



Department of English, Film, and Theatre Newsletter

Spring Edition

April 2009

DEFT

Message from the Head

Dr. Judith Owens

"Sundry jottings, stray leaves, fragments, blurs and blottings"

Robert Manning



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Our spring issue of DEFT has some new features. **The Year in Review** provides a brief look back at some of the activities and events of the academic year that just ended. For those of you who attended these events, it'll be a chance to remember the occasions and, perhaps, follow up on ideas that percolated from the talks and presentations. For those of you who were not able to attend, you'll be able to catch up on what's been happening and mark your calendars for next year. **Spotlight on Research**, which focusses on the work of professors in a little more depth than is possible in statements listing publications and conferences, features reports written by graduate students following interviews with the (randomly) selected faculty members. Thanks to Anna Lapointe of pAGES for lining up the interviewers, and thanks to Alyson Brickey and Lesley Cowan for their reports. We hope to expand this segment in subsequent issues of the newsletter, high-

lighting the work of four faculty members each year, and providing more graduate students with the opportunity to participate in this informal way in the life of the department. To get a sense of the more formal ways that our graduate students contribute to the intellectual life of the department, turn to yet another new segment, **Grad Student Research Interests**. And for a completely different perspective on the lives of our faculty members, turn to **What They Used to Do**. Can you guess who used to work on a road crew? Or at a company producing questionable films? Do you know who has been a grave-digger? Or who has unhappily impersonated an Alpine lass?

Enjoy the newsletter, and please continue to send me suggestions for features you'd like to see included in subsequent issues. Thanks to Mabelle for making this issue so attractive.

Message from the Associate Head

Dr. Pam Perkins

The good news from the associate head's office is that there isn't much to report -- Arlene Young left things running so smoothly when she stepped down in January to take her research leave that I have almost nothing to add to what she said in September. I do, however, want to thank Faye McIntyre for making such a great success of running Info Days this year. We had a steady turnout of students over the

two days of the event, a level of interest which is very encouraging. I'd also like to thank everyone who turned out for our annual Honours reception, which attracted both new and prospective students to eat doughnuts, meet professors, and chat about the programme. What better way could there be to spend a February afternoon?



UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

Faculty of Arts



Message from the Graduate Chair

Dr. Mark Giblin

Pip pip and what what, everyone. As the year draws to an official close, I'm compelled to note that it has been a year of tumult and triumph, chaos and promise. We have now come out the other end of the application and major awards process, made tumultuous and chaotic thanks to the gentle ministrations of the Faculty of Graduate Studies. This was the year of the Great Re-Centralization Process for applicants, and this meant a great deal of confusion and delays in terms of getting all the applications for admission processed and in accessible form for our Selection Committee. I would like to gratefully acknowledge the heroic efforts of our Grad Program Assistant, Mabelle Magsino, in negotiating our way through the new system. I would also like to praise the Graduate Selection Committee for this year: Glenn Clark, Margaret Groome and Adam Muller. They dealt with the task at hand balancing tremendous efficiency with a rigorous attentiveness. The final result, I'm happy to say, is all good news. We have accepted four PhD applicants, eighteen MA applicants, and one pre-MA candidate, and look forward to a brand new crop of peers joining us in September. After

much confusion and some preliminary gloom, we were able to offer UMGFs to two deserving students. I would like to congratulate Sandy Annett and Alyson Brickey on these awards.

Finally, I would like to mention the wonderful efforts of Dr. Dana Medoro, whose Animal colloquium this February managed to bring a large number of faculty and graduate students into supportive and productive dialogue with each other. This was a fantastic opportunity for graduate students to showcase their talents in a brief, and therefore (almost?) non-stressful context, and I think the faculty appreciated being able to present alongside the students. I think that as a department we should avail ourselves of opportunities for similar occasions in the future.

So now you know the secret of a successful graduate chair – surround yourself with brilliant, hard-working people. All I have to do is thank them!

Alumni News

An interview and lengthy selection of **George Amabile's** poems will appear in the Winter Issue of *Contemporary Verse II*.

Gail Asper was conferred with an Honorary Doctorate in Law at the U of M convocation in the fall.

Jonas Chernick won the Gemini Award for Best Actor in a Supporting Role for his performances on CBC TV's *The Border*. Jonas was back in the city this January to play Biff Loman in the Winnipeg Jewish Theatre production of *Death of a Salesman* for MillerFest 2009.

Sarah Constible played the lead role in the MametFest 2009 production of *Playing for Time*; **Brenda McLean**, a Theatre Program instructor, was also in the cast.

