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Of course, much has changed since those trailblazing days of the pioneer faculty. An entire “American Century” has come and gone, and we find ourselves caught at a time of reflection and doubt over future prosperity. Thankfully, our major universities have stood like rocks in these uncertain waters, nowhere more so than here in the creative heart of the Bay Area. When I look at our department, I see the persistence of the scholarly distinction and the rare fusion of talents that David Starr Jordan first envisioned. I see a department of writer-critics, of scholars working across the breadth of literary traditions and plumbing the depths of English and American literary history. Though a far cry from the philology of the nineteenth century, our Literary Lab continues the scientific pursuit of literary study with its digital and quantitative research conducted along collaborative lines. I see world-class centers for creative writing and for the study of the novel in a department where those traditions run deep. I see a department in sync with the innovation and creativity that have made Silicon Valley what it is today.

I feel reassured and a little daunted to be leading a department that has been cared for so well by my predecessors, not least Jennifer Summit, who has ushered in a new curriculum—a radical rethinking of literary history and critical methods. The beginning of the year is a time to remember the vision and leadership that have made our department strong. It’s a time to greet our new graduate students and Stegner fellows, and to welcome new and returning faculty members, including Mark McGurl and Sianne Ngai—renowned scholars and creative thinkers both!

The meeting of English and Engineering made Stanford great. And the fusion of the sciences and the humanities continues to steer our world. If Steve Jobs hadn’t taken that calligraphy class, and found in it something “beautiful, historical, artistically subtle in a way that science can’t capture,” who knows how different things would have been. In the English department, we teach courses in the calligraphy of the imagination. In our scholarship and our teaching, we reach for the big questions begged today by environmental and technological change, by advances in the world of medicine, by the trials of the economy and the persistence of conflict and injustice. I sense at Stanford a recommitment to the ideals of a liberal education in these uncertain times. I feel a hunger among undergraduates for the tools of aesthetic and interpretive reasoning, for an understanding of the politics of culture—for both the release and the rigor of the imagination.

We lie on the cusp of a literary turn. 

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A letter from the Chair

Gavin Jones

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The 2011 English Commencement ceremony occurred on June 12th in Memorial Church. Before the diplomas were distributed, outgoing Department Chair Jennifer Summit and several graduating students delivered brief speeches celebrating the student experience at Stanford University and the English department.

Summit began the ceremony by greeting all in attendance:

Welcome: friends and families, students and faculty, and—most of all—graduates of the class of 2011! On this day of celebration, I want to invite you to ponder a basic question: why are you here? In a cosmic sense, this could apply to all of us, and it’s something we should ask ourselves from time to time. But the question is directed at today’s graduates, and I mean it in the most literal sense: why are you here, right now? That is, in Memorial Church, with your fellow English majors, as you prepare to receive your degree.

You arrived here by many paths: some of you knew that you would major in English before you even applied to Stanford. Others of you didn’t decide until after Chem 31. Some of you were drawn by the chance to write fiction or poetry: others were converted by Stephen Orgel’s Shakespeare class, or Denise Gigante’s Poetry and Poetics, or Ken Fields’ Freshman Seminar. Whatever brought you here, you’re here at the end of a long morning, and at the end of a packed four years, because you graduate from Stanford but you major in a discipline. This is why the President and Provost got to confer your degrees, but I get to hand you your diploma. And let me tell you, when I do—in just a few more minutes—it’s the best part of my year.

The disciplines structure our education, but we rarely ask what they are and where they came from. This is especially true of the cluster of disciplines that call themselves the humanities. Ask what the “humanities” are, and you’re likely to hear that they’re about what makes us human. But this is a make-shift answer, and a misleading one, since the question of what makes us human belongs no more to us than it does to human biology or anthropology. To get to the real meaning of the Humanities, we need to go back to the Renaissance, when the term used was “Studia Humanitatis.” It didn’t mean study of the human so much as the study that imparts humanity, “humanitas,” defined as “civility, decency, generosity, and kindness.” This quality doesn’t come naturally: we may all be human, but we can’t all claim “humanity.” And that’s why we need to be educated into it.

How do you achieve “humanity?” Our Renaissance ancestors believed that it was through an education in reading and writing, speaking and listening. Communication is what puts “humanity” in the “humanities.” It means the ability to express ourselves, but also to listen to, and understand deeply, another, whether it’s a fellow student in your Creative Writing workshop, or someone who wrote long ago, now dead, waiting for your imagination to make his or her words and thoughts live again.

Today we’re bombarded with language and texts, too often at the expense of genuine communication. As English graduate Miles Osgood puts it in the Chronicle of Higher Education this week, “The language of our world—where the Internet provides our reading, television our theater, and advertising our art—has grown increasingly dependent on stock phrases. Our trite, repeated lines order the world by flattening it.”

But English majors have a different relationship with language. Literature—which you’ve been reading, analyzing, writing, and living with for four years—insists that language takes hard work, and deserves our most concentrated attention. Literature humanizes language by insisting on its power to change lives.
English graduates, you’ve cast your lot with the humanities, and well done, because they can reward you with a life of humanity in the true Renaissance sense. As readers and writers, speakers and listeners, may you both achieve for yourselves and inspire in others the qualities of civility and decency, generosity and kindness that give the humanities their name.

The first student speaker was Olivia Haas, who completed her Bachelor of Arts degree in English with an interdisciplinary emphasis:

I’m rarely one to perpetuate stereotypes, but in true English major fashion, I found inspiration for this speech as I sat in my Shakespeare seminar, drinking a cup of Yogi tea. As the class discussed the cross-dressing of Rosalind in As You Like It, I sat daydreaming about what I would say were I given the chance to speak with you today. Thanks to newfound allergies, I sneezed, sending my cup in an impressively disastrous arc. I dove to save it, hoping not to draw more attention to myself than I normally do and it was then that I saw the tiny print on one side of the tea bag label which read: “There is no greater power than the power of the word.”

I instantly realized that here, on the third floor of Margaret Jacks Hall, in a seminar room with no windows (yes, one of those...), I had found my message: there is no greater power than the power of the word.

As English majors, we are masters of the word. We have spent four (maybe more) years taking the word and holding it on high, throwing it against the wall, breaking it apart, piecing it back together. We have asked what words mean and what words can do. We have read histories, biographies, autobiographies, novels, novellas, graphic novels, poems, plays, picture books. Stories. So. Many. Stories.

Because that is who we are. We are the storytellers of our generation. We have spent our time here investing in our ability to tell stories. And what a noble ability. At a university like Stanford, it’s at times been hard for me to remember that what I love do to—tell stories—is just as valuable and worthy as the endeavors of my peers in the hard and soft sciences. I’m not working to develop Google’s latest software, I’m not spending my time analyzing DNA under a microscope, and you 110% do not want me advising your company on how to invest its money. Trust me.

In this day and age so much emphasis is placed on studying subjects that are “practical,” and the English major often comes under fire for being anything but. When I tell people I’m an English major, they often respond with, “...Oh,” which of course is them saying “And what are you going to do with that?” But what I think these misguided souls are forgetting is that the ultimate aim of our four years in college should not be to get a job or to “find something to do” with that? But what I think these misguided souls are forgetting is that the ultimate aim of our four years in college should not be to get a job or to “find something to do” with our major. To quote W.E.B. DuBois, “The true college will ever have one goal—not to earn meat, but to know the aim and end of that life which meat nourishes.” Spending four years studying literature has allowed us to experience and examine worlds beyond our immediate spheres of life, and to better understand our existence as human beings. As Stanford Professor Joshua Landy said, the “[study of literature is] about clarifying ourselves to ourselves.”

To study the power of the word is to prepare for a lifetime of connection with the human condition and the ability to express it, an “education of the heart,” as Susan Sontag called it. We use words—we use stories—to change, to comfort, to heal...I recently heard a human rights activist speak about her experience helping survivors of human trafficking, and more than anything her talk was about one woman in particular who used her story of abuse to help other victims. One of my mother’s good friends used the story of her husband’s death at the hands of the September 11th terrorists to make public...
the plight of World Trade Center widows. When my grandmother died in December of my junior year at Stanford, the most helpful part of my grieving process was in telling her life story, and sharing stories of my time with her. And when I discovered what it was to be in love, I turned to words, putting my abstract and inexpressible feelings into poems and journals. As often as the phrase is thrown around, there are few things more powerful than hearing and believing the words, “I love you.” It will not be bombs and guns that solve the world’s problems. It will be words. Words and stories. Without them what are we?

There are so many stories to be told, and it is our responsibility to tell them. Whether it be as journalists, novelists, graphic novelists, lawyers, screenwriters, songwriters, activists, politicians, poets, playwrights, or even professors, helping future generations to develop the same tools we have acquired.

Thank you, Stanford English department, for being the place of our love story with words (although I’m sure as many of you frantically finished your theses it felt like less of a love story and more of a gothic novel with dark hallways and murderous inclinations). At its core, storytelling is a community ritual, and in the Stanford English department we have found an amazing community in which to share and be supported. Thank you to the faculty and staff who made that possible.

And thank you to all the parents. I’m fortunate to come from a family with parents who have, from the start, encouraged me to follow my passion, whatever that be. As a writer herself, my mom has always said, “It’s all material,” and oh has Stanford given me lots of material. Thank you.

