

The Creative Writing Program Establishes the Tomales Bay Writers' Workshops

The Department of English is proud to announce the establishment of U.C. Davis's own public writers' conference. Long a dream of Pam Houston, Director of the Creative Writing Program and author of the new novel, *Sight Hound*, this conference will offer students and members of the writing community an opportunity to meet with UCD writing faculty as well as top faculty from across the nation. The conference, made possible by a generous gift from the Borchard Foundation, will take place over six days in October. Participants will attend workshops, information sessions, and faculty readings in the beautiful coastal setting of Tomales Bay.

Houston sees the Writers' Workshops as a vital element of the graduate experience: "When I was a graduate student at the University of Utah, I was discovered at their equivalent program, 'Writers at Work.' For me, it was the most positive part of graduate school." Houston met her current agent at the workshop, and she hopes that students will also be able to network, making contacts that will help them in their careers, while studying with an elite faculty.

The workshops are the result of the combined determination of Houston and English Department chair David Robertson, as well as several generous donations and the support of the Office of the Dean. The Albert and Elaine Borchard Foundation, which supports the arts, offered a generous donation to begin the workshops. In addition to funding the workshop, they will provide scholarships for three students to attend. Author John Lescroart's donation to the department, used in part to fund the Maurice Prize, (see story page 3) will also fund the writers' workshops. Joe Kiskis, Barbara Jackson and Richard and Lisa Rico have also sponsored fellowships.

This year there are six full scholarships available, with one earmarked for a U.C. Davis undergraduate. The other five scholarships will be awarded in an open competition. For the inaugural year of the workshops, the English Department is funding the attendance for all second year creative writing MA students. Additional funding is being sought to support students in future years.

Houston describes the workshop faculty as "stellar." She adds, "I would study with all of them today in a heartbeat." The benefit for students, she explains, is to have yet another set of voices and responses to their work. Murray Dunlap, a graduate student assisting Houston with all aspects of preparation for the event, noted: "I'm especially excited about our tremendous faculty. Every visitor attending the Tomales Bay Workshops will be exposed to writers and writing of the absolute highest caliber." Melinda Moustakis, another graduate student assisting with the workshops, adds: "We looked for gems with the following: notoriety, writing we admired, wonderful teaching skills, and lovely personalities." The workshop faculty are nationally recognized, prize-winning authors, as well as excellent teachers. Workshop faculty include Kim Barnes, Ron Carlson, Jane Miller, Carl Phillips, and Brady Udall.

Barnes is the author of a memoir, *In the Wilderness: Coming of Age in the Unknown Country*, which was a finalist for the 1997 Pulitzer Prize. Barnes teaches creative writing at the University of Idaho. Carlson has written eight books of fiction, including the novel *At the Speed of Light* and

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News from the Chair

Chair's Column

Professor Linda Morris



I have enjoyed returning to the chairship for the spring quarter, filling in for David Robertson, who has been teaching in our short-term program in London. He will be back in charge on July 1. Meanwhile, we are in the final planning stage for the Tomales Bay Writers' Workshops Conference, which promises to be an exciting event. (See article page 1). Our faculty continues to distinguish itself through its teaching and its stellar record of scholarly and creative publications. We have the highest number of majors we have ever had, with nearly 800 students currently having declared themselves as English majors. Our graduate program continues to thrive, with the best placement record for our new Ph.D.s we have enjoyed in some time.

Long a dream of mine, I'm very pleased to announce that we are starting a "Friends of English" organization designed to keep alumni of our undergraduate and graduate programs connected to the department. Members of the community will also be invited to join. All Friends will be invited to attend scholarly talks and readings by our creative writing faculty. Depending on the level of participation (one can become a Friend for an annual contribution of \$50, or at the top, a Benefactor for \$1000), members may also participate in an on-line book discussion, receive a signed and inscribed copy of a faculty member's recent book, or join the Chair and members of the faculty for a Spring lunch.

In return, Friends of English will assist the department in several crucial ways: supporting graduate and undergraduate fellowships and awards, supporting faculty and student research, and sponsoring public lectures and readings. Contributions will help the department to continue to achieve distinction and will contribute to its general well-being.

If you are a graduate of our department (now numbering over 6000), you should be receiving a letter from me in the next few weeks. You may also go on-line at www.english.ucdavis.edu/ to learn more about Friends of English. I hope you will seriously consider becoming a founding member.

New Hire

Assistant Professor Colin Milburn, a specialist in twentieth-century American Literature, will join the English Department faculty this fall. Milburn's work focuses on the intersection of science and literature. A graduate of Harvard University (2005), Milburn recently completed the manuscript for his book on the science, philosophy and cultural narratives of nanotechnology, entitled *Nanovision: Engineering the Future*.

As an undergraduate, Milburn double-majored in science and literature. His current field of study allows him to pursue his dual interests. His specific interest in nanotechnology began when he noticed that "more and more people, and especially science-fiction writers, were talking about nanotechnology. It didn't exist yet, but this was actually what got me interested in the whole thing, because it was a science that was attracting enormous attention from its anticipations for a scientific revolution in the future. And this hypothetical revolution was always illustrated by pointing to the science-fiction novels in which it had been depicted. To me, this was really fascinating, since it was science deploying itself entirely in the form of science fiction."