Audrey Dwyer was back in the city this fall to perform in the MTC production of *Medea*.

Rob Herriot is directing a production of Donizetti's *Daughter of the Regiment* for Edmonton Opera and a *Don Pasquale* for Utah Opera this season.

Jeff Madden performed in the Winnipeg Mennonite Theatre production of *A View from the Bridge* for MillerFest 2009. (His daughter, Liz, was Tituba in the Black Hole production of *The Crucible*.)

Paul Madziak (memorable as Cousin Lyman in George Toles' production of Albee's *Ballad of the Sad Café*) will be back with us this March to play Old Mahon in *Playboy of the Western World*.



Staff News

In October, **Brenda Austin-Smith** travelled to Pordenone, Italy, for Le Giornate del Cinema Muto, where she didn't say a word. Her powers of speech returned in time for her to give a paper called "It Touched My Heart So Deeply: Film, Affect, and Personal Modernity" at the European Communication and Research Education Association Conference in Barcelona, Spain, in late November. She is currently revising the introduction to a collection of essays on Canadian women filmmakers, and writing a conference paper on Alfred Hitchcock and Henry James that she is tempted to call "The Wings of the Psycho," but probably won't.

Diana Brydon's co-edited book, *Renegotiating Community: Interdisciplinary Perspectives, Global Contexts* (2008) is now available in paperback from UBC Press. She presented a keynote address, "Globalization and Higher Education: Working toward Cognitive Justice," at an invitational workshop on "The Scope of Interdisciplinarity" sponsored by Athabaska University in November 2008 and a revised version of this talk at the University of Sao Paulo, Brazil in January 2009. Her new research team, "Building Global Democracy," presented on their project at the World Social Forum in Belem, Brazil in January 2009. Information on this international, interdisciplinary project may be found at www.buildingglobaldemocracy.org. Cristina Eluf Kinderman, a PhD student working with Diana on "The Critical Pedagogical Value of Using Learner Corpus data in EFL teaching in Brazil," will be working at the Research Centre on Globalization and Cultural Studies on a CBIE scholarship from March to June 2009.

Michelle Faubert has just published her first monograph, entitled *Rhyming Reason: The Psychologist-Poets of the Romantic Period* (January 2009, Pickering & Chatto). If you are interested to read some of it, you can find a few chapters and the index on the Pickering & Chatto website. Alternatively, you may borrow the copy she has donated to the Dept.; it is in 627 FA.

Chris Johnson has returned after a six-month research/study leave. He spent much of the time writing: two arti-

cles are forthcoming in *Canadian Theatre Review* and a third in *Comparative Drama*. One of the CTR articles, co-written with Bill Kerr,

examines Winnipeg's Master Playwright Festival. It's the only ongoing event like it in the world, and DEFT's Black Hole Theatre is one of only four organizations involved in every iteration of the festival since its inception nine years ago. Chris has also been working on entries for the *Literary Encyclopedia*, directed a production of George Walker's *Tough!* with the Young Company at the Prairie Theatre Exchange, and has been working with Prof. Kerr and Mike Bell, the Theatre Program's playwright-in-residence, on Mike's new play, *Headspace*, which the Black Hole commissioned and which it will produce next season, with Chris directing and Bill dramaturging. This spring, Chris will be presenting a paper on performing the self in the plays of Carol Shields at the first annual Carol Shields symposium at the University of Winnipeg. However, the biggest thrill Chris experienced during his leave was when *Model Railroader* accepted for publication a "Workshop Tip" on the use of period popular music in ambient sound.

Mark Libin's article, "Dog-Angels in Wolf Time: Locating the Place of the Human in Marlene van Niekerk's *Triomf*," was published in the *Journal of Post-colonial Writing*. He has also recently been granted tenure, so he assumes that from now on he has no obligation to be courteous, responsible or (needs to be confirmed) sober.

Faye McIntyre delivered a paper titled "Voice and the Boundaries of Cinematic Space in Richard Linklater's *Before Sunrise*" at the Southwest Texas Popular Culture/American Popular Culture conference in New Mexico in February.

Robert O'Kell will be delivering a paper on Disraeli's Vindication of the English Constitution at the joint



Staff News

British Association of Victorian Studies / North American Victorian Studies Association conference at Cambridge in mid-July 2009. He will also be participating in the workshop on "Evolution" at the same conference.

Judith Owens presented a paper entitled "Such Goodly Workmanship': Spenser and Technology" at the Sixteenth-Century Studies Conference (SCSC) held in St. Louis last October, and will be presenting a paper entitled "God bless the child': Raleigh's Instructional Ethos" at the next SCSC, which is being held this May in Geneva.

