FROM THE CHAIR
SCOTT SIMMON

As I finish my second year as English Department chair, I’m realizing that the position is much like the format of this newsletter. I stand in here at the front, taking implied credit for accomplishments and leaving my lapses on the cutting-room floor. As should be evident from a quick glance through the following pages, 2011-12 has been a year in which the department can take some pride—notwithstanding funding cutbacks and moments of campus chaos—thanks to all of the English Department’s components: faculty, staff, and graduate and undergraduate students. This newsletter itself has been pulled together by staff, and graduate and undergraduate students. This newsletter itself has been pulled together by staff, and graduate and undergraduate students. This newsletter itself has been pulled together by staff, and graduate and undergraduate students.

Among awards to our faculty this year, particularly notable are: Lucy Corin’s Rome Prize, which comes with an apartment in Rome for eleven months, making us all deeply envious; Fran Odusolu (who graduated in winter). Stephanie Johnson (who graduated in fall) and Temidayo Hayashi, and Stephanie Galasso—and to Thomas Dolan’s Distinguished Teaching Award from her doctoral students: the new Provost’s Dissertation Year Fellowships to Jasmine Kites and Peter Weise; a Davis Humanities Institute Fellowship to Sarah Klotz; an ACLS Dissertation Year Fellowship to Nick Valvo; and the new Bilinski Foundation Fellowships to Valerie Billing and Nicole Kenley. Ph.D. students also shined as teachers, with both Pearl Chaozon-Bauer and Claire Dawkins winning Outstanding Graduate Student Teaching Awards, only a handful of which are awarded across campus.

Among the more than 300 undergraduate students earning their B.A. degrees with English majors this year, five who graduated in spring have just been awarded “Highest Honors” as we go to press. These are students who have amazed us in our undergraduate classes. We’ll hear more from them, but meanwhile our thanks and congratulations go to Alexandra Casavant, Gianina Couturri, Melissa Freeman, Sean Hayashi, and Stephanie Galasso—and to Thomas Johnson (who graduated in fall) and Temidayo Odusolu (who graduated in winter). Stephanie also won this year’s Outstanding Graduating Senior Award.

Next year will bring a few changes to our faculty. We’re sorry to bid goodbye to Tim Morton, who received an offer he couldn’t refuse from Rice University in Houston. But we’re thrilled to welcome two new faculty members. Matthew Vernon, a medievalist who is also an expert in nineteenth-century and African American literatures, emerged from our competitive search last year, ably run by Seeta Chaganti (who had quite the full year, also delivering our Fall Faculty Lecture; see page 3). David Lloyd, a renowned voice in Irish and postcolonial studies and critical theory, joins us as a Distinguished Professor, and we’re already looking forward to his forthcoming Fall Faculty Lecture. (If you plan ahead, mark your calendars for Friday, November 9 at 4:10 p.m. Page 4 includes an overview of David’s work by Ph.D. student Erin Hendel.)

I can’t close this year’s overview without mentioning what has been most unexpectedly heartening in my role as chair: observing the active unani- mity of department faculty and students in responding to UC’s well-publicized crises—not merely to the pepper-spray incident of last November but to the larger issues of tuition increases and the push toward privatization of public universities generally.

Budget and funding issues can’t help but loom as we move ahead. Our Voorhies Unit staff do more with less, and manage to make it easy on me. We’re also more grateful than ever to our donors who have supported financially the department and its students. Although state funding for physical improvements of classroom spaces has been hardest hit, we were able last year to upgrade our department’s O’Connor Library to incorporate a more inspirational space for graduate seminars, thanks to individual donations. Coming this summer: a similar upgrade to our other, mainly undergraduate seminar room. Donations for this and for student support would be most welcome.

Meanwhile, onward….
Mellon Fellows

The Early Modern Mellon Fellows program draws together some of UC Davis's finest doctoral graduate students whose research focuses on the early modern period (c.1500 –c.1700). Fellows participate in all events associated with the Mellon Initiative and take part in lunchtime seminars at which they share their work in progress. In addition to students from Spanish and history, four of this year's Fellows came from the English department. Ph.D. Student Valerie Billing, whose project is titled “Large and in Charge: Age, Size, and Gender in Early Modern England,” said, “The Mellon Fellows program fosters a sense of unity and professionalism among graduate students, giving us the opportunity to spend a year in a collaborative, interdisciplinary seminar. We Fellows had the rare experience of intimately getting to know the projects of graduate students from English, Spanish, and history.” First-year Ph.D student Elizabeth Crachiolo, whose work is titled “Eye-Hopes Deceitful Prove: The Spectacle of the Female Body from Sidney to Behn,” commented, “It's rare to receive such focused attention on a work in progress. It was extremely helpful, especially to me (just starting out), to participate in intensive discussions about the writing conventions in my field.” Billing, a fifth-year, also remarked on the positive impact of the program on her doctoral work, “the feedback I received on my dissertation project was invaluable as it helped me, on the large scale, think through the major claims of my project and, on a smaller scale, prepare an article for publication, which is currently under review at Renaissance Drama.” The other Fellows from English include Kelly Neil (English), whose work is titled “Inscrutable Suicide: Self-Killing, Gender, and Identity in Early Modern Drama” and Anna Pruitt (English), whose project is titled “Shadow Patriarchs: Rogues, Witches, Bawds, and the Politics of Reproduction on the Jacobean Stage.” Pruitt, who graduates this summer, has received a prestigious position as a Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of English at the New Oxford Shakespeare Project, University of Indiana, Indianapolis School of Liberal Arts.

Find out more about the Mellon Research Initiative in Early Modern Studies at their website.

