As I start in as chair, it's a pleasure to see gathered together here just a few of the recent accomplishments and events of our English Department and its alumni. The achievements are all the more impressive in the midst of this tough environment for humanities funding. It's less heartening to lose through retirements the irrepressible David Van Leer and the polymath Winfried Schleiner (pictured to the right) without immediate prospects of replacing their positions. Still, the range of activities and publications documented in this newsletter suggests that the department nevertheless keeps expanding—at least in intellectual ways....

We're grateful to Pete Scully for the sketch of UC Davis above (and for more on his work visit http://petescully.com). Thanks go to Nathan Milos for pulling together information here (and for the typewriter sketch).

Scott Simmon
Chair
English Department

Retirements

Warm congratulations go out to Professors David Van Leer and Winfried Schleiner. Thank you for your service to UC Davis. You will both be truly missed. Enjoy retirement!

David Van Leer

Winfried Schleiner

Recent Placement News

Ann Bliss (Ph.D. 2006) has accepted the offer of Assistant Professor at Texas A&M University, San Antonio
Margaret France (Ph.D. 2010) accepted a tenure-track position in the Program in Cultures, Civilizations and Ideas at Bilkent University in Ankara, Turkey

Catherine Fung (Ph.D. 2010) accepted a tenure-track position at Bentley University

Kathy Heininge (Ph.D. 2002) was promoted to Associate Professor this year at George Fox University

Jessica Howell (Ph.D. 2008) holds a three-year Wellcome postdoctoral research fellowship at the Centre for Health and the Humanities at King’s College, London

Ben Jahn (M.A. 2007) teaches English at Los Medanos College in Pittsburg and at the College of Marin

Megan Kaminski (M.A. 2005) is a Lecturer at the University of Kansas

Christian Kiefer (Ph.D. 2006) has been awarded a tenure-track position at American River College

Kristen Sundberg Lunstrum joined the creative writing faculty at Purchase College, SUNY in 2008

Whitney Shuman (B.A. 2009) will begin a M.A. program in Moving Image Archive Studies at UCLA

Melvin Sterne (B.A. 2003) is an Assistant Professor of English at the American University of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Monica Storss (M.A. 2008) is the new publicist for Wilderness Press

Dominick Tracy (Ph.D. 2003) is now the Assistant Director of Humanities & Sciences at California College of the Arts (SF/Oakland)

Jan VanStavern (M.A. 1991; Ph.D. 1996) is Associate Professor (adjunct) at Dominican University, CA

Chris Westage (Ph.D. 2005) has obtained tenure-track position at CSU Fullerton in 2007 in Modern and Contemporary Drama
Faculty News

**Gina Bloom**'s essay on early modern drinking games, "Manly Drunkenness: Binge Drinking as Disciplined Play," has just been published in the collection *Masculinity and the Metropolis of Vice, 1550-1650*, eds. Amanda Bailey and Roze Hentschell (Palgrave Press, 2010). Bloom has spent the academic year in Washington, D.C., on a fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies. While on the east coast, she delivered papers at the University of Pennsylvania, Columbia University, and The George Washington University.

**Gregory Dobbins** finished his book *Lazy Idle Schemers: Irish Modernism and the Cultural Politics of Idleness*. It will be published by Field Day Publications of the University of Notre Dame in 2010. Over the past year, Dobbins has been invited to give talks at NYU, UC Irvine, and St. Mary's University in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

In May 2010, **Margie Ferguson** taught two classes on "Unfolding Hamlet" for the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland.

**Hsuan Hsu** finished his book *Geography and the Production of Scale in Nineteenth-Century American Literature* (Cambridge, 2010) and presented papers at conferences sponsored by the American Comparative Literature Association, the American Literature Association, and PAMLA. He was a keynote speaker at Texas Tech University's symposium on *American Studies as Transnational Practice* and UC Santa Cruz's conference on *Spatial Imaginaries and Critical Geographies Across the Pacific*.

**Alessa Johns** has two articles that will be appearing this year: “Feminism and Utopianism” will appear in *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*, ed. Gregory Claeys (Cambridge...
University Press, forthcoming 2010) and "Mary Astell's 'Excited Needles': Imitation, Circulation, and a Theory of Feminist Utopia," which is Chapter One of her book Women's Utopias of the Eighteenth Century and has been selected to be reprinted in Literature Criticism From 1400-1800 Volume 183 (Gale Cengage, forthcoming in 2010). In January Professor Johns was invited to give a lecture at the University of Goettingen, Germany, titled: "Before Germans Took After Indians: Anna Jameson and Native American Spurs to European Reform." She has also received a yearlong fellowship for 2011-2012 at the Lichtenberg-Kolleg, an institute for advanced study at the University of Goettingen, Germany.

Elizabeth Carolyn Miller was awarded a Charles A. Ryskamp Research Fellowship for 2009-10 from the American Council of Learned Societies to help her complete a book project titled Slow Print: Literary Radicalism and Late-Victorian Print Culture. She spent much of the summer of 2009 on a research trip to England, with the support of a Curran Fellowship from the Research Society for Victorian Periodicals. In 2009, she presented papers based on her work for this project at conferences sponsored by the North American Victorian Studies Association, the International Shaw Society, and the MLA.

In addition to publishing The Ecological Thought, Timothy Morton also published "Queer Ecology" in PMLA, and four other essays including “Hyperobjects and the End of Common Sense.” He gave nine lectures, including one in Switzerland and one at Johns Hopkins. His recent class podcasts have been downloaded a quarter of a million times. He was also a finalist for the Letters and Science ASUCD Outstanding Teacher of the Year Award.

Winfried Schleiner and his collaborator Tyler Fyotek (a former undergraduate in the English Department) are publishing an edition and translation of a 1615 Neo-Latin satire written against King James I. Tyler took the lead in the English translation. This satire stung the English deeply since here (possibly for the first time in print) the King's homoerotic tendencies were publicized and satirized. Professor Schleiner's introduction chronicles efforts by the English to determine the printer and author of the work. The volume is forthcoming from Droz, a Geneva-based publisher.
David Simpson won an American Council of Learned Societies fellowship for the coming year. Professor Simpson has been serving on the System-Wide Senate Executive Committee as well as the Commission for the Future Workgroup on Education and Curriculum.