Pam Perkins' edition of John Moore's 1789 novel *Zeluco* came out at the end of 2008, and an edition of Elizabeth Hamilton's work, *The Cottagers of Glenburnie and Other Educational Writing*, is due out at the beginning of April. Two other editions are in prospect: a pair of travel journals by Francis Jeffrey (1800 and 1823) and Isabella Kelly's 1796 gothic novel *The Ruins of Avondale Priory*, both of which are supposed to be completed this coming summer.

Phyllis Portnoy will be giving a paper, 'Biblical Seafaring in Anglo-Saxon Verse: Pictorial Poetics,' at the International Society of Anglo-Saxonists Conference to be held in July at St. John's, NFLD. Phyllis has two essays in press, 'Daniel and the Dew-Laden Wind: Sources and Structures,' in *Old English and the Old Testament*, ed. Michael Fox (Toronto: UTP), and 'What Was Left at Marlow? New Considerations for the Place-Name,' in *Essays in Anglo-Saxon Studies* 5, "Anglo-Saxon Traces," ed. Jane Roberts and Leslie Webster (Arizona Center for Medieval and Ren-

aissance Studies). A third essay is under review with *Anglo-Saxon England*, 'Laf-Riddles in Old English: Metal-Work and Word-Play.' When not busy with things Anglo-Saxon, Phyllis plays cello in two chamber groups and in the Mennonite Community Orchestra.

David Williams' latest scholarly book, *Media, Memory, and the First World War* (McGill-Queen's UP), offers a sequel to *Imagined Nations* (2003), his prize-winning study of media and the space of the nation, this time focussing on media and evolving views of temporality. Touted as a "highly original history of memory," this new book explores how the structures of public and private memory are shaped by changing media environments, from the oral memory of *The Iliad* to the electronic memory of History Television and the interactive war museum. Of interest to historians, classicists, media and digital theorists, archivists, museologists, and scholars of literature, film, theatre, and television, *Media, Memory, and the First World War* presents a distinct view of what constitutes "modern memory."

Colleagues from English, Film, and Theatre, as well as from other disciplines are warmly invited to attend the launch of Professor Williams' book at McNally-Robinson (Grant Park) on Monday evening, May 4, at 8 pm.



Tenure & Promotion Workshop:

Tuesday, May 12, 2009

1:30–3:30 p.m.

627 Fletcher Argue

Please R.S.V.P. to Marianne Harnish

The Fall edition of the Department of English, Film, and Theatre newsletter is tentatively scheduled for publication in September 2009. If you would like to contribute to this upcoming issue please forward your submission/s via email to mabelle_magsino@umanitoba.ca by August 2009.

A reminder will be sent out in the summer. Submissions are to be submitted electronically and should be in "finished" form.

Suggestions and contributions are always welcome!



The Year in Review

The Research Cluster on Affect sponsored a presentation on November 14, 2008 by Dr. Ben Singer, Associate Professor of Communication Arts at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Prof. Singer, author of the book *Melodrama and Modernity* (Columbia, 2001), spoke on "A Typology of Pathos," using film clips to advance the claim that movies are perhaps the most effective medium for eliciting pathos.

In his talk, Prof. Singer suggested that watching tear-jerker movies might be adaptive behaviour from the perspective of evolutionary psychology, because the experience of pathos reassures us that our "networks of empathy" are working as they should. He also pointed out, using several heart-wrenching scenes from movies such as "How Green Was My Valley," "Lassie Come-Home," and "Imitation of Life," that as we watch, we look for evidence that the pathos evoked by film is substantial and categorical rather than trivial, and that the suffering on display is unjust rather than retributive.

Among the types of filmic situations that trigger our tears, Prof. Singer identified those that dramatize the pathos of self-sacrifice, the pathos of undeserved catapulting into maturity, the pathos of disrupted attachment, the pathos of transcendent attachment, and the pathos of humility. After all present had wiped their eyes and blown their noses, a lively discussion began, and continued during the reception that marked the conclusion of the Affect Cluster's activities for the term. Our thanks go to Prof. Singer, to the Department, and to St. John's College for their support of this event.

On February 6, 2009, Thomas Schmid of the University of Texas, El Paso, delivered a talk called "Diminished Impresibility: Addiction, Neuroadaptation and Pleasure in Coleridge" in the Quiet Room of St. John's College at 10:30 AM. This talk was organized by the Affect Group, but all were invited. Happily, the event was well-attended by both students and faculty, and the discussion after the talk – which ran for roughly 45 minutes – was lively and insightful.



