English News / the online newsletter of the CSUSB English Department
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What's New in the English Department



Award Winner: Our congratulations to the College of Arts & Letters Outstanding Graduate Student for 2001, **Joe Notarangleo**, shown here with daughter Luisa at the College of Arts and Letters Reception on May 29. Joe was honored for his achievement and awarded his M.A. in English Composition with a concentration in Literature at the College of Arts and Letters commencement ceremony on June 16. He will enter UC Riverside's English Ph.D. program in September. Joe's thesis explores the California labor novel, examining the California Dream in three works: Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, Barrio's*The Plum Plum Pickers*, and Boyle's *The Tortilla Curtain.*

New Faculty: We'll be welcoming five outstanding new tenure-track members of our faculty next Fall. You can read more about their backgrounds in the Chair's column below. The Department also plans to recruit in the coming year, looking to fill four new tenure-track positions in areas such as Creative Writing, English Education, Composition, and Asian or Asian-American Literature.



News from our Department Office Staff: Welcome to Marilyn Gareis, who joined our office staff this January as Administrative Support Assistant, and helps Dottie Cartwright to keep things running smoothly. Marilyn came to us from Accounting. She says "I enjoy the variety of people that I get to interact with (staff, faculty and students). Yes, there are days when I wish 'Calgon, please take me away!' but overall if it wasn't for those crazy days my job would be boring." Her future plans include earning her MA in linguistics and acquiring a teaching credential. Jeff Hupp, who many of you will remember, is now living and working in Studio City after graduating last Spring.

Teaching Assistantship in Literature for the MA Program: Plans are in the works to add a TAship in literature to our MA Program. The current program offers students the opportunity to apply for a TAship in Composition, teaching a section of English 101 (Freshman Composition) after they've completed required courses and undertaken an internship. Students accepted for the new TAship will teach a section of English 170, Studies in Literature, a lower-division general education course.

From the Chair



Time sure flies when you're having fun! It's hard to believe that I've put in almost two years in this Chair. I guess I've sort of become used to it, and so far anyway there hasn't been any open rebellion.

Personnel-wise, it's been a very up-and-down year. On the down side, we are still mourning the death of **Larry Kramer**. And we're losing **Rise Axelrod**, who's been lured away by that prestigious university about 20 miles south of us. They made her an offer that apparently no sane person could refuse; they are trying in fact to give her an Endowed Chair (which definitely trumps my lowly Chair). Another milestone: **Clark Mayo** is taking early retirement starting next year, so he'll only be teaching for us in the Winter. He says that he was finally persuaded to make the move when he realized that, together, he, **Bruce Golden**, and **Peter Schroeder** have taught 100 years here. And many of you no doubt had either 311 or 510 with Kevin Burne, who is retiring (again) after teaching here

lo these many years. For him the decisive factor was his wife's refusal to let him continue to drive over the Cajon Pass.

As if in anticipation of those departures, we've done a lot of hiring this year. In fact, I think we set some sort of record, as we hired five new assistant professors as well as two visiting assistant professors. We now have a reputation around campus as the department who hires people. In January and February, we invited our top five choices for campus visits and we hired every one of them. We obviously convinced them that we're a cool department. One is our own graduate--both B.A. and M.A.--**Yvonne Atkinson**, who is just finishing her Ph.D. dissertation from that institution down the road, and who joins us as a tenure-track faculty member specializing in African-American literature. Another is a composition specialist from the University of Rochester: **Mary Boland**. The third comes from the University of Indiana--**Dave Carlson**--whose specialty is early American literature. **Ellen Gil-Gomez** got her Ph.D. from Washington State University and teaches Chicano/a and Latino/a literature as well as American literature in general. And **Luz Elena Ramirez** (Ph.D. from the University of Texas) will teach modern British literature and some areas of world literature.

So, lots of changes. And the changes will continue, as we will be recruiting again next year for at least several new assistant professors. At the same time, the spirit of the Department continues to be as vibrant, if not more so, than ever. Faculty members are publishing, presenting at conferences, teaching, running various parts of the University. And our programs are growing: we're up to almost 100 B.A.'s graduating each year, and there are now over 100 graduate students enrolled in courses each quarter.

We'd love to hear from you. Drop us a line (5500 University Parkway, SB 92407), an e-mail (ppage@csusb.edu), or a phone call (909-537-5824), or come by for a visit.

Phil Page

Remembering Larry Kramer



Last year the English department and university community lost Larry Kramer, due to complications related to his battle with cancer. His students regarded him as an outstanding professor, and we remember his contagious laughter, his unique style of teaching, his artistic sensibility, and his excellent poetry. And of course, how can anyone forget his office with its mounds of papers, half-empty boxes, and the confused state of his bookshelves? I recall once sitting in my office when a new janitor opened Larry’s door for the first time and took a step back, shaking his head and saying to himself: "Boy, I guess no one cleaned this office after the earthquake we had last week." The janitor quickly learned that that cluttered room was a functioning office.

There was always a stream of students waiting to see Larry. Once Larry told me that his uncles were men who enjoyed sitting on porches, cultivating the art of fishing and conversation. Larry was a fine conversationalist with a knowledge of many topics. He was also an attentive listener and spent time with students. And as some of you know, Larry loved to fish. He talked about his fishing as if it were a way of life, though he didn’t have a lot of time to go fishing. Yet, in another way he was always fishing. His storytelling was a form of fishing. If you had taken a class with him, I am sure you were exposed one of his stories—you know, the stories that were a mixture of truth and imagination. He loved to

see how far he could reel you in until you realized he had hooked you. To this day his some of his stories still tug at me. He would cast his line to see if he could catch you off guard and how long you'd remain on the hook.

Larry had multiple myeloma, which is very painful and difficult to treat. I had known Larry for over twenty years, and in his last year of life I learned he was a courageous man. Many years ago when Larry had a dog named Princess, he would walk his beloved whippet behind Cal State. I joined him on occasion. I remember one day Princess spotted a rabbit and gave chase. She dashed into the heavy brush, disappearing from our sight. When she returned, she had cuts on her face and shoulders. She had lost the rabbit. When she was going through the chaparral, she leaped to see over the tall brush in hope of spotting the rabbit.

I often thought of that image when Larry was going through his different treatments. Princess was determined to carry on even though she was surrounded by brush; I saw Larry face each treatment with an unwavering spirit even though the odds were against him. Larry died last year, but we still have him in his poems and in the ways he influenced us as a teacher, artist, mentor, colleague, and friend. In closing, if you have time for some fine poetry, please read Larry's last book, *Brilliant Windows*. Larry also wrote many wonderful poems at the end of his life that Pat, his widow, is collecting and editing with the hope of getting them published. I look forward to reading those poems in print.

Juan Delgado

Donations in Larry's name can be made to: Circle of Friends Research Grant, International Myeloma Foundation, 12650 Riverside Dr., Hollywood CA 91607-3421

Faculty Features

Who's on First? Several faculty will take up new administrative roles in Fall 2001: **Ron Chen,** stepping down after two years as Graduate Coordinator, will become Associate Chair & TESL Coordinator, **Jackie Rhodes** will be Composition Coordinator**, Renée Pigeon** will replace **Rise Axelrod** as TA Coordinator, **Elinore Partridge** will once again be Graduate Coordinator, and **Holly Henry** will step in for **Jenny Andersen** and **Sunny Hyon** as adviser to the English Club.

As Phil Page notes above, **Rise Axelrod** will be leaving us to become Professor of English and Director of English Composition over at UCR, where she hopes to create opportunities for doctoral study in Rhetoric and Composition. She can be reached at raxelrod@ucr.edu.



Kevin Burne's long service to the department was celebrated at the end-of-Spring-quarter festivities held at Carol Haviland's on June 9. We all wish him the best on his retirement.

Margaret Doane was named the University's Outstanding Faculty Advisor Award. Following up on last year's feat of participating in the AIDS Ride, Margaret ran in and completed the San Diego Marathon in January. Go, Margaret!

Pete Fairchild's much-honored volume *The Art of the Lathe* was a finalist for the Poet's Prize. This summer Pete will be poet-in-residence at the Frost Place in Franconia, New Hampshire.

Two new Assistant Professors joined the Department this year, **Holly Henry** and **Alexandria LaFaye**. Holly specializes in Modern British Literature, and her research focuses on cultural studies of science, particularly the interconnections between literature and astronomy, aerostation and space science. Alexandria is our new Children's Literature specialist, and the author of several young adult books, several of which have just been issued in paperback.

Sunny Hyon completed a four-week French immersion course in Annecy, France last summer (2000), polishing her Francolinguistic skills after her adventures last summer in Quebec.



Looking forward to his retirement, **Clark Mayo** (shown here with sidekicks Chen & Schroder) says "I feel incredibly lucky to have taught in such an outstanding department - both students and faculty have made my job a joy (truly!)." And we feel lucky that FERP (the Faculty Early Retirement Program) will keep Clark around still teaching a few courses.

The Samuel Johnson Society of Southern California elected **Ted Ruml** their President. He also continues to edit the society's newsletter.

DeShea Rushing has been keeping busy as the Director of the Alliance for Academic Preparation (AAP) Program, a collaborative effort between targeted high schools in our region and CSUSB to help eleventh-grade students more adequately prepare themselves for the academic challenges of the university as well as to work with high school faculty in their efforts to improve student performance. DeShea also serves on the Test Development Committee for Written Composition for the Golden State Exam (GSE) and is one of the Chief Readers for the exam, and lends her expertise in test development to the California High School Exit Exam, as well as serving as a reader and/or Table Leader for several assessment programs.

Worth Reading: A new feature in *English News*, recommendations from the English Department of books & web sites worth checking out. Alumni & friends, please send us your recommendations, too.

Books

Me Talk Pretty One Day by David Sedaris. Anyone who's ever taught or been a student (and that should cover most of us) will appreciate Sedaris' misguided attempts to teach creative writing and explain the Easter Bunny while learning French in this latest collection of comic essays by the frequent NPR contributor. (Little Brown & Co., 2001. ISBN: 0316776963. $14.95)--Renée Pigeon

A Suitcase Of Seaweed and Other Poems by Janet Wong, a compelling collection of poetry for children that explores Asian-American identity in crisp imagery and touching observations. (Margaret McElderry, 1996. ISBN: 0689807880. $15.00)--Alexandria LaFaye

Web Resources

http://www.merlot.org **MERLOT** (Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning and Online Teaching) is a free database of hypertext links and teaching resources for everyone from math teachers to English teachers of

various stripes. It's free to join and relatively easy to search (although it's still in the growing stage). When you get to the page, check out the link to "Humanities" in the upper right or, for more comp-ish things, use the pull-down menu on the bottom right ("Teacher Education" has a wide variety of material for English classrooms of all sorts; "World Languages"-->"ESL" gets you into ESL comp materials). --Jackie Rhodes

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Friday Forums The "Friday Forums" are a regular feature of English Department life. Several times a year faculty and guests gather on Friday afternoon to listen to talks from one of our colleagues on topics ranging from the pragmatic to the arcane. The Forum year culminated in Peter Schroeder's June 1 talk on "Jane Austen and her Readers," where Peter shared with us, among more laudatory commentary, Mark Twain's acerbic response to Austen: "I often want to criticise Jane Austen, but her books madden me so that I can't conceal my frenzy from the reader; and therefore I have to stop every time I begin. Every time I read Pride and Prejudice I want to dig her up and hit her over the head with her own shin-bone." Alumni and other Department friends are always welcome at Friday Forums--check the Department website for announcements of upcoming events.



In Brief: Recent Professional Activities of Faculty & Graduate Students

Faculty & Graduate Student Publications:

Melanie Abrams' short story, "The AWOL Chef," will appear in the Spring issue of the *Indiana Review*.

Susanne Arakawa presented a paper focusing on race in U.S. cinema at the December 2000 MLA meeting in Washington D.C., and reviewed Daniel Leonard Bernardi's *Star Trek and History: Race-ing Toward a White Future* for the *Journal of Popular Film & Television*, Fall 2000 (v. 28 no. 3). She was elected Graduate Student Representative to the Executive Committee of the Pacific Ancient and Modern Languages Association, 2001-2002, and served as co-presiding officer for the MELUS session on "Writing Identity," at the PAMLA Convention held at UCLA in November 2000.

Jim Brown published an autobiographical essay, "My Papa's Waltz," in the *Los Angeles Times Magazine* last January, reviewed a novel, "The Lost Legends of New Jersey," for the *San Francisco Chronicle Book Review* last summer, and contributed another essay, "The Facts," to the Spring 2001 edition of *The Santa Monica Review*.

Pete Fairchild has poems presently appearing or forthcoming in *Paris Review, Yale Review, Hudson Review, American Scholar,* and *Sewanee Review.*

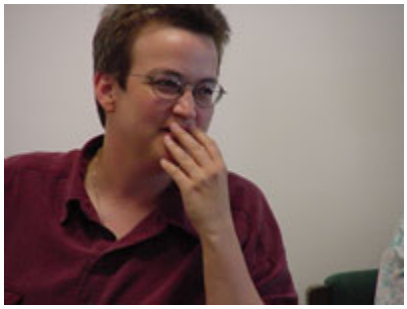
Holly Henry's manuscript, *Virginia Woolf and the Discourse of Science: An Aesthetics of Astronomy*, is under contract for publication by Cambridge University Press.

Simon and Schuster will publish **Alexandria La Faye's** fifth young adult novel, *Dad, in Spirit*, in June 2001.

Clark Mayo was the featured speaker at Chaffey College's Book Week in April with a lecture entitled "Kurt Vonnegut's Gestalt: Unnecessary Truth and Necessary Lies."

Phil Page's article, "Furrowing All the Brows: Interpretation and the Transcendent in Toni Morrison's *Paradise*," will appear in an issue of *African American Review* during 2001.

Renée Pigeon contributed "No Man's Elizabeth: The Virgin Queen in Recent Films" to *Retrovision: Reinventing the Past in Film and Fiction*, the sixth *Film/Fiction Annual*. Published by Pluto Press, the collection is scheduled to appear in June 2001. Renée's article analyzes the portrayal of Queen Elizabeth I in three films from the '90's: *Orlando*, *Elizabeth*, and *Shakespeare in Love*.



"Risking Queer: Pedagogy, Performativity, and Desire in Writing Classrooms," an article **Jackie Rhodes** (pictured here) wrote with Connie Monson of Emory University, was accepted for publication in *Queer Compositions: Queer Theory and the Teaching of Writing*, which is currently in its second round of readings by MLA manuscript reviewers

Peter Schroeder's article on "Saying but Little: Malory and the Suggestion of Emotion" appeared in *Arthuriana* vol. 11, n. 2, a journal devoted to King Arthur.

Professor Emeritus **Ed White** has kept up his usual busy schedule of publications, contributing an article to the *Chronicle of Higher Education* on student evaluation of teachers ("Bursting the Bubble Sheet: How to Improve Evaluations of Teaching," November 10, 2000, B11), another article to *College English* ("The Opening of the Modern Era of Writing Assessment: A Narrative," 63.3 (January 2001): 306-20), and in a lighter moment a Crossword Puzzle to *Rhetoric Review* ("Rhetoricians on Location," 19.1/2: 92-3). Ed also has seven book chapters more or less in press and a book with Southern Illinois UP under contract for 2003. "Hey," says Ed, "that's what retirement is for."

Faculty & Graduate Student Conference Presentations & Other Professional Activities

Margaret Doane presented "'The Fear of the Tongue, That Terror of Little Towns': Overcoming the Oppression of Gossip in Cather's Nebraska Novels," a paper co-authored with Honors student Joseph Nieto at the International Cather Conference in Nebraska City, Nebraska in June. A tape of the reading played over Nebraska Public Radio in October. Margaret also presented "Life is but a Dream: Reality Romanticized in *A Lost Lady*," at the Western American Literature Association conference in Oklahoma City in October, and rounded off the year by presenting "Revelation and Reticence: Cather's Use of Dreams in Characterization," at the Pacific Northwest American Studies Association conference in Lincoln City, Oregon in April.

Writing Center tutors **Becky Rudd, Naoko Kato, Kent Rogers**, and **Pat Harper** presented "Staying Writing Center Outside of the Writing Center" with **Carol Peterson Haviland** at the 2001 CCCC in Denver. And grad students **Maggie Cecil** and **Sandra Halsey**, along with Associate Professor of Accounting and Finance **Claire Purvis,** joined **Haviland** to present "We Hate You: WAC as a Professional Threat" at the Fifth National Writing Across the Curriculum Conference at Indiana University in May.

Sunny Hyon and **Ron Chen** presented a paper on "University Faculty Writing and EAP Education: Beyond the Research Article" at the American Association for Applied Linguistics Conference in St. Louis, Missouri in February 2001.

Kristine Potter (BA '97, MA '00), who is now in the Ph.D. program at University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee and **Bruce Golden** presented "Technology and Writing: Less is More" at the Computers and Writing 2001: A Cyber Odyssey Conference, May 2001 in Muncie Indiana.

In March 2001, **Jackie Rhodes** presented "Radical Feminism and the Subject of Writing" at the 2001 CCCC in Denver. Jackie and **Carol Haviland**are off to the Netherlands in June to present "Representing the Other: Our Students, Our Writing Centers, Ourselves" at the first conference of the European Association of Teachers of Writing/European Association of Writing Centers. (Yes, we are expecting them to bring back chocolate).

Alumni & Other Friends: Update

Ellen Cushman (BA '90, MA '92) is a coeditor of *Literacy: A Critical Sourcebook* from Bedford/St. Martins, 2001. **Chad Davidson** (B.A. '93) is a Ph.D. student in creative writing-poetry at New York State University, Binghamton and has spent this year in Italy on a Rotary Fellowship. **Matt Garrett** (BA '00) is teaching 10th grade at Cajon High School while completing the credential program at Cal State. **Dan Goldsmith** (BA '00) is teaching in Fontana USD this year. **Melissa Miller** (BA '00) is teaching 7th grade Language Arts at Fontana Middle School and will be finishing her credential by the end of June at the University of Redlands. And our congratulations to **Paula Priamos** (B.A. '99), who has been accepted into the M.F.A. Program in Fiction Writing at Cal State Long Beach; she was one of over fifty candidates competing for six openings.

Several of our alumni are teaching at Indio High. **Steve Schwartz** says "I visited Indio High school last week where five of our alums are on the English faculty (there are more in other departments). Indio High, as you probably know, is on the wrong side of the tracks. They are: **Stephanie Bronson** (BA '96), **Caffe Ellenz** (BA '99), **Pete Estep** (BA '98), **Tony Garcia** (BA '97), and **Christine Newkirk** (BA '98). They are all highly valued additions to the faculty, and Pete Estep has already been awarded the title of Teacher of the Year. The impressive list of college admissions from Indio for next fall: Berkeley 9, UCLA 12, with many more acceptances at other UC and Cal State campuses. The Senior Studies program this year raised more than $100,000 for these students to pay for their college educations."

From our mailbag: We heard from Kalinda Schreiber (BA '98), who writes that " the reason that I had to postpone, indefinitely, my post-baccalaureate was to welcome, safely, my new daughter into the world. Brian and I finally had our dreams of a baby met on March 14, 2000, when our little red haired, blue eyed Airin Cyrene made us a complete family--a week late. I am now sending non-fiction articles out to editors and writing product reviews, in addition to teaching in the Cucamonga School District and creating dolls that are on display for purchase in the downtown Upland area. **Wray Finks** (BA '00) is teaching English at Colton High School. He writes that "Things are going well. I'm working on a multimedia presentation of Homer's *Odyssey* to be taught in the coming weeks, teaching myself how to use PowerPoint as I go. It's a lot of fun to do. Love those animations. Congratulations to everyone on their success and projects!" We also heard from **Marc Pollit** (BA '99), who writes that " I've been a relatively busy person of late. I am currently teaching 12th grade English at San Gorgonio High School (San Bernardino City Unified School District). I am also still working (slowly) on my M. A. in English Composition at Cal State, while simultaneously trying to finish up my teaching credential classes here. Mostly, though, I'm holding down the fort here at home while my wife works toward her MFA in studio art back East (she's starting the MFA program this fall at Rochester Institute of Technology, after spending a postbaccalaureate year at Maryland Institute, College of Art this school year). "

Future plans: Recent grad **Mary Rose Toll** writes that she will be teaching at Basset High School, and **Kathryn Bosler** will be teaching for the Covina School District.

Write to us We love to hear from our alumni. Send an e-mail with your news to rpigeon@csusb.edu, or write to : Prof. Renée Pigeon, Dept. of English, CSUSB, 5500 University Parkway, San Bernardino, CA 92407-2397. And please remember that when you contribute to the University's Annual Fund, you can designate the English Department to receive your contribution.

***English News* Editor: Renée Pigeon**

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