Claire Waters has won an American Council of Learned Societies fellowship for next year, as well as an NEH summer stipend. She has been serving on the Chancellor's Committee for the Future of UC Davis.
Faculty Publications

1989
Joshua Clover

Teaching Early Modern English Prose
Margaret W. Ferguson & Susannah Brietz Monta

Servants' Quarters
Lynn Freed

The Vagrants
Yiyun Li
Framed
Elizabeth Carolyn Miller

The Ecological Thought
Timothy Morton

Department of English
Voorhies Hall
One Shields Avenue  University of California  Davis, CA 95616
main office phone: 530-752-2257  fax: 530-752-5013

department chair: Scott Simmons  department chair phone: 530-752-1696
Maurice Price in Fiction

Angie Chau won for her collection *A Map Back to You*.

Alumni News

**Ann Bliss** (Ph.D. 2006) has accepted the offer of Assistant Professor at Texas A&M University, San Antonio, starting in the fall.

**Michael Borgstrom**'s (Ph.D. 2002) book *Minority Reports: Identity and Social Knowledge in Nineteenth-Century American Literature* will be published this summer (by Palgrave) and an essay ("Hating Miles Coverdale") will be published later this year by *ESQ: A Journal of the American Renaissance*. This essay is part of a longer project on which he's now working (tentatively titled *Anxiety Attacks: Queerness and Cultural Tension in American Literary History*).

**Angie Chau**'s (M.A. 2005) story collection, *Quiet As They Come*, will be released this year by IG Publishing. She was also the winner of the 2009 Maurice Prize in Fiction.

**Dave Cleary**'s (M.A. 1997) novella, "The Flowers of Nicosia," was the cover story in a recent issue of *Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine*.

**Lindsey Crittenden**'s (M.A. 1995) short story “Which Leaves Me” won the *Glimmer Train "family matters"* contest and was published in *Glimmer Train* 71 (Summer 2009). She is a contributing writer to "Good Letters," the *Image magazine blog* and had a cover story published in *SF Chronicle Magazine* in Feb 2008.

**Tiffany Denman** (M.A. 2009) was published in the 2010 *West Wind Review* (along with Brian Ang, Uyen Hua, and Wendy Trevino.)

**Murray Dunlap** (M.A. 2005) has published several short stories in various places, most notably in *The Bark and Night Train*. He also has an anthology coming out in June called "*What Doesn't Kill You...*" for which he is co-editor and a contributing writer.
Christopher Erickson (M.A. 2009) had excerpts from his novel in progress "Henrytown" published on www.benmarcus.com in May 2010.

Dana Fore (Ph.D. 2005) has an article on Robert Louis Stevenson and disability scheduled for publication in the Summer 2010 issue of the Journal of Stevenson Studies: "Snatching Identity: 'Passing' and Disabled Monstrosity in Stevenson's Jekyll and Hyde and 'The Body Snatcher.'"

Christien Gholson (M.A. 2003) had a chapbook of prose poems published by 2River online in 2009. The entire first section of his second book of poems was published in 2009 by Mudlark.

In July, Jan Goggin's (Ph.D. 2002) book California on the Breadlines: Dorothea Lange, Paul Taylor, and the Making of a New Deal Narrative is forthcoming from University of California Press. Jan has begun work on her next book, which explores fashion and class in literature and film of the 1930s. Grants from UC Merced's Graduate and Research Council and the Center for Research in the Humanities and Arts will allow her to spend two weeks viewing studio films, shorts, and newsreels at the Library of Congress.

Maura Grady (Ph.D. 2008) received the Excellent English Faculty Mentor Award for the 2009-10 academic year from the English Graduate Student Organization at the University of Nevada Reno. She also has an essay, "The Fall of the Organization Man: Loyalty and Conflict in the First Season of Mad Men," set to appear in Mad Men: Critical Essays on the Series (forthcoming from McFarland Press).


Kathy Heininge's (Ph.D. 2002) book, Buffoonery in Irish Drama: Staging 20th Century Post-Colonial Stereotypes, came out in 2009, published by Peter Lang Publishing of New York. She also had several articles published, including one on Gerard Stembridge in the anthology, Deviant Acts (Carysfort Press). She was promoted to Associate Professor this year at George Fox University.

Eileen Herrmann-Miller (Ph.D. 1998) was awarded a Fulbright Research Grant to go to Poland (Krakow) for Fall 2010 semester and is editing a book of essays on Eugene O'Neill.

Jessica Howell (Ph.D. 2008) holds a three-year Wellcome postdoctoral research fellowship at the Centre for Health and the Humanities at King's College, London. She is studying the writing of nurses who travelled in the service of empire from the 1890s through the 1960s.

Ann Hunkins (M.A. 2002) was one of one hundred recipients of the Devkota Century Award in 2010, presented by the Prime Minister of Nepal, for contributions to Nepali literature. In 2008 – 2009, she received a National Endowment for the Arts Translation Grant to translate a Nepali novel called On Flows the Indravati. In 2009 she was published in the Contemporary Anthology of Poems.
in Defense of Global Human Rights (Lost Horse Press). In 2010, she was published in a Helen Burns Poetry anthology: New Voices, Academy of American Poets.


Megan Kaminski (M.A. 2005) is a Lecturer at the University of Kansas and has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize. She's recently published two chapbooks: Across Soft Ruins (Scantily Clad Press, 2009) and The Prairie Opens Wide (La Ginestra, forthcoming). Her poems have also been published in a number of journals, including: 6x6, Coconut, CutBank, Denver Quarterly, Ditch, Dusie, Eoagh, Foursquare, The Laurel Review, Listenlight, Milk, No Tell Motel, Phoebe, So and So Magazine, With+Stand, Womb Poetry, and Third Coast.