On February 5th, the Department of English, Film & Theatre hosted "**The Animal Imprints Round-Table Discussion and Art Exhibit.**" We heard presentations on a range of subjects, from the presence of bees at the origins of philosophy, to the skulking of dogs in contemporary South African literature. Many thanks go to the eight faculty members and the nine graduate students for giving such great papers, and to everyone who came to listen. It was widely acknowledged that seven-minute presentations work very well, that humans and animals mysteriously imprint

upon each other (and accompany each other into all kinds of print), and that we should have more of these



departmental round-tables, especially when they're framed by breakfast at one end and wine at the other.



The Reading Series this year brought in three writers for five events at the U of M. The playwright and novelist Andre Alexis, poet Louise Halfe and writer and critic Greg Hollingshead each did a public reading and Alexis and Hollingshead ran advanced classes for honours and graduate students and faculty. Turnouts were excellent at all events and the committee is looking forward to another eventful year in 2009-10.



Our new colloquium series, **DEFT Works**, got underway this year with two noon-hour presentations of works-in-progress. In November, Dr. Serenity Joo gave a talk entitled "America is in the Heart, or Kalamazoo, Michigan: Bienvenido Santos, Allen Ginsberg, and Asian American Literature." In March, Dr. Jonah Come gave a talk entitled "In its Own Element: Cinematic Citation and the Fate of the Unreliable Critic." Both talks, which were well attended, prompted discussions that will certainly continue in the months to come. DEFT Works provides us with an opportunity to learn more about our colleagues' research and to discover some areas of shared interest. We plan to expand the series next year by holding two colloquia each term. Watch for those dates to be announced within the next few months.



Fire In The Hole, the mini-festival of original plays by DEFT students was directed by DEFT students and for the most part, acted by them too. These "explosive new plays by fiery young talent" included ten short original plays by DEFT students and were showcased in Lunch

The Year in Review

Bhagg and public reading formats over five days in late March.



After premiering at Sundance and Berlin, *The Yes Men Save The World* took the next logical step on the global festival circuit and played to a packed auditorium at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, in an event taking place on March 3rd co-sponsored by the Department of English, Film, and Theatre, Plug-In ICA, and the WAG. The latest feature from the legendary duo of media infiltrators documents their most recent feats of corporate imposture, including posing as Dow Chemical contritely offering reparations for the Bhopal disaster on live BBC television news, and disseminating hundreds of thousands of copies of a counterfeit New York Times with the headline "Iraq War Ends" (among other dispatches from a utopian future) in the streets of Manhattan. Following the screening, Andy Bichlbaum appeared in his own person for an on-stage interview with

local filmmaker Noam Gonick, and to field questions from a lively audience spanning the city's art, activist, and academic communities.



The Warhaft Lecture this year was delivered by Professor Paul Strohm of Columbia University. His lecture, "The Voice Within: Episodes of Conscience from Augustine to Abu Ghraib," was attended by a reasonably large audience at the Inn at the Forks. Professor Strohm was impressed by what he saw of Winnipeg and the University of Manitoba. He commended in particular the participation of graduate students during the seminar. The success of these events owes a great deal to the strong commitment of our students and department members, but particular thanks are due to this year's committee: Glenn Clark, Lucas Tromly, Serenity Joo, and Anna Lapointe. The committee would also like to extend special thanks to Cliff Eyland and Mabelle Magsino, for their work on the poster, and to Marianne Harnish, for almost everything else.

Announcements

CONGRATULATIONS

to **Dr. Struan Sinclair**, who received an Rh Award for creative work, and whose short story "Diaspora" was short-listed for the CBC Literary Awards;

to **Guy Maddin**, whose *My Winnipeg* was ranked the no. 3 movie of 2008 by Richard Corliss of *Time*;

to **Dr. Phyllis Portnoy**, who received a University 1 Teaching Award;

to **Ms. Monique Dumontet**, who was this year's recipient of the Fr. Patrick Mary Plunkett Memorial Graduate Scholarship from St. Paul's College.

CONGRATULATIONS also to the following newly-tenured members of the Department:

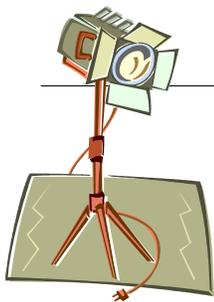
Dr. Warren Cariou; Dr. Glenn Clark; Dr. Mark Libin; Dr. Vanessa Warren; and to the following newly-promoted members of the Department: **Dr. Mark Libin**, to Associate; **Dr. Vanessa Warne**, to Associate; **Dr. Arlene Young**, to Professor.