So. The clock has struck June and in thirty minutes or so we will officially be graduates. As we close this chapter of our lives and begin a new one (note the story metaphor), I hope that we will all remember the importance of what we have done here, and how essential our time as English majors is to the rest of our time on this planet. In closing, I find it appropriate to say to us college graduates what parents and kindergarten teachers say to children everywhere: “Use your words.” For there truly is no greater power than the power of word.

Thank you.

Erika Harrell was next to address the class of 2011. Erika, who graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in English with a Creative Writing emphasis, recited a poem that she felt captured the emotions of the day:

The poem I will be reading today is called “Ithaka” by Constantine P. Cavafy. In the time that I’ve considered this poem, I have come to believe that its message is particularly relevant to the life of a Stanford student. As the best and the brightest, it’s easy to get caught in a whirlwind of setting goals and achieving, and to forget how dearly we should appreciate the journey that brings us to the fruition of our ambitions. This poem emphasizes the idea that while we will strive to achieve our goals, to reach Ithaka, the strength, knowledge, and joy that the pursuit of these goals allows us to cultivate are achievements of their own. As we head off into the real world, such a reminder seems more pertinent than ever. The president of Mexico stole some of my thunder when he quoted a portion of this poem earlier this morning, but I hope you’ll enjoy hearing it in its entirety now.

“ITHAKA” by Constantine P. Cavafy

As you set out for Ithaka
hope the voyage is a long one,
full of adventure, full of discovery.
Laistrygonians and Cyclops,
angry Poseidon—don’t be afraid of them:
you’ll never find things like that on your way
as long as you keep your thoughts raised high,
as long as a rare excitement
stirs your spirit and your body.
Laistrygonians and Cyclops,
wild Poseidon—you won’t encounter them
unless you bring them along inside your soul,
unless your soul sets them up in front of you.

Hope the voyage is a long one.
May there be many a summer morning when,
with what pleasure, what joy,
you come into harbors seen for the first time;
may you stop at Phoenician trading stations
to buy fine things,
mother of pearl and coral, amber and ebony,
sensual perfume of every kind—
as many sensual perfumes as you can;
and may you visit many Egyptian cities
to gather stores of knowledge from their scholars.

Keep Ithaka always in your mind.
Arriving there is what you are destined for.
But do not hurry the journey at all.
Better if it lasts for years,
so you are old by the time you reach the island,
wealthy with all you have gained on the way,
not expecting Ithaka to make you rich.

Ithaka gave you the marvelous journey.
Without her you would not have set out.
She has nothing left to give you now.

And if you find her poor, Ithaka won’t have fooled you.
Wise as you will have become, so full of experience,
you will have understood by then what these Ithakas mean.
The final speaker was Jennifer Harford Vargas, who received her doctorate in English upon the completion of her dissertation, titled “Dictating Forms: Authoritarian Power in the Latina/o American Novel.” Jennifer began a tenure-track assistant professorship at Bryn Mawr College in August.

Good afternoon. What a beautiful day to graduate amongst the red tile roofs, stain-glassed windows, and palm trees.

I am honored and humbled to be able to speak to you today as Ruth, Kenny, Joe, Jessica, Ju Yon, and I receive our PhDs, concluding this chapter and beginning the next chapter of our careers. Though each of us is being granted a doctoral degree today, it takes a special group of faculty, administrative staff, colleagues, friends, and family to become a doctor. Knowledge production is not done alone in isolation. It is a communal endeavor. Academic convention restricts us to hooding only those who are enrolled in the department. But we could not have completed our degrees much less written our dissertations without the never-ending conversations, criticism, encouragement, and distractions you have provided. All of you were instrumental in helping us endure and enjoy the long, arduous process of becoming scholars.

Graduate school, we have discovered, requires a great deal of esperanza. There is no word in English that captures the dual meaning of this Spanish word. Esperar means both to wait and to hope. We have spent 6, 7, 8 years in graduate school waiting patiently and hopefully for the day we finished our dissertations and became PhDs. We did not do so passively though. For difficult thinking requires lots of time. Our transformation from students into scholars has taken years of course work, office hour conversations, nerve-wracking oral examinations, and endless days in front of the computer as we contemplated, wrote, deleted, worked, re-thought, re-wrote, revised and revised yet again and again. Through the dissertating process, we have learned to have active patience. I am reminded of how Pablo Neruda describes poetry writing.

Yo pienso confundir las cosas, unirlas y recién nacerlas, entremoslas, desverstirlas, hasta que la luz del mundo tenga la unidad del océano, una integridad generosa, una fragancia crepitante.

Similarly, we have slowly and patiently crafted our dissertation projects. We have embraced the productive power of confusion and trusted, sometimes tenuously, that as we wrote we were creating a structure for our dissertations.

John Steinbeck once wrote, “We find after years of struggle that we do not take a trip; a trip takes us.” Similarly, we find after years of struggle, that we do not complete graduate school; graduate school completes us. It has shaped us and molded us, deepening our intellectual lives and enriching our capacity to produce transformative knowledge.

At the end of Sandra Cisneros’s novel The House on Mango Street, the narrator Esperanza imagines her escape from the inner city streets in which she grew up:

“One day I will pack my bags of books and paper. One day I will say goodbye to Mango. I am too strong for her to keep me here forever. One day I will go away.

Friends and neighbors will say, What happened to that Esperanza? Where did she go with all those books and paper? Why did she march so far away?

They will not know I have gone away to come back. For the ones I left behind. For the ones who cannot out.”

As we pack our books and say goodbye to Margaret Jacks Hall and Stanford University, let us strive to be educators and scholars who enable others to “out.” We have been trained by a stellar group of faculty to be rigorous intellectuals. We have thus been burdened with the gift of critical insight that enables us to read distorted representations and unequal hierarchies of power. Let us cultivate and share this vision.

In thinking about achieving social justice Antonio Gramsci declared: “I’m a pessimist because of intelligence but an optimist because of will.” Gramsci is referring to the pessimism that can accompany critical insight. When we read texts and cultural phenomena and tease apart their patterns and contradictions, what we discover can be unsettling. But we are saved by our will, our will to explain and change things. Since we are students of literature, let us move forward with pessimism of the intellect and optimism of the willful imagination.

Thank you. Congratulations!
W.S. Di Piero

Professor Emeritus W.S. “Simone” Di Piero has taught classes on poetry at Stanford University since 1982. He specialized in areas pertaining to modern poetry, modern painting and photography, Basil Bunting, and William Carlos Williams.

Di Piero is an active poet, essayist, and translator. He has published six books of poetry and nine collections of essays. His latest volume of poems Nitro Nights is being released at the end of 2011. His translations include Giacomo Leopardi’s Pensieri (1984), The Ellipse: Selected Poems of Leonardo Sinisgalli (1983), and Euripides’ Ion (1996). Di Piero serves as a consulting editor of Southwest Review and writes frequently about the visual arts. He’s a frequent contributor to Threepenny Review and Poetry. He continues to teach the Stegner Poetry workshop.

Director of the Creative Writing Program Professor Eavan Boland reflected on Di Piero’s legacy in the English department:

“Simone Di Piero came to Stanford as an Assistant Professor in 1982. His writing career has occurred with great distinction over several genres. He is an acclaimed poet, a distinguished prose writer, and a prize winning translator. His translation of Euripides’ Ion was performed earlier this year as part of the American Conservatory Theater's Master of Fine Arts program.

“At Stanford he has taught innovative classes on poetry and the visual arts. He is also one of the three faculty who every year select the Stegner Fellows in poetry. He has taught the Stegner workshop in poetry from the beginning of his time at Stanford.

“With Simone’s retirement, all of us in Creative Writing, as well as in the English department, have lost an exceptional colleague. His unique mix of integrity and accomplishment will be sorely missed in and out of the classroom. And he shone in that classroom, giving his students a rare witness of the writing life.

“When I think of his wonderful poetry and prose, I also think fondly of his occasional impatience with the institutional aspects of University life—the committees, events, schedules. That also was part of his unwavering commitment to the artist’s individualism. If any of us had tendencies toward bureaucracy, Simone provided a tonic and delightful reality check.

“All these qualities come together for me in a particularly vivid statement that catches one of his core values. It comes from his eloquent 1996 volume of essays Shooting the Works. There he writes with a characteristic lyric affection about the ‘dense Italian neighborhood in South Philadelphia’ where he grew up. And for a writer who preferred life lessons to any other, it’s not surprising, but altogether revealing, that he added, ‘My real learning was about the executive power of language to reveal, enchant, disguise, and transgress.’

“And reveal, enchant, disguise, and transgress is just what he has done over the past several decades. He does so in his poems: in The Dog Star (1990), The Restorers (1992), Shadows Burning (1995), Skirts and Slacks (2001), and Chinese Apples: New and Selected Poems (Knopf, 2007).

“He has also done so in marvelous translations from the Italian. (He received the Raiziss/de Palchi Book Prize in 1996, for This Strange Joy: The Collected Poems of Sandro Penna.) And he has done so in prose and memoir, in Memory and Enthusiasm: Essays, 1975-1985, Out of Eden: Essays on Modern Art (1991), Shooting the Works: On Poetry and Pictures (1996), and most recently in his autobiographical meditations in City Dog (2009), from which he gave a splendid reading, a short time ago.

“For all this work he has been widely honored. Those honors include fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation and the Ingram Merrill Foundation, and a grant from the Lila Wallace-Readers’ Digest Fund.