Professor Colin Milburn

This summer Milburn will begin his next project "about monsters and abnormal organisms in the history of the biological sciences and how this history has intersected with the development of gothic fiction. This book will probably be called *Monstrology*." Next winter you might catch a glimpse of him skiing; Milburn was on Stanford's Alpine skiing team in college.

A California native, Milburn is excited to be returning to the golden state. In particular, he is "proud to be joining the amazing and brilliant faculty in the English department." Milburn notes that he is "thrilled to see what an emphasis the university as a whole seems to place on interdisciplinary work and interdepartmental programs. As a person who traffics between literature and science studies, this is especially attractive." He looks forward to working with the graduate and undergraduates at U.C. Davis, and, he admits, to seeing some sunshine.

Retirement News



Professor Raymond Waddington will retire in July, 2005 after 23 years at U.C. Davis. His plans for retirement--writing a book on Milton, recording his family's history, continuing as editor of the *Sixteenth Century Journal* and of the Praeger Series on the Early Modern World--reflect the varied interests that have driven his long and interesting career.

Waddington describes his research as representing his wish to "study the whole" of the Renaissance. "One gets greedy," he adds, "when working on such a great period."

Professor Waddington has published articles and books on topics ranging from Milton to Shakespeare, dramatic emblems to Italian medals. The evolution of his most recent book, *Aretino's Satyr: Satire, Sexuality, and Self-Projection in Sixteenth-Century Art and Literature*, suggests the ways in which his many interests drive his research. Waddington first became interested in Aretino, an early model Italian author whom Waddington describes as "the first important vernacular writer for the popular press," while pursuing one of his hobbies, collecting Renaissance medals. These medals are an art form that combine portraiture, iconography, and sculpture. One medal commissioned by Aretino particularly interested Waddington, and he began researching Aretino's many works, including prose comedies, a tragedy, verse, and his letters, which Waddington describes as "personal revelation in prose." Aretino commissioned many medals with his own face on one side and a motto on the reverse and circulated them so widely among his artistic circle of friends and beyond that Waddington argues that his face was one of the most well-known in early modern Europe.

Former graduate student Judith Rose, now a professor at Alleghany College, feels that her own career was impacted by her TAs under Waddington. Waddington, she remembers, "rarely 'talked down' to students; he assumed that they would grasp the complexity of his ideas." She continues: "I noted a number of instances where students clearly rose to the challenge, writing far more interesting and complex responses than might be anticipated." Waddington consistently treated lower-achieving students "with patience and kindness."

Professor Linda Morris, reflecting on Waddington's retirement, says that "In all of the years I've known Ray, he has always been a gracious colleague--a true gentleman. He's so unassuming, you would never know how accomplished a scholar he is. I'll miss him, but I hope he'll have more time to pursue his many interests, including wine tasting!"

Professor Sandra Gilbert, renowned feminist critic and poet, is retiring from UCD. Gilbert first began teaching at Davis in 1975. Since then, her critical work has significantly shaped the field of feminist criticism.



In 1979 Gilbert published *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the*

Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination co-authored with Susan Gubar. They continued to co-author and co-edit many influential texts, including *The Norton Anthology of Literature by Women*. The wide reach of their work on feminist studies is reflected in their joint nomination for *USA Today's* "People Who Made a Difference" in 1985 and as *Ms. magazine's* "Woman of the Year" for 1986.

Gilbert's work encompasses many genres and interests. She wrote a memoir, *Wrongful Death: A Medical Tragedy*, a collection of elegies, and has published eight collections of poetry. Her most recent collection of poetry, *Belongings*, was published by Norton in 2005; Norton will also publish her forthcoming prose work, *Death's Door: Modern Dying and The Ways We Grieve*, in 2006.

The recipient of honors and awards for her critical and creative writings, as well as a former MLA president, Gilbert was recently elected to the American Philosophical Society. The Society, the oldest learned society in the nation, was founded in 1769 by Benjamin Franklin. In the words of the Society itself, "election to the APS honors extraordinary accomplishments in all fields," from the Mathematical and Physical Sciences to Humanities and the Arts.

Reflecting on Gilbert's influence on his own career, Kevin Clark, professor of English at Cal Poly (SLO) and a UCD graduate (MA and PhD), said, "Sandra's poetry and pedagogy changed my life as a writer and a teacher. Not only was she my mentor in both, but, as importantly, her very way of being--open-minded, informal, humorous, free-thinking --showed me that the academy didn't have to be a place of button-down, tweedy decorum. Given her example -- and that of her husband, the incomparable professor Elliot Gilbert -- I could pursue my vocation on my own terms."

Professor Alan Williamson remembers that when he met Gilbert in 1981 she was "already well known as one of the founders of feminist criticism. But what I learned was that she loved works of literature first and foremost for themselves, in all their complexity." Through developing a friendship with Gilbert, he also "watched her own poetry mature, through personal sorrow, until she became one of the masters of the contemporary elegy."