WELCOME

to **Dr. Hye Ji Lee** from Suwon Science College, who is here as a Visiting Scholar until January 2010. During her stay here, Dr. Lee will be researching feminist criticism and gender theory in English literature.

WELCOME also to **Dr. Jeanette Lynes**, who will be teaching creative writing in the summer under the auspices of Extended Education's new Visiting Scholar programme. Dr. Lynes is an accomplished and award-winning author who has published several collections of poems and has a novel forthcoming. I hope you'll have a chance to drop by her office in the Creative Writing and Oral Culture Centre (in University College) to meet her while she's here. In addition to teaching, Dr. Lynes will be giving a talk or reading so watch for the poster!





Spotlight on Research

Dr. Lucas Tromly has been teaching at the University of Manitoba for approximately five years. His area of specialty is American literature and, more specifically, American modernism and Asian American literature. He wrote his PhD thesis on William Faulkner and nineteenth-century aestheticism, and he is currently researching a link between Faulkner and the decadent figure of the femme fatale. He is also interested in researching the ideological interaction between popular culture and national politics. Following from this, he is currently looking at alien abduction stories and the conspicuous exclusion of Asian Americans as abductees. According to Dr. Tromly, even though these stories are often considered “fringe” discourses, they replicate mainstream idealistic beliefs in equality and represent the strain to accommodate racial difference. Minorities are under-represented in these narratives, which almost always include the abduction of white people, rarely include the abduction of African Americans (which is linked to the historical trauma of slavery), and never include the abduction of Asian Americans. These stories, he believes, form a subculture with a political subtext that is central to current debates surrounding national politics. Dr. Tromly is currently teaching an honours seminar on the Harlem Renaissance as well as an introductory English course called Literature and Travel. The latter provides an interesting opportunity to teach students from faculties other than Arts, including Music and Engineering. Apart from his current courses, one of the most positive experiences he has had here at the university was teaching a course in Asian American Literature about three years ago, in which he says everything aligned to make for an engaging and enriching experience.

- Alyson Brickey



I recently met with **Dr. Glenn Clark**, one of the department’s few specialists in Early Modern literature, to discuss “a few leading questions about [his] current research.” That research turned out to be focused mainly on three projects. First, there’s *City Limits*, a soon-to-be forthcoming volume of essays Dr. Clark has been co-editing with Dr. Judith Owens and historian Dr. Greg Smith. Coming out of the City Limits conference held at the University of Manitoba in 2004, the essays explore aspects of the culture and politics of the European city from the late medieval period to the turn of the 20th century.

With this project nearly complete, Dr. Clark has been focusing on two projects of his own: converting his doctoral thesis on taverns and alehouses in early modern drama into a book (entitled *Commercial Hospitality*), and conducting research for a second volume, *Shakespeare’s Pastors*, which examines how late-16th-century discourse about the professionalization of the English protestant ministry is reflected in drama of the period. The projects, according to Dr. Clark, are “not unrelated” – not only because they suggest a pun on “spirits” (and Dr. Clark is quick to make this pun), but because Shakespeare’s drinkers often act like pastors, and scenes set in taverns often “bear surprising discursive resemblances to churches.”



Dr. Clark has been conducting research for *Shakespeare’s Pastors* in London, at Lambeth Palace Library (which houses records for the Anglican Church), the British Library, and other institutions. No information was forthcoming as to where research was conducted for the book on taverns and alehouses.

As for future projects, Dr. Clark notes that in addition to his longtime interest in form he has become increasingly interested in violence and affect in literature, which he foresees may *possibly* lead to an interest in psychoanalytical approaches (which, he assures me, are becoming acceptable again) or approaches based on cognitive psychology.

- Lesley Cowan

What they used to do ...

For six summers (as an undergrad and MA student) I worked as a laborer on a road construction crew. It was the perfect summer job: for the first six weeks, I was happy to be away from classes and out in the sun; after that I could hardly wait to get back to the books. I worked with a colorful bunch of guys: Barrel, Pig Swill, Old John, Goomba, The Cigar Store Indian (Cigar, for short), Barn Smell, Picture o' Health. (If I ever knew their given names I've long since forgotten them.) Picture o' Health picked me up every morning at six, driving a dump truck with an open quart of beer between his legs. Thus the name. I was Tarzan, not because I weighed 130 pounds at the beginning of the first summer and they had a sense of irony (none of them did), but because I could provide a great imitation of Johnny Weissmuller's jungle call with the yodel in the penultimate chord. Over the years I learned to run all of the heavy equipment -- the rollers, the backhoes, the ten-wheelers, even the Barber-Greene asphalt spreader when the operator passed out at the controls one day. During my last summer, I was even the boss for a while because none of the full-time guys wanted the responsibility. That was a disaster, but it still was a wonderful job. Paid great too for its time -- \$2.00 an hour.