“Despite his occasional impatience with structures and meetings, Simone was quietly and marvelously collegial when it counted. Outside his writing, we knew him in Creative Writing for his superb judgment in the selection of the Stegner Fellows in poetry—something which is right at the heart of our program.

“On March afternoons Simone, Ken Fields, and I would gather, with stacks, of manuscripts, fractured notes, and a well mapped area of our minds on which we had scribbled lines, images, names, and poems. The conversation that followed was never less than a pleasure and an illumination. All these qualities Simone brought to his writing he gave to those conversations. And yet there was always time in those meetings...
Arnold Rampersad


His teaching covered 19th- and 20th-century American literature; American autobiography; race and American literature; and African-American literature. From 1991 to 1996 he held a MacArthur Foundation fellowship. He is an elected member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the American Philosophical Society. He is a 2010 recipient of the National Humanities Medal.

Professor Emeritus Bliss Carnochan reflected on Rampersad’s legacy in the English department:

“An interviewer once asked Arnold Rampersad, after the publication of his biography of Ralph Ellison, to name his ‘favorite non-fiction books of all time.’ His answer: ‘Three that come to mind readily are W.E.B. DuBois’s The Souls of Black Folk; C.L.R. James’s Beyond a Boundary; and R.W.B. Lewis’s biography Edith Wharton.’ Then he added, in a parenthesis: ‘Perhaps it has something to do with all those initials?’ The throw-away parenthesis is vintage Rampersad, a reminder that, however serious the subject, human quirkiness can’t be left out of the picture. Yet the three books offer a window on a canon of value. DuBois, James, and Edith Wharton all led cosmopolitan lives that arose not out of special privilege (though Edith Wharton grew up as the child of privilege) but from exertions of the will that overcame handicaps of race and gender. That has been Rampersad’s subject in his study of DuBois; his biographies of Langston Hughes, Jackie Robinson, and Ralph Ellison; and his memoir of Arthur Ashe.

“If he is the foremost interpreter of African-American experience—as I think he is—it’s because he’s first of all an Americanist who sets African-American experience in its larger context, not a blinkered student of particular identities. He tells a joke enjoyed by Langston Hughes in the 1960s. As the story goes, students at a racially troubled college were offered support for research on a topic designed not to be controversial: the elephant. A German student proposed to study the romance of the elephant; an inarticulate, white American student said, ‘Oh well, like you got to be something, man, like, so what’s...

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wrong with elephants;” and the black student said (of course) ‘I will write about the elephant and its relationship to racism in the United States of America.’ I think the story had a special resonance for Langston Hughes’s biographer.

“For those of us who don’t write biographies, much less biographies on the heroic scale of Rampersad on Hughes, Robinson and Ellison, the enterprise is stunning. How to collect all that information and put it all together? Biographers don’t often get enough credit for the sheer work involved or the virtuosity it takes to make it all cohere. Like Gibbon in the Decline and Fall, good biographers handle a huge, diverse volume of material but make the story run easily. This is what Arnold does. And his ‘output’—I embrace the word in quotes to abate the flavor of corporation-speak—has been prodigious. He started working on the two-volume Hughes biography in 1979. Robinson, Ashe, and Ellison followed, all in less than thirty years. Add it up and you get a Gibbon-like number of pages. And that’s not even counting the collected edition of Hughes’s poetry (1994) or other of Arnold’s editing projects. Or a fine review-essay (1990) of V. S. Naipaul’s travel narrative, A Turn in the South. Counting pages is a crude measure of achievement, but when the sheer number of pages is matched up with wit and skill, that is to marvel at. Consider the beginning of the essay on Naipaul and A Turn in the South: ‘V. S. Naipaul and I have perhaps two things in common, but they might disqualify us from making a critique of the South or a critique of a critique of it: we were both born and reared in Trinidad in the West Indies, and we have only a limited knowledge of the South…’ And, after a bill of particulars describing their respective experience: ‘In other words, Naipaul and I both know almost nothing about the South.’ I think of this as the Rampersad Opening, a move in the chess game of reviewing that could hardly be bettered for rapier-like efficiency.

“When Arnold was awarded the National Humanities Medal for 2010, he was surprised. But no one deserved it more. During the George W. Bush years, the awards tilted toward the right: winners for 2006 included, preposterously, the Hoover Institution. Those days, at least for the time being, are well over.

“Finally, sports, which matter to the story. Arnold plays tennis with the same concentration as he writes. His biography of Robinson and his memoir of Ashe contribute memorably to the literature of sport as an American vocation. Of the books he calls his favorites, James’s Beyond a Boundary is a unique view of cricket in Trinidad and the political sociology of the colonial Caribbean. Langston Hughes was a stand-out high jumper. Only Ralph Ellison, the least favorite of his biographical subjects, seems to have lacked interest in sports. Winner of the National Humanities Medal, recipient of an honorary degree from the University of the West Indies, winner of a MacArthur prize, Arnold Rampersad might have been equally gratified to be a Wimbledon champion. But if he had been, then the ragtag hackers of the English department wouldn’t have had the pleasure of playing with him. Non omnia possunt onmes. I think it’s just as well.”

A few years back I got a letter from Edgar Daniels of Carmel responding to something I’d written about my old teacher, Yvor Winters. Daniels took several courses from Winters in the late forties: “As you say, one had to see through his grim exterior to realize his essential kindness. When I was sent to his office to take an oral exam for my MA French requirement, I made a miserable job of a text he handed me. By way of advising me to work at it more and try again, he said, ‘You’re not yet at home in the French sentence.’ How could it have been put more gently?”

Even further back, I heard from someone who had been an undergraduate at Stanford and had taken courses from Winters, somehow missing his fearsomeness. He and a friend decided to drop in on Winters unannounced on
Lecturer D. R. “Dave” MacDonald came to Stanford not long after I did, that is to say, a long time ago. He was a Stegner Fellow in Fiction in 1969-70, and has been an important member of our community ever since, teaching undergraduate composition and creative writing. His appearance has changed little in all those years—skinny-legged jeans, cowboy boots, fancy belt buckle, western shirt, black leather jacket. And his shades. The story is that Nancy Packer, observing his Freshman English class years ago, liked his teaching, but told him he could not wear his dark glasses in class. No doubt for some pedagogic reason. Stanford lost something distinctive on that date.

Dave was born in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, and most of his stories are set in his second home, where he has spent most of his summers for years. He has published two novels, *Nova Scotia Road* and *Lauchlin of the Bad Heart*, and two books of stories, *Eyestone* and *All the Men Are Sleeping*. Fellow Canadian writer, Alistair MacLeod, has written that MacDonald is “a writer of heart-stopping beauty.” Dave himself is mad-deningly modest about his work, never agreeing to a reading of his stories. Years ago he was invited to read his work in the David Hume Tower at the University of Edinburgh, at a gathering honoring Scottish-American writers, a very big deal. Dave did not tell any of his friends until after he had returned—as if we might all trek to Scotland and show up at his reading.

Dave’s stories are infused with Nova Scotia, its landscape, customs, and a poignant sense of longing and loss—losses we increasingly experience but don’t want to notice. His stories make us notice. Read *All the Men Are Sleeping*, beginning with “The Flowers of Bermuda,” and find out what we are all missing. His stories will stand with the best of the stories that have come out of the Stanford Creative Writing Program since its beginnings. You can name the names. If this appreciation of Dave’s career sounds like an elegy, that’s because it is.

Dave’s teaching has been the backbone of our Creative Writing Program for 40 years, even without the shades. He has also served as the initial screener for the thousands of manuscripts we get from people applying for Wallace E. Stegner Fellowships each year. He has written brief comments on every one of them, mordant, sometimes funny, enthusiastic and insightful. Dave is a modern Stoic, and his voice is direct and pointed. To the cliché that creative writing programs teach students to “write what you know,” he might reply, “No, write what you want to find out about,” perhaps adding, though, that too many people, in fiction and non-fiction, write about what they don’t know about.”

Dave and his wife, Sheila, have consistently been the most important force in bringing our community together socially. They have always opened their house to our writers, fiction writers and poets, and over and over again writers from the past have turned up on Waverley Street for food and merriment. One of my daughters, when she was a baby, always referred to the MacDonalds almost as a single unit. She called Sheila “Shoola.” “Dave and Shoola are so generous” she said often. She got that right.
**MARK MCGURL**

*Introduced by Professor Ramón Saldívar*

The Department of English is delighted to welcome new faculty member, Mark McGurl. A specialist in 20th-century American fiction, McGurl has in the course of his short career already established himself as one of the preeminent scholars of the 20th-century American novel, contemporary fiction, and the cultural innovations of the late 20th- and early 21st-centuries. McGurl’s first book, *The Novel Art: Elevations of American Fiction after Henry James* (Princeton, 2001), is an exemplary work of criticism. Offering a sociology of literary form, *The Novel Art* has already become one of the most important works in the field. Moving with impressive analytical grace and breadth of literary reference from Henry James to Stephen Crane, Edith Wharton, Gertrude Stein, William Faulkner, Dashiell Hammett, and Djuna Barnes among others, in *The Novel Art* McGurl examines the transformation of the American novel from a popular to a high art form.

McGurl’s second book achieved even more impressive success. In *The Program Era: Postwar Fiction in the System of Higher Education* (Harvard, 2009), McGurl reads American fiction in relation to the rise and spread of creative writing programs in the postwar era. Tracing the remarkable emergence of these writing programs, McGurl shows why it is essential that literary scholars, historians, and theoreticians investigate the historical, sociological, and aesthetical implications of the social phenomenon that is the contemporary creative writing program. Asking how the rise of the creative writing program has affected the nature of literary production in the US, McGurl makes the point that we have barely begun to understand the remarkable consequences of the rise of creative writing programs in the US.