Christian Kiefer (Ph.D. 2006) has been awarded a tenure-track position at American River College. He published a portion of his dissertation in CLIO this past year, gave a paper at the American Literature Association conference in Boston, and is finishing a new novel.

In 2008, Kristen Sundberg Lunstrum's (M.A. 2003) second collection of short stories, Swimming With Strangers, was published by Chronicle Books. Stories from the collection were published in One Story, The American Scholar, and Willow Springs, as well as the O. Henry Prize Stories Anthology 2009. Her most recent publication is an essay, "This Is How It Happens," published by the Southern Humanities Review in 2009 and was awarded their annual Theodore Christian Hoepfner Award for best essay. In 2008 she joined the creative writing faculty at Purchase College, SUNY. The big news around her household, though, is that her daughter Virginia was born in December of 2009; her brother, Finn, will turn four this summer.

Clarke W. Owens' (M.A. 1976) poems have appeared or will appear in Oyez Review, Slant, Karamu and Bryant Literary Review.

Sally Palmer (Ph.D. 1998) was promoted to Full Professor of English at the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology where she is just finishing her eleventh year. She is also in her second term as vice president of publications for the 4500-member Jane Austen Society of North America. The organization boasts a journal, a newsletter, and a website.

Elise Winn Pollard's (M.A. 2009) story "Cloud, Egg, Bird, Box" was a finalist in American Short Fiction's short story contest and will be published in the Fall 2010 issue.
Reema Rajbanshi's (M.A. 2007) short story "The Ruins" was a finalist in the Meyerson Fiction Prize 2008 (Southwest Review) and was published in Southwest Review Spring 2009. Her short story "Mufaro's Beautiful Daughter" was a finalist in New Letters Fiction Contest 2009. Her short story "The Carnival" was the winner of So To Speak Fiction Contest 2010 and will be published in So To Speak Fall 2010.

Judith Rose's (Ph.D. 1998) article “'Great Exercise with the Nations and Islands beyond the Seas': Alice Curwen's Trans-Atlantic Anti-Slavery Testimony” is forthcoming in two different scholarly collections: Olaudah Equiano & His Contemporaries: Africans in Transatlantic Literature of the Long Eighteenth Century, eds. Kamille Stone Stanton and Julie Chappell, and in New Studies in the Eighteenth Century Literature and Culture. Also her poems "Rabenmutter” and “Walking the Minefield” will be published in the Summer 2010 issue of Calyx.

Whitney Shuman (B.A. 2009) will begin a Master's Degree program in Moving Image Archive Studies at UCLA.

Melissa Stein's (M.A. 1996) poetry collection Rough Honey won the 2010 APR/Honickman First Book Prize, selected by Mark Doty, and was published by The American Poetry Review with Copper Canyon Press. Her poems were published recently in Harvard Review, North American Review, Alaska Quarterly Review, 32 Poems, Spoon River Poetry Review, and Green Mountains Review.

Melvin Sterne (M.A. 2003) is an Assistant Professor of English at the American University of Bosnia and Herzegovina. His story "Split Decision" placed second in a fiction contest in Crucible and was published last winter.

Monica Storss (M.A. 2008) is the new publicist for Wilderness Press.


Dominick Tracy (Ph.D, 2003) is now the Assistant Director of Humanities & Sciences at California College of the Arts (SF/Oakland).

Jan VanStavern (M.A. 1991; Ph.D. 1996) is Associate Professor (adjunct) at Dominican University, CA. She has published a chapbook of poetry, The Long Birth, with Conflux Press in 2009.

Karma Waltonen (Ph.D. 2006) has published the textbook she co-wrote with Denise Du Vernay, The Simpsons in the Classroom: Embiggening the Learning Experience with the Wisdom of Springfield (McFarland Press).
Mary Water's (Ph.D. 2001) anthology *British Women Writers of the Romantic Period: An Anthology of their Literary Criticism* was published by Palgrave Macmillan in late 2009.


Chris Westage (Ph.D. 2005) took a tenure-track job at CSU Fullerton in 2007 in Modern and Contemporary Drama. He and his wife had their first child, a boy named Will, in 2009.

Aimee Whitenack (M.A. 2006) won the Ivan Klima Fellowship in Fiction Writing, which allowed her to spend a month in Prague studying with Stuart Dybek through Western Michigan State's Prague Summer Workshop.

Naomi Williams (M.A. 2007) won a Pushcart Prize in 2009 and an Honorable Mention in the 2009 Best American Short Stories. Her stories have recently appeared in *One Story* and *A Public Space*. She's looking forward to making progress on her book manuscript during a month-long residency she's been awarded at Hedgebrook this summer.

Martin Woodside (M.A. 2003) is in Bucharest, Romania, as a Fulbright Fellow for the 2009-10 academic year. He won the grant to study and translate contemporary Romanian poetry.
Margaret Ferguson is a Distinguished Professor of English at UC Davis.

Cries and Whispers: Cultural Debates about the Hymen (UC DAVIS Nov. 6)

In what follows, I offer a partial summary of my fall faculty lecture and of the book project from which the lecture derived. The lecture began with three epigraphs, each of which glosses a major trope of my project: the synecdoche, the part for the whole. My epigraphs also gloss a film of 1972 directed by Ingmar Bergman; my main title phrase comes from that film, which, as some will remember, is about visual and auditory signs of various kinds of repression in late nineteenth-century Sweden.