Mellon Visiting Assistant Professor: Ari Friedlander

In fall 2011, the English Department welcomed Ari Friedlander as the Mellon Visiting Assistant Professor of English literature. Ari received his doctorate from the University of Michigan, where he taught classes on Shakespeare, gender and sexuality, and postcolonial literature. As Mellon Visiting Assistant Professor, Ari taught a senior seminar last Fall on “Sex and Crime in Renaissance Drama.” In Winter 2012, he taught a survey of Shakespeare's works and a graduate course on early modern sexuality, class, and culture, entitled “Rogue Sexualities in Early Modern England.” He also met with the Mellon Fellows in a seminar to discuss their works in progress. Next Spring, Professor Friedlander will teach a graduate seminar, titled "The Politics of Reproduction in the Early Modern World" (HUM 250, M, 3:10-6:00 in Voorhies 120). The seminar will be open to auditors, and will include four visiting speakers from disciplines such as history, comparative literature, English and Spanish. Professor Friedlander’s current book project, Promiscuous Generation: Sex, Crime, and the Birth of Political Economy, connects social and sexual deviance to the development of the concept of “population” in early modern England. A second project concerns the relationship between Renaissance poor laws and the modern concept of disability.

Mellon Research Initiative in Early Modern Studies

Thanks to generous funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, UC Davis launched the Mellon Research Initiative in Early Modern Studies this fall. The program will run for two more years and is co-directed by two English faculty, Gina Bloom and Margaret Ferguson. The Initiative has enriched the work of many faculty and graduate students in English. Bloom said, “The Mellon Initiative has highlighted and contributed to our department's strengths in early modern studies. Not only have our students benefited from the rich intellectual environment made possible by the grant, but several have received material support for their research. Indeed, of the six Mellon Fellows chosen from a rich and large application pool, four were English PhD students [see below]. And one of our grads was also the winner of the Mellon essay prize [see p.7].”

The Initiative, along with the Mellon Research Initiative in Environments and Societies, is centered in the Davis Humanities Institute, which has hired a new administrative assistant, Lisa Carvajal, to coordinate its many speakers and events. This year, the Research Initiative in Early Modern Studies welcomed an impressive group of scholars to participate in talks on campus. Visiting scholars gave lectures and attended luncheons and reading groups with graduate students to discuss cutting edge research in the field. Dyani Johns Taff, an English Ph.D student in early modern literature and co-coordinator of the Early Modern Research Cluster, said that the Initiative brought in “some of the most exciting scholars working on early modern topics across a number of different disciplines.” In addition to professors of music, Spanish and history, invited guests included many excellent literary scholars—Rosalind Jones, Peter Stallybrass, Kathryn Schwartz and Tom Conley. Johns Taff also spoke of the interdisciplinary nature of the program: “Each event drew people from multiple departments, and the talks always sparked really fascinating discussions about whatever topic the two scholars were presenting on.”

As the program continues into 2014, there are already exciting events planned for next year. On October 9, the Initiative will welcome Steve Hindle, the new Director of Research for the Huntington Library in Pasadena, to talk to faculty and graduate students. Hindle will discuss the Huntington's collections and give a public lecture on his own research, which includes a book on the micro history of poor relief in rural England between 1550-1750. Find out more about Hindle's Huntington appointment here.
Professor Seeta Chaganti specializes in Old and Middle English poetry and its intersections with material artifacts. Her current research focuses on poetic and visual representations of dance in the late Middle Ages. Media, performance, and movement studies, along with poststructuralism and theories of poetics, all inform her perspective on the Middle Ages as deeply as do historicist methodologies.

A tightly-packed crowd gathered in Voorhies 126 last November for the English Department’s annual Fall Faculty Lecture. This year’s speaker, Professor Seeta Chaganti, said she was “honored” to present her piece “Danse Macabre and the Virtual Churchyard” at the event. She explained, “Anything that brings together the entire faculty and the grad students, as well as the undergraduate honors students, and gives us all a shared text to talk and think about, is great. Our own interests as a department are so diverse, which is good, but I think it can be very helpful sometimes to give everyone something they can think about together.”

Crowd Review  Chaganti is no stranger to presenting her work to a crowd, as her piece underwent an innovative form of peer review prior to its publication. Chaganti explained, “The issue of postmedieval in which this essay appears engaged in an experiment with ‘crowd review,’ similar to the open peer review that Shakespeare Quarterly tried a couple of years ago.”

Being peer-reviewed in an open forum would seem a little daunting to most writers, and Chaganti initially felt the same way: “I feared feeling overwhelmed, even by helpful suggestions. Two readers’ reports can seem like a real Scylla and Charybdis sometimes, and I wasn’t sure what would happen with a whole rocky archipelago of suggestions.” But the process turned out to be extremely productive. Chaganti said, “it actually worked really well … the issue editors were wonderful about preparing their own remarks to assess each person’s reviews, so they made clear what they saw as the critiques with the highest priority, and how different critiques might fit together.” Chaganti’s piece garnered feedback from an impressive range of scholars, opening up new connections. She said, “I heard from some medievalists in fields outside my own, like an art historian whose work I had always admired but with whom I had never really had a good reason to get in touch. That was exciting — to see evidence that one’s work might be reaching a broader audience than one realizes.” Ultimately, Chaganti appreciated the fact that the process went far beyond the limits of an ordinary peer review: “it was really great to get such a broad spectrum of suggestions—from the archival to the theoretical—for further reading. As someone who likes to work a little bit outside traditional disciplinary boundaries, I often worry that I’m missing important things, and the variety of readers the crowd review offered helped to address that problem, I thought.”

Dance and the “Middle Ages”

Chaganti’s lecture comes from her current scholarly project, a book about dance and the Middle Ages. In this work, she argues that “by looking at medieval dance traditions and the specific ways that they have been preserved and assessed by later periods, we can form some broader insights about how scholarship has constructed the entity that we call the ‘Middle Ages,’ and how we might revise some of those constructions.” Of the lecture, she said, “in the piece that you heard, I am trying to change some of our perceptions about the Middle Ages by using dance to introduce the term of virtuality into our discussions of medieval culture.”

However, she suggests that in the book, “there’s also another aspect of danse macabre that I explore, which you didn’t hear about. This is how it fell victim to early modern iconoclasm: Shakespeare’s father, for example, whitewashed over a danse macabre mural and poem in the Guild Chapel at Stratford-upon-Avon. That kind of destruction, I argue, results in the loss of some ways to understand medieval poetic form (rather than simply the loss of the visual images, which is what one would assume).” She continued, “when my lecture turned to virtuality as a way of centralizing the issue of medieval poetic form, or seeing it differently, it was also addressing this gap that the postmedieval world created in our understanding of medieval culture.”

