

17 August 2009

Dear Colleagues:

I want to begin by thanking Mario DiGangi for having stepped so gracefully into the job of Executive Officer (EO) last semester while I was on leave. I had a very good semester, and that was in large part because I knew that the English Program was in such capable hands. Richard Kaye served effectively as Deputy EO, overseeing the complex process of admissions. Nancy Silverman did her usual remarkable job as Assistant Program Officer (APO), as did our College Assistant, Julie Pranikoff. And Ammiel Alcalay continued to serve as the Deputy Executive Officer in charge of Placement, course scheduling, and the internship program, and Joan Richardson continued her work as our Student Progress Officer (SPO). I am happy to say that, for the coming year, we have our whole administrative team back in place, with Mario and Ammiel serving as Deputies, Joan as SPO, Nancy as APO, and Julie as College Assistant. I look forward to the year ahead, working with all of them, and with you.

The Spring semester was marked by the very sad news of Distinguished Professor Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's death. Eve had been, for more than a decade, an extremely important, dedicated, and generous member of our faculty, and I certainly miss her presence in the English Program. I want to thank Josh Wilner for having completed the teaching of her Spring seminar, and her students and colleagues for the expressions of affection and admiration they made at our last Friday Forum of the Spring semester. With Eve's husband Hal Sedgwick, the Program is organizing a memorial for Eve on Saturday, September 26, noon to 4 p.m., in the Elebash Recital Hall.

Asian American Literature Search

Toward the end of last semester, the English Program was given authorization to proceed with a search for a Graduate Center appointment in Asian American literature. This is part of a broader Graduate Center initiative to appoint new faculty members, across the disciplines, in the study of social change in an era of globalization. (There are also ongoing initiatives to appoint new scholars in the interdisciplinary study of religion and of science in the twenty-first century, and we hope to be part of those initiatives in future years.) As many of you will remember, our recent self-study identified Asian American as a top priority for hiring in the Program, and we are excited about this search.

The job has already been advertised in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* and in other appropriate venues. The initial deadline for the receipt of applications is September 15 (the unusual timeline for the search is determined by budgetary/administrative concerns beyond our control). At that point, we will assess the pool of candidates; if a larger pool seems desirable, we will advertise the position further. If not, we will proceed with considering the applications received.

The Faculty Membership and Executive Committees have the ultimate responsibility for decisions regarding hiring, but in proceeding with this search, as always, we will schedule events (public lectures, etc.) that allow for full Program input.

New Faculty

During the past year, we were able to appoint two new CUNY-based faculty members to the doctoral faculty.

Nico Israel of Hunter College has a wide range of interests, including twentieth-century British, Irish, American, and European literature, colonial and post-colonial literature and theory, literary and critical theory, and art history and visual culture.

Lyn Di Iorio of City College brings to the doctoral faculty her expertise in Caribbean literature, literatures of the Americas, magical realism, ghosts and the Gothic in literature, fiction writing (the novel and short story), minority literature, and Latino/a literature and aesthetics.

We very much look forward to the opportunity to work with Professors Di Iorio and Israel, and to the rich professional experience and scholarship each brings to the Program.

The Faculty Membership Committee has invited, for the coming semester, two scholars of early modern England to give faculty membership lectures: William Fisher of Lehman College will speak at 4 p.m. on September 25 and Tanya Pollard of Brooklyn College will speak at 2 p.m. on October 2. We also will schedule for more informal meetings, for students and faculty, with Professors Fisher and Pollard on the days of their respective lectures.

Friday Forums

We have our usual full schedule of Friday events for the coming semester, which will be posted on our Website at <http://web.gc.cuny.edu/English/pages/forum.html>. These events generally take place at 4 p.m. in our lounge, room 4406; each is followed by a modest wine-and-cheese reception.

The first Forum of the semester – on Friday, September 4, at 4 p.m. – will be our Welcome for new students. We hope that as many faculty and continuing students as possible will attend this event, or at least the reception following, in order to have the opportunity to introduce themselves to our incoming class.

September's events also include our Job Forum (2 p.m. on September 11) for students entering the job market; an all-day, international conference (Authorship and Authority: Barking Abbey and its Texts) (September 11), and a two-day conference (Advancing Feminist Poetics and Activism) (September 24-25, sponsored by Belladonna).

