

Department of English Newsletter -- Fall 2009, No. 1

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This newsletter and previous issues are also available at www.sfsu.edu/~english

A Note from the Chair:

Undergraduate instruction is being enriched this semester through a collaboration with the College of Creative Arts. The Alexander String Quartet is giving lecture-performances in several literature classes, each performance keyed to the literary subject of the course. In Prof. Loretta Stec's survey course, for example, the Quartet performed and explained modernism in music after Loretta had introduced the class to modernism in painting and in literature. Next month, Prof. Bruce Avery will be speaking before a performance of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, which is being presented by the Theatre Arts Department, and some faculty members are taking their students to see David Auburn's *Proof* this week as part of their class.

The faculty and staff of the department have been doing remarkable things, in and out of the classroom, and with slender means. We are all aware of the deep cuts to public education. Many faculty members have accepted more students than ever before in their classes, many have taken on extra responsibilities, and all faculty and staff members are working for less pay. **For those who are reading this newsletter in its paper incarnation, I would like to note that the paper was a gift of Bill Allen of Napa, a 60's graduate of SFSU.** That seems to be a symbol of the times. Much of what we do is possible now only because of the generosity of our alumni and our own faculty and staff. We do not yet have a "**DONATE TO ENGLISH**" page on our website, so if you would like to donate to scholarships for English students, if you would like to donate to the department, if there is some special project which you would like to support, please get in touch with me.

--Beverly Voloshin

DEPARTMENTAL NEWS and EVENTS

Congratulations to **Sugie Goen-Salter** on her promotion to Professor, and to newly-tenured **Jennifer Trainor**!

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We enthusiastically welcome **Lynn Wardley** as she begins the year with us as an Assistant Professor in Literature; Emily Kurland, '09 TESOL, who joins the CMS faculty; and Pam Hughes, who returns to CMS.

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The following M.A. students are newly appointed GTAs in English and are teaching IRW and composition classes:

Keith Anderson (TESOL)
Jason Carrick (Composition)
Eleni Economides (Composition)
Sarah Fama (Composition)
Bernabe Mendoza (Comparative Literature)
Renee Nelson (Poetry)
Caroline Prieto (Composition)
Charles Rech (Creative Writing)
Tanna Rozar (Composition)
Jamie Stock (Literature)

Funding for student assistants has been cut substantially, but fortunately we still have a talented and flexible group of students working with us: **Harpreet Hayer** is in her last semester of studies here, and is working in the ETC office after four years in the main office. **Donny Wombold** is in the main office and also helps out in CMS. **Ryan Willard** continues in the Comp/JEPET office, as does **Dorothy Koch** in the CMS office.

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Maureen Turner Carey and James Warren Boyd report that the **English Tutoring Center** currently has six drop-in tutors, 53 one-on-one tutors, and 99 student writers coming through its doors each week, not to mention the many additional students who stop by for drop-in tutoring appointments. Drop-in tutoring is available Monday-Thursday.

This semester, the ETC is working with the externally-funded Metropolitan Health Academy to hire paid tutors for MHA students. This is a wonderful opportunity for some of our senior tutors, and experienced ETC tutors are encouraged to apply for one of these positions.

Lastly, the English Tutoring Center's new website is now up and running! Please visit www.sfsu.edu/~etc for regular updates regarding tutor training workshops and tutoring services, as well as downloadable resource materials for students and tutors alike. Also, be sure to refer your students to the ETC for drop-in tutoring.

Meet the Staff!

We are inaugurating this section with a profile of **Irina Simon**, who works as the Department Office and Web Coordinator. Irina has been working in the department since February 2004, starting as a student assistant in the Composition and JEPET Office and moving to a staff position in January 2006, after graduating *magna cum laude* with a B.A. from the Technical and Professional Writing Program and a minor in Accounting here at SFSU.

One of Irina's major accomplishments has been a collaboration with Chris Clark (College IT consultant) on redesigning the departmental website: www.sfsu.edu/~english. Some of her other duties include helping the faculty with advising; supervising student assistants; collecting information from the faculty to post for the students; helping to organize and advertise departmental events; entering the class schedule online; and, assisting faculty, staff, and students on the phone and in person in the reception area.

She is also a member of the local arrangements committee for the PAMLA conference that will be held at SFSU in November.

Irina stays connected to her interest in writing and editing by working as an English Department grader for a high school in the Jefferson Union High School District in Daly City. She edited the Russian version of a booklet for parents and guardians entitled *Because Writing Matters: Helping Your Children Become Confident, Skilled Writers, In and Beyond School*, a publication of the California Writing Project at UC Berkeley.

Irina grew up in Moscow, Russia. Her interests include cooking; doing various handcrafts such as cross-stitching and knitting; and hiking with her husband.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Author's Teaching Circle: Join authors **Michael Krasny** (SF State) and M.E. Sokolik (UC Berkeley) as they discuss teaching with their newly released book, *Sound Ideas*. Krasny and Sokolik will talk about the process of putting together the texts for this composition-oriented reader, and they will address how instructors might use it to foster student engagement in reading and writing. A wine-and-cheese reception, sponsored by McGraw-Hill, will immediately follow the teaching circle at 4:30 pm. RSVP to colloquium organizer Kory Lawson Ching at klching@sfsu.edu.

