

English News

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Messiah College English Department

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Department News

Humanities House Reading Series

The Humanities House is sponsoring a series of readings by English department faculty. Following the readings will be a brief time for questions and mingling, as well as refreshments. Listed below are the dates for future readings, which all begin at 8 p.m. If you have any questions, please e-mail Jenny Zimmerman at jz1169@messiah.edu.

4/27 - Dr. Crystal Downing

English Department Study Break

Help us recognize our Graduating Seniors ~ Wednesday, May 3, 2006, 7:30-9:00pm. Larsen Student Union at the Fireplace Alcove. Enjoy a time of fellowship and refreshments!

Student Reading

"Some Good Stuff from Jonathan Vaitl."

On Wednesday, April 19, Jon Vaitl gave a reading. He read some of his independent study work, which hasn't quite been classified as either fiction or creative non-fiction.

Honors Presentation

Danina Garcia will be giving her Honors paper on May 1st from 4:00 to 5:30 in Boyer 231. Danina's project looks at postcolonial responses to Jane Eyre.

Peace Essay Contest

Carolyn Eanes won the Peace Essay contest sponsored by the Sider Institute. Ruth Kitchin and Tennyson Tippy received notice for Honorable Mention. An excerpt from Carolyn's essay is appended to the newsletter.

"My imagination makes me human
and makes me a fool;
it gives me the world
and exiles me from it."

~ Ursula K. Le Guin

Faculty News

Matthew Roth presented an essay entitled "Unmaking the Made: The Paradox of the Female Quest in Alice Notley's *The Descent of Alette* and *Disobedience*" at the 41st Annual Comparative Literature and Classics Conference at the California State University-Long Beach on March 10.

Christine Perrin was a semi-finalist in the "Discovery"/*The Nation* poetry contest this year (announced March 2006).

Crystal Downing's most recent essay on film was published in *The Cresset*, an arts journal produced by Valparaiso University. Called "(C)rafting Redemption," the essay discusses an award-winning Chinese film released in 1996: *The King of Masks*.

Pete Powers will be delivering a paper on the topic of "Reading Literature Now" at the Cultural Studies Association conference in Washington D.C. on April 22.

Helen Walker presented at the Conference on College Composition and Communication in Chicago in March: "The Spirituality of Uncertainty: Making Leaps of Faith in Critical Thinking and Critical Pedagogy."

Paul Nisly and his son Lamar spent a week in Louisiana and Georgia, spending the first part of the week in LA before attending an O'Connor conference in Milledgeville, GA. Also, Dr. Nisly received a plaque for serving as founding sponsor of Sigma Tau Delta, the International English Honor Society. The award honored 20 years of service as sponsor.

Alumni News

Dulcimer Hope Brubaker, Class of 2004

Dulcimer is the editor of *Seek*, the magazine of the Brethren in Christ church. The magazine is available online at www.bic-church.org/seek.

Kimi Cunningham Grant, Class of 2002

Kimi has accepted an offer of full funding with a stipend at Bucknell, a program defined by professors as "nurturing" and "very close-knit." She begins in the Fall.

Peter Ramsey, Class of 2002

Pete has been accepted to the University of North Carolina School of Information and Library Science and will begin next Fall. He also recently received a substantial assistantship working in reference for the graduate library.

John Francis, Class of 2001

John performed in Harrisburg on March 18 as part of a series of folk concerts at the Midtown Scholar Bookstore. In the fall, he released his first full-length album, "Strong Wine and Spirits."

Student News

Jenny Zimmerman ('06) received a score on her Praxis II English Content Knowledge which qualifies for an ETS Recognition of Excellence.

Carolyn Eanes ('07) won first place at the recent Peace Speech contest, with her speech entitled "Grace from Gratz Street." Ruth Kitchin ('07) and Tennyson Tippy ('06) received honorable mentions. An excerpt of Carolyn's speech follows at the end of the newsletter.

Opportunities

Prison Fellowship is seeking summer interns in a variety of areas, including writing and researching, at their Virginia location. Housing and transportation can be provided for students if needed. For more information, visit <http://www.pfm.org/employmentlocations.asp?ID=17>.

Need a summer internship? The Brethren in Christ Foundation, just across the railroad tracks from campus, is looking for a gifted writer to do extensive interviewing and writing for the Foundation's web site and other publications. The Foundation provides financial services to various Brethren in Christ ministries, congregations, and individuals. With many stories to be told, the Foundation is looking for a writing intern (preferably 20-30 hours per week, but writers wanting 40 hours per week would be considered). For more information, contact Mike True at the Internship Center or Dulcimer Brubaker at the BIC Church Offices: dbrubake@messiah.edu or ext. 5436. Candidates must provide writing samples.