Basse Danse  In addition to Chaganti’s piece on “Danse Macabre,” the book includes a chapter on basse danse, “a predominantly fifteenth-century form that seems to hover between the medieval and early modern periods.” Chaganti claims, “the fifteenth-century dance manual tradition, which revolved around the desire to preserve and instruct these dances, is very dependent on philosophies of anticipation—looking forward all the time, or looking back mainly in order to look forward.”

In this chapter, she suggests that “modern scholarship on basse danse internalizes and reflects this tendency, so that it sees the relationship between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance as one of anticipation, a narrative of increasing conceptual sophistication as we move from ‘Gothic’ dances to Renaissance humanist ones.”

She continued, “This is an attitude toward the Middle Ages that a lot of medievalists have tried to find ways to complicate. The advantage of talking about it through dance is that dance can open up some questions about the implication of embodied experience — the dancer’s or the historian’s — in the production of this kind of anticipatory dynamic.”

Fall Lecture  Reflecting on the fall event, Chaganti said, “I always look forward to the fall lecture. I really enjoy having the opportunity to hear colleagues in different fields talk in detail about ideas and topics that they’re working on….I find it so useful to see what different stages of work on a project can look like for different people.” After hearing Chaganti’s piece, we eagerly await the publication of her book on dance and the Middle Ages.

DAVID LLOYD

David Lloyd is a major voice in the fields of Irish Studies, postcolonial theory and criticism, and literary modernism in general. Starting in the summer of 2012, he will also be a member of the UC Davis faculty. Lloyd will join the Department of English as a Distinguished Professor. Hired under the “Target of Excellence” program, which aims to attract top scholars to the campus, Lloyd will augment the department’s strengths in postcolonial studies, Irish studies, and critical theory.

“He is a scholar of extraordinary distinction,” said English Department Chair Scott Simon, “and a major voice in more than one field of contemporary literary scholarship, including Irish studies, modern British literature in general, and postcolonial and critical theory.”

Lloyd’s extensive body of work includes seminal books that have opened new chapters in Irish studies. *Nationalism and Minor Literature* (1987) was perhaps the first book to bring the insights of contemporary critical theory to bear upon Irish studies, and Lloyd’s work has proven to be among the most influential in the field for the last twenty-five years. He has also published *Anomalous States* (1993); *Ireland After History* (1999) and *Irish Times: Temporalities of Irish Modernity* (2008). His most recent book is *Irish Culture and Colonial Modernity*, published in November 2011 by Cambridge University Press. He is currently at work on three further books: *Beckett Among the Painters* (a study of Samuel Beckett’s visual aesthetics), *Under Representation* (on aesthetics and race), and *Poetry and Violence* (on Yeats, Vallejo, Césaire and Celan).

Lloyd’s criticism extends far beyond Irish Studies. Another major thread of his work focuses on the interconnection of minority writing, Enlightenment aesthetics, and the process of state-formation. *Culture and the State* (Routledge, 1998), cowritten with Paul Thomas, traces the manner in which the concept of culture during the Victorian period, so crucial to the discipline of Cultural Studies, was deeply imbricated with the modernizing qualities of the bourgeois state, and vice-versa.


In addition to his extensive critical oeuvre, Lloyd has written plays and several volumes of poetry. He has taught at six other colleges and universities, including Cambridge University; the University of California, Berkeley; University College, Galway; Scripps College, Claremont; and most recently, the University of Southern California. His courses include topics such as Irish Literature, Romantic poetry and theory, Modern poetry, Victorian literature, U.S. minority literature, comparative literature, colonialism, critical theory, and poetics.

Lloyd will be in excellent company here in the English Department. He will join scholars such as Parama Roy and John Marx in postcolonial literature, Gregory Dobbins in Irish Studies, and David Simpson, Nathan Brown, Scott Shershow, and Evan Watkins in critical theory.

“It is wonderful to bring such a distinguished faculty member to UC Davis,” said Jessie Ann Owens, Dean of Humanities, Arts, and Cultural Studies. “I know that he will make a major contribution to the entire division.”

Erin Hendel

Danielle Heard (Ph.D Cornell) officially joined the UC Davis faculty in 2009. She was a recipient of a two-year Andrew W. Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship of Scholars in the Humanities at Stanford University from 2009-11, so began teaching here this year. Her research and teaching interests include African American literature and culture with a focus on black cultural theory and studies of political and cultural identity. Other interests include American, U.S. ethnic, and postcolonial literatures and cultures, feminism, cultural studies, humor studies, disability studies, and sonic and visual culture. At UC Davis, Professor Heard has taught undergraduate courses on “Blues Literature and Black Feminism” and two survey courses on African American Literature, from 1900 to the Present. This Spring, she taught a graduate seminar, titled “Black Cultural Theory” and next Fall she will teach a graduate course on “Ralph Ellison and His Interlocutors.” Professor Heard has an upcoming article in *Callaloo*, entitled “Don’t Let Me Be Misunderstood: Nina Simone’s Theater of Invisibility” and is currently working on a book manuscript, *Buggy Jiving: Comic Strategies of the Black Avant-Garde.*

MATT WERN

Matthew Vernon (Ph.D Yale) will join the UC Davis faculty in fall 2012. Professor Vernon specializes in medieval and 19th century literature, and is particularly interested in conducting cross-temporal work along the lines of genealogy, interraciaclity, medievalism, vernacular literature and migration. His work focuses on the intersections of medieval and African American literatures, drawing upon his facility in Old English, Latin, French and Icelandic. He comes to UC Davis from The Gallatin School for Individualized Study at New York University, where he taught courses such as “Wandering Knights, Errant Detectives” and “From Medieval Manuscripts to Graphic Novels.” At UC Davis, Professor Vernon looks forward to teaching a course on “Monstrosity in the Middle Ages,” a survey of medieval texts designed to give students an overview of the possibilities of reading in the Middle Ages. The course will include Icelandic literature, Beowulf and Chaucer. Professor Vernon is currently working on Twain’s medievalism in "A Connecticut Yankee," and his current book project is tentatively titled *The Black Middle Ages.*

Nathan Brown published an article in Fall 2011 in Radical Philosophy, “Red Years: Althusser’s Lesson, Rancière’s Error, and the Real Movement of History.” He has another article forthcoming in The New Whitehead (Minnesota UP), titled “The Technics of Prehension: On the Photography of Nicolas Baier.” In the Winter and Spring of 2012, Nathan delivered talks as an invited speaker on philosophy, contemporary art, and politics at Artists Space in New York, at the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, at The Public School in Los Angeles, and at UC Riverside. He is the organizer of an upcoming conference in Zagreb, Croatia, titled The Art of the Concept (June 15-17, 2012). It is the third in an ongoing series of sympoisa under the title Conjuncture: 21st Century Philosophy, Politics, and Aesthetics.