Place: HUM 587

Time: 3:30 pm - 4:30 pm (Teaching Circle) and 4:30-5:30 (Reception)

Date: Wednesday, October 21

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Release of *Changing Society*: Perhaps you've seen the posters for *Changing Society*, edited by **Jerome Schwab** and **Amy Love**. This new issues-based reader from Pearson-Prentice Hall will be released on November 2nd and is ready for Spring adoptions. It is filled with new material (12 chapters and 72 readings) and has been successfully piloted in English 105, 106, 114 and 414 composition courses. You all are invited to a teaching circle/book release party on the afternoon of November 12th. From 3:30-4:30 the authors will share their success with student engagement, and then celebrate with refreshments from 4:30-6:00. More details will follow.

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Pacific Ancient and Modern Language Association: A number of our faculty will participate in the 107th Annual Conference of PAMLA, which takes place here at SFSU on November 6th and 7th:

- **Bev Voloshin** will deliver the Presidential address and will also lead a session on Disability Studies.
- **Sarita Cannon** is chairing a session on American literature from 1865 to 1945, and **Geoffrey Green** will chair the session on American literature from 1945 to the present.
- **Sara Hackenberg** is chairing a session on literature and religion in the 19th century, and giving a paper during the "Narrative and Crime" session entitled "Painful Excitements": Transatlantic Urban Mysteries Novel and the Rhetoric of Social Reform; Sara will also be a respondent in Studies in Literature and Science session.
- **Emily Merriman**, a conference co-organizer, is chairing a session on "Revising Religion in the Recent American Novel."
- **Herman Haluza** will present "The Classics, Understanding and Contemporary Vision" during the "Ancient-Modern Relations" session.
- **Martha Klironomos**, in a session on Virginia Woolf, will speak about "British Women Travellers to Greece: Virginia Woolf and her Circle and the Contradictions of Liberal Aesthetic Ideology."
- **Elise Wormuth** is chairing a session on young adult literature.
- **Lynn Wardley** will chair a session on studies in literature and science; she'll also give a paper entitled "Edith Wharton's *Eternal Marriage*" in a session on marriage and family in 19th-century American literature.
- **Mary Soliday** will lead a session on issues relevant to the academic workforce in higher education.

- **Loretta Stec** is chairing a session on post-colonial literature, and will deliver a paper on “Claude McKay’s Proletarian Cosmopolitanism Transformed in the Postcolonial Era.”

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M.A. TESOL Conference: The M.A. TESOL graduating class of Fall 2009 welcomes all who are interested to attend the Fall 2009 M.A. TESOL Conference on Friday, December 4, 2009.

12:45-1:30 Registration (HUM 581)

1:30-3:30 Presentations (HUM 202, 207, 211)

3:45-4:15 Reception (HUM 587)

4:15-5:30 Career networking with alumni (HUM 587 and nearby rooms)

FACULTY AND STAFF ~ NEWS AND ACTIVITIES

Peter Weltner has new poems already published or appearing soon in *Paradigm Journal*, *Ampersand*, *14 Magazine/U.K.*, *Clapboard House*, *Danse Macabre*, and *Breadcrumb Scabs*. His prose poem, "Give Us Peace," won the Grand Prize of the *Prick of the Spindle* Open Fiction Competition. *From a Lost Faust Book*, a chapbook, is due out October 30th, from Finishing Line Press, and a new full length collection of narrative poems and prose poems, *News from the World at My Birth: A History*, about the period immediately before, during, and shortly after World War Two, will be published later this fall by Standing Stone Books.

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Ellen Peel has been nominated to run for Second Vice President (and therefore eventually President) of the International Society for the Study of Narrative.

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Maricel Santos published a co-edited volume with Kathleen M. Bailey of the Monterey Institute of International Studies entitled *Research on ESL in U.S. Community Colleges People, Programs, and Potential* (2009, University of Michigan Press). She also has an article in the September 2009 issue of *Global Health Promotion* entitled "Engaging learners as interpreters for developing health messages—designing the “Familias Sin Plomo” English as a Second Language curriculum project," co-authored with Jeff McClelland (MA TESOL alum) and Margaret Handley (epidemiologist at UCSF). The article is accessible at <http://ped.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/16/3/53>.

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Shelley Waksler presented a paper in July at the 11th International Pragmatics Conference (IPra) in Melbourne, Australia: “Super, uber, so, and totally: Over-the-top intensifiers as subjectivity markers in colloquial discourse.”

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Casey Keck and **Tara Lockhart** presented their work as part of a panel entitled "Teaching Graduate Student Writers" at this fall's English Council in San Diego. **Sugie Goen-Salter** chaired the panel.

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Maureen Fitzgerald taught English this summer in the Peruvian Amazon. She traveled down the Madre de Dios River to the Los Amigos Biological Station, where she worked with the station's support staff, many of whom need English skills to communicate with visiting researchers from the U.S. and other countries.