When coupled with the extraordinary teaching record that he established at UCLA, McGurl’s overall profile as a scholar and teacher make him an exciting addition to the faculty of Stanford University.

**SIANNE NGAI**

*Introduced by Professor Jennifer Summit*

We are delighted to welcome Sianne Ngai back to Stanford as Professor of English after three years at UCLA. Prior to her tenure at UCLA, Ngai had been teaching at Stanford since 2000. We are fortunate to have her back with the department to continue her dynamic research and teaching on 20th- and 21st-century literary theory and aesthetics.

As an established scholar, Ngai’s publications have had a profound impact on her field. Her first book, *Ugly Feelings* (Harvard, 2005), received an exceptional level of positive attention. An analysis of affective states in literary studies, the work charted new territory in the field of modern literature and theory and established Ngai as a significant new voice in the discipline at large. Her new book, *Our Aesthetic Categories* (forthcoming, Harvard) is already attracting excited attention, thanks to an advance article that recently appeared in literary studies’ flagship journal, *PMLA*. Extending her theoretical analysis to literature and culture up to the present day, Ngai detects the emergence of new aesthetics and genres that demand their own set of analytical categories.

Ngai’s work and teaching have earned her the deep admiration of her colleagues, who appreciate the intellectual daring of her first book and her second, and the extraordinary impact she has already had in the fields of American literature, aesthetic theory, cultural studies, and literary studies more broadly. Noteworthy too is the refreshingly broad range of her cultural references, which embrace both canonical literature and popular culture and open up literary studies to new frames of reference.

With her outstanding teaching record, we also anticipate that Ngai will play a major role in attracting a new generation of English majors—whose interests combine literary texts and artifacts of visual media—and building our graduate program’s profile in literary and aesthetic theory. Our new curriculum requires coursework in Critical Methods of all majors—an area in which Ngai is particularly experienced—and also gives faculty considerable latitude in designing innovative, new electives—a condition in which Ngai’s versatility and inventiveness will flourish.

We are fortunate and thrilled to have Sianne Ngai back with us.
Digital Humanities 2011 @ Stanford

In June 2011, 350 participants from around the world convened at Stanford for the 22nd annual conference of Digital Humanities (DH2011). Once a small venue for a niche community of computing humanists, DH has grown to be one of the most vibrant and competitive scholarly venues in the humanities; paper proposals are peer-reviewed by multiple scholars and acceptance rates hover at around 50%.

“Digital Humanities” is a consciously ambiguous term meant to capture what some have described as a “discipline” or as a “field” and others as a “community of practice” or “methodology.” For the benefit of those who are unacquainted with this growing field, “DHers” are humanities scholars who either study born-digital objects using traditional methodologies (close-reading, interpretation, etc.) or scholars who utilize computation to study traditional humanistic materials (art, text, etc).

Stanford researchers made a strong showing at the conference, including five papers, which began as research projects in the Department’s Literary Lab. Franco Moretti chaired a panel titled “Networks, Literature, Culture” that featured research by current English PhD candidate Rhiannon Lewis, recent PhD Ed Finn, and Professor Zephyr Frank of the Stanford Department of History. Ryan Heuser and Long Le-Khac presented their co-authored research on “Abstract Values in the 19th-century British Novel,” and Matthew Jockers presented a computational analysis of “National Style in the 19th-Century Novel.” Cameron Blevins (PhD candidate in History) presented research that he began as a member of the Literary Lab.

Glen Worthey, the Stanford Library’s Digital Humanities Librarian and another Literary Lab stalwart, co-hosted and co-organized the conference with Jockers. The two set the theme (“Big Tent DH”) and the tone (“groovy”) of the conference: they showed up in bow ties and jackets for the evening lectures and tie-dyed shirts and shorts during the heat of the daily program. At their side and ever ready to help was a team of similarly clad English department/Literary Lab volunteers. These tie-dyed ambassadors included staff members Ever Rodriguez and Ryan Heuser along with graduate students Cameron Blevins, Marissa Gemma, Long Le-Khac, Kathryn VanArendonk, and Irena Yamboliev.

Reports from the DH community continue to come in praising the conference and noting the high bar that Stanford has set. Next year’s hosts were on site distributing dazzling brochures and gearing up for what promises to be another stellar DH conference in Hamburg! Reflections on the Digital Humanities Conference at Stanford can be found in William Pannacker's series of two Chronicle of Higher Education articles: “‘Big Tent Digital Humanities,’ a View From the Edge Part 1” (7/31/2011) and “Part 2” (9/18/2011).

ACLS New Faculty Fellow:

PHOEBE PUTNAM

Phoebe Putnam joins the Department as an ACLS New Faculty Fellow (2011-2013), a new fellowship affiliated with the Mellon Foundation. Phoebe comes to Stanford by way of Harvard, where she taught in the History and Literature concentration, and completed her doctorate in the Department of Comparative Literature. Her dissertation, Land Lies in Water: Panoramic Perspectives in Lyric Poetry, a study of nineteenth- and twentieth-century poems of land, sea and sky, received the Harvard English Department’s 2010 Helen Choate Bell Prize for an outstanding dissertation in the field of American Literature. Her scholarly interests in literary visuality and compressive poetics are well represented by her Stanford courses this fall: “Eye-Catching: On Literary Detail,” a Senior Seminar, and “Going Long on the Short Poem,” the latter of which just might turn out to be the title of her second project.
Stephen Orgel’s English 202, “The History of the Book,” is a course designed to interest students in working directly with Stanford’s Department of Special Collections. In the simplest sense, this involves observing the difference between reading works in the format of the culture for which they were produced and reading them in modern editions; but in a broader sense, the course considers the concept of the book itself, the transformation of a manuscript, a single handwritten exemplar, into a text transcribed or printed in multiple copies for sale and general circulation. Though we look at the standard monuments of printing, such as the Nuremberg Chronicle, the Hypnerotomachia Poliphili, the Shakespeare and Jonson folios, the class’s greatest excitement is often generated by far rarer publications: ephemera, the miraculous survivals of the most basic sort of printing, the work that kept publishers in business—pamphlets, broadsides, indulgences, news sheets, proclamations. Such publications were designed not for posterity but for the moment, and were obsolete almost immediately; and they constitute invaluable records of the culture of everyday life. And since the best way of understanding the nature of books is to produce one, as a class project we edit a piece of ephemera, considering what is required to transform this single sheet, often produced at an emergent moment and designed to have no further relevance, into a text comprehensible to a reader centuries later.

Stanford’s library has a large and wonderful collection of broadsheets and other miscellaneous ephemera. From these we chose three—the class was large this year, with varied interests, and we split into two groups and did two different projects. Our pamphlet Jim Crow Visits the Queen presents two remarkable Jim Crow ballads produced in early Victorian London, in which the eponymous, quintessentially American hero attends the coronation and wedding of Queen Victoria, and which offer a fascinating insight into the complexities of transatlantic popular culture. The other, The Quarters of William Stayley, is a broadsheet alerting the citizens of London to a particularly grisly moment in the aftermath of the Popish Plot in 1678, an account of the execution of the first of the alleged plotters, and of the burial and subsequent exhumation and desecration of his body. The pamphlets include excellent facsimiles of the broadsheets and have richly informative commentary by the students.
The Creative Writing Program had another successful academic year in 2010-2011. Ten talented new Stegner Fellows were selected from nearly 1,900 applicants. In poetry we welcomed Kai Carlson-Wee, Mario Chard, Chiyuma Elliott, Dana Koster and Mira Rosenthal. In fiction we welcomed Helen Hooper, David Hoon Kim, Anthony Marra, Shannon Pufahl and Juliana Wang. We also have several new lecturers who bring their expertise and enthusiasm to our undergraduate writing workshops: Jennifer duBois, Joshua Edwards, Brittany Perham, and Kirstin Valdez Quade.

Our undergraduate courses continue to grow in popularity, attracting students from a broad spectrum of academic disciplines to our workshops. Creative Writing remains the most popular minor on campus, a reflection of the vibrancy of our program and the writing community it fosters. Innovative courses offered include the wildly popular course “Fiction into Film” which gives students the opportunity to study the process of turning a piece of fiction into screenplay. Another unique course offered last Autumn was “Special Topics in Intermediate Fiction Writing: Nanowrimo,” co-taught by Jones Lecturers Scott Hutchins, and Tom Kealey. This is a course designed to prepare students for the writing marathon which takes place in November called National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo), during which students are challenged to write an entire novel of at least 50,000 words in one month. Our students also had the opportunity to launch a new publication, the Stanford Arts Review, as part of a creative writing workshop class. The goal of this publication is to inform others about the art surrounding them on campus and in the local community, and to provide an outlet for discussion about what the arts mean, do, and are.

The Creative Writing Program offers undergraduates a wide array of opportunities to continue to hone their writing skills outside the classroom. In the Writers’ Studio, Stegner Fellows offer drop-in help to undergraduates working on poetry, fiction, and nonfiction, and in Poet’s House, Stegner Fellows offer a spirited evening of poetry and flash fiction writing, providing writing prompts, encouragement, and pizza to any interested undergraduates.

