." At the Willa Cather International Seminar in Chicago, she gave a plenary address entitled "Cather, Modernism -- and Blogging."

**Gerald Maa**, adjunct lecturer and MFA graduate, has an essay accepted for publication in *Studies in Romanticism*. The first version of "Keeping Time with the Mail-Coach: anachronism and Thomas De Quincey's 'The English Mail-Coach'" was written for Orrin Wang's Seminar in Nineteenth-Century Literature: Romanticism, Deconstruction, and Marxism.

**Helen McClung** and **Leigh Ryan** were recognized for their years of service to the College of Arts and Humanities at ARHU Convocation on September 15. Helen received the Non-Exempt Staff Service Award and Leigh received the Faculty Service Award.

**Greg Metcalf** explains how Bob Dylan has used cover recordings to attempt to escape being "the Voice of a Generation" in his essay, "The Same Yet Different/Different Yet the Same: Bob Dylan Under Cover of Covers." The essay appears in *Cover Recordings in Popular Culture*, ed. George Plasketes (London: Ashgate 2009).

**Michael Olmert's** new book on the social history of 18th-century backyard architecture was featured on the New Yorker book blog, "[Ask an Academic](#)," on June 5. Michael's article on the architecture and social history of 18th-century offices, which appeared in the Spring issue of *Colonial Williamsburg*, is now [online](#) with additional pictures. On July 27, Michael was interviewed at Colonial Williamsburg about 18th-century outbuildings. A podcast of the interview, "Purpose-Built: Backyard Architecture," is available [here](#). Michael spoke to volunteer archaeologists on "The Nature of Early Kitchens" at the Montgomery County, MD., Uncle Tom's Cabin Site on September 14. For the National Geographic Channel, Michael has written "The Secrets of Angkor," which covers the latest in Cambodian archaeology and anthropology. It was broadcast in July, but clips from the show are available [here](#).

# (NEWS cont.)

**Stanley Plumly** has been named the recipient of the John William Corrington Award for Literary Excellence, which will be presented to him at Centenary College, LA in the spring. As part of the celebration, some 300 students will be reading Stanley's two latest poetry collections, *Now That My Father Lies Down Beside Me* and *Old Heart*, along with his biography, *Posthumous Keats*. Previous winners of the Corrington Award include, among others, Eudora Welty, Anthony Hecht, Richard Wilbur, and Paul Muldoon.

In June, **Brian Richardson** read a paper on "Misreading in *Ulysses*" at the North American James Joyce Symposium in Buffalo and another on "Radical Story Making and the Material Text" at the International Narrative Conference in Birmingham, UK. He also gave two presentations at York University (UK): "The Question of Fictionality in Nabokov and Others" at an interdisciplinary workshop on fictionality, and "Narrative Beginnings in History, Fiction, and Drama," at the Symposium on Narrative Research at the Centre for Modern Studies. In July, he read a paper on "Beyond Narrative Individualism: Toward a Collective Poetics" at the University of Freiburg and another on "Story, Plot, and Narrative Progression after Sterne" at Wuppertal University in Germany. At Aarhus University in Denmark he gave a plenary lecture on "Closure and Violation in Drama" and taught a seminar on "Extreme Narrative Strategies" in August. His article, "Plural Focalization, Singular Voices: Wandering Perspectives in 'We'-Narration," was published in the anthology, *Point of View, Perspective, and Focalization*; his review of *Joseph Conrad: Voice, Sequence, History, Genre* appears in *Style*.

At the European Association for the Teaching of Academic Writing conference in June at Coventry University, England, **Leigh Ryan** was invited to present a pre-conference workshop on writing tutors and their roles. She also presented a talk entitled "Teacher/Tutor/Scholar/Mentor: Perspectives on Mentoring to Facilitate Professional Development" with Joan Mullin (Indiana State University) and Pamela Childers (The MaCallie School).

**Todd Solomon** accepted a full-time offer at the US Dept. of Transportation as online community manager for Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood. He will be managing the secretary's [blog](#), Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, FriendFeed, Technorati accounts and more. He will also design a multimedia online newsroom for the department and templates for its online media releases -- multimedia versions of the traditional press release. Todd says his schedule is unusually flexible for government and he plans to continue to teach for the Professional Writing Program.

A new book from **David Wyatt**, *In Plain Sight: American Literature as Secret History*, has been accepted for publication by the Johns Hopkins University Press.

## STUDENT NEWS

**Anna Bedford** and Kirsten Crase (American Studies) presented at the June AAUP Conference, hosting a session entitled "Creating an Inclusive Teaching Resource Guide as a Means of Stimulating Campus Engagement and Community." At the World Science Fiction Convention in Montreal in August, Anna presented a paper and also participated as a panelist on "The Middle Ages: Getting it Right" and moderated a panel on "Canadian Speculative Fiction." Anna received a Goldhaber Award from the Graduate School to participate in the conference.

**Janet Hearn** will be presenting a paper at the GEMCS conference in Dallas, Texas on October 22-25. Her paper is entitled "Navigating the Alimentary Canal: Poetic Peristalsis in Ben Jonson's 'On the Famous Voyage,'" discussing versification in that the Jonson poem.

At [Glory Days: A Bruce Springsteen Symposium](#) (September 25-27), **Lisa Kirch** and James Howes (Cambridge University) will be delivering "The Ties that Bind: Bruce Springsteen, Patriotism, and Misinterpretation." **Martha Nell Smith** and Lenny Cassuto (Fordham University) will deliver "'Pharaoh's Army Got Drowned': From Madam Marie to Pete Seeger." Both papers part of the conference examining Springsteen and American Roots Traditions.

**Sara Schotland's** article, "Africans as Objects: Hogarth's Complex Portrayal of Exploitation," was recently published in the *Journal of African American Studies* (Vol. 13 (2009): 147-163). Schotland will be chairing a panel, "William Hogarth: Interpretation and Influence," at the April 2010 NEMLA conference in Montreal.

### **SUBMISSION GUIDELINES**

*The next edition of Bywords will be released in October. Please send us any and all updates on new publications and accomplished accomplishments by*

**Monday, October 12th.**

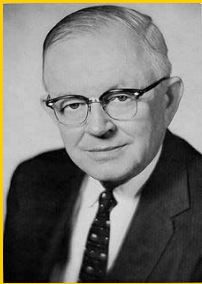
*Please include dates, locations, and titles of papers/lectures/etc. in your news submissions.*

**Bywords e-mail: [englweb@umd.edu](mailto:englweb@umd.edu)**

### **HISTORY of the ENGLISH DEPARTMENT**

*This year Bywords will continue to celebrate the English Department's long legacy and important role at the University.*

The History of Department will be on hold this edition, because mention must be made that of the momentous history made this month! "After 19 years of wandering in the wilderness of South Campus, finally we've arrived at the promised land!" said Kent Cartwright at the Grand Opening Celebration of Tawes Hall, new home of the English Department. A slideshow and audio from the event are available on our [website](#).



But who is this Tawes whose building we are inhabiting? John Millard Tawes was governor of Maryland for eight years, from 1959 to 1967. He is most remembered for governing Maryland through the Civil Rights era, but he also made a strong mark in conservation as a precursor to the environmental movement and in

education. Tawes oversaw a major expansion of the University System of Maryland and the development of the state's community college system. In addition to Tawes Hall, he has buildings named for him at Frostburg State, Washington College in Chestertown, Coppin State, and the University of Maryland, Eastern Shore.