- Gene Walz

Chris Johnson worked his way through university by working as a copy editor for CBC radio. At the same time, he was Doug Bankson's teaching assistant at UBC when Doug was busy setting up the New Play Centre in Vancouver. Subsequently, Chris was a literary bum in Europe, taught Theatre at Brock University, worked as a lowly sessional in the departments of English and Creative Writing at UBC, and then worked here as a lowly sessional for five years before achieving his current, exalted status as a full-time member of the U of M English Dept.

Robert O'Kell began his post-secondary education at Ryerson in Electronic Engineering Technology. After graduation in 1960 he joined the Medical Electronics Group at the National Research Council of Canada where, for three years, he worked on instrumentation for cardiac surgery teams. Subsequently, after completing his honours degree in English at Carleton, and before going to graduate school in English, he returned to NRC for a year as a special assistant to Gerhard Herzberg, Director of the Pure Physics Division, who was then completing his Nobel Prize winning work on the electronic spectra of polyatomic molecules.

My summer jobs have included working at a credit bureau, where I learned far more than I cared to know about people around town; at The Met, where one very long Friday evening I learned the value of an eraser in balancing books; at a nursing home, where I learned that the nightshift is much longer than the dayshift; and at a concession stand on a beach, where I learned that flies retire for the night at about 8:12 p.m.

- Judith Owens

One summer during my B.A., I worked as a waitress at one of the restaurants at the Canadian Pacific lodge at Kananaskis, near Lake Louise, where the theme was decidedly Swiss. They even had a flugelhorn player outside on the weekends. My uniform was supposed to make me look like an Alpine peasant lass, complete with long, swinging skirt, red pinstriped, frilly shirt, and full apron. Imagine Maria Von Trapp with a hangover. That was me.

- Michelle Faubert

In her salad years, Phyllis Portnoy worked as an Occupational Therapist in large provincial psychiatric institutions, first in Halifax and then in Sudbury, doing 'play therapy' with very young children. Next, Phyllis moved back to Manitoba to live on a farm in East Selkirk, raising goats and children, teaching piano lessons, and working on a doctorate in English. Finally, rather than return to her career as a therapist (and actually earn a living), Phyllis chose to teach in the English Department of the University of Manitoba.

One summer, just before I started my PhD, I worked as a receptionist for a film company in Toronto that made misogynist, slasher films (I think they're the ones who produced those Chucky movies about the crazed doll that comes to life). I didn't know they specialized in such an esteemed genre when I took the job, but I figured it out quite quickly, because I always read the screenplays when they come in. I read everything that came across my desk, including the letters from the strip-club that was suing the company for compensation (because the filming there held up business for a week or so & they lost money). Anyway, my big moment of fame came when I was asked to do voice-over work for a Spencer For Hire t.v.-movie. The worst part of the job was how badly the "writers" treated me when they came to drop off their screenplays--how they'd leave their sunglasses on and drop off their "manuscripts" about, oh, for example, a hotel that gets taken over by terrorists during a beauty-pageant and how the terrorists throw one woman/hour over the balconies until their demands are met.

Here's the story of my life in jobs:

1. shoe shine boy
2. paper boy
3. trapper
4. gas jockey
5. hunting guide
6. short order cook
7. grave digger (summer job in high school one year)
8. paper mill worker
9. construction laborer
10. carpenter's helper
11. surveyor
12. construction laborer
13. heavy equipment operator
14. paper mill worker
15. medical research assistant (working for the doctors who developed interferon)
16. fence and deck builder (my own company)
17. substitute teacher
18. remedial math and English teacher in a high school
19. high school English teacher
20. sessional instructor
21. part-time arborist (coming soon)
22. shoe shine boy.

- Roy Campbell

- Dana Medoro

... what they used to do

Graduate Student News

Message from the pAGES Chair

Cheery group greetings from pAGES, the perspicacious Association of Graduate English Students!