The Creative Writing Program offered Levinthal Tutorials in nonfiction this past spring in addition to poetry and fiction in the winter. The Levinthal Tutorials allow undergraduate writers to design their own curriculum and work with Stegner Fellows who act as writing mentors throughout one quarter. Many of the Levinthal students describe the tutorial as their most rewarding experience while at Stanford, and we are grateful to Elliott and Rhoda Levinthal for making that experience possible.

The Jean and Bill Lane Lecture Series celebrated 29 years of bringing distinguished contemporary writers to Stanford with its 2010-2011 season. Reading from their works were Deborah Eisenberg, D.A. Powell, and Lydia Davis. Through the generosity of Jean and Bill Lane, this series honors the enduring power and importance of our literature by bringing the best of writers together with their readers, offering both campus and community a rare exhilarating experience of each author’s work.

Creative Writing also welcomes an acclaimed poet and a fiction writer to teach a Stanford writing seminar to undergraduates each year. Stephen Dobyns and Charles Baxter were the visiting writers for 2010-2011. These unique classes offer students a rare opportunity to study with a master poet or fiction writer. The writer also gives a public reading and holds a discussion session. These seminars are made possible with the generous support of Lawrence and Nancy Mohr and Isaac and Madeline Stein.

Looking Ahead

The Lane Lecture Visitors in 2011-12:
Mary Oliver, Ann Patchett, Martin Amis

The 2011-2012 Visiting Writers:
Mohr Visiting Poet—Louise Glück
Stein Visiting Writer—Abraham Verghese

Joshua Edwards, the William Chace Lecturer in Continuing Studies, was named as one of the Poetry Society of America’s biannual New American Poets and was awarded a fellowship to attend the Akademie Schloss Solitude in Stuttgart, Germany. He also published a book of his poems, entitled *Campeche* (Noemi Press) as well as a translation of Mexican poet María Baranda’s *Ficticia* (Shearsman Books) which was shortlisted for the Northern California Book Award for Poetry in Translation.


During the 2010-2011 academic year, Jones Lecturer John W. Evans’s poems appeared in Slate, Poetry Daily, Corium, Tigertail: An Anthology of South Florida Literature, and elsewhere. His essays appeared in The Missouri Review, The Rumpus, and The Owls. A chapbook of his poems, *No Season*, was published by FWQ Press. His first book manuscript, *Young Widower*, was a finalist for the National Poetry Series and the Cleveland State University Poetry Prize, and a semi-finalist for the Sarabande Morton First Book Prize and the Philip Levine Prize.

Stegner Fellow in Poetry Miriam Greenberg won a Ruth Lilly Fellowship, was nominated for a Pushcart Prize Fellowship, and was featured in the Best of the Net anthology. Her poems appeared in several publications including Poetry magazine.

Stegner Fellow in Fiction Helen Hooper’s work appeared in New South and *The Hopkins Review*. She also attended the Kenyon Review Summer Writing Workshop under a Peter Taylor fellowship.

Jones Lecturer Maria Hummel’s poem “Station” won a Pushcart Prize.

Stegner Fellow in Fiction David Hoon Kim was a resident at Yaddo and the Kimmel Harding Nelson Center for the Arts and the Avocats du Diable writers’ colony in France. He was also awarded a Grant for Artist Projects from Artist Trust and his novel manuscript was named runner-up in the 2010 James Jones First Novel Contest.

Jones Lecturer Peter Kline was the recipient of the 2010 Morton Marr Prize from Southwest Review. His poems appeared in Ploughshares, Southern Poetry Review, Southwest Review, Measure, Quiddity, Linebreak, Terrain.org, THEthe Poetry Blog, Innisfree Poetry Journal, Breakwater, and other publications. He also served as a guest blogger for the Ploughshares website.

Stegner Fellow in Poetry Dana Koster published several poems in Modesto Poets Anthology.

Stegner Fellow in Poetry Keetje Kuipers was selected by Poets & Writers magazine as a Debut Poet for 2010. She is currently the Emerging Writer Lecturer at Gettysburg College for 2011-2012.

Stegner Fellow in Fiction Anthony Marra won the Narrative Prize for the best work published by an emerging writer in Narrative magazine.


Stegner Fellow in Poetry Sara Peters was a reader at the Robert Lowell Memorial Lecture at Boston University.


Stegner Fellow in Poetry Greg Wrenn published poems in Gulf Coast, New England Review, Transom, Field, and Devil’s Lake. He was also a guest reader for the Art Institute of California and a semi-finalist for Sarabande Books’ Morton First Book Prize in Poetry.
n Fall 2010, the directorship of the Center for the Study of the Novel passed from Alex Woloch to Nancy Ruttenburg, William Robertson Coe Professor of American Literature in the English department, with courtesy appointments in Comparative Literature and Slavic Languages. In the course of the year, we experienced a transition in our graduate staffing, bidding farewell to graduate coordinators Mike Benveniste, Joe Shapiro, and Sarah Allison, and welcoming aboard Lucy Alford and Virginia Ramos of the Division of Literatures, Cultures, and Languages (DLCL), and Irena Yamboliev and Nate Landry of the English department. The interdepartmental character of our coordinators underscores our dedication to a continuing partnership between the English department and DLCL in the study of this most global of literary genres.

The year began with the visit of Professor Eric Naiman (Comparative Literature, Berkeley), who discussed his new book, \textit{Nabokov, Perversely}. Professor Florence Dore of the University of North Carolina and our own Terry Castle joined us as respondents. In the spring, we welcomed Ngugi wa Thiong’o (Distinguished Professor, UC Irvine) as the Ian Watt Lecturer in the History and Theory of the Novel. His moving talk, “Globalectic Heterotopia: Writing Fiction from Liminal Space,” was followed the next day by a reading from his new memoir, \textit{Dreams in a Time of War: A Childhood Memoir}.

Last year’s conference asked the question “Is the Novel Secular?” We assembled an international group of scholars to help us address the topic’s complexities: Professors Robert Alter, Derek Attridge, Simon During, Anne-Lise François, Michal Govrin, Dorothy Hale, Beatriz Jaguaribe, Vincent Pecora, and Karen Zumhagen-Yekplé. The conference brought together students and faculty from English, the Division of Literatures, Cultures, and Languages, Religious Studies, Philosophy, Classics, Art History, East Asian Language and Cultures, as well as a sizable contingent of Berkeley faculty and students for a two-day event on April 29-30th.

The Center was pleased with the continuing success of the Working Group on the Novel, which was renewed by the Stanford Humanities Center as a Gehalle Workshop for 2011-12. The Working Group featured presentations by Professor Christopher Hill (Columbia) on the Naturalist novel and world literature, and Professor Karen Sanchez-Eppler (visiting Humanities Center Fellow from Amherst) on Julia Ward Howe’s \textit{The Hermaphrodite}. We also read and discussed work-in-progress by graduate students Lucy Alford (Comp Lit) on Cormac McCarthy and Paul Celan; Marissa Gemma (English) on style in Henry James; Becky Richardson (English) on Trollope and self-help; and Michael Hoyer (Comp Lit) on project fiction and David Foster Wallace.

Finally, the Center launched two initiatives: the Berkeley-Stanford Liaison and the Undergraduate Colloquium. The former is intended to facilitate collaboration between Stanford’s Center for the Study of the Novel and Berkeley’s Consortium on the Novel and to promote graduate student research. Last year the Liaison hosted two graduate student conferences connected to the major conferences offered by the Center and the Consortium. In preparation for Berkeley’s conference, “New Directions in Novel Theory,” Stanford hosted roundtables featuring current graduate student work on the novel. As a continuation of Stanford’s conference, “Is the Novel Secular?”, graduate students presented response papers at Berkeley. The overarching mission of our second initiative, the Undergraduate Colloquium, is to enrich Stanford undergraduate education by fostering participation at the Center. Open to all interested undergraduate students, the Colloquium met at least twice each quarter. Meetings of the Colloquium were designed to complement the Center’s programming through discussions of scholarship on the history and theory of the novel presented at the Center’s major events (Books at the Center, The Ian Watt Lecture, the Annual Conference). The Colloquium also hosted independent, student-initiated roundtables. Graduate student instructors facilitated each meeting of the Colloquium.

We anticipate a busy 2011-12. In the Winter quarter, we will welcome Margaret Cohen (Stanford Comparative Literature) to discuss her new book, \textit{The Novel and the Sea} (respondents to be announced), and on May 3, Professor Jed Esty from the University of Pennsylvania will discuss his new book, \textit{Unseasonable Youth: Modernism, Colonialism, and the Fiction of Development}, with Stanford’s Franco Moretti and Berkeley’s Colleen Lye as respondents. On April 2nd, Zadie Smith will deliver the Ian Watt Lecture. Our spring conference asks the question “Is the Novel Democratic?” and will be held on April 20-21. A description of this year’s focus as well as information about conference participants can be found on the Center’s website (novel.stanford.edu). Nine Workshops on the Novel are scheduled for this year. Under the auspices of the Undergraduate Initiative, we plan to hold a series of colloquia on novel theory for undergraduate literature students, hosted by Nate Landry. Plans are in the making for co-hosted events under the auspices of the Berkeley-Stanford Initiative. Please keep an eye on our website for details on future events, which will be updated regularly as event times and places are finalized. Thanks to our designer Davey Hubay, our website was significantly expanded last year so that in addition to information about this year’s offerings, you can view our full poster archive and history of past events.