Seeta Chaganti’s edited volume Medieval Poetics and Social Practice: Responding to the Work of Penn R. Szitya (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012) came out in May 2012. This year, Seeta won an Outstanding Mentor Award from the Consortium of Women and Research. The award, one of four given out, honors faculty for sustained and successful mentoring of women at UC Davis. In Fall 2011, Seeta gave the Fall Faculty Lecture on “Dante Macabre and the Virtual Churchyard,” (see p.3 for more on this), a piece that was “crowd reviewed” before its publication in postmedieval: a journal of medieval cultural studies (2012) 3, 7-26.

Lucy Corin was awarded a prestigious Rome Prize, which includes a one-year residency in Rome for “young writers of promise.” As a Rome Prize recipient, Lucy is in excellent company: previous recipients include Ralph Ellison, Anne Sexton, Richard Wilbur, and Cormac McCarthy.

Francis Dolan won a Distinguished Teaching Award for undergraduate teaching from the Academic Senate and the Academic Federation. Describing her as a “dazzling lecturer” and mentor for students, English professor Margaret Ferguson said: “Whether teaching a course of 200 or mentoring a single MURALs (Mentorships for Undergraduate Research in Agriculture, Letters and Science) student, Fran pays extraordinary attention to the details of pedagogy.”

Stephanie Elsky (a visiting Scholar and Lecturer this year) has been appointed a Francis Bacon Fellow at the Huntington Library for 2012-2013. She will spend her time at the library doing research for her current book project, Time Out of Mind: The Poetics of Custom and Common Law in Early Modern England.

Margaret Ferguson was elected second vice president for the Modern Language Association (MLA) this year. She will serve in this office from January 2012 through the close of the 2013 convention. She will then automatically become first vice president in 2013 and president in 2014. In Fall 2011, Margaret received an ACLS Senior Faculty Fellowship for work on her book, "Missing the Maidenhead: Debates about the Hymen in Early Modern England." Margaret is also co-director of the Mellon Research Initiative in Early Modern Studies. [See p. 2.]

Elizabeth Freeman gave a talk on queering the chronic at the Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy in September 2011. In November 2011, her book Time Binds: Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories (Duke UP, 2010) and a lecture on “chronicity” were the subject of a two-day seminar at the MA in Gender, Culture and Sexuality and the Graduate Research and Education Programmes at University College, Dublin, Ireland. She also lectured and/or gave workshops on the book at Brown, Cornell, Indiana University, Stanford and Tulane.

Ari Friedlander received a Francis Bacon Fellowship at the Huntington Library to work on his book manuscript, “Promiscuous Generation: Sex, Status, and Reproduction in Early Modern England.” Ari is the Mellon Visiting Assistant Professor. [See p.2.]

Hsuan Hsu received a National Endowment for the Humanities summer stipend for 2012. Earlier this year he was awarded a Frederick Burkhardt Residential Fellowship for Recently Tenured Scholars by the American Council of Learned Societies. He will use this fellowship to work on his book, Sitting in Darkness: Mark Tavain and America’s Asia and will spend his residency year at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, an interdisciplinary research center housed at Stanford University.

Mark Jerng received a research grant for 2012-2013 from the University of California Center for New Racial Studies (UCCNRS) for his project, "Protocols of Racial Reading." He will use the grant to do archival research on popular fiction writers such as the African American historical romance writer Frank Yerby and the Eurasian romance writer, Winifred Eaton (Onoto Watanna).

Alessa Johns spent the 2011-2012 academic year on fellowship at the Lichtenberg Kolleg at the University of Göttingen in Germany. While in Europe, she presented her work at the Chawton House Library in England as well as Georg-August-Universität where she participated in the "Regimes of Knowledge" symposium, presenting her work, "German and British Women Writers in Cultural Transfer Processes: Bluestocking Transnationalism and the Development of Feminist Knowledge." Alessa is the winner of this year’s ASUCD Excellence in Education Award for the Divisions of Humanities, Arts and Cultural Studies. These awards are student-funded, student-nominated, and student-chosen.

Yiyun Li has been named a UC Davis Chancellor’s Fellow for 2011-2012. This award honors outstanding faculty members who are early in their careers. Last year, Yiyun was honored as a MacArthur Fellow. Read more at her website.


Colin Milburn was awarded a UC President’s Faculty Research Fellowship in the Humanities for 2012-13. The program provides UC faculty with fellowship support to carry out an extended research project. The Fellowships are underwritten by funds from the Office of the President provided to the UC Humanities Network.

Timothy Morton sat down with KPFA Pacifica’s show Against the Grain this fall to discuss his latest work on the existence of “nature.” Tim has delivered several public lectures this year, including a discussion of “Emergent Environments” at Queen Mary University of London, the Wayne Leys Memorial Lecture at Southern Illinois University and a talk titled “Disturbing Gentleness: The Ontological Depth of Nonviolence,” as part of the University of South Florida’s conference on “Eastern and Indigenous Perspectives on Sustainability and Conflict Resolution.” He has also presented his work at the Royal Academy of London and the California College of the Arts. You can listen to most of these lectures on his blog, Ecology Without Nature.

Scott Simon’s latest curatorial DVD collection from the National Film Preservation Foundation, Treasures 5: The West, 1898-1938, has received wide acclaim since its release in fall 2011. The Los Angeles Times calls it “imvaluable,” while the New York Times says the collection “reminds us again what a rich and wondrous body of work is the American cinema, and how little of it we actually know.” Watch a trailer for the project here: Treasures 5: The West, 1898-1938. In May he was interviewed on NPR’s All Things Considered about John Huston’s long-censored documentary about psychologically wounded soldiers, Let There Be Light (1946).
Gina Bloom is Associate Professor in English and Graduate Advisor for 2010-2012. She is also Co-Director of the Mellon Research Initiative for Early Modern Studies [see p.2]. Her areas of interest include early modern English literature, especially Shakespeare and drama, gender and feminist theory, theater history and performance, and sound studies.

