

“January is here, with eyes that keenly glow,
A frost-mailed warrior
striding a shadowy steed of snow.”
- Edgar Fawcett



“The English Department Goes to MLA”

Fourteen English department faculty members (and two alumni!) went to Los Angeles earlier this month for the 127th Annual MLA Convention. Congratulations to our department colleagues Tita Chico, Jeanne Fahnestock, Neil Fraistat, Linda Kauffman, Matt Kirschenbaum, Bob Levine, Marilee Lindemann, Peter Mallios, Stanley Plumly, Sangeeta Ray, Brian Richardson, Laura Rosenthal, Martha Nell Smith, and Mary Helen Washington! (The alumni presenters were Tanya Clement and Julie Enszer.) Word is, the conference was invigorating and productive. And MLA has already begun calling for submissions for next year’s conference in Seattle. (Those submission can be made through their website: http://www.mla.org/conv_papers.)

Please check out the department’s website for more information on our professors’ fields and their specific talks:
<http://www.english.umd.edu/news-events/mla-2011>

“Leigh Ryan wins the IWCA Muriel Harris Outstanding Service Award”

The International Writing Centers Association awards our Writing Center director, Leigh Ryan, the Muriel Harris Outstanding Service Award.

It’s been another great month for the University Writing Center’s director, Leigh Ryan! On November 6, 2010, she won the International Writing Centers Association Muriel Harris Outstanding Service Award. In an introductory speech given by former awardee, Al DeCiccio, winners of this award were described as “leaders.” These leaders “listen...are empathetic...heal...are aware...persuade...conceptualize...are stewards...are committed to the growth of others, and are community builders.” Of course the committee was impressed with Leigh’s capacity to work closely and presently with students and teachers in the field of literacy-community building, locally, regionally, and internationally. But they were also struck by her humble way of making a name for herself. The IWCA quotes Leigh saying, “I don’t think I’m anything special in the writing center world; I just have lots of experience. When I look at my record, I’ve done a lot, but I’ve always just done it quietly. It mattered to me.”

This year has certainly proven that the “writing center world” thinks Leigh Ryan is something quite special. And of course that is an honor of which to be proud. But, for Leigh, it is obvious that pride has very little to do with it—her love of the work is at the very heart of her achievements. A mere six weeks ago, the department celebrated Leigh’s receipt of the Presidents’ Distinguished Service Award, and in an article written for that occasion, Leigh reiterated her joy at being honored for “doing what [she] love[s].” Thank you and congratulations (again!) to Leigh Ryan!

www.english.umd.edu/bywords

**Please submit your syllabi
using the new system!**

**Faculty, Lecturers, and TAs teaching
ENGL and/or CMLT courses at the 200-
level or above:**

**If you are teaching, please submit a copy
of your syllabus for SPRING 2011 as soon
as possible. As you know the English
Department has a new website, and we’re
hoping to reduce the number of tasks for
everyone. We would like you to submit
your syllabus using the following webpage:**

[http://www.english.umd.edu/
administration/faculty/syllabi](http://www.english.umd.edu/administration/faculty/syllabi)

**This will allow everyone access who needs
this information (including Isabella). We
use these copies to answer inquiries from
current students who need to finalize
their class schedules, and former students
needing transfer credits. Also, your syllabi
on file have been a big help to new T.A.s
when they’re in the process of developing
their own syllabi.**

**Also, if you’re faculty or a lecturer through
the MEO, please submit office hours for
SPRING 2011 on the above section of
the department website, before your
scheduled session starts.**

**Your cooperation is very much
appreciated.
Isabella**

**For updating or placing new book orders:
The University Book Center:
<http://www.umcp.bkstore.com>
click on “Faculty,” than on “Register”
(if it’s your first time)**

**Maryland Book Exchange:
<http://www.marylandbook.com>
click on “Faculty Information,” then on
“Faculty Adoptions Form”**

WRITING OPPORTUNITIES

The Paper Shell Review, the University's only undergraduate journal of essays on literary topics and book reviews, is now accepting submissions. If you've written essays you're particularly proud of, consider sending them to the journal. Having published work can put you above the competition when applying to grad schools and jobs. The submission guidelines are below.