My first epigraph is from Freud's 1915 essay "Repression": "Repressions that have failed will of course have more claim on our interest than those that may have been successful." [1]

My second epigraph is from a webnews outlet called intriguingly: "The Local: Sweden's News in English" (so the "local" paradoxically signals that which is brought to non-locals, those who either don't know Swedish or those Swedes who prefer their news in a non-native tongue). Mindful that Ingmar Bergman's native Sweden has been much in the news lately, as the source of all the Nobel prizes except the peace prize, which comes from Norway, I chose this news tidbit as an epigraph primarily because it introduces one of my major concerns in this lecture, which is with how knowledge or pseudo knowledge is transferred—often with serious material consequences—across national borders, across languages and times, and from popular to elite venues, from what experts see and claim to know, to what ordinary people think they know from hearsay or from experience. But I'll immediately deconstruct _that _binary between elite and popular knowledge—and circulating routes thereof—by acknowledging that "ordinary" people may well include professional experts when it comes to possessing knowledge about their own or their spouses or their children's bodies! In any case, my news item is from July 2008 and it's headlined: "Stockholm taxpayers funding surgically restored 'virginity'"! The news story—as is so often the case—is a story of a story, or rather of a "new report" about a "study"—presumably done by experts credentialed in social science-- showing that "surgical reconstructions of the hymen, a fold of skin supposedly found at a female's vaginal opening, are being performed by both public and private practitioners in Stockholm. The study has caused alarm among local health officials and politicians, who were previously unaware that such operations took place at all, let alone at tax payer-funded health clinics."
Foolish Virgins James Tissot

My third epigraph looks back from 2008 to 1595, when Edmund Spenser published his "Epithalamion," a poem celebrating his marriage to Elizabeth Boyle; the genre-term comes, as do many of the key words in my talk, from Greek: epi- upon, and thalamium, nuptial chamber. Here's one part of one stanza from Spenser's poem, in which the bridegroom speaker describes his wedding day—and the longed-for night—in 24 long and intricately rhymed stanzas; after having described his brides' lovely lips as like cherries and her lower body—as mediated by the eyes watching it—as like unto a "Pallace fayre /Ascending uppe with many a stately stayre,/To honours seate and chastity's sweet bower," the poet acknowledges some of the fears—including those 'bred' of rumors that might question the bride's chastity—surrounding both the male poet's and his lady's socially and sexually charged movement from the domain of public ceremony into the private, or semi-private, space of chastity's bower where the husband will come to know his wife—and, perhaps, where his and her doubts about the whole marital enterprise will come more fully into view:

Let no lamenting cryes, nor dolefull teares,
Be heard all night within nor yet without:
Ne let false whispers, breeding hidden feares,
Breake gentle sleepe with misconceived dout. . . .

That "misconceived doubt" of which Spenser writes—the phenomenon created by the cries and whispers figuratively attached to the strange body part called the hymen and of course by many other names as well—is at the center of my inquiry. Such doubt, an apparently immaterial phenomenon which often has material consequences, recurs across times and spaces in what I've been able to reconstruct so far in the history—or rather the multicultural though by no means universal histories—of the hymen. The doubt, I argue, is constitutive of the hymen as an object of knowledge and as a key player in various socio-economic systems—including our own—in which the *reproduction* of the ethnic group or the state is believed to depend on the control of female sexuality in particular, though efforts to control male sexuality—and sexual desires more generally—loom large in both ancient and modern examples of what I'd like to call hymeneal doubt. Consider as just one example of this phenomenon a passage from Chapter 22 of the biblical book of Deuteronomy, here quoted in Tyndale's translation of 1530. The passage tells the Israelite community what to do in cases where the man takes a wife and, after lying with her, comes to hate her and "lay[s] shameful things unto her charge"—specifically, the charge that when he "came to her," he found her "not a maid" [the Hebrew word is "bethula"). What is to be done in such a case? The father and mother of the bride are to "bring forth the tokens of her virginity, unto the elders of the city, even unto the gate"—i.e., to an opening in the community's built environment that seems somehow to parallel the contested state of the opening into the bride's body. The parents are to lay the "tokens of virginity" [/bethulim/ in the Hebrew, /signa virginitatis/ in the Vulgate] on the ground in front of the elders, who are then to decide whether or not the tokens constitute a "surety" of virginity or not. If they do, the slandering husband is to be punished with a fine of a hundred pieces of silver, which money is to be given to the bride's father; the bridegroom is also punished by having to keep his wife "all his days." If the tokens of virginity do not create a "surety" in the eyes of the elders, however, "let them bring her unto the door of her father's house, and let the men of that city stone her . . . to death, because she hath wrought folly in Israel."
Cupid and Hymen Drink from the Cup of Friendship  Jean Baptiste Regnault

The ancient biblical passage offers an intriguing illustration of the argument implicit in my title phrase: cries and whispers that occur in the ostensibly private space of the marital chamber are among the many ambiguous signs, both visible and audible, that are subject to debate and reinterpretation on occasions where chastity—what Virginia Woolf in /A Room of One's Own/ called the "fetish of chastity"—is socially produced. I argue that we cannot begin to understand the function of the hymen as a fetish in our own culture—which is also not our own in many ways to which debates about hymens point—without attempting to write and read the hymen's multiple histories and the ways those histories are appropriated—and misappropriated—through the English language.

The early modern English part of the hymen's histories features debates about whether or not we can know an invisible state of being—the state valued as female virginity or chastity—through procedures for ascertaining the presence or absence of a certain body part that is itself invisible to the naked eye. The material existence of this body part, along with its use as proof in legal proceedings, has been repeatedly contested in different eras and places, sometimes, as is the case with a first-century BCE doctor named Soranus and a sixteenth-century French doctor named Paré, in polemical response to people the writer deems "vulgar" or illiterate, people who hold beliefs about the female body that the medical writer wishes to correct. Ancient, medieval, and early modern debates about the body part in question, which were often, in the Christian era, connected to the disputed doctrine of Christ's mother as "virgo intacta,"* are fragments of a larger body of cultural debate in which the hymen or maidenhead becomes an object of cultural knowledge unevenly, through different acts of naming, translating, persuading, seeing, and touching. Such acts were performed by individuals and groups with different degrees of power and different kinds of literacy, as well as with different degrees of access to media for making public ideas about what might be considered a highly private body part.