Creative Writing

Maurice Prize in Fiction

The English Department is proud to announce the new Maurice Prize in Fiction. Funded by a generous endowment from author John Lescroart, the Maurice prize awards \$5000 to the best work of fiction by an author who has not yet published a book-length manuscript. The award is unique to Davis because only current students or alumni of the Creative Writing Program in the English Department at UC Davis are eligible to apply.

John Lescroart is the author of sixteen novels and the creator of the acclaimed Dismas Hardy/Abe Glitsky series of crime stories and legal thrillers. The *Sacramento Bee* calls Lescroart "one of Sacramento area's favorite literary sons." His gift to the University is in honor of his father, Maurice Lescroart. Mr. Lescroart hopes that this award will provide an impetus for new authors in the way

his own career was encouraged by receiving a similar award for his first novel, *Sunburn*.

Asked why he chose to memorialize his father with this award, Lescroart replied: "Maurice was a voracious and eclectic reader who was also something of a frustrated writer. In World War II as a navigator/bombardier, he was awarded both the Purple Heart and the Distinguished Flying Cross before he was shot down over Tokyo and survived six weeks as a Japanese POW. As a father, he sired nine children (and lost two of them), and for a full year in 1952 he was almost a full-time stay-at-home dad with four kids under five as my mother struggled, bedridden with polio. So he had lots (he might have said "too much") life experience, but he never lost his zest for it, nor his sense of humor, nor his desire to capture the essence of it in writing. Several times he succeeded in writing the first several chapters of "his" novel, but never quite made it to the end. I hope the Maurice Prize commemorates those valiant efforts and encourages young

writers to follow their own dreams and to keep going until they finish that last chapter."

According to Pam Houston, Director of the Creative Writing Program, "literary merit will be the overriding criterion in selecting the winning entry." The judge of this year's inaugural contest is Karen Joy Fowler. Fowler is an internationally critically-acclaimed author. Her most recent book is the *New York Times* bestselling novel, *The Jane Austen Book Club*.

Submissions for this year's contest were due in April; congratulations to the first Maurice Prize winner, Spring Warren (UCD 2002). The English Department web page will carry updates on this annual award. If you are a student or alumni of the Creative Writing Department who has not yet published your first book in fiction, the department looks forward to your submission for the 2006 Maurice Prize. For additional information, please contact: Janie Guhin (530) 752-2281 or jsguhin@ucdavis.edu.

The Greenbelt Review

The Greenbelt Review, an on-line literary magazine run by students in the creative writing program, just released its inaugural issue. The journal is a reincarnation of *Spark*, which stopped publication in Fall 2000. *The Greenbelt Review* offers more than a name change to the older *Spark*, however. Adam Scott, editor for the new magazine along with Oreste Belleto and Angie Chau, explains: "our plan is to showcase work by current students in the MA program, as well as to develop special

features. For example, in the Summer 2005 issue, we'll have an interview with award-winning author T.M. McNally." Scott adds: "We're also planning to bring at least one writer per year to speak at UCD." The Spring 2005 issue included fiction from Stephan Clark, Murray Dunlap, Sabrina Tom, and Kate Wilson, and poetry from Tim Kreiner, Joe Romano, and Cathleen Williams. Through the "Archives" link on the *Review* page, readers can access past *Spark* issues as well. For more information, please see: <http://greenbelt.ucdavis.edu>.

Elliot Gilbert Prize

Poetry:
Kate Asche

Fiction:
Leticia Del Toro-Gasquy

Announcements and Awards

Creative Writing Contest Winners

Ina Coolbrith Memorial Prize Finalists from Davis

Adam Bogan and Erin Costello

Pamela Maus Contest in Creative Writing: Fiction

1st place: Michael Giardina
2nd place: Aaron Davidson
Honorable Mentions: Remi Barrett,
Susan Calvillo, Devon Larsen, and
Carolyn Miller-Lopez

Pamela Maus Contest in Creative Writing: Poetry

1st place: Sam Spieller
2nd place: Melissa R. Smith
Honorable Mentions: Lani Chan and
Anna Rozzi

Poet Laureate Award Finalists from Davis

Tim Kreiner, Joe Romano, and
Buddy Struble

Celeste Turner Wright Poetry Prize

1st Place: Joe Romano
2nd Place: Francisco Reinking
Honorable Mentions: Megan
Kaminski and Bonnie Eileen Roy

Diana Lynn Bogart Prize for Fiction

1st Place: Lata Nott
2nd Place: Brian Daly
3rd Place: Brianna Van Der Veen
Honorable Mention: Katherine Rosa

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A Kind of Flying. He is Foundation Professor and Regents' Professor of English, as well as creative writing program chair, at Arizona State University. Miller's most recent book is a collection of poems, entitled *A Palace of Pearls*. She teaches at the University of Arizona. Phillips is the author of seven books of poetry. His most recent book, *The Rest of Love*, is a finalist for the National Book Award. The winner of several national awards, he teaches at Washington University in St. Louis. Udall, the author of the short-story collection *Letting Loose the Hounds* and the novel *The Miracle Life of Edgar Mint*, is the Kittredge Lecturer at the University of Montana.