In the 2008-2009 year, pAGES has focused on social activities, keeping up DEFT's reputation as one of the country's friendliest and most supportive graduate English programs. We are now well-settled into our office at 611 FA, which has developed into both a popular meeting room and a comfortable space for grad students to work in the department. We invite any grad students who haven't yet visited to drop in, have a seat (watch out for the wobbly chairs), and read, write, or contribute to the Wall of Thoughts, using the crayons provided. (Thanks to Dr. Medoro for the Faulkner quote!)

The annual Re-Gifting Party came off rather well, with food and ridiculous gifts for all! This year's triumphant re-gift exchange winners include Dr Libin (whose beautiful pink and purple pillows may be viewed in his office) and Dr Finnegan, who gave a home to the giant furry blue moose head. The MA students pooled their resources to claim the philosophical finger puppets!

Still to come this year, there will be professionalization workshops. On Wednesday, March 25, from 1:30-2:30, Mark Libin will speak on "Writing Your Thesis: How to Do It, How to Do It Efficiently, How to Avoid Not Doing It." And on Wednesday April 1, from 11-12, Luke Tromly will speak on "Building Your CV."

Finally, pAGES will wrap up the year with a pub night on April 18th. We'll be meeting around 8pm at the Cambridge Hotel on Pembina. All grad students and faculty are welcome, and pAGES will start the tab --- early drinks and nachos are on us! We hope to see you there, and to see even more grad students get involved with pAGES next year.

Peace,
Anna Lapointe
pAGES Chair



pAGES Executive for 2008-09

Chair	Anna Lapointe
Secretary	Sarah Freedman
Treasurer	Melanie Brannagan
GSA Rep	Alyson Brickey
Social Convener/PR Rep	Sandra Annett
PhD Departmental Rep	Barbara Romanik
Creative Writing MA Rep	Keith Cadieux
MA Departmental Rep	Cameron Burt
Executive at Large	Nadine LeGier

Successful M.A. Defenses

FEBRUARY 2009 GRADUATION

Vivi Dabee
"The Summons to Behold a Revelation: Femininity and Foliage in Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*"



INFORMATION FOR POTENTIAL GRADUANDS

Students who wish to graduate in **October 2009** should meet the dates listed below. Please note that experience has shown that students who leave the distribution of their thesis until the deadline shown often have difficulty getting their work approved in time and have their convocation postponed to the subsequent graduation. For this reason, students are strongly encouraged to submit their theses in advance of the dates noted below.

Last date for receipt by Graduate Studies of PhD Theses for distribution	June 15, 2009
Last date for students to distribute Masters' Theses to Examining Committee	June 22, 2009
Last date for receipt by Graduate Studies of Theses and reports on Theses	August 27, 2009

Graduate Student Research Interests

My name is **Sandra Annett**, and I am just beginning my PhD thesis on animation and transcultural fan communities. My research interests include postcolonial literature and theory, globalization, film and media studies, and Asian studies, particularly Japanese language and culture. I hope to travel a lot, teach cultural studies, and someday watch all the movies on my “to see” list.

Tim Bandfield, the Theatre Program’s Teaching Assistant, will be performing in the Dry Cold production of *Company* this spring.

I’m **Melanie Brannagan**, a PhD candidate in the department, and I specialize in contemporary literature and theory. I’m currently writing my dissertation on Walter Benjamin, memory, and objects.

My name is **Alyson Brickey**, and I’m a first-year MA student taking courses in Modernism and the Media as well as Psychology and Literature. I’m planning to write my MA thesis on the function of silence in the works of Virginia Woolf and Gertrude Stein, and I’m hoping to eventually specialize in British and American modernism and critical theory. I’ll be presenting a paper at Congress in May on the question of the animal in William Faulkner’s *As I Lay Dying*.

Cameron Burt is interested in literature of the late Middle Ages, particularly the works of Geoffrey Chaucer. He is currently writing his MA thesis, entitled “Chaucer’s Prioress: The Moral Specter of The Canterbury Tales”.

I’m **Keith Cadieux**, I am currently taking a grad seminar on Identities in Literary Theory with Dr. Muller and am completing a creative MA thesis. I am working on three horror stories that explore the boundaries of the self and subjectivity through different technologies.

My name is **Kristian Enright** and I have completed the course work for my M.A. I am currently writing a creative thesis in the

form of a long poem that will be a kind of large-scale aesthetic experiment. I will be exploring aesthetics and poetics along with a general obsession with literary modernism, if that can be considered specialization. Current research is on formalism, metafiction and creative writing in general.