Jim Kohn continues lecturing for the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. He gave a presentation recently on the current exhibition at the DeYoung, "Tutankhamen and the Golden Age of the Pharaohs." Jim also leads adult walks at the Botanical Garden in Golden Gate Park. One is coming up on Sunday, October 25, at 10:30 a.m.

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Casey Keck has been invited to contribute an entry on "Corpus Linguistics and Language Teaching" to Wiley-Blackwell's *Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics*, which will be released in 2011. Her work will also appear in an upcoming special issue of *Writing & Pedagogy* on the topic of "Plagiarism in the Academy." Her contribution to this issue is titled, "How do university students attempt to avoid plagiarism? A grammatical analysis of L1 and L2 paraphrasing strategies."

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In the summer, **Jolie Martin** traveled to Siberia to participate in a summer language camp; she writes,

I trekked across the back of Mother Russia, riding on her spine from Moscow to Novosibirsk to live and take part in something unique, teaching pirate-themed courses in English and French to Russian children at Cosmopolitan Language Camp. Staying in the woods, forty minutes outside of Novosibirsk, in a forest with tall elegant legged white birch trees and shaggy brown trunked pine trees that rise from thick fern beds which are sprinkled with yellow, violet, and white wildflowers, I attempted to teach four different levels of English every thirty-five minutes, and one French course to patient, yet ambitious seven- to seventeen-year-old Siberians. Not being able to communicate with the students, not having materials, and not teaching in a classroom, I had to adapt, flex, bend, and laugh loads. Loving with a full and open heart, asking teachers for our autographs, posing with us in photographs, applauding for us when we performed on stage, and gifting us little chocolates and treat, the children were a delight; they are truly bright stars of Russia.

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Bev Voloshin participated in a conference on Melville and the Mediterranean, held in East Jerusalem last summer.

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For the University's first Alumni Day (17 October), **Bruce Avery** made a presentation entitled "How to Teach *Hamlet*." Bruce also gave a talk at the recent conference of the British Shakespeare Association in London.

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Elizabeth Whalley gave a presentation last winter in Honolulu at the Hawaii International Conference on the Arts and Humanities entitled "Spoken Grammar Activities to Promote Written English." She will present this fall at the Regional CATESOL Conference in Concord on "Improv Games to Build Community and Promote Language Development." She is a member of the improv troupe "Spontaneous Combustion," which performs monthly. Information about the performances can be found on Facebook.

NEWS ABOUT CURRENT AND FORMER STUDENTS

Several Literature graduate students will present papers at the upcoming PAMLA conference:

Carla Della Gatta: "Stephen Greenblatt's *Cardenio* and New Historicism in the Theater"

Ruth Osorio: "Emancipation or Condemnation: Female Sexuality in Jean Toomer's *Cane*"

Charissa Shull: "A Successful Proposal: John Donne's Redirection of the Virginia Company"

Melissa Mirza: "Arab Identity as Constructed Through Fashion"

Avi Mendelson: "Doggish Madness: Edgar Plays Rabies"

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M.A. TESOL student **Christina Lorimer** was selected as one of the first student research fellows under the Research Infrastructure in Minority Institutions (RIMI) grant from the National Center for Minority Health and Health Disparities, National Institutes of Health, to San Francisco State University. Christina is working under the supervision of Maricel Santos on two projects: (1) a qualitative study of ESL learners who have experienced diabetes or care for someone with diabetes, exploring the link between improved health literacy and health outcomes; and (2) a community engagement project which seeks to promote community engagement and awareness in multiple sectors about the immigrant elder experience in health care (in conjunction with Project SHINE). Christina is receiving a stipend of \$6000 and will have multiple opportunities to participate in research trainings on campus and in the Bay Area, all of which will support her eventual application to doctoral programs that build on her interests in health and literacy.

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Hae Sung Yang, also in M.A. TESOL, was recently accepted to present at the upcoming Symposium on Second Language Writing in Tempe, AZ. His presentation will describe the rhetorical move structures of text-responsible argumentative essays written by multilingual undergraduate students.

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Justin Smith, a student in M.A. Literature, participated in a symposium last April called "100 Years of Richard Wright: The Man, His Work, and His Legacy," hosted by the University of Utah in Salt Lake City. He presented a paper titled "Black Brute: The Dread of Amalgamation Fictionalized by Richard Wright," which is based primarily on Wright's 1940 novel *Native Son*, and is an examination of the acute fear of miscegenation in the novel and of the racist stereotype of the "brute."

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Viola Lasmana, also in M.A. Literature, has just been in Carlisle, Pennsylvania to present a paper at the Literature and Film Association's 2009 Annual Conference on "Texts, Technologies, and Intertextualities," held at Dickinson College. Viola's spoke about "(Re)Mediated Intertextualities in the 21st Century: YouTube and the Age of Digital Reproduction."

***We are eager to maintain contact with alumni and friends of the department.
To receive future news and announcements, to update us about yourself,
and to submit items for the newsletter,
please e-mail Ceci Herrmann at herrmann@sfsu.edu***