Unlike the hand or the eye or even the penis and the clitoris, the hymen is simply not there as an object of private or public knowledge—even the low-level knowledge we call "noticing"—until it is represented by someone to someone else as something that matters. Usually, though not always, the concept of a hymen is produced by experts, as Nina Philadelphoff-Puren has argued, and as is amply demonstrated by the legal and literary texts generated by Henry VIII's nation-making divorce from Katherine of Aragon. Her maidenhead—which she and others claimed was intact at the time when she married her second husband—was represented retroactively as not intact in texts legitimating Henry's divorce from his first wife (see e.g., the Henrician dialogue A Glasse of the Truth [1532?]). The hymen, however, has had a long cultural life beyond what experts (including teachers, lawyers, priests, and doctors) could control. This is one reason why the hymen—and its
various English synonyms—is such a rich subject for wordplay and for probing reflection on representation. Hymens play a role in literary and other discourses investigating the distinction between truth, truth-claims, and fictions.

In Elizabeth I's time and long after her death, many writers explored a skeptical position in the arena of debate my project defines; such a position is epitomized in Abraham Cowley's definition of the maidenhead as a "point imaginary" ("The Maidenhead," 1656). Aphra Behn also explores the skeptical position; so does Spenser in some moments of the Faerie Queene. Other writers, or the same writers in other places, explore the logically related though apparently antithetical position that "real" maidenhood exists invisibly despite signs indicating that it does not. A version of this story is told in Shakespeare's Othello, in which the hero is obsessed with the hymen-like handkerchief he takes as "ocular proof" of Desdemona's infidelity; this story is told in an ultimately more comic vein in Shakespeare's Much Ado About Nothing. The hymen, as a locus for questions about belief and disbelief in signs, is an apt analogue for the object of religious faith as defined by St. Paul: "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb 11:1, AV). A foreign word imported into English (the OED records the first usage in the sense of "thin membrane" in Helkiah Crooke's medical treatise Microcosmographia of 1615), "hymen" is a sign that points to another sign located, allegedly, in the female body--a "membrana," as Ben Jonson called it in a well-known formulation from 1619 that satirically divides Elizabeth I's maidenhead (which Jonson judges as having been intact only because it was abnormally thick) from the real state of her maidenhood, which he slanders (Dobson 15). Further complicating the hymen's status as a sign is its frequent yoking with another, the blood that allegedly arises from the hymen's destruction by bridegroom or rapist or possibly by self-touching or by horseback riding or by a midwife's examination. Blood, required as a sign of virginity's loss in foundational texts such as Deuteronomy 22:13-21, was easily counterfeited after wedding nights.

The first of Henry VIII's Six Articles insisted that "the natural body and blood" of Christ, "conceived of the Virgin Mary," was really present in the bread and wine of the Eucharist; many doubted this article and were punished for doing so. Expressions of doubt about what Christ's blood was and when and how it could reappear crossed with debates about his mother's miraculous virginity in ways that inform my hypothesis that literary figurations of hymeneal blood carry more theological significance than critics have tended to allow. This line of argument also leads me to take a fresh look at the roles played in literary texts by Hymen as the non-Christian god of marriage who appears in masques such as Jonson's Hymenae (1606), in many epithalamia, and in plays such as Shakespeare's As You Like It (1623) and Daniel's pastoral tragiocomedy Hymens Triumph (1615). Intriguingly, the Hymen, a god as a girl in order to rescue a group of Athenian maidens from thieves; a grateful father gives his daughter away as a reward to the happy bridegroom (whether the bride is happy we don't know). The Hymen as a god, with his cries or "hymns," merits more scholarly attention than he has yet received from scholars interested in the hymen as a membrane. The god exists in a border territory between genres and genders, no less a threshold phenomenon than the membrane hypothesized as existing between men and women, between a body's (or nation's) inside and outside, and between material and immaterial realms.

It is noteworthy--given the strong body of scholarly work on the general subjects of marriage, virginity, and divorce in early modern England--that the hymen is absent from scholarly places where one would have expected to find something on the subject. Hillman and Mazzio's important collection The Body in Parts, for instance, does not mention the hymen; nor does Thomas Laqueur in his influential book Making Sex. The hymen, on which the ancient medical authority Galen is completely silent, troubles Laqueur's Galenic one-sex model. Though hymens are variously located by those early modern medical authorities who claim to have seen them at all in dead or living female bodies, hymens are not so far as I know ever regarded as the inversion of any male organ; nor do men have them—except allegorically, and with the notable exception of Christ. He is represented by some medieval authors as "virgo intacta." The possible importance of such a medieval concept for early modern theories of gender difference (or sameness) remains to be
assessed. Oddly, a tiny labeled representation of a hymen appears in an essay Laqueur wrote to refute his critics; the hymen is there, if you're looking for it, on a page Laqueur reproduces from Crooke's *Microcosmographia* that depicts the female reproductive parts. Crooke has a chapter on the hymen filled with differing (mostly translated) medical views on that body-part's existence.

In my fall lecture, I described my plan for a book of four chapters. The first, "Naming the Hymen," draws on Derrida's discussions of the hymen as a "fold" or hyphen-like structure that both separates and joins categories and that can signal both marriage and virginity (*Dissemination* 20-21). This chapter also discusses the two Greek meanings of the word as they come through various routes to English Renaissance texts in which H/hymens coexist with politically-charged puns on heads and maidenheads. I consider other conceptually charged names as well, among them "vilme" [film] (Gowing); "knot," with its puns on "nothing" and "noting" (Carroll); "curtains" (Spenser); "seal" (Shakespeare and others); and "fatal ring" (Fletcher, discussed by Loughlin).

Chapter 2, "Representing the Hymen," acknowledges the thin line separating naming from representing while focusing on some extended and imagistically vivid passages about hymeneal matters. Spenser's stories of sexually repressed characters (both female and male) who suffer bloody wounds are one object of this chapter's analysis; Amoret seems to have fears of defloration that are allegorically assuaged when she is made "perfect hole" at the end of Book 3 of the *Faerie Queene* (see Coles; many other critics have also written about this climactic episode). Books 3 and 4, the legends of Chastity and Friendship, are particularly rich in hymen-like figures falsely and idolatrously fetishized (Flormiell's "girdle," for instance, which is vainly pursued by the "Knights of the Maidenhead" in Book 4). My chapter also analyzes literary examples of faking virginity, as Duessa does in Book I of the *Faerie Queene* and as Beatrice-Johanna does spectacularly in Middleton and Rowley's *The Changeling*, which features a gullible husband, a deflowering villain named De Flores, and pointed allusions to the historical case of Frances Howard, pronounced a "virgo intacta" during the divorce trial in which her husband admitted that he was impotent with her but not with other women.