The Tomales Bay Workshops will begin with a keynote address from author Richard Bausch, who is the Heritage Chair in Writing at George

Mason University. He has published nine novels and five volumes of stories to critical acclaim. As this newsletter went to press, Bausch was a finalist to direct the famed University of Iowa Writers' Workshop.

Participants will attend faculty-led workshops each morning and talks about the craft of writing each afternoon. The workshop topics cover a wide range of interests; for example, Miller is leading a workshop on "Thinking in Poetry" while Udall is discussing "How to Build a Novel." The afternoon talks will include panel discussions with U.C. Davis faculty and visiting agents, editors, and members of the Davis writing community. Each evening there will be readings by workshop faculty and the faculty of the U.C. Davis Creative Writing program. Participants will also be able to meet individually with publishing industry professionals for

an additional fee.

Tomales Bay is an ecologically unique section of the California shoreline. The Marconi Conference center, site of the workshops, sits above the bay amid pine trees. The beautiful location will help insure Houston's other goal for the workshops, that they be, simply, "fun" for faculty and participants.

The Tomales Bay Workshops are open to students, graduates, and to the community, based on availability and the review of a short piece of writing. Fellowship applications for the 2005 workshops were due in May. Applications to the workshops are being handled through the University Extension Office. In order to determine if any spaces remain, please call 1(800) 752-0881 ext. 2115, e-mail artsinfo@unexmail.ucdavis.edu or visit www.extension.ucdavis.edu.

Faculty and

In 2005 The British Film Institute published *The Matrix*, by **Joshua Clover**. In addition, Clover has published poems in several journals, including *Chain, 1913: A Journal of Forms*, and *The Hat*. This year **Lucy Corin's** fiction was published in *Gargoyle, Notre Dame Review*, and online at *Black Ice*, and her non-fiction was published in *The Journal of Experimental Fiction* and the *Electronic Book Review*. **Joanne Feit Diehl's** book, *On Louise Gluck: Change What You See* was published this spring by The University of Michigan Press. **Frances Dolan** served as president of the Shakespeare Association of America; her term ended in March. **Margaret Ferguson** co-edited *Women, Property, and the Letters of the Law* (U of Toronto Press, 2004) with Nancy Wright and Andrew Buck. She also co-edited *Feminism in Time*, a special issue of *Modern Language Quarterly*, with Marshall Brown, for which she wrote the introduction (Vol. 65, no. 1. March 2004). Her most recent book, *Dido's Daughters*, was awarded the Roland Bainton Prize by the Sixteenth Century Society, was co-winner of the Book Prize of 2004 awarded by the Society for the Study of Early Modern Women, and received Honorable Mention for the Rene Wellek Prize for Literary Theory awarded by the American Comparative Literature Association. **Lynn Freed's** *The Curse of the Appropriate Man*, a collection of stories, was published in Fall 2004 by Harcourt Inc. and has been nominated for the Northern California Book Reviewers Association prize for fiction. Her next book, *Reading, Writing, & Leaving Home: Life on the Page*, a collection of essays, will also be published by Harcourt for Fall 2005. Her essay

"Where Diversity Reigns" appeared in the March 2005 National Geographic Traveler; another essay, "Doing Time" will be published in the September issue of *Harper's* magazine; and her story "This Flesh, This Ghost," appeared in the Spring 2005 issue of *Rattapallax* magazine. *Belongings*, a collection of poems by **Sandra Gilbert**, appeared from W.W. Norton in December 2004. **Beth Freeman** published "The Whole(y) Family: Economies of Kinship in Nineteenth Century America" in *American Literary History* (Winter 2004). Her piece "Monsters, Inc.: Notes on the Neoliberal Arts Education" will be published in *New Literary History* in Autumn 2005. She received the UCDCancellor's Fellowship for 2004-2009, a Faculty Development Award for Fall 2005, a Small Grant in Aid of Research for 2004-05, a Consortium for Women & Research Academic Senate Project Grant for 2004-05, and a Undergraduate Instructional Improvement Program Grant, with Gayatri Gopinath and Juana Rodriguez, for work on a Sexuality minor in 2004-05. **Peter Hays** (professor emeritus) has published "The Arc of Plot in Hemingway's Fiction: Experiments in the Thirties," *Literatur in Wissenschaft und Unterricht*, 36:1 (2003), 51-57; and "Steinbeck's Plays: From Literature to Abstraction," *Studies in the Humanities*, 31:1 (June 2004), 92-98. He has also written two reviews: *A Queer Sort of Materialism: Recontextualizing American Theater (Triangulations: Lesbian/Gay/Queer Theater/Drama/Performance)* by David Savran; and *Professing Performance: Theatre in the Academy from Philology to Performativity*