My stint as Graduate Adviser ends this summer, and though there is always more work to be done, I feel good about the changes to our doctoral program that we have been able to institute over the last two years. Perhaps the most dramatic change was to our preliminary exams. We moved from a written exam on one historical list to an oral exam where students gain expertise in two historical periods and one “focus” field. By segmenting historical fields differently and having students choose two historical fields, we are now better able to train our students for the kind of foreign language work that their dissertations will involve; and it has helped students meet their requirements more efficiently.

Another big change to our Ph.D. program this year was the creation of two new workshops, which were taught by Colin Milburn this year and will be taught by Beth Freeman next year. In the Article Writing Workshop, students receive guidance in preparing an article for publication. Since at least one published essay is now the norm for applicants to most tenure-track positions, helping our students bring their work into publishable form is more important than ever. Our second workshop is designed to help students make the difficult transition from passing their preliminary field exams to advancing to candidacy with a viable dissertation project. In the Prospectus Workshop, students are guided through the steps of creating a project, from formulating an argument to positioning their work in relation to other critics.

Although our department—like all departments in the UC system and, indeed, throughout the country—encountered strains on our budget, I have been pleased to find that UC Davis’s Office of Graduate Studies has remained as committed as ever to supporting our graduate students in English. Smart, well-trained, and productive (see p.10), our PhD students have risen to the top of a number of university fellowship competitions. Thanks to the new Provost Fellowships in Humanities and Social Sciences, four of our Ph.D. students will receive special fellowships next year, two incoming students and two current Ph.D. candidates, Jasmine Kitses and Peter Weise. Two of our Ph.D. students, Nicole Kenley and Valerie Billing, were awarded generous fellowships from the Bilinski Foundation, giving them a quarter free of teaching just after passing their qualifying exams, a summer of support, and a year-long dissertation fellowship. With Sarah Klott receiving a year-long dissertation fellowship from the Davis Humanities Institute and Nick Valvo winning a highly prestigious external fellowship from the American Council for Learned Societies, we will have what seems like something of a record number of students taking dissertation fellowships next year. What is more, twenty of our graduate students have received fellowships this summer to enable them to work full-time on their dissertations.

Thanks largely to our talented and productive faculty, our department continues to attract and graduate superb graduate students. And I feel fortunate to have had the strong support of those students and faculty in helping improve the way we train and nurture our graduate students. I am also thrilled that the program will be in good hands next year under the able leadership of John Marx, whose shoes I will attempt to fill when I take over his spot as one of our Job Placement directors.
GRADUATE STUDENT AWARDS & PLACEMENTS

2012 Ph.D.s Awarded

Sara Rene Anderson
“Archives of Futurity: Prophetic Discourse Networks and the End of Race in the United States”

Sharada Balachandran-Orihuela
“From Flags to Freeways: Hemispheric Routes of Exchange, Marginalized Economies, and Liberal Rights” (pending Sept.)

Jennifer T. Brock
“You Shall Go Home Again...: Narratives of Colonial Return from the Late Eighteenth through the Nineteenth Centuries”

Gina Marie Caison
“Being, Feeling, and Seeing Red in the Native South”

Valerie Ann Dennis
“The Divine is in the Details: Changing Representations of God in Medieval and Early Modern English Drama”

Kari Durgan
“The Virtue of the Hermaphrodite: Representations of Chaste Women in Early Modern English Literature” (pending Sept.)

Ryan Fong
“Britannia’s Unruly Pages: Victorian Forms and Neo-Victorian Fiction” (pending Sept.)

Natalie Grand
“Teaching the Turk, Teaching as the Turk: Female Characters as Tutors on the Early Modern English Stage”

Courtney Hopf
“Story Networks: The Politics and Poetics of Mass Collaboration”

John Kilgore
“The Revival of Revolt: Enthusiasm and Event in U.S. Literature from the American Revolution to the Civil War” (pending Sept.)

Mindi Rose McMann
“Ethical States”

Lisa D. Sperber
“The Poetic Relationship of Adrienne Rich, Jean Valentine and Jane Cooper”

Rachel Swinkin
“The Limits of Sympathy: Animals and Sentimentality in Eighteenth-Century Literature and Culture, 1759-1810”

Julie Ha Tran
“Alien Cities: Anxieties about Race, Space, and Embodiment in the Science Fiction City” (pending Sept.)

2011/2012 Graduate Student UCD & Department Awards

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT DISTINGUISHED DISSERTATION FELLOWSHIP
Valerie Billing, Ryan Fong, Jasmine Kitses

DAVID NOEL MILLER ESSAY PRIZE
Jordan Carroll, “Post-Fordism, Pornography, and Ballard’s Crash.”
Honorable mention: Marty Weis, “Puppets and Video Game Avatars.”

PROFESSORS FOR THE FUTURE PROGRAM FELLOWSHIP
Kelly Neil, Erin Hendel

OUTSTANDING GRADUATE STUDENT TEACHING ASSISTANT AWARD
Pearl Chaozon-Bauer, Claire Dawkins

BILINSKI FOUNDATION FELLOWSHIP
Valerie Billing, Nicole Kenley

GRADUATE FELLOWS FOR THE MELLON RESEARCH INITIATIVE IN EARLY MODERN STUDIES
Anna Pruitt, Elizabeth Crachiolo, Kelly Neil, and Valerie Billing

MELLON EARLY MODERN STUDIES GRADUATE STUDENT ESSAY PRIZE
Elizabeth Crachiolo, “Heat in 1 Henry IV, An Unfortunate Traveller, and A Jovial Crew.”