Paper Shell Review Submission Guidelines:

We accept essays of no more than twenty pages. Essays must be double-spaced, in Times New Roman font, numbered, and formatted with one inch margins. Use MLA style to cite sources.

We accept book reviews of no more than two pages. Book reviews must be double-spaced, in Times New Roman font, numbered, and formatted with one inch margins. Submissions are accepted up to January 31st. The journal is published in print on April 18th and on-line May 20th. Send submissions to papershellreview@gmail.com.

UPCOMING LECTURE SERIES

Queering the Archive, Archiving the Queer

Ninth Annual Lecture Series in LGBT Studies
University of Maryland
Spring 2011

The archives of queer intimacies and subjectivities are everywhere and nowhere – in audio recordings, the chronicles of colonialism, the records of psychiatric hospitals and prisons, the ephemera collected by LGBT community history organizations. For the scholar of sex and gender variation, the encounter with the archive is often a matter of attending to patterns of silence and submersion, of reading evidence that is always under erasure. To queer the archive is to tease out those buried truths, but it is also to recognize the vexed nature of “truth” and to acknowledge that one's own desires and fantasies shape and misshape what one sees in any collection of artifacts or records. In this fascinating series of lectures and conversations, scholars and producers of queer archives reflect on what they do, why they do it, and what is at stake in efforts to document queer identities, practices, and performances. Join us as we plumb the depths of a history that is no longer hidden but not yet fully in view.

For more information, visit www.lgbts.umd.edu

(NEWS)

FACULTY NEWS

Michael Dirda, BookWorld columnist for the Washington Post, is with us this semester as the Petrou Reader in Residence. Welcome!

Robin Earnest, J.D., LL.M. and **Willie Schatz, J.D.**, recently had their proposal for a work entitled “Teaching The Basics of Legal Writing Before Law School—A Collaborative Effort Between Law Schools and Supporting Undergraduate Programs” accepted for presentation at the Capital Area Legal Writing Conference. The conference, which will be held in February at George Washington University Law School, will bring law professors from around the country to discuss the newest trends in teaching legal writing.

Verlyn Flieger's collection of essays, *Green Suns and Faërie*, was reviewed in Kent State's publication, “Books for 2011.” The review was quite favorable, calling Flieger's work, “a major contribution to the growing body of Tolkien Scholarship.”

Sheila Jelen published a book entitled “Modern Jewish Literatures: Intersections and Boundaries” through University of Pennsylvania Press. It was co-edited with Scott Lerner of Franklin and Marshall, and Michael Kramer of Bar Ilan University.

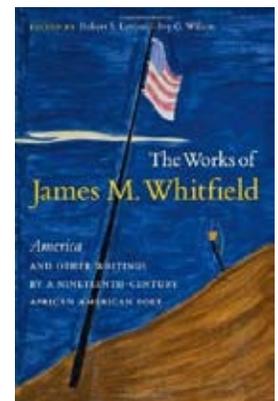
Brian Richardson organized an MLA panel on “Conrad and Narrative” and read papers on “Postcolonial Narrative Theory” and on “Unnatural Lives.” His article, “Transtextual Characters” appears in *Characters in Fictional Worlds: Understanding Imaginary Beings in Literature, Film, and Other Media*, edited by Jens Eder, Fotis Jannidis, and Ralf Schneider. Another article, “Narratology, the Question of Method, and the Unusual Text,” was published in *Théorie, analyse, interprétation des récits*, edited by Sylvie Patron. He is currently the president of the International Society for the Study of Narrative.

Bob Levine published two books the first two weeks of January: *The Works of James M. Whitfield: America and Other Writings by a Nineteenth-Century African American Poet* (University of North Carolina Press), which he coedited with Ivy Wilson, and the updated second edition of his Bedford Cultural Edition of William Wells Brown's *Clotel*.

Marilee Lindemann organized as MLA Session entitled “New Tools, Hard Times: Social Networking and the Academic Crisis.” She, as well as Rosemary Feal, Chris Newfield, and others spoke, and it turned out to be the most-tweeted session of the conference.

John Mancini Band's second album, “Sun King,” will be released next week. It will be available for download on iTunes.