Chapter 3, "Teaching the Hymen," argues that writers such as Erasmus, Spenser, Shakespeare (in the deferred consummation plot of *The Taming of A Shrew*) and Mary Wroth (in her play *Love's Victory*) obliquely articulate advice for bridegrooms that stresses the value of delaying nuptial intercourse and respecting (or appearing to respect) the bride's wishes, as Spenser's heroine Britomart does allegorically when she takes three long days to go through three doors en route to freeing a bride from torture.

My final chapter, "Knowing the Hymen," examines Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing* and Milton's *A Masque at Ludlow* in the course of considering the hymen's peculiar epistemological status in various kinds of truth claims including those produced by the digital virginity tests performed on female prisoners entering Bridewell Prison according to historian Paul Griffiths in *Lost Londons*.

My epilogue speculates on the implications of the early modern debates on the hymen for modern theories and practices focused on this strange body-part. I am particularly interested in asking why so-called revirgination surgeries are so often advertised on the Web under names alluding to ancient Greek: *hymenoplasty*, *hymenorraphy*, and (pace Derrida) *hymenography*. I discuss some of the contradictory representations of the hymen in modern handbooks aimed at educating young readers of both sexes. Mystifications of agency abound in such texts, which present as "facts" theories that continue to be debated in the medical literature: one educational text describes the hymen as "intact at birth," for instance, though some doctors acknowledge that we simply do not know that all females have hymeneal tissue; the same treatise uses the passive voice to inform us that the hymen "typically becomes perforated by the time a woman reaches puberty, allowing the passage of menstrual flow" (Blonna and Richard 78). Renaissance debates about representing the hymen provide a frame for critiquing the epistemological reductiveness of such formulations, and also for interrogating the commodifying language of many advertisements for hymen "reconstructions" such as the one from a Beverly Hills doctor that promises that "suturing the tear in the hymen will heal it and make the girl a virgin"; furthermore, "stitch[ing] a gelatin capsule of artificial blood" into the vagina will give "proof that the bride is a virgin" so long as the sexual act is completed soon after the surgery, since its effects are likely to be short-lived.
In his darkly comic novel *The Brothers*, the Chinese novelist Yu Hua satirizes such operations and sees them as symptomatic of "the way we live now," in a moment of a moment of global capitalism marked by the exploitation of sexuality and the selling of unnecessary commodities including absurdly reified hymens. Translated into English in 2009, Yu Hua's novel stages, as its climactic episode, a "national" beauty pageant for alleged virgins that makes the sexually insatiable and thoroughly despicable protagonist, one Baldy Li, immensely wealthy. It's not the pageant itself that creates his wealth, but the medical revirgination industry that the pageant spawns and that Baldy controls from behind the scenes. This is a con man's "recon" industry, as the translator calls it; the industry is thoroughly international and thoroughly corrupt. Baldy succeeds in duping some of his countrymen into mistaking the ostensibly natural and home-grown hymen as the perfect sign of national or tribal self-containment; the hymen, Boss Li's PR man opines, "plays a crucial role in preventing the invasion of foreign microbes, protecting the internal reproductive system, and preserving the body's reproductive ability" [477]. The novelist mocks this comforting vision of the hymen, which presupposes an old analogy—familiar to us from Elizabethan England—between the body politic and the bounded body of the pure woman. Yu Hua's novel attempts to critique that analogy; that is my aim as well in my book project, which benefitted greatly from questions that colleagues and students raised after the lecture last November.

* Naomi Seidman offers a fascinating account of Jewish writers' skepticism about this doctrine—the result of what Jews saw as a mistranslation of Isaiah 7:14 in the Greek Septuagint Bible—in *Faithful Renderings*, 61-63, 65-67.
2009-2010 AWARDS

David Noel Miller Scholarship Essay Prize

Gina Caison
“Alabama’s Own: Forrest Carter and Little Tree as Southern Characters”

and

Will Elliot
"Garbage In, /Garbage/ Out: Analog Poetics in the Integrated Circuit"

Outstanding Graduate Student Teaching Award

Andrew Hageman

Celeste Turner Wright Poetry Prize

2nd Place - Brian Ang

Graduate Student Winners of the Elliot Gilbert Prize Contest for Fiction and Poetry

David Owen won for his short story entitled "Honeymoon."

Kitty Liang won for her poem entitled "The Long March."
Graduate Degrees Awarded

2010 Ph.D. Recipients

Margaret France - *Now for Something Completely Different: The Non Sequitur Sequel in Daniel Defoe, Sarah Fielding, and Sarah Scott*

Lynn Langmade - *GemiNation: A Theory of Twin Literary Criticism in American Literature*

Nathan Milos - *Messthetics as an Alternative to the Avant-Garde*

Kyle Pivetti - *"We'll Remember With Advantage": National Memory and Literary Device in Early Modern England*

Katie Rodger - *"Toward the Western Sea”: Science, Culture, and Narrative in the American Pacific*

2010 M.A. in Creative Writing Recipients

Aaron Begg - *Ask Me About the Sun*

Tristen Chang - *The Real Sister*

Ashley Clarke - *The Patron*

Daniel Grace - *The Sound Era*

Rachel Jenkins - *Something Less Than Hearsay*

Maria Kuznetsova - *The Accident*

Melissa Mack - *After Paradise, The Descent*

Noah McGee - *The Thomas Miller Boulangerie*

David Owen - *The Dentist's Chair*

Richard Siegler - *Nothing Holds Us Together*

Richard has also received a Fulbright Scholarship to Rwanda
Kristen Aldebol received the Graduate Student Travel Award from the Office of Graduate Studies for a paper she presented at The University of British Columbia 38th Medieval Workshop: Writing the World. Her paper was entitled "From the Garden into the City: Pearl as Intermediary in Medieval Conceptions of Heaven."