New Students

The students we welcome to the English Program this year are, once again, a most impressive group. They include students from Germany, Canada, and Taiwan, as well as from across the United States. Many entering students have already earned master's degrees in literature or creative writing, and many have extensive and interesting work experience. The Admissions Committee was deeply impressed by the qualifications and accomplishments of all.

The academic interests of the incoming class are extremely eclectic, ranging from the 21st century to the medieval, from consumerism to aesthetics, and including composition/rhetoric, Chicano literature, queer studies, African American literature, Shakespeare, feminism, Caribbean literature, postcolonial literature, and much more.

Again, please join us in welcoming the new members of our community at the Friday Forum on September 4 at 4 p.m. in room 4406.

Student Achievements

English Program students won four of the Graduate Center's dissertation-year fellowships for the coming academic year. Additional students' dissertation work will be supported by English Program awards. And the program was able to offer a number of dissertation prizes to completed dissertations. (Most of the Program's fellowships and prizes are made possible by gift funds set up by alumni, retired faculty, and other friends of the English Program.) The full list of Program and Graduate Center awards is at http://web.gc.cuny.edu/English/pages/awards_0809.htm.

Thirty-one of our students completed their degrees during the 2008-2009 year. It gives me great pleasure to recognize them, along with their dissertations, here:

BARRIE BALTER, AMERICAN "I-DEOLOGIES": THE PERSONAL AND THE POLITICAL IN THE POST-VIETNAM NOVEL

NIKHIL BILWAKESH, EMERSON AND AMERICAN COSMOPOLITANISM

VINCENT BISSONETTE, THE FIGURE OF ANGER: POLITICAL AND PERSONAL PASSIONS FROM HOBBS TO COLERIDGE

KRISTEN CASE, "A BIRD'S LIFE": PRAGMATISM IN THE FIELD OF TWENTIETH-CENTURY AMERICAN POETRY

BARBARA M. COPPUS, WOOLF PLAY: THE ART OF SCIENCE IN BETWEEN THE ACTS

FRANCESCO CROCCO, NATIONAL EYES: ROMANTIC POETRY AND THE RISE OF BRITISH NATIONALISM

CLAUDIA A. DIXON, BRINGING HER HOME: THE WOMAN IN HERMAN MELVILLE

ROBERT JOSEPH FAUNCE, A SEMESTER IN PURGATORY: AT THE INTERSECTIONS OF PEDAGOGY, INTERPELLATION, QUEERNESS, AND MOURNING

ANDREW JAMES FITCH, POP POETICS: BETWEEN LYRIC AND LANGUAGE

WENDY WALTER GALGAN, SHE'S POETRY IN MOTION: METAPHORS OF MOVEMENT IN SOME CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN WOMEN'S POETRY

RUTH GLADYS GARCIA, "I WILL NOT CALL HER SERVANT": AMBIGUITY AND POWER IN MASTER-SERVANT RELATIONSHIPS IN THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY NOVEL

LOUISE GEDDES, "THE WOUNDS BECOME HIM": SACRIFICE, HONOR AND THE HAZARD OF MUCH BLOOD IN SHAKESPEARE'S ROMAN PLAYS

MIKHAIL GERSHOVICH, "MAKING THE DEVIL USEFUL": ENGLISH TEACHERS AND THE MOVIES IN AMERICA, 1910-1941

SEAN AUSTIN GRATTAN, CROSSING THE LINE: KATHY ACKER, WILLIAM S. BURROUGHS, AND THE POLITICS OF PIRACY

BROOKS E. HEFNER, "YOU'VE GOT TO BE MODERNISTIC": AMERICAN VERNACULAR MODERNISM, 1910-1937

ROBERT KAPLAN, MANNING AMERICA: FRANCIS HUTCHESON, HOMOAFECTIVE RELATIONS AND NATIONAL IDENTITY IN THE EARLY REPUBLIC

JUNGCHUN ROSLYN KO, READING FOR (THE) REAL: BETWEEN JACQUES LACAN AND NARRATIVE PLOT

GARY LIM, FAMILIAR ESTRANGEMENTS: READING FAMILY IN MIDDLE ENGLISH ROMANCE

CHRISTINA M. MOHLER, HOLLOW WOMEN: RAPE AND SODOMITICAL DESIRE IN EARLY MODERN DRAMA

KATHRYN COAD NARRAMORE, BEYOND AGENCY: WOMEN WRITING ROMANCE AS POLITICAL INTERVENTION IN THE ENGLISH REVOLUTION

ANDREA PARMEGIANI, THE POWER OF ENGLISH AND ACADEMIC LITERACY: STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS AND THEORETICAL, POLITICAL, AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS. A CASE STUDY OF STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY

LAROSE TULIA PARRIS, BEING APART: THE AFRICAN DIASPORA AND THE EXISTENTIAL

RICHARD PEREZ, TRANSAMERICAN GHOSTS: THE FACE, THE ABYSS, AND THE DEAD OF NEW WORLD POST-COLONIALITY

JOHN RODRIGUEZ, "WHEN WE WAS BOYS": THE AUTO-ETHNOGRAPHY OF A SOUTH BRONX TEEN PROGRAM

SARAH ROTHSCHILD, MODELING THE FEMININE: THE PRINCESS STORY IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY AMERICAN FICTION AND FILM

CHRISTOPHER SCHMIDT, WASTE MATTERS: EXPENDITURE AND WASTE MANAGEMENT IN 20TH - AND 21ST- CENTURY POETICS

MAHWASH SHOAIB, ARTS OF THE IMPOSSIBLE: THE TRANSNATIONAL POETICS OF ETEL ADNAN, AGHA SHAHID ALI, THERESA HAK KYUNG CHA, AND KISHWAR NAHEED

CLIFFORD DARROW STETNER, SHAKESPEARE'S "SHRIEKING HARBINGER": SEASONAL PATTERN, GENRE, AND THE SHAPES OF TIME IN THE FIRST FOLIO AND THE PHOENIX AND THE TURTLE

KAREN WEINGARTEN, GENEALOGIES OF ABORTION: ON THE LIMITS OF LIFE AND CHOICE IN MODERN AMERICA

RONALDO VERGELIO WILSON, BLACK BODIES BLACK FIELDS(S): 20TH CENTURY AND CONTEMPORARY POETICS OF THE BLACK BODY IN AFRICAN AMERICAN POETRY AND VISUAL CULTURE

SUNG HEE YOOK, THE POETICS OF TRAUMA NARRATIVES AND ASIAN AMERICAN WOMEN WRITERS

Job Placement

Our students had good success on the job market last year despite the tight economy and the cancellation of a fair number of jobs mid-search. Following is a list of students who have found full-time positions (most of them tenure-track). Please join me in congratulating all of them. (If the information that follows is incomplete, please let me know.)

Jennifer Abeles, University of Hartford [full-time, one-year appointment]

Marta Bladek, John Jay College, CUNY [full-time, tenure-track]
Kristen Case, Lebanon Valley College [full-time, one-year appointment]
Frank Crocco, BMCC, CUNY [full-time, tenure-track]
Sean Egan, Hudson County Community College [full-time, tenure-track]
Andy Fitch, University of Wyoming [full-time, tenure-track]
Alina Gharabegian, New Jersey City University [full-time, tenure-track]
Lizzie Harris, LaGuardia Community College, CUNY [full-time, tenure-track]
Brooks Hefner, James Madison University [full-time, tenure-track]
Robert Kaplan, Temple University [full-time, renewable]
Chris Loots, Mercy College [full-time, five-year appointment]
Mark McCullough, Ave Maria University [full-time, tenure-track]
Andrea Parmegiani, Bronx Community College, CUNY [full-time, tenure-track]
Chris Schmidt, University of Michigan [full-time, four-year renewable]
Sandra Smith, Union College, KY [full-time, tenure-track]
Karen Weingarten, Queens College, CUNY [full-time, tenure track]
Rebecca Wisor, West Point [full-time, three-year appointment]

Alumni

Our alumni continue generously to support the Graduate Center and the English Program through their donations. These make possible our Program dissertation fellowships and prizes.

English Program alumni continue as well to be extremely active and productive members of a variety of scholarly and intellectual communities. For a sampling of their recent accomplishments, see our Website, at http://web.gc.cuny.edu/English/pages/alumni_accomplishments.html.

Again, I welcome you all to the new academic year. I look forward to seeing many of you at our first Friday Forum (September 4), and to working with all of you in the coming semester.

Yours sincerely,

Steve Kruger

EO, English