The Sewanee Writers' Conference, held at the University of the South in Tennessee, features workshops and lectures with distinguished writers in poetry, fiction, and playwriting. The conference is scheduled for July 18-30; for more info, go to www.sewaneewriters.org.

The Pennsylvania Women's Press Association has announced its annual scholarship of \$1000 to a print journalism major who is working toward a newspaper career. Both men and women may apply, and the applicant must be a Pennsylvania resident who is a junior, senior, or graduate level student (in fall 2006) at a PA college/university. Deadline is April 25; see the department bulletin board for applications.

The Association of Young Journalists and Writers is sponsoring a \$2000 Literary Essay Contest judged on quantity, quality, and popularity of submitted essays. The deadline is June 30th, and more information about the essay contest, including submission information, is available at <http://ayjw.org/rewards.php?type=lit>.

The St. Davids Christian Writers' Conference will be held at Geneva College from June 19-24. In its 49th year, the conference features nationally respected editors and writers to help attendees develop writing skills and get published. For more information, visit www.stdavidswriters.com.

Hollins University is also hosting the Tinker Mountain Writers' Workshop from June 11-16. Writing instructors will lead small workshops, as well as readings, manuscript reviews, and other activities. For more information or registration details, visit www.hollins.edu/tmww/2006/index.html.

The University of Iowa Summer Writing Festival is a short term, noncredit writing program for adults 21 and over. The festival offers 135 workshops across the genres, including novel, short fiction, poetry, essay, memoir, humor, travel, playwriting, screenwriting, writing for children, and more. It will be held June 11 through July 28, in either week-long or weekend workshops. For more information, visit www.uiowa.edu/~iswfest.

Moravian College is sponsoring an undergraduate conference in medieval and early modern studies on Saturday, December 2, 2006. Students are invited to submit proposals for consideration; proposals should be either for a 15-minute paper presentation on a relevant subject, or for a 45-minute musical or dramatic presentation by a group of students. Abstracts of papers are due November 1, 2006. For more information, visit www.moravian.edu/medieval.html.

The department of English of Cleveland State University is holding a writer's workshop entitled "Imagination" from July 11-16. The six-day conference includes workshops, classes, lectures, and readings. Application deadline is June 10; for more information, visit www.csuohio/imagination/.

The New York State Writers Institute is holding its 20th annual summer program on the Skidmore campus. The program runs from July 3 through July 28 and features courses in poetry, fiction, and nonfiction. All manuscripts must be received by June 1; to register or for more information visit www.skidmore.edu/summer.

An excerpt from “Grace from Gratz Street” by Carolyn Eanes

Being witness to the brokenness and instability of the surrounding world makes many Christians feel guilty – therefore compelled to carry out gestures of benevolence that make us feel better. Indeed, in the naiveté of my inexperience, I used to believe that in performing good deeds of service I would begin to feel like a good person – a useful, faithful, fulfilled person. In turn, I believed that my willingness alone to volunteer time and abilities meant that the outcome of my deeds would necessarily be good. What I’m learning is that most of the time, my social involvements provide me instead with a whole host of complicated, conflicting feelings about the world I live in... I don’t feel like a good person at all, when I come home from tutoring neighborhood kids or interning at a domestic violence agency and can so easily recoil into the safety and security of my predictable college life: swipe my student ID for food whenever I feel like it ... I don’t feel like a good person at all when my daily stresses consist of homework, lack of sleep, deadlines or unmet social agendas when the kids I encounter each day who are only one third of my age live amidst stresses that are incomparably worse: Drug use. Unemployment. Domestic violence. Unpredictable living conditions. Premature death of friends or family members. I don’t feel like a good person at all when I begin to discover Pharisaical self-righteousness in my actions. As Dorothy Day put it, “Worldly justice and unworldly justice are quite different things. The supernatural approach ... is to turn the other cheek, to give up what one has, willingly, gladly, with no spirit of martyrdom, to rejoice in being the least, to be unrecognized, the slighted ... There is a kind of hypocrisy that is worse than that of the Pharisees; it is to hide behind Christ’s example in order to follow one’s own lustful desires and to seek the company of the dissolute” (59).