Brian Ang had poems published and accepted by Rampike, Scythe, textsound, West Wind Review, and With + Stand (a journal edited by UC Davis student Daniel Thomas Glass).

Gina Caison had two publications: “We’re Still Here: Eddie Swimmer on Cherokee History, Life, and Outdoor Drama in the Appalachian Mountains,” North Carolina Literary Review 19 (2010, forthcoming) and a Review of All That Remains: Varieties of Indigenous Expression by Arnold Krupat, MELUS: Multi-Ethnic Literature of the U.S. 34.4 (2009). She received a scholarship to attend the University College Dublin's 2010 Clinton Institute for American Studies Summer School. And she was one of three graduate students selected to participate in the NEH's Summer Institute, "From Metacom to Tecumseh: Native Alliances, Conflicts, and Resistance in North America" at the D'Arcy McNickle Center for American Indian History at the Newberry Library in Chicago.

Cynthia Degnan received the UC Office of the President's Dissertation Year Diversity Fellowship this year. She presented two papers, one at UC Irvine's Windows: A Visual Studies Conference and at Exploring Childhood Studies hosted by Rutgers, Camden. She also co-founded, with three cultural studies grad students, an ongoing project called Queers for Public Education (Q4PE). Q4PE generates writing and presentations that offer and encourage a queer critique of the privatization of public education, especially in the wake of numerous hate crimes that have occurred on and around California campuses this year.

Margaret France received The Traveling Jam Pot Award from the...
American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (ASECS), allowing her to present "Robinson Crusoe: Home School Hero" at the ASECS Meeting in Albuquerque in March. The English Club asked France to sit on their "Q&A with the Professors Panel," where she learned a lot about Greg Dobbins and answered questions about the Twilight series. Margaret was also nominated for the ASUCD Excellence in Teaching Award.

**Alysia Garrison** was awarded a Chancellor’s Teaching Fellowship for 2009-2010 and served as President of the MLA Graduate Student Caucus last year. She spent a quarter in London in Spring 2009 as Teaching Assistant for the quarter abroad program. She had the opportunity to conduct research and to fly to Galway, Ireland, to give a paper at the ACIS convention on a panel she co-organized. In addition, she presented a paper and participated as a fellow at the DePaul School of Philosophy's Collegium Phaenomenologicum in Umbria, Italy this past summer. In Fall 2009, Alysia published a chapter on Samuel Beckett in the collection Samuel Beckett: History, Memory, Archive and an article on Giorgio Agamben in a special issue of Law and Critique. In winter, she moderated a panel, "Criticism as Method: Mediating Literature and Politics," at the MLA convention in Philadelphia. In April 2010 she gave a paper at the ACLA conference in New Orleans. Alysia was nominated for the 8th annual ASUCD Excellence in Education Award.

**John Garrison** received the Everett Helm Visiting Fellowship from Indiana University to examine early modern texts in the Lilly Library Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Special Collections. He also received the John F. Benton Prize from the Medieval Association of the Pacific, a research grant from the Medieval Academy of America, and a travel grant from the Shakespeare Association of America. John had an article about depictions of friendship in Chaucer accepted at the journal Medievalia et Humanistica.

Research Association (SFRA). He received a departmental Dissertation Quarter Fellowship and was also the recipient of the Outstanding Graduate Student Teaching Award.

Courtney Hopf presented a paper at the first Conference on David Mitchell at the University of St. Andrews (Scotland), and Mitchell himself was in attendance for all the sessions. Says Hopf, "It was an amazing and thought-provoking experience, especially as he's my favorite author." The papers from the conference are being collected in a volume entitled David Mitchell: Critical Essays, forthcoming from Gylphi Press.

Darcy Irvin received the 2010 Berkeley-Pembroke Exchange Scholarship offered through the UC Berkeley Center for British Studies. Funded by the Mellon Foundation, the scholarship provides $10,000 for six months of archival research at Cambridge University. While there, Darcy will study late nineteenth century pornography and the resulting purity campaigns. This year, Darcy also participated as one of the UC Davis Professors for the Future Fellows.

Rachel Jenkins has three poems ("Area," "New Algebra," and "Short Phrase") in issue 6 (Barthelme) of kill author, which recently won the 2009 Million Writers best new online literary magazine. She will have a poem called "Hysteresis" published in the fifth Zoland Poetry annual.

Heather Jennings presented the essay "Embodiment and the Limits of Knowledge in Chretien’s Yvain" at the Medieval Association of the Pacific conference in Tacoma, WA. She also presented the essay "Memory and Interiority in Augustine and Chrétien" at the UC Davis Religion, Literature, & and the Arts Conference. Heather is finishing her first year and is studying medieval literature.

Kristian Jensen and recent Ph.D. graduate Keri Wolf both wrote articles for an anthology due to go to press in 2010 on the Twilight series, edited by Marijane Osborn and Amy Clarke. Kristian’s essay examines Quileute Indian mythology, especially werewolf and shape-shifter lore, in relation to Twilight.

Anett Jessop published the article “Modernisms, Pure English and Poetry: Laura (Riding) Jackson’s ‘Linguistic Ultimate’” in Traverses, ed. Sandrine Sorlin (Presses Universitaires du Languedoc et de la
Méditerranée) and also published the book chapter “Poet Interrupted by her Muse” in *Girls Interrupted*, ed. Jennifer Rich (Hofstra University Press). She presented the essay “The Linguistic Ultimate: Laura (Riding) Jackson’s Way to Language” at the Inventive Linguistics Interdisciplinary International Conference: “literature/linguistics/history of ideas” at the Université Paul Valéry, Montpellier III, France. She also presented the essay at the Heidegger in America seminar, 40th Annual Conference, Northeast Modern Language Association, in Boston, MA, in February 2009. Anett received a Northeast MLA Conference Travel Grant and the UC Davis Consortium for Women and Research Travel Grant.