2011/2012 Placement Highlights

2012
Sharada Balachandran-Orihuela, University of Maryland, College Park
Gina Caison, Georgia State University
Ryan Fong, Kalamazoo College
Kyle Pivetti, Norwich University

2011
Alysia Garrison, Dartmouth College
John Garrison, Carroll University
Andrew Hageman, Luther College
Darcy Irvin, University of Puget Sound (Visiting Assistant Professor)
Welcome to the Rheinland: the Mainz Exchange by Angela Hume Lewandowski

What could be more romantic than living across the river from Heinrich Heine’s famous Lorelei, or just down the street from a 1,000-year-old Dom? How about strolling past the ruins of a Roman theater on your way to the grocery store twice a week? This is Mainz, nestled in the Rheinland, bloomy with roses this month of June.

I had never been to Europe, and so naturally jumped at the opportunity to live and work abroad for an academic year. Not long after receiving a lecturer appointment at Johannes Gutenberg Universität through our department’s long-standing “Mainz Exchange,” my partner and I sold our car, crammed all of our worldly possessions into 10x10 square feet of storage, and let our Oakland apartment go. How freeing it was to board a plane with only a few suitcases and a couple of backpacks between the two of us!

Upon our arrival, one of my new colleagues, Martin (our “pathfinder”), met with us right away to help us obtain our visas and residency cards, open a bank account, sign up for our terrific new German health insurance (my partner is on mine at no extra cost), and get oriented in Mainz. In those first weeks, we did some hiking along the Rhein, radiant in its early fall color, and sampled plenty of Federweißer, the region’s seasonal wine.

Then it was time to get to work—I had three syllabi to finalize!

My department head, Oliver Scheiding, encouraged me to design courses around my research interests, so in the fall I taught an American cultural studies course on “energy, labor, and environment, 20th century to present.” I also taught a couple of writing classes on “contemporary American Englishes,” in which I assigned mainly fiction and poetry. As I learned right away, the students in Mainz are hard working and sharp—a lot like the students at UC Davis. This semester, I’m teaching an upper-division cultural studies course on “poetry and politics, 20th century to present,” and also a master’s-level writing course for American and British studies students, on “writing about 21st century film, literature, and art.” My teaching experience has been invaluable—I’ve had the chance to design original courses and showcase my own research and archive. Needless to say, I’ll come home with a much beefier CV. I’ve also found the teaching load to be very manageable, leaving me with plenty of time to work on my dissertation.

The English department in Mainz is collegial, warm, and welcoming. On Tuesdays, a number of faculty and graduate students all go out to lunch together. Also, some of us organized a poetry reading group, and we meet every month to discuss an author. Throughout the year, a number of scholars have visited Mainz, including Bruno Latour and Fredric Jameson. (Guess who split a veggie pizza with Jameson after the graduate student workshop?) The scholarly community here is dynamic and engaged. There’s always more on my calendar than I have time for.

I came to Mainz with very little German. And while [Continued on p.9]
Medievalists take a “hawk walk”

This Winter, the Medieval Research Consortium traveled to West Coast Falconry in Marysville for a “Hawk Walk.” Experienced falconers explained the history of falconry, showed the group the differences between various species of falcons and hawks, and discussed falconry terms and references from the Middle Ages. The falconers took the group through the Sierra foothills, where they practiced casting off and calling to the glove a Harris hawk named Seabhac.

Angela Hume Lewandowski is a fourth year Ph.D. Candidate who works on twentieth and twenty-first century lyric, ecopoetics and continental philosophy. You can contact her at amlewandowski@ucdavis.edu

(From left to right): Graduate students Barbara Zimbalist, Kristen Aldebol & Heather Jennings
Valerie Billing’s article “‘Treble marriage’: Margaret Cavendish, William Newcastle, and Collaborative Authorship” appeared in the fall 2011 issue of the Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies. Billing is a Bililinski Fellow in the Department of English as well as one of four graduate students from the department named as 2011-2012 Mellon Fellows in the Mellon Research Initiative in Early Modern Studies. [For more on this, see p.2.]

Pearl Chaozon-Bauer was awarded an Outstanding Graduate Student Teaching Assistant award for 2012. This award is co-sponsored by the Graduate Council and the Office of Graduate Studies and recognizes excellence in teaching by graduate students across the UC Davis campus. Pearl recently published a review of the exhibition The Cult of Beauty: The Victorian Avant Garde 1860-1900 in the Journal of Victorian Culture Online.

Claire Dawkins was awarded an Outstanding Graduate Student Teaching Assistant award for 2012. This award is co-sponsored by the Graduate Council and the Office of Graduate Studies and recognizes excellence in teaching by graduate students across the UC Davis campus. This February, the Consortium for Women and Research hosted a brown bag lunch for Claire to present “Female Alliances against Sexual Slander in Shakespeare’s Othello and The Winter’s Tale,” a piece she worked on with a research award from the CWR last year.

Ryan Fong has recently been selected to participate in the 2012 National Endowment for the Humanities’ Summer Seminar entitled “Oscar Wilde and His Circle.” The seminar is hosted at the UCLA Clark Memorial Library and will be led by Professor Joseph E. Bristow. Earlier this year, Ryan received Honorable Mention for the Best Graduate Student Paper presented at the 2011 North American Victorian Studies Association conference. This year, Ryan published an article on author Jackie Kay in Thamyris/Intersecting: Place, Sex, and Race. He is also an Editorial Assistant for the Journal of Victorian Culture Online, and regularly publishes pieces in its “Victorians Beyond the Academy” section. Ryan recently accepted a tenure-track assistant professor position at Kalamazoo College in Kalamazoo, Michigan.

William Hughes is presenting a paper entitled “I felt something of a shock: Transportation Technologies and the Production of Subjectivity in Novitiano” in a panel on travel and literature at PAMLA in the fall.

Julia Halprin Jackson will be a teaching fellow at the San Jose Area Writing Project’s Summer Invitational Institute at San Jose State University this summer, Julia is also an alternate for a winter 2013 residency at the Jack Kerouac House in Florida.

Anett Jessop received several research and development awards for 2011, including a NIAP Sonia Raiziss Giop Foundation Research Grant and a Holy Names University Faculty Development Award. She has a chapter titled “Modernisms, Pure English and Poetry: Laura Riding Jackson’s ‘Linguistic Ultimate’” forthcoming in the collection Inventive Linguistics, edited by Sandrine Sorlin and published by Presses Universitaires de la Méditerranée.

Nicole Kenley has an article forthcoming in Mississippi Quarterly 65.2 (Spring 2012), titled “Hardly/boiled: Knight’s Gambit, The Big Sleep, and Faulkner’s Construction of the Popular Masculine Subject.”

Jasmine Kitses was awarded a Provost’s Dissertation Year Fellowship in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences for 2012-2013 from the Office of Graduate Studies and the Division of Humanities, Arts and English, to work on her dissertation “Simple Marks: Moments of Punctuation in Twentieth-Century Poetry.” Jasmine received a Distinguished Dissertation Fellowship in Winter 2012 and a UC Davis Humanities Graduate Research Award for 2012-2013.


Angie Lewandowski’s piece “Imagining Ecopoetics: An Interview with Robert Hass, Brenda Hillman, Evelyn Reilly, and Jonathan Skinner” is forthcoming in ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment 19.3. In 2012, Angela published an article “‘Rescuing Hegel’s Magical Thinking’ in the inaugural issue of Essential Aesthetics. This year, Angela took part in the Maxin Exchange Lectureship at Johannes Gutenberg University in Germany [see pp.8-9]. Recently, she was selected to participate in the Bonn University Summer School in German Philosophy. In fall 2011, Angela saw the publication of a poetry chapbook, Second Story of Your Body (Portable Press at Yo-Yo Labs). She was also named a semifinalist for the Sawtooth Poetry Prize. A statement of poems is forthcoming in Evening Will Come (August 2012). Currently, Angela is working to organize the 2013 Conference on Ecopoetics (Feb. 22-24).

Mindi McCann’s forthcoming article “British Black Box: A Return to Race and Science in Zadie Smith’s White Teeth” will appear in the September 2012 issue of Modern Fiction Studies.

Dyani Johns Taff will spend the summer teaching at the Skidmore Summer Program, which focuses on small, intense classes in liberal arts and studio arts. Dyani will teach a writing seminar and a class on poetry. She is currently at work on the first chapter of her dissertation, which examines the intersections between translation, conversion, and navigation in early modern English and Spanish texts.

Nick Valvo was awarded a prestigious American Council of Learned Societies Dissertation Completion Fellowship for 2012-2013 to work on his project “Penurious Payments: Debt, Dependence, and Communal Form in Eighteenth-Century Britain.”

Peter Weise was awarded a Provost’s Dissertation Year Fellowship in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences for 2012-2013 from the Office of Graduate Studies and the Division of Humanities, Arts and English, to work on his dissertation “Sound Reasoning: Determining the Meaning of the Irrational, 1688–1837.”

Barbara Zimbalist will publish two essays in edited collections in 2012: “The Word of God and the Structure of the Text: Christ’s Speech in The Life of the Virgin Mary and the Christ,” Trinity College Dublin MS 423,” in ‘Diverse Imaginations of Crises Life’: Devotional Culture in England 1300-1550, edited by Stephen Kelly and Ryan Perry, which will appear from Turnhout in Fall 2012; and “Imitating the Imagined: Clemence of Barking’s La Vie de St Catherine, in Reading Memory and Identity in the Texts of Medieval European Holy Women, edited by Margaret Cotter-Lynch and Bradley Herzog, which appeared in Palgrave’s New Middle Ages series in April. Her article “Quotation and Imitation in Havelwijk’s Visioen” will appear in the Belgian periodical Ons Geestelijke Ely in Summer 2012. This academic year, Barbara gave papers based on her dissertation research for the Society for Medieval Feminist Scholarship at the MLA conference in Seattle; the Medieval Academy of America Conference (where her paper received a 2012 Graduate Student Essay Prize); and the International Medieval Congress at Kalamazoo.
CREATIVE WRITING PROGRAM UPDATE
FROM THE DIRECTOR, PAM HOUSTON

This spring, the creative writing wing of the English department hosted readings by four recent graduates of the MA program who all have had books come out within the last year: Megan Kaminski ('05), Uyen Hua ('09), Melanie Thorne ('06) and Stephan Clark ('05). Their books, respectively: *Desiring Map* (Coconut Books), *a/s/l* (in girum imust nocte et consumimur igni), *Hand Me Down* (Dutton), and *Vladimir's Mustache and Other Stories* (Russian Life Books) are just a sampling of the many books that have found their way from MA thesis, to completed manuscript, and finally into print in the last several years.

Since 2005 twenty-five books from Davis MA graduates have been published, and there are already three more slated for publication within the next year, including Erica Lorraine Scheidt's ('07) *Uses For Boys*, which will be published by St. Martin's and Elana Kuczynski Arnold's ('98) novel *Sacred*, published by Random House.

Of the books that have won the Maurice Prize, an award open only to graduates of the MA program and endowed by the generosity of novelist John Lescroart, five of seven are now in print, including *Bear Down, Bear North*, by Melinda Moustakis ('06), which also won the prestigious Flannery O'Connor Award, and Shawna Ryan's ('01) *Locke, 1928*, which was published first by Thomas Farber, and then republished under the title *Water Ghosts*, by Penguin.

The creative writing faculty in the English Department celebrate these writers and their accomplishments, and we look forward to the books yet to come.

Pam Houston is the Director of Creative Writing at UC Davis and the Director of the Tomales Bay Workshops. She is the author of two collections of linked short stories, *Cowboys Are My Weakness* and *Waltzing the Cat*. She is a regular contributor to O, the Oprah Magazine, The New York Times, Bark, More, and many other periodicals, and her essays and stories have been widely anthologized.

CREATIVE WRITING M.A.s CONFERRED
JUNE 2012

Jessica (Nora) Bergamino “Invisible Clocks: Poems”
Ryan Croken “Person?”
Kathryn Dillard “Diptych”
Nicholas Falgout “The Other Good News & Other Stories”
Jon Ford “The Tenth Ward”
Julia Halprin Jackson “Foreigner”
Evan Jones “Into Black Light”
Qinger (Kitty) Liang “A Collection of Poems & An Untitled Novel”
Phillip (Alex) Russell “Land's End: Stories”
David Semonchik “Sometime After that Awful Fire”
Marissa Tinloy “Look Away”
Greg Wlasiuk “I Love You Sexy Baby!”

2011–2012 CREATIVE WRITING CONTEST WINNERS

INA COOLBRITH MEMORIAL PRIZE AT UC DAVIS
Equal Placement: Michael Boal, Melissa Gutierrez & J. J. Moyers

PAMELA MAUS CONTEST IN CREATIVE WRITING
First Place Fiction: Michelle Siebert
Second Place Fiction: TIED Lindsey Campbell, Tiffany Lew
First Place Poetry: Nicholas Malone
Second Place Poetry: TIED Emily Nicol, Christopher Yu
Third Place Poetry: Lindsey Campbell

DIANA LYNN BOGART PRIZE
First Place: Michelle Siebert
Second Place: Arielle Deakter
Third Place: Arika Bourgette
Honorable Mention: Neha Palacherla, Nikole Sandusky

CELESTE TURNER WRIGHT POETRY PRIZE
First Place: TIED Nora Bergamino, David Semonchik
Honorable Mention: Kitty Liang

2011 MAURICE PRIZE IN FICTION
Maria Kuznetsova: “The Accident”

Jack Hicks was contest chair/coordinator for this year’s contests
Undergraduate Student & Departmental Awards

Outstanding Graduating Senior Award
Stephanie Galasso

English Department Essay Prize
1st place: Stephanie Galasso, “Between ‘Devils’ and ‘Dreams’: Music as Trauma, Evidence, and Future in Corregidora”

2nd place: Annika Cunningham, “Did Anyone Hear That Screaming?: Accurately Representing History in Flight to Canada”

Elliot Gilbert Prize for Best Honors Critical Thesis
Harry Stoddard, “Poetic Interruption: Pronoun Changes in Shakespeare’s Sonnets”
Honorable Mentions: Stephanie Galasso, Sarah Schoch, & Dean Shreve

Elliot Gilbert Prize for Best Honors Creative Work
Arielle Robbins Deakter, “Nothing to Do With Explosions”

2012 Undergraduate Program Citation Winners

Daphne D. Arena Goncharov
Linh Ngoc Banh
Yesenia Barajas
Allison A. Belden
Michele M. Beyer
Alexandra Nicole Casavant
Michelle Anne Cat
Pinki Cheung
Gianina Marie Coturri
Paulo R. DeMorais
Melissa Freeman
Stephanie Leigh Galasso
Sarah Gross
Melissa Rose Realy Gutierrez
Mark Roy Halmhofer
Sarah Hansel
Wesley Joseph Hanson

Elizabeth Gabrielle Harvey
Sean Matthew Hayashi
Kathryn Sophia Hempstead
Aliyah Aiyeshah Hussain
Vanessa Katalin Iacocca
Thomas L. Johnson
Sarah S. Jung
Kylie Anne Lewis
Gabriela Marie Lippi
Anne-Marie J. Litak
Derek L. Mathews
Renee Noel Mattos
Robin S. Migdol
Katherine E. Mitchell
Natalie Obeid
Temidayo Opeyemi Oduolu
James Patrick O’Hara

Krystal D. Owen
Kirk Alexander Piper
Olivia Spelman Pogorelskin
Kelley Ann Rees
Jennifer A. Ridino
Sara Frances Schoch
Jennifer Mallory Scofield
Dean Robert Shreve
Lauren Michelle Smith
Kaileigh Alyse Snyder
Nicole M. Stark
Elliot C. Stevenson
Harry Edward Stoddard
Alison Elizabeth Sundstrom
Crystal L. Tao
Andrew Samuel Verderosa
Michelle A. Vieira
Steven Kurt Vote
Elana K. Arnold (M.A., 1998) has three Young Adult novels forthcoming from Random House. Sacred will be published this fall, Burning is coming in spring 2013, and Splendor in the fall of 2013. Read more about her work on her website.

Jessica Hope Jordan’s (Ph.D. 2009) book The Sex Goddess in American Film, 1930-1965 was published by Cambria Press. In the first critical study of the sex goddess in film, Jordan discusses how the sex goddess’ seemingly endless power to influence and fascinate, to achieve her own self-reproduction through many decades of “re-makeovers,” reveals her positioning in American culture as not only a lasting image but also a potentially powerful and subversive force. Jordan has been interviewed by the BBC for two documentaries on her book’s topic (August 2010, April 2011). Jordan is Assistant Professor at University of the Pacific.

Sarah Juliet Lauro (Ph.D. 2011) has published an edited collection Better Off Dead: The Evolution of the Zombie as Post-Human. The book, co-edited with Deborah Christie, was published by Fordham University Press. The collection demonstrates how “the zombie has not just evolved within narratives; it has evolved in a way that transforms narrative.” Last year, Lauro received one of the Davis Humanities Institute’s prestigious year-long research fellowships. Her previous work on zombies, particularly her boundary 2 article, “A Zombie Manifesto: the non-human condition in the era of advanced capitalism,” co-authored with fellow graduate student Karen Embry, is frequently cited as formative to the burgeoning contemporary discourse on zombies.

Melinda Moustakis (M.A. 2006) has been named a “5 Under 35” author by the National Book Foundation for her work, Bear Down, Bear North: Alaska Stories. This collection also received the 2010 Flannery O’Connor Award for Short Fiction, as well as the 2010 Maurice Prize from the Department of English. Read more about Moustakis’ work on her website.


Ryan Poll (Ph.D. 2009) has published Main Street and Empire: The Fictional Small Town in the Age of Globalization. The book, published by Rutgers University, presents a critical look at how the small town is used to imagine and reproduce nation in a wide range of texts, from Thornton Wilder’s Our Town to speeches by William McKinley, Ronald Reagan, Sarah Palin, and Barack Obama. Ryan Poll teaches at Northeastern Illinois University.

Chris Schaberg (Ph.D. 2009) has published The Textual Life of Airports, released by Continuum. The book is an exploration of airports in literature and culture. From contemporary novels to popular films, from unique art exhibits to acoustic elements, Schaberg looks at how airports are figured as textual spaces and shows how various interpretative demands are made on people who travel through and work in these modern zones of transit. Schaberg is Assistant Professor at Loyola University.

Austin Smith (M.A. 2009) received a two-year Wallace Stegner Fellowship in fiction at Stanford University. Smith’s poems have been published by The Sewanee Review and Midwest Quarterly.