To join the CSN mailing list or the Working Group on the Novel, or for general information, go to http://novel.stanford.edu or contact any of our coordinators.
A Journey with Two Maps: Becoming a Woman Poet
Eavan Boland
W.W. Norton & Company, 2011

“This is a book of being and becoming. It is about being a poet. It is also about the long process of becoming one,” writes Eavan Boland. These inspiring essays are both critical and deeply personal, allowing the adventure, passion, and struggle of becoming a woman poet to be viewed from different perspectives. Boland traces her own experiences as a woman, wife, and mother and their effects on her poetry. In the opening essay, she explores the story of her mother, a painter, and her influence on Boland’s own concepts of art and womanhood. She examines the work of women poets such as Adrienne Rich, Elizabeth Bishop, Gwendolyn Brooks, and Sylvia Plath, whose poetry provided light and guidance for her own work. And finally, in “Letter to a Young Woman Poet,” she addresses an unseen young poet of the future, and looks to a world where this future artist can change the poetic past as well as the present.

The Study of Medieval Manuscripts of England: Festschrift in Honor of Richard W. Pfaff
Ed. George Hardin Brown & Linda Ehrsam Voigts
ACMRS, 2010 & Brepols, 2011

The Study of Medieval Manuscripts of England: Festschrift in Honor of Richard W. Pfaff, edited by George Hardin Brown and Linda Ehrsam Voigts, consists of sixteen important studies, all dealing with manuscripts produced in medieval England. The first group reflects the meticulous analysis of liturgical manuscripts that characterize the honorand’s career. These treat both early and late medieval liturgical concerns and include liturgy for Gilbertine lay brothers, a lost treatise by Amalarius, the re-working of an Anglo-Saxon Gospel book; the music for the Vigil of St. Thomas Becket; and the continuity of Processions from Old Sarum to Salisbury Cathedral. Two studies examine the liturgies having to do with saints in Sarum missals and breviaries. The second, historical, section of this volume includes three studies on Anglo-Saxon manuscripts. Six other analyses concern the high and later Middle Ages: an illuminated crusade manuscript; codicological evidence for revising the traditional dates associated with Gilbertus Anglicus’s life and writing; evidence for Bishop William Reed’s collection and donation of books to Oxford colleges in the later fourteenth century; anomalous writings in a sermon codex; the records of the private incomes of monks at Westminster Abbey; and a catalogue and analysis of medieval manuscripts containing moral philosophy.

When Can I See You Again?
W. S. Di Piero
Pressed Wafer, 2010

“To write essays is to respond to life with life,” W. S. Di Piero wrote in his last essay collection, City Dog, “to counter-pressure life’s press. It’s always ad hoc or on the wing, because the inner life keeps changing, troping along with whatever reality gives it to work with.” In When Can I See You Again? the reality Di Piero works with is art. His range is broad and deep. He writes on classics like Rembrandt and Degas but also offers punchy reconsiderations of Norman Rockwell and Frida Kahlo and of offbeat subjects like fetish art and snapshot photography. This is Di Piero’s fifth collection of essays. It follows his Chinese Apples, New & Selected Poems published by Knopf in 2007. According to Poetry magazine, “W. S. Di Piero is probably the most consistently compelling and idiosyncratic writer among contemporary American poets.” When Can I See You Again? eliminates the probably.

The Souls of Mixed Folk: Race, Politics, and Aesthetics in the New Millennium
Michele Elam
Stanford University Press, 2011

The Souls of Mixed Folk examines representations of mixed race in literature and the arts that redefine new millennial aesthetics and politics. Focusing on black-white mixes, Elam analyzes expressive works—novels, drama, graphic narrative, late-night television, art installations—as artistic rejoinders to the perception that post-Civil Rights politics are bereft of black art is apolitical. Reorienting attention to the cultural invention of mixed race from the social sciences to the humanities, Elam considers the creative work of Lezley Saar, Aaron McGruder, Nate Creekmore, Danzy Senna, Colson Whitehead, Emily Raboteau, Carl Hancock Rux, and Dave Chappelle. All these writers and artists address mixed race as both an aesthetic and social concern, and together, they gesture toward a poetics of social justice for the “mulatto millennium.”
The Souls of Mixed Folk seeks a middle way between competing hagiographic and apocalyptic impulses in mixed race scholarship, between those who proselytize mixed race as the great hallelujah to the “race problem” and those who can only hear the alarmist bells of civil rights destruction. Both approaches can obscure some of the more critically astute engagements with new millennial iterations of mixed race by the multi-generic cohort of contemporary writers, artists, and performers discussed in this book. The Souls of Mixed Folk offers case studies of their creative work in an effort to expand the contemporary idioms about mixed race in the so-called post-race moment, asking how might new millennial expressive forms suggest an aesthetics of mixed race? And how might such an aesthetics productively reimagine the relations between race, art, and social equity in the twenty-first century?

The Keats Brothers: The life of John and George
Denise Gigante
Harvard University Press, 2011

1818 move to the western frontier of the United States, an imaginative leap across four thousand miles onto the tabula rasa of the American dream, created in John an abyss of alienation and loneliness that would inspire the poet’s most plangent and sublime poetry. Denise Gigante’s account of this emigration places John’s life and work in a transatlantic context that has eluded his previous biographers, while revealing the emotional turmoil at the heart of some of the most lasting verse in English.

In most accounts of John’s life, George plays a small role. He is often depicted as a scoundrel who left his brother destitute and dying to pursue his own fortune in America. But as Gigante shows, George ventured into a land of prairie fires, flat-bottomed riverboats, wildcats, and bears in part to save his brothers, John and Tom, from financial ruin. There was a vital bond between the brothers, evident in John’s letters to his brother and sister-in-law, Georgina, in Louisville, Kentucky, which run to thousands of words and detail his thoughts about the nature of poetry, the human condition, and the soul. Gigante demonstrates that John’s 1819 Odes and Hyperion fragments emerged from his profound grief following George’s departure and Tom’s death—and that we owe these great works of English Romanticism in part to the deep, lasting fraternal friendship that Gigante reveals in these pages.

Nach der Natur: Das Artensterben und die moderne Kultur
Ursula Heise
Suhrkamp, 2010

Humankind is currently confronted with the sixth mass extinction of species in the history of life on Earth—the first one triggered by humans. The narrative that usually accompanies popular scientific accounts, literary texts, films and artworks about biodiversity loss forms part of the long tradition of environmentalist stories about the decline of nature. Elegiac and tragic story templates are called upon to turn accounts of the decline of a particular species into parts of cultural history and tools for a critique of modernization.

Global database inventories, understood as a contemporary form of epic that seeks to encompass all known forms of life, offer an alternative template and the potential of a more future-oriented perspective on humans’ interactions with nonhumans. In keeping with the idea of “posthumanism,” the central challenge for humans in the face of biodiversity loss is to reinvent themselves as a species among species—as animals.

Imagination, Meditation, and Cognition in the Middle Ages
Michelle Karnes
University of Chicago Press, 2011

In Imagination, Meditation, and Cognition in the Middle Ages, Michelle Karnes re-uses the history of medieval imagination with a detailed analysis of its role in the period’s meditations and theories of cognition. Karnes here understands imagination in its technical, philosophical sense, taking her cue from Bonaventure, the thirteenth-century scholastic theologian and philosopher who provided the first sustained account of how the philosophical imagination could be transformed into a devotional one. Karnes examines Bonaventure’s meditative works, the Meditationes vitae Christi, the Stimulis amoris, Piers Plowman, and Nicholas Love’s Myrrour, among others, and argues that the cognitive importance that imagination enjoyed in scholastic philosophy informed its importance in medieval meditations on the life of Christ. Emphasizing the cognitive significance of both imagination and the meditations that relied on it, she revises a long-standing association of imagination with the Middle Ages. In her account, imagination was not simply an object of suspicion but also a crucial intellectual, spiritual, and literary resource that exercised considerable authority.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE
Situating Opera: Period, Genre, Reception
Herbert Lindenberger
Cambridge University Press, 2010

Setting opera within a variety of contexts—social, aesthetic, historical—Lindenberger illuminates a form that has persisted in recognizable shape for over four centuries. The study examines the social entanglements of opera, for example, the relation of Mozart’s Abduction from the Seraglio and Verdi’s Il trovatore to its initial and later audiences. It shows how modernist opera rethought the nature of theatricality and often challenged its viewers by means of both musical and theatrical shock effects. Using recent experiments in neuroscience, the book demonstrates how different operatic forms developed at different periods to create new ways of exciting a public. Lindenberger considers selected moments of operatic history from Monteverdi’s Orfeo to the present to study how the form has communicated with its diverse audiences. Of interest to scholars and operagoers alike, this book advocates and exemplifies opera studies as an active, emerging area of interdisciplinary study.