Maria Kuznetsova’s short story "No Mess Allowed" came out in the spring issue of *The Summerset Review*. She also won the Elliot Gilbert Prize for her short story "Eventually."

Lynn Langmade presented a pair of papers at conferences: “The Wilson Duplex: Corporatism and the Problem of Singleton Reading in Poe’s ‘William Wilson,’ (or Why Can’t You See Twins?)” at the Third International Edgar Allan Poe Conference and “Natural Born Killers: The Criminality and Criminology of Identical Twins in Twain’s *Pudd’nhead Wilson*” at the 20th Annual Conference of the American Literature Association (ALA). Lynn will be a Recent Graduate Lecturer in the department beginning Fall 2010.

Angela Hume Lewandowski was selected by the UC Davis Graduate Program in Critical Theory to receive a fellowship to attend the Cornell University School of Criticism and Theory this summer. Her poems recently appeared or are forthcoming in *Zoland Poetry, Word for/Word, Spinning Jenny*, and *cold-drill*.


Sharada Balachandran Orihuela is teaching Honors English 3 in the fall and has also received the Cuban Heritage Collection fellowship to work at the University of Miami Cuban Heritage Collection for the months of August and September.
David Owen has short stories forthcoming in two journals: A Public Space and The Threepenny Review.

Kyle Pivetti had an article accepted at Modern Philology entitled "Temporal Forms: Reading Dryden's Rhymes as History." He is also one of the English Department's Recent Graduate Lecturers for the 2010-2011 academic year.

Karolyn J Reddy traveled to London as a Teaching Assistant for the department's quarter abroad and engaged in research at the British Library and the Wellcome Library. She also presented a paper entitled "Bits of Ivory and Mirrors: Feminism and Dialogism in Austen" at the New Directions in Austen Studies conference.

Rosalinda Salazar was selected to attend the Academy for Doctoral Students and Junior Faculty in American Studies at Wayne State University in Detroit, which included a group of 24 German and American students and a lineup of faculty keynote presenters. She presented "What's food got to do with it: Literature, Space, and Place in Oscar Casares' Amigoland."
Kaitlin Walker received the Consortium for Women and Research Fall 2009 Graduate Travel Award to present her paper "Making Home, Daughters, and Borders in Sandra Cisneros' Caramelo" at the Gender, Place and Space conference at the University of Notre Dame.

Barbara Zimbalist has been awarded a Fulbright Research Grant for the 2010-2011 academic year; she has also been awarded a year-long fellowship from the Belgian American Educational Foundation for 2011. Barbara was recently a recipient of a Bancroft Library Study Award for the summer of 2010.

**ACTION: ADVOCATING FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION**

In response to increased tuition and furloughed (and reduced) staff and faculty, many UC Davis students took action to advocate for public education. As Catherine Fung noted, "the English department has been really well represented in the organizing efforts. Consistently, at every meeting, teach-in,
and demonstration, English department grad students and faculty showed up in strong numbers, which really is a testament to our investment in this university. It could be said that the English department (along with our friends in Cultural Studies, Sociology, and other departments) basically built the movement at UC Davis.” Below is more of her response.

**Catherine Fung:** For the Sept. 24 walkout, I was asked to give a speech at the rally on the quad (along with faculty member Nathan Brown). At the November 17th demonstration, I gave a speech at Berkeley (along with faculty member Joshua Clover). I served on the student panel for the UC Commission on the Future, in which I, along with 19 other students (grad and undergrad), presented our views to the Commission. I also participated in the March 4th day of action.
2010 YEAR-END AWARDS

OUTSTANDING SENIOR AWARD

Kevin Peterson

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT ESSAY PRIZE

1st Place
Tom Johnson, “Poetic Architecture: Redrawing the Cognitive Map”

2nd Place
Lauren Swift, “Psychopathology and the Slum: Untangling the Manifestation of Schizoid Mechanisms in the Characters of Zakes Mda's Ways of Dying”

ELLIOTT GILBERT MEMORIAL PRIZE FOR BEST HONORS CREATIVE PROJECT

Briony Gylgayton

INA COOLBRITH MEMORIAL PRIZE

Finalists for the state & campus wide competition (in alphabetic order)
Collin Brennan
Sylvia Chan
Briony Gylgayton (Briony Gylgayton also tied for 2nd place in the statewide competition)

PAMELA MAUS CONTEST IN CREATIVE WRITING

1st Place for Fiction
Briony Gylgayton

2nd Place for Fiction (tie)
Kathleen Martinelli
Jayne Wilson

1st Place for Poetry
Teresa Pham

2nd Place for Poetry (tie)
Erica Dessenberger
Briony Gylgayton

DIANA LYNN BOGART PRIZE

1st Place
Sylvia Chan

2nd Place
William Long

3rd Place
John Stuster

Honorable Mentions
Sarah Louise Stratton
Josh Rottman
Hailey Harrell
Briony Gylgayton

CELESTE TURNER WRIGHT POETRY PRIZE

1st Place
Jordan Eryn Murphy

DEPARTMENT CITATIONS

Jessica Arthur
Jessica Boissy
Michael Bolin
Melissa Borden
Collin Brennan
Melanie Brunet
Kristen Bucher
Elena Buckley
Patricia Chidyausiku
Michele Christensen
Zachary Crockett
Kathryn Darfler
Alison Day
Erica Dessenberger
Amanda Edd
Sara Franssen
Lindsey Gillespie
Briony Gylgayton
Benjamin Johnson
Kristen King
Tal Koyman
Chino Mayrina
Katelyn McCrory
Carly Michelsen
Ben Moroski
Corey Moseley
Lyndsay Olson
Lisa Palmer
Kevin Peterson
Teresa Pham
Katelyn Phillips
Susana Ponce
Jennifer Pugh
Christine Reyes
Sarah Rich
Francesca Sapien
Randi Schuler
April Shields
Emily Sibley