I’m **Dustin Geeraert**, a second year M.A. student. I’m taking courses in Middle English and Icelandic, and I’ve also taken courses that cover aspects of 19th and 20th century literature here at the U of M. I am specifically interested in the use of medieval sources on mythology in English and Icelandic by nineteenth century writers in English such as William Morris. I am writing my Master’s Thesis about H P Lovecraft, and his indebtedness to nineteenth century “Spiritual Reactionaries” (my term) such as Dostoevsky and Nietzsche. The place of mythology in an age of science fascinates me.

Hi. My name is **Luann Hiebert**, an English Literature student currently in the PhD program at the University of Manitoba. For the 2008-09 academic year, I have enjoyed participating in the seminar courses Bibliography, Writing the City, Texts and Messages: Reinventions of the Letter in the Long Eighteenth Century, and Identities in Theory. Areas of academic study and teaching interests include Milton, Seventeenth Century Literature, Romantic Literature, Canadian Literature, Bakhtinian Dialogism, and Post-modern Poetics. I expect to write my comprehensive exams in the coming year, and anticipate focusing my research on prairie women poets and their poetry for my dissertation. I imagine my own poetic musings will continue to be enriched by the wealth and colour of prairie writers.

Hi, I’m **Adam Kroeker**, one of the lucky students enrolled in the Creative Writing MA program. I am working on a novella called *The Loftschruw*, a fictional work obsessed with the psychological effects of



Grad Student Research Interests

nostalgia and homesickness. My other areas of interest include Philosophy of Literature, the Romantic poets, prairie writers, and shifting texts in early folk songs and stories.

Anna Lapointe is currently working on her PhD thesis on gender and technology in the fiction of William Gibson and Margaret Atwood. She hopes to make a career in Canadian literature, and has been known to write some.

I'm **Nadine LeGier** and I'm in my fourth year of study toward a PhD. I've completed my course work and my first comprehensive exam, which was focused on nineteenth-century British, Canadian, and American literature. I am currently studying for my second comprehensive exam. This exam is the Special Topic exam and I have developed a reading list on physical disability in nineteenth-century and pre-nineteenth-century writing. This reading list will support my thesis on illness and disability narratives in nineteenth-century familiar letters.

I'm **Elise Mayberry**, I am in my last course with Professor Adam Muller on Identities in Theory. My interests include theory, Aboriginal Literature, and Shakespeare/Renaissance. I am working on a course work MA and plan to defend my major paper this summer.

I'm **Josh Moore** and I am planning to write my MA thesis on the implications of post-colonialism in the works Eden Robinson and other Canadian Aboriginal Authors.

Jason Peters is a master's student specializing in early modern devotional literature, book history, and the Bible. His thesis considers the production and reception of the King James Bible, placing it in context with other books and bibles printed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.



My name is **Susan Rich**, and I'm a masters student in the English department. I've completed my coursework in the masters program, and am in the process of writing

my thesis. I hope to defend it this spring. My thesis is a combined creative and critical work in which I develop an idea called "reading the self." Essentially, rather than exploring how a text restricts or programs readerly subjectivity, I will examine how readers are given agency by projecting the self onto a text. Unlike reader response theory, my emphasis is not on how readerly interiority informs one's interpretation of a text; instead, I will focus on how texts might inform an interpretation of the self – in essence, how they might enable a 'reading' of the self as a type of Derridean text. To work through this idea, I will undertake a simultaneous reader/writer role in attempting to read myself as a text's protagonist, as its "I." I hope to enter into a PhD program in English lit in the fall.

Sheila Simonson is a PhD student in the Department of English. She is also a Research Fellow at St. John's College, and is entering her fourth year as an intern at MOSAIC. In the past year she has been the recipient of a SSHRC Doctoral Scholarship, the Manitoba Graduate Scholarship, the Arthur Chipman Graduate Fellowship at St. John's College, Clarence Bogardus Sharpe Scholarship, the Margaret H. Tyler Award in English, and the Dean of Graduate Studies Student Achievement Award. Sheila's academic papers have appeared in *Open Letter* and *Synoptique* and she has given more than twenty public lectures and conference papers in the areas of Canadian Literature, Contemporary Theory and Poetics, and Victorian Literature. Sheila has most recently been invited to Chair a session on Mikhail Bakhtin at the McGill International Graduate Conference in March of 2009.

Upcoming Event:

Archives in Canada Conference Series
 ARCHIVES AND THE CANADIAN NARRATIVE
 TELLING CANADA'S STORIES & REGIONAL ARCHIVES IN THE DIGITAL UNIVERSE.
 June 10-13, 2009
 Mount Allison University
 Sackville, New Brunswick, Canada