Unoriginal Genius: Poetry by Other Means in the New Century
Marjorie Perloff
University of Chicago Press, 2010

“Perloff . . . refreshingly, doesn’t blame the internet for the decline of culture or the closing of the American mind; she doesn’t even think it’s the death of poetry. Hierophant of the experimental and the avant-garde, Perloff finds method in what some might see as the madness of late 20th-/early 21st-century developments like concrete poetry, Oulipian constraint, flarf (i.e. poetry made from, or written in imitation of, email spam), and even the conceptual reframing of traffic and weather reports. The premise of her latest book, Unoriginal Genius: Poetry by Other Means in the New Century, is quite simple: the anchoring terms that have made a certain idea of the literary possible—genius, greatness, and originality—have failed to offer ways of understanding recent literary innovation. This problem only increases with poetries rooted in citation, recycling, and other complex forms of mediation typical of the new digital age. Perloff is not blind to tradition; she characterizes these new poetries as an extension of the modernist avant-garde project. And while she rarely reaches as far back as [Harold] Bloom into literary history, she does encourage us to reconsider notions like originality and creativity, which were not literary values in the times of Chaucer, Spenser, and Shakespeare.”—Joseph Campana, Los Angeles Times Review of Books

The History of British Women’s Writing, 1500-1610 (Vol. 2)
Ed. Jennifer Summit & Caroline Bicks
Palgrave Macmillan, 2010

This volume initiates a new history of early women’s writing. Focusing on a wide variety of texts—from verse and drama to household records and recipes—it reconsiders what writing meant to the women who produced and used it. The 110 years of British history that define this volume’s scope (1500-1610) witnessed dramatic upheavals in politics, religion, society, and culture. As these illuminating essays reveal, women actively participated, through their writings, in key developments of the period: new media technologies, emergent performance spaces, Reformation and Counter-Reformation movements, and shifting representations of nation and race that marked colonial expansion. Bringing together an exciting group of leading and emerging scholars in the field, this volume both establishes the importance of women’s writing to sixteenth-century literary culture and offers a new paradigm for reading the diversity of textual forms that emerged at this seminal moment in the history of British literature.
Professor John Bender’s *The Culture of Diagram* (Stanford University Press, 2010), co-authored with Professor Michael Marrinan of the Department of Art and Art History at Stanford, has continued to enjoy a strong reception. A roundtable of presentations was devoted to the book at the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (ASECS) meeting in March 2011. Also in March, the authors lectured about the book at a conference organized by New York University and Fordham University about Diderot and d’Alembert’s *Encyclopédie*. Bender gave a seminar on the work in Germany at the University of Freiburg in December of 2010 and Marrinan spoke about it in July 2011 at a conference at the Free University of Berlin. Reviews, all positive, have appeared in *Isis*, the journal of the History of Science Society, *Library Journal*, *Choice*, *Recherches sur Diderot et sur l’Encyclopédie*, *H-France*, and Nineteenth-Century French Studies.

Bender gave a paper on the work of Niklas Luhmann at the ASECS meeting in March and a lecture in April at the Harvard Humanities Center on Choderlos de Laclos’s novel *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* (a talk also given during his earlier visit to Freiburg). He was a discussant at a conference in London in July for the project group called “Re:Enlightenment,” the aim of which is to bring eighteenth-century ideas alive in present-day life. Bender also served as the delegate of the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies to the American Council of Learned Societies.

Locally, Bender was Director of Graduate Studies in English and developed two new courses for the department, including one on “Narrative and Narrative Theory” for the new core of requirements for undergraduates. He also served as chair of the University Committee on Libraries.

A volume collecting a number of Bender’s essays will appear from the Stanford University Press in 2012 as *Ends of Enlightenment*.

Emerita Helen Brooks began the new year by presenting a paper at the Modern Language Association convention in Los Angeles in January entitled “Donne the Space Man: John Donne’s Innovations in the Art of Perspective.” She also was invited to serve as a respondent at The John Donne Conference held at Louisiana State University in February. The conference session, and her response-paper, focused on Donne’s influence on both the lithographs of southern California artist June Wayne and on the poetry of Seamus Heaney. She was elected to the Executive Committee of The John Donne Society for 2011-13.

Brooks currently serves as a pre-major and transfer student faculty advisor. She was invited to speak to students in Wilbur Hall enrolled in UAR 10, “Intellectual Journeys,” on her choice of an undergraduate major, attending graduate school, and working with faculty mentors. She also was invited to lead one of the ongoing Book Salon discussions for the Stanford Alumni Association. The Salon, founded by the late English department Professor Diane Middlebrook, was held in January and focused on Shakespeare’s *Othello*. Brooks also was invited to give one of the Academic Expo talks at Stanford’s Admit Weekend in April. Her talk was entitled “Thinking Outside the Box: Conceptual Breakthroughs on the Threshold of the Modern World.” In April, she spoke on campus to Stanford women alums. Her talk focused on “Re-Configurations of Space in the Early Modern World: An Interdisciplinary Perspective.” She also served this year on a University committee reviewing a proposal for a new undergraduate program. Brooks currently is working on a book manuscript on innovations in the Early Modern poetry of John Donne and recent developments in the neurosciences and cognitive theory.

At the annual meeting of the Medieval Academy of America on August 5, Professor Emeritus George Brown and the Bedan scholar Joshua Westgard did a slide presentation at the University of Wisconsin on the many medieval manuscripts of the Venerable Bede’s works. Brown is currently doing a massive survey of Bede’s works and influence through the centuries, to be titled *The Bedan Legacy*. During winter quarter, Brown will co-teach with David Jordan of the Stanford Libraries a graduate course on paleography and codicology (the study of medieval manuscripts).

Professor Emeritus Bliss Carnochan gave a paper at Columbia University about the ideology of friendship at the time of the American Revolution and the experience of three graduates of King’s College (now Columbia University) in the 1760s: Gouverneur Morris and John Jay on one side of the Revolutionary divide, the loyalist Peter Van Schaack on the other. He also gave a paper at the sixth Münster Symposium on Jonathan Swift, held every five years and sponsored by the Ehrenpreis Institute for Swift Studies at the University of Münster. A revised chapter of his book *Confessions of a Dodger Fan* (2010) was published as “The Faith of the Fan” in the journal *Contemporary Psychoanalysis* (no, that’s not a misprint).

Professor Terry Castle was a Phi Beta Kappa Visiting Scholar this past year and lectured and met with Phi Beta Kappa students at Albion College, McDaniel College, Kansas State University, Washington and Jefferson University, the University of Puget Sound, Willamette University, and the University of South Dakota. Her book *The Professor: A Sentimental Education* was chosen as a Top Ten Book of the Year by *New York Magazine*, won an Editor’s Choice Award for Gay and Lesbian Writing at Amazon.com and was a finalist, for the National Book Critics Circle Award. She was also elected to PEN America and a San Francisco Public Library Laureate for 2010. Her artwork was featured on book covers for Oxford University Press,
Editions Amsterdam, and HarperCollins and in the *New Statesman, BookForum,* and the *Women’s Review of Books.* She began a new blog this year, *A Postcard Almanac,* dedicated to vintage postcards and anonymous photography.

Professor Michele Elam published *The Souls of Mixed Folk: Race, Politics & Aesthetics in the New Millennium* (Stanford University Press, 2011) and was promoted to full professor. An article “The High Stakes of Mixed Race: Post-Race, Post-Apartheid Performance in the US and South Africa,” drawn from her next book in progress on post-apartheid representation in the US and South Africa, co-authored with Harry J. Elam Jr., appeared in *Theatre in the Round: Multi-ethnic, Indigenous, and Intertextual Dialogues in Drama,* ed. Marc Maufort (Peter Lang, 2011): 71-90. A review essay of Werner Sollors’ *Ethnic Modernism* (Harvard UP, 2008) appeared in *Modern Language Quarterly: A Journal of Literary History* 72.1 (March 2011): 117-120. Elam was invited to serve on the editorial board for a new publication, *The Journal for Critical Mixed Race Studies,* and has also been involved in media appearances, including a filmed interview for “Mixed,” a British Broadcast Corporation (BBC) documentary on the global history of race mixing, a podcast for MixedChicks.com, and a TEDx live presentation on the new policy and education. Elam also served on a sub-committee of the Study of Undergraduate Education at Stanford (SUES) reconsidering Stanford’s undergraduate education. Finally, this fall she was honored to begin a stint as Director of Curriculum in English and was terrifically excited to join the Michelle R. Clayman Institute for Gender Studies as both a Faculty Fellow and, thanks to the Office of the Vice Provost of Faculty Development and Diversity, as a Fellow sponsored for their inaugural Thought Leaders Fellowship Program.

Since a fan’s environmental foundation bought 200 paperback copies, Professor Emeritus John Felstiner went on sharing *Can Poetry Save the Earth? A Field Guide to Nature Poems* with west- and east-coast high schools, and other venues: Berkeley’s Watershed Environmental Poetry Festival (alongside its founder Bob Hass, English PhD/Poet Laureate and Al Young, Creative Writing teacher); Mendocino Coast Writers Conference; Stanford’s Reunion Homecoming; Oregon State University; Castilleja high school (Palo Alto); De Anza College (Cupertino, CA); Mrs Dalloway’s bookshop (Berkeley); Hadassah’s Sierra chapter; Gunn high school (Palo Alto); Jewish Community high school (San Francisco); Kol Emeth synagogue; Roosevelt High School (Seattle); Ecology Center (Berkeley); Brookline high school and Deerfield Academy (Massachusetts); Palo Alto high school; alumni week at Stanford Sierra Camp; Association for the Study of Literature and Environment’s (ASLE’s) biannual conference. Thanks to President Ursula Heise, ASLE held a reception for him. *Zyzzyva* magazine ran his chapter-essay on Hass.

For the first time, Felstiner and his wife Mary co-taught an English course funded by Jewish Studies, “Creative Resistance and the Holocaust” on poems, graffiti, letters, diaries, chronicles, paintings, photos, music by victims in Nazi-occupied Europe; a similar Continuing Studies course, adding World War I, Vietnam, and Iraq. They also spoke on creative resistance at Beth Am synagogue (Palo Alto) and to Stanford’s Structured Liberal Education students.