Howard Norman's novel *What Is Left the Daughter* was reviewed by Susan Stamberg as one of the “Year's best books” on NPR and was on many end-of-year “best” lists. The novel is published this month in Portuguese and German language editions. His journal of his travels in Japan, “Travel with Ghost and Ghost-to-Be,” has been accepted for publication by Univ. of Washington Press in 2012.



(NEWS cont.)

FACULTY NEWS cont.

Carla Peterson wrote a column, entitled “Dr. Smith’s Back Room,” for the New York Times *Opinionator* blog (<http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/01/19/dr-smiths-back-room/>). According to Kent Cartwright, “The article discusses the political alignments of African-American leaders in New York City in the decades leading up to the Civil War and reflects Carla’s intimate knowledge of the city’s black community in nineteenth-century.”

Martha Nell Smith, after enjoying MLA and presiding over a session, “Dickinson Forming History,” spoke at a Directors Guild event honoring the movie director Irvin Kershner (best known for *The Empire Strikes Back*). The LA Times account of the event can be found here: <http://herocomplex.latimes.com/2011/01/13/the-empire-strikes-back-sweet-memories-of-the-impish-irvin-kershner/>

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

The “**Borderlines**” conference will be the fourth annual interdisciplinary graduate conference put on by the Graduate English Organization. “Borderlines” will take place on March 11 and 12, 2011.

The upcoming “**Bloodwork**” conference explores how conceptions of the blood—one of the four bodily fluids known as humors in the early modern period—permeate discourses of human difference from 1500 to 1900. “Bloodwork” begins with the assumption that the metaphorical equation of blood with “race” as we understand it today is a distinctly modern, always shifting, and geo-culturally contingent formation. Hence, we believe a conversation among scholars from various periods and fields of inquiry will enhance our understanding of the cultural history of blood. Specifically, we ask how fluid transactions of the body have been used in different eras and different cultures to justify existing social arrangements. The conference is made possible by Office of the Vice President of Research, the Office of the Dean of Arts & Humanities, and the Center for Literary and Comparative Studies in the Department of English. And the organizers are our department’s own Ralph Bauer, Kimberly Coles, Zita Nunes, and Carla L. Peterson.

For contact and registration information, please visit: <http://www.terpconnect.umd.edu/~rwakeman/index.html>

STUDENT NEWS

Jasmine Lellock received a graduate student travel grant from the Shakespeare Association of America to attend the conference this April. Also, AVISTA Forum Journal published the abstract of the paper that she presented at the International Medieval Congress at Kalamazoo last year: “‘Off þe marvellys þat wer wondrously wrowght’: Magic, Miracle, and Meta-theatricality in the Croxton Play of the Sacrament.” It is in vol. 20, no. 1/2 (Fall 2010).

Sohayl Vafai, of the The English Undergraduate Association, is organizing a talk by Norman Steinberg, the co-writer of “Blazing Saddles.” Steinberg is coming to speak to the EUA about a new Master of Arts in Media Arts program he created at Long Island University, Brooklyn Campus. He’s coming to speak on Thursday, Feb 3. The time and location are TBA.

Speaking of acronyms (which we totally were on page one regarding our department’s amazing turn out at MLA), one caught my eye when I was tooling around in the university archives this week.

I’ve had poetry on the brain in light of the Poetic Aesthetic exhibit in the Art/Soc Building. (Check it out, between January 27th and March 3rd.) So, I began searching the archives using the brilliant key word, “poems.” Anyway, way back in 1897, when the University was M.A.C. (Maryland Agricultural College), students wrote a poem entitled “If M.A.C. Burned.” The poem gently pokes fun at these academic halls we love. I enjoyed it, and here is the link if you’d like to check it out: <http://digital.lib.umd.edu/image.jsp?pid=umd:5630>

Thanks for reading, and I hope your semester is off to a beautiful, if frigid, start.
Until next month,
Catherine

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

The next edition of Bywords will be released February 17th. Please send us any and all updates on new publications and accomplishments by February 15.

*Please include dates, locations, and titles of papers/lectures/etc. in your news submissions.
Bywords e-mail: englweb@umd.edu*

Stay tuned to www.english.umd.edu for more news!