(*Theatre and Performance Theory*) by Shannon Jackson for *American Literature* (Dec. 2004). **Bob Hopkins** (professor emeritus) had his essay, "General Tilney and Affairs of State: The Political Gothic of *Northanger Abbey*" reprinted in the new Norton Critical Edition of *Northanger Abbey* edited by Susan Fraiman (2004). **Pam Houston's** novel, *Sight Hound*, was published by W.W. Norton & Co. **Alessa Johns** received an International Faculty Exchange grant from the University of California Education Abroad Program to spend four weeks this summer working to develop exchanges between literature departments of our campus and those of the University of Goettingen, Germany. **Sandra McPherson** has poems published & forthcoming in *Paris Review, The Yale Review, Harvard Review, Field*, and *Crazyhorse*. **Linda Morris's** article, "Beneath the Veil: Clothing and Dress in Mark Twain's *Pudd'nhead Wilson*," has been included in the new edition of the Norton Critical Edition of *Pudd'nhead Wilson*. **Timothy Morton's** essay "Environmentalism" appeared in *Romanticism: An Oxford Guide* Nicholas Roe, ed. Oxford University Press, 2005. **Marijane Osborn** updated her *Beowulf: A Guide to Study*, and it was republished by Wipf and Stock, 2004. She won the "Excellence in Teaching Award" from the Northern California Association of Phi Beta Kappa, after being nominated by her students. **Riché Richardson** published her essay "Charles Fuller's Southern Specter and the Geography of Black Masculinity" in the journal *American Literature* (March 2005). The issue itself is entitled "Erasing
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Graduate Student News

faculty news cont.

the Commas: RaceGenderClassSexualityRegion.” **Catherine Robson’s** essay “Where Heaves the Turf”: Thomas Hardy and the Boundaries of the Earth” was published this year in *Victorian Literature and Culture* 32 (2004): 495-503. Her essay “Standing on the Burning Deck: Poetry, Performance, History” will appear in *PMLA* 120 (2005): 148-62. **Scott C. Shershow’s** book, *The Work and the Gift*, will be published by the University of Chicago Press in June, 2005. **Joe Wenderoth** has a book forthcoming fall 2005 from Verse Press entitled *The Holy Spirit Of Life: Essays Written For John Ashcroft’s Secret Self*. **Alan Williamson’s** book, *The Pattern More Complicated: New and Selected Poems*, was published by the University of Chicago Press in Fall 2004. **Karl Zender** was appointed as a Faculty Fellow at the UC Center in Washington D.C. for the Fall Quarter 2004. As a fellow, he taught one course and did research at the Folger Shakespeare Library.

Graduate Student News

Ann Bliss presented a paper titled “‘All Parts From Mexico, Assembled in the U.S.A.’: The Confluence of Family and Cultural Memory in *Caramelo*” at the Rocky Mountain MLA in October. **Stephan Clark’s** short fiction has been published in *Barrelhouse* (Winter 2005) and *Fourteen Hills* (Summer/Fall 2005), and nominated for a Pushcart Prize (Night Train, Fall 2004). Earlier this year, he was recommended for a Fulbright scholarship to Ukraine and offered a position in the literature and creative writing Ph.D program at the University of Southern California. **Helena Feder** was awarded the Muir

Environmental Fellowship for 2005-06. **Jennifer Hoofard** has been hired as a lecturer at Mills. She interviewed Toni Morrison for her dissertation; the interview will be published in a forthcoming issue of *Writing on the Edge*. **Jessica Howell** received a UCD Humanities and Research award, which she is using to further her research in Victorian Literature and Medicine. She presented two papers, both versions of her MA thesis, one at the Australasian Victorian Studies Association conference at Auckland University, New Zealand, and the other at the 9th Biennial Conference of the Australian Society of History of Medicine, also at AU. **Katie Kalpin** presented “Speaking ‘to the Purpose’: Hermione’s Curtain Lecture and Women’s Speech of Persuasion” to the Pacific Northwest Renaissance Society Conference in Banff. **Kristian Jensen** delivered his paper, “Every Slave a Martyr: Douglass’s Narrative and 19th Century Christian Ideology” at the International Humanities Conference in Honolulu (January ‘05). In 2005-2006 he will be participating in the exchange teaching program in Bordeaux. **Jessica Hope Jordan** delivered her paper, “Women Refusing the Gaze in *Beowulf* and Tarantino’s *Kill Bill, Volume I* at the Hawaii International Conference on Arts and Humanities in Honolulu. **Lynn Langmade** presented “Surplus Economies: Crisis & Recovery in the Literary Relations of Production in Emily Dickinson and Herman Melville” at the Emily Dickinson International Society Conference, Hilo, Hawaii, and “Simulating the Simulacra: Androgyny, Irony and the Subject of History in *Orlando* and the *Orlando Furioso*” at the 14th Annual Virginia Woolf Conference in London. She will present her paper

“Making Violence Sexy?: Race, Gaze, and Gothic Subversion in *Benito Cereno* and *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*” at the Frederick Douglass and Herman Melville: A Sesquicentennial Celebration, in New Bedford, MA this summer. **Marit MacArthur** is teaching for the Spring semester in the American literature department at the University of Lodz in Poland, at the indirect invitation of one of our alumni, Andy Gross, who now teaches in Berlin. She also has a tenure-track position at California State University Bakersfield, which begins in September. **Jodi Schorb** accepted a tenure-track job at the University of Florida. **Kella Svetich** accepted a tenure-track position at Foothills College in Los Altos.

Exchange lecturers: **Kate O’Brien** 2004-2005, **Kristian Jensen** 2005-2006 (Bordeaux); **Brad Busbee** 2004-2005, **Darcy Irvin** 2005-2006 (Mainz).

Miller Essay Prize Winner:
Alysia Garrison

This year two students from the department received the campus-wide **Outstanding Graduate Student Teacher Award:**

Shellie Banga
and
Kathy Cunningham

Faculty Focus

The subject of our faculty focus this year is **Professor Scott Simmon**. Simmon is a graduate of UCD who has returned as a faculty member. A professor of English and film studies, Simmon is also currently the graduate adviser. He has produced two popular DVD-and-text anthologies, *Treasures from the American Film Archives* and *More Treasures from the American Film Archives 1894-1931*. Simmon's most recent book, *The Invention of Western Film*, won the *Theater Library Association Award*.

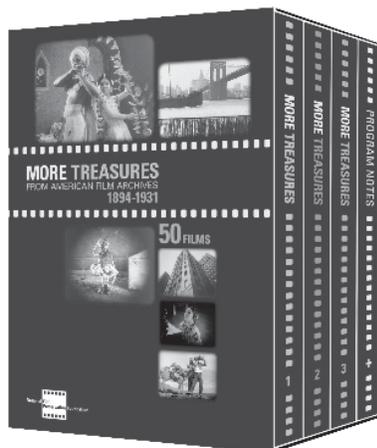
Q (Kalpin): How did you become interested in studying film and in film preservation?

A.(Simmon): Well, while writing my dissertation—or avoiding writing it—I was living in Berkeley near the great Pacific Film Archive. There was the every-evening choice of seeing an unmissable, rare film, or drafting one more paragraph—and films usually won out. I began publishing pieces that combined literature and film, beginning with one on film in Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow*. I finally managed to write the last chapters of the dissertation in the inspiring main reading room of the Library of Congress, and began to work there, starting up its film theater to showcase to the public its film collection. That was five years of film fan's heaven, really, prowling the world's largest film collection (several hundred thousand titles) to find things to show to the public. And, as the theater was free, I always felt as if I could screen obscurities without anyone being able to complain that they didn't get their money's worth. As a result, I've probably watched reel #1 of more bad movies than anyone....

Q: What is your next project?

A: Hopefully, assuming funding comes through, my next project will be to curate a third *Treasures from American Film Archives* set—this one

on early “social-problem” films, which were able to tackle all sorts of issues later forbidden under Hollywood's production codes. These DVD-and-text sets (produced by the National Film Preservation Foundation) are certainly the most useful thing I'm able to do in film studies. They make available films—100 so far—that can



otherwise only be seen by researchers in archives, and thus expand the canon of film studies. (The problem is that the field of film studies is generally tied to being able to teach only what is available commercially on video; and that leaves whole intellectually essential areas inaccessible—early avant-garde films, serials, newsreels, instructional films, etc.) I also am just beginning to work on two book projects, a cultural history of American silent film and a second volume of my history of the Western film.

Q: You helped to formulate the national film preservation plan that was presented to Congress in 1994. How are today's film preservation efforts?

A: Briefly, much better than they used to be. Hollywood studios all now understand that their old films are valuable corporate assets, and spend much to preserve them. The organization that I work for in San Francisco, the National Film Preservation Foundation, tries to save all those *other* kinds of non-studio

films—regional documentaries, avant-garde and independent films, etc.—as well as early films that have fallen out of studio copyright. Only about 15% of American silent features still survive, so one trick is not to lose any more.

Q: Your two DVD compilations highlight silent pictures. Do you teach silent film in your undergraduate classes, and how do students receive them?

A: Yes: I'm unrepentant in teaching early films in undergraduate and graduate classes. I may well be deluded, but my sense is that undergraduates come to silent films with such low expectations (“This will be BOR-RING...”) that their surreal surprises and cultural revelations go over well.

Q.: What do you remember from your student years at Davis?

A: OK, here's one detail. On the road from Davis to Winters in my student days there used to be a store with a memorable name: *Guns and Grog*. (“Yeah, I'll take a fifth of Old Crow and, while I'm here, a handful of .45 cartridges...make a weekend of it...”) Q: Presumably you are asked this all the time, but, what are your favorite movies? And—what was your favorite movie last year?

A: Well, if I'm forced to choose one, it has to be Hitchcock's *Vertigo*—which is also the great San Francisco movie. Last year is harder. It is a rare year where the official Academy Award winner—*Million Dollar Baby*—was actually one of the best. Clint Eastwood's looking more and more like the John Ford of our time: His stylistic choices appear merely simple and obvious and yet add up to an emotional intensity. It wasn't a great year for international films either, although I quite liked von Trier's *Dogville* and a Russian film called *The Return*.

News in the Major

Undergraduate

Below are honors awarded June 2004, too late to be published in the 2004 newsletter. Stay tuned for next year's newsletter reflecting the 2005 winners of these awards.

Outstanding Graduating Senior Award: Robin Pille

Elliot Gilbert Memorial Prize for Best Undergraduate Honors Critical Essay: Robin Pille

Elliot Gilbert Memorial Prize for Best Undergraduate Honors Creative Work: Adam Soldofsky

Department Citations are awarded annually on the basis of academic achievement (at least a 3.7 in the major), participation in the Department Honors program, and/or service to the Department as an English Department Peer Advisor.

Erica Archer, William Baker
Sarah Barbulesco, Shelly Bennett
Adam Bevelacqua, Robin Bird
Mark Bosler, Brooke Byrd
Nicole Carroll, Elissa Christensen
Marci Delozier, Erin Elskes
Leland Feleciano
Aleshandra Griffith-Reed
Kelly Grumann, Ruth Hawley
Nicholas Henson, Erica Jamieson
Nicholas Kominitzky, Samantha Lew
Erin Lyons, Kimberly Magill
Julia McElvain, Chelsea Narr
Emily Newton, Allison Pedrazzi
Robin Pille, Andrew Ramos
Nicole Reidy, Jeffrey Ross
Sheila Santos, Adam Soldofsky
Rachel Swaby, Tamara Thompson
Carl Walker, Windy Wertemberger
Anna Wetherbee

Graduate

In the fall of 2004, the department welcomed a new graduate student counselor, Levada McDowell. Though new to the department, she first began working for UCD in 1979. She worked in the clerical pool, the Dean's office of Engineering, and Chemical Engineering before taking a break to raise her children. In 1996 she returned to UCD to work as the Undergraduate/Graduate Assistant for the Agricultural and Resource Economics Department, and then she worked as graduate assistant for the Geography Graduate Group.



While working for the Geography Graduate Group, McDowell realized that she had found a good fit. She remembers, "this was a job I really loved. I love working with graduate students." She says that she was "thrilled to be offered the job in English Graduate Program. The faculty and the staff are wonderful." She adds that the best part of her job is "giving students good news, such as fellowship awards, travel awards, and block grant awards. I also enjoy seeing them turn in their dissertations, and walk in Commencement."

In other news, 26 new graduate students will matriculate in Fall 2005, 14 in the Ph.D. program, and 12 in the creative writing program.

Education Abroad

From Lauren Rodgers, a UCD undergraduate.

I had always known I wanted to study abroad, living in another country sounded spectacular. However, as an English major, options are limited; studying in Madrid would not have been very helpful for me. But then I saw it – Cambridge University, Pembroke College Summer 2004. I had dreams of tea and crumpets, the changing of the guards, and classes in 700-year-old buildings. I was not disappointed.

I took classes in Magical Realism with a professor from South Africa, Irish Literature from a tenured Cambridge professor, and History with a professor from York. I could not get over the fact I was studying where the English language was developed, perfected, and given a very nice accent! Classes were 4 days a week about 5 hours a day. The grading scale was fair and resources for research were abundant. Maybe it was the setting that convinced me to start papers a week ahead of time – maybe it was just me.

There was nothing lacking for me at Cambridge; I had a shower, food, and I even brought my own peanut butter. However, by the end of the trip I had an undeniable craving for a burrito. Now having been home for a year, I am still homesick for that small buzzing town that adopted me. I miss the cobble streets, the buildings with their intricate architecture, the daily open market, and the pubs. It is everything we strive for in a small city, perfected by hundreds of years of practice. Why should you study abroad you ask--because you'll never get the chance to live like that again. For more information on study abroad, visit <http://eac.ucdavis.edu>

Alumni Updates

B.A.

Diana Pharaoh Francis (1989) had her second novel, *Path of Honor*, published by Penguin/Roc Books. She is currently teaching at the University of Montana-Western. **Renee Marilyn Lam (1999)** has been working for Work Transition Services in San Bruno, CA. Among her many responsibilities, she writes grant proposals, and one of her proposals received a \$50,000 grant for "Expanding Employment Opportunities for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in San Mateo County." **Shanen R. Prout (1999)** graduated from the University of San Diego School of Law in 2004. **Janet Crosbie (2001)** is a Marketing Associate for Apress, a book publisher catering to IT professionals located in Berkeley, CA. **Hazel L. Wetherford (2002)** is employed by the city of Brentwood as an Administrative Assistant II to the City Clerk. She is also a board member of the Contra Costa Alcohol and Other Drugs Advisory Board. She plans to run for public office in the future.

M.A.

Brett Ryan Bourbon (1989) is an assistant professor of English at Stanford University. His book, *Finding a Replacement for the Soul* was published in 2004 by Harvard University Press. Swan Scythe Press is publishing *El Sobrante: Selected Poems, 1975-2005* by **Charlie MacDonald (1993)**. *El Sobrante* is the Walter Pavlich Memorial Poetry Selection for 2005. **Lindsey Crittenden (1995)** had her essay "The Water Will Hold You" published in *Best American Spiritual Writing*, 2004. **Tom Heise (1997)** has had his book of poems, *Horror Vacui*, accepted for publication by Sarabande Books. His poems have been published in *Slope*, *Verse*, *Gulf Coast*, and *Forklift, Ohio* journals. He has been hired as a Language Lecturer at NYU. **Maria Melendez (2000)** began a tenure-track position with St. Mary's College (Indiana) in the fall. The University of Arizona Press will publish a full-length collection of her poetry in 2006. **Kristin Kearns (2002)** published her first story in *Failbetter*, an online literary magazine. Chronicle Books will publish **Jodi Angel's (2003)** book, *the history of vegas*, in July. **Kirsten Lunstrum's (2003)** first book, *This Life She's Chosen* was published as a part of Barnes & Noble's "Discover Great New Writers" series. **Virginia Robinson (2004)** had her chapbook *Carrier* published by Swan Scythe Press.

Ph.D.

Charles Kollerer (1974) is currently a Senior Executive Associate for Lyon Real Estate in Sacramento. **Hans Ostrom (1982)** is a Distinguished Professor of English and Chair of the department at the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, WA. He is co-editing a 5-volume *Encyclopedia of African American Literature* for Greenwood Publishers. He co-wrote *Metro: Journeys in Writing Creatively* (Longman 2001) with the late Wendy Bishop (MA 1979) and Katherine Haake. A recent chapbook of his poems is *Subjects Apprehended*. **Eric Paul Shaffer (1991)** is a lecturer at Maui Community College. In 2002 he received the Elliot Cades Award for Literature, primarily for two of his books of poetry, *Portable Planet* (2000) and *Living at the Monastery, Working in the Kitchen* (2001). The award recognizes local Hawaiian writers. His work has been published in the anthologies *The Soul Unearthed* (2002) and *100 Poets Against the War* (2003) as well as in several journals, including *American Scholar*, *North American Review*, *ACM*, *Grain*, and *Malahat Review*. His most recent publication is a collection of short fiction entitled *You Are Here* from Obscure Publications. His fifth book of poetry, *Lahaina Noon: Nā Mele o Maui*, (April 2005 from Leaping Dog Press) will include only poems written on the islands since he moved to Maui from Okinawa, Japan, in 1998. **Erika Kreger (2000)** accepted a job as a development officer in the Graduate Division at UC Berkeley. She has an article coming out in the next *Studies in American Humor*, and book reviews forthcoming in *Feminist Teacher* and *American Periodicals*. **Jane Beal (2002)** was hired at Wheaton College in Illinois. **Jan Goggans (2002)** was appointed to a tenure-track position at UC Merced in fall of 2004. **Andy Majeske (2003)** will have his edited dissertation published as a book by Routledge Press in their *Literary Criticism and Cultural Theory* series. **Tiffany Aldrich MacBain (2004)** has accepted a one-year position as visiting assistant professor at Mills College in Oakland. **Jim Barilla (2004)** was hired to a tenure-track position at Lake Forest College in Illinois. **Roland Finger (2004)** has accepted a tenure-track job at Concordia College in Minnesota.

Miscellaneous

Davis Humanities Institute's Research Clusters

The Davis Humanities Institute is currently funding 10 research clusters, several of which are run by English Department faculty. According to the Humanities Institute, the clusters are organized to “facilitate faculty and graduate student collaborative research and discussion at UC Davis.” While the activities of the clusters are determined by each group, the clusters typically “meet as seminar groups and also organize conferences, colloquia, and speaker events.” The clusters cover a range of interests, from Asian Pacific American Cultural Politics to Irish Studies. Three clusters, Literature of California, Medieval Research, and Early Modern Studies, are currently led by English Department faculty.

After several years on hiatus, the Early Modern Studies group was resurrected last year by Professor Frances Dolan of the English Department. The first event last year was a talk by Shannon Miller of Temple University; they also co-sponsored a talk and dinner with Jean Howard, Professor of English at Columbia University and a Huntington Library fellow. The talk was jointly funded by the British Studies Reading Group. The dinner, held at the home of Professor Margaret Ferguson, allowed all in attendance to continue the discussions sparked by Howard’s provocative presentation. This year, Dolan has focused on developing and maintaining an inter-disciplinary focus for the cluster by inviting members of the Art History, History, Religion, and Science and Technology Studies departments at U.C. Davis, as well as the Spanish Department of UC Berkeley. In March, a luncheon talk by Jennifer Summit was jointly held with the Medieval Research Cluster on the topic of early modern collectors of medieval manuscripts. During the Spring quarter they sponsored talks by Ian Munro (U.C. Irvine) and Katherine Romack (Stanford Humanities Institute).

Dear Alumni:

We would like to continue updating our alumni news. You can help by sending us your news and by notifying us of any change in address.

Please use one of the following methods:

- 1. Email Mary White: mjwhite@ucdavis.edu (Please write “Department Newsletter” in the subject line).*
- 2. Detach this form and mail it to the address below.*

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