Concerning Paul Celan: Lilly Library (Indiana University) celebrated Felstiner’s donation of his Celan archive with a lecture and a dinner; his biography came out in Polish, joining German, Spanish, Greek, and Chinese; BBC Radio used his work; his Preface for *The Correspondence of Paul Celan and Ilana Shamueli* also appeared in *American Poetry Review; Religion and Literature and Free Verse* published essays.

Vacating his office he donated 1200 books, acquired since 1955, to high schools, community colleges, and Stanford entities. Stanford Hillel had Felstiner present to students “My Search for Meaning.”

Professor Shelley Fisher Fishkin was named the Joseph S. Atha Professor of Humanities in 2010-2011. She published articles on Mark Twain, on Gloria Anzaldúa, and on citizenship and cosmopolitanism, and published Op-Ed pieces in *The New York Times* and the *New York Daily News.* The paperback edition of her book, *Mark Twain’s Book of Animals,* appeared last spring.

She gave invited keynote talks on transnational American Studies at the annual meeting of the German Association of American Studies; at a global studies conference at Nanjing University; at American Studies conferences at Hong Kong City University, the University of Coimbra, and the Japan-America Society in Tokyo.

She also gave invited talks on Mark Twain’s transnational legacies in Japan, Portugal, and Singapore (where the US ambassador to Singapore had a dinner in her honor). Her work was profiled in *The American Scholar* and featured on the leading English-language morning TV news show in Asia.

She delivered an endowed lecture at Purdue University, lectured at the Morgan Library in New York, and did a talk-back after a performance of Mark Twain’s *Is He Dead?* at the Nevada Repertory Theatre (one of the more than 40 productions this past year—across the US and in Australia, Canada, Romania, and Sri Lanka—of the play which she uncovered, published and helped guide to Broadway).

She continued to serve as Director of Stanford’s American Studies Program; chaired a successful promotion committee in English; was a Faculty Fellow at the Clayman Institute for Gender Research; served on university committees including the Committee for the Review of Undergraduate Majors (C-RUM) and the
committee to design a translation studies minor; and served on the steering committees of Modern Thought and Literature, Jewish Studies, and African and African American Studies, and as an editor of *The Journal of Transnational American Studies*.

Professor Denise Gigante’s new book, *The Keats Brothers: The Life of John and George*, a biography of the English Romantic poet and his pioneer brother who emigrated to America in 1818, came out with Harvard University Press in September 2011. Following an event for the book at Stanford in November, co-sponsored by the Creative Writing Program, the Seminar on Enlightenment and Revolution, and the Department of English, and featuring poets Eavan Boland and Stanley Plumly, she will speak about *The Keats Brothers* on Stanford’s Entitled Opinions (KZSU); on podcast for *Vanity Fair*; on a member station of NPR in George Keats’s adopted town of Louisville, KY; at Princeton University; and at Cambridge University, among other venues. She will spend winter quarter in the UK as Faculty-in-Residence at Stanford’s Overseas Program in Oxford. Her current book project, *Darlings in New York*, for which she completed some research at The Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington DC this past summer, is also forthcoming from Harvard University Press.

Professor Ursula Heise published her new book *Nach der Natur: Das Artistenberen und die moderne Kultur (After Nature: Species Extinction and Modern Culture)* with the German publisher Suhrkamp in November 2010, and in July 2011 was a guest at Westdeutscher Rundfunk’s radio show “Philosophical Radio” to discuss the book. Over the past academic year, she gave invited lectures and keynotes around the US, in Hong Kong, Taipei, Barcelona, Stockholm, and Umeå, and continued to direct the Program in Modern Thought and Literature. She is the 2011 President of the Association for the Study of Literature and the Environment (ASLE) and served as program coordinator for ASLE’s biannual conference in June 2010. She has been awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship for her project “Cultures of Extinction: Narrative, Database, and Biodiversity Loss” for 2011-12.

Associate Professor Blair Hoxy is writing two book manuscripts on the theory and practice of tragedy from 1500 to 1800. In *What Was Tragedy?* he argues that critics and dramatists once conceived of tragedy in terms that are now unfamiliar to us. But once we are able to reconstruct their theory and practice of tragedy, then the early modern repertoire of tragic drama will appear far more expansive—and strange—than we now consider it. Some of these arguments will appear in his essay, “What Was Tragedy? The World We Have Lost, 1550-1795” in *Comparative Literature* (2012). In *Reading for the Passions*, he attempts to show why reading for the passions—rather than for plot or character—is what we should do when we read early modern tragedy. Parts of this argument will appear in “Reading for the Passions: The Case of All for Love,” in *Approaches to Teaching Dryden*, ed. Jayne Lewis and Lisa Zunshine, and “Passion” in *Twenty-first Century Approaches: Early Modern Theatricality*. He is looking forward to the MLA this year, where he will be participating in panels on early modern tragedy and the passions, and on Milton’s *Samson Agonistes*.

Assistant Professor Claire Jarvis began the summer at the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas, Austin, finishing the last stages of her D.H. Lawrence research. She ended the summer by delivering a lecture, “Great Sexpectations,” at the annual Dickens Universe at UC Santa Cruz. In the coming year, she plans to finish her book, *Making Scenes*, and to begin work on a new project, focused on gestural language in the novel.


Professor Adam Johnson’s novel *The Orphan Master’s Son* has been accepted for publication by Random House and is forthcoming in the US and seven foreign markets in January 2012. Excerpts of the book appear in or are forthcoming from *Faultline, Granta, Playboy Magazine, Southern Indiana Review*, and *Zyzzyva*.

Professor Gavin Jones spent the year as a fellow at the Stanford Humanities Center, where he began a new book about American literature’s obsessive efforts to describe the idea and experience of fail-

Assistant Professor Michelle Karnes’s first book, Imagination, Meditation, and Cognition in the Middle Ages (University of Chicago Press) has just been released. She has an article, “Julian of Norwich’s Art of Interpretation,” forthcoming this spring from the Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies. She recently presented work at the annual medieval conference in Kalamazoo, MI and at an anthropology conference here at Stanford.

Professor Andrea Lunsford has recently published essays on comics artists Joe Sacco and Lynda Barry as well as an essay on Gloria Anzaldúa. In addition, Writing Together: Collaboration in Theory and Practice, a collection of previously published and new essays written with co-author Lisa Ede, was published this fall.

Assistant Professor Saikat Majumdar gave a talk on Anglophone world literature in Canberra, Australia this July at the invitation of Australian National University. He is on sabbatical from Stanford for 2011-12, and he is spending part of the year as a Fellow at the Institute of Advanced Study at Jawaharlal Nehru University in Delhi. His monograph, Prose of the World, is forthcoming from Columbia University Press.

Professor Sianne Ngai gave the annual Rushton Scholar lecture at the University of Virginia last year, as well as the Tudor-Stuart Lecture at the English department at Johns Hopkins University. She also gave the keynote address at Harvard University Graduate Student Conference in 2011, and talks at the Oakley Center at Williams College and the English department at the University of Pennsylvania. A new essay, “Network Aesthetics,” is forthcoming in American Literature’s Aesthetic Dimensions, eds. Christopher Looby and Cindy Weinstein (New York: Columbia University Press).

Lecturer Hilton Obenzinger continued “How I Write” conversations, now in their 10th year, working with the Stanford Storytelling Project to post more recordings of conversations on their web site in addition to those already on Stanford on iTunesU. He also gave a talk on “Reflections on the Writing Process” for the Writers on Writing Series at West Valley College in Saratoga and published an excerpt from How We Write: The Varieties of Writing Experience, his book-in-progress based on the conversations, in XCP: Cross Cultural Poetics. He also published an excerpt from yet another book-in-progress, Dogs Playing Poker, an essay of expository fiction, in the literary magazine Eleven Eleven. He co-edited a special issue of Leviathan: A Journal of Melville Studies based on “Melville and the Mediterranean,” the 2009 conference of the Melville Society held in East Jerusalem that he co-chaired. His article “Melville, Holy Lands, and Settler-Colonial Studies” was part of that collection, and his article “Herman Melville Returns to Jerusalem” also appeared in Jerusalem Quarterly. He lectured on yet another book-in-progress, Melting Pots and Promised Lands: Early Zionism and the Idea of America, at the Center for Near Eastern Studies at UCLA. He also presented papers on “Zionism and Critical Ethnic Studies” at the conference of Critical Ethnic Studies and the Future of Genocide at UC Riverside and “American Jews and Anti-Islamic Bigotry” at the Symposium on Islamophobia at San Francisco State University.

Professor Stephen Orgel was scheduled to give the keynote talk at a conference on the future of literary studies at UC Santa Barbara in March, but he fell ill with laryngitis, so his student Talya Meyers read his paper, and was said to have done an excellent impersonation. By late March his voice had returned, and he was a keynote speaker at the conference of the Spanish and Portuguese Society for English Renaissance Studies in Madrid. In April, he was a plenary speaker at the Shakespeare Association of America meeting in Bellevue, Washington, and in May, he delivered the Bredbeck Memorial Lecture at UC Riverside. In July, he spoke on Shakespeare and Fuseli at the International Shakespeare Association meeting in Prague. His new book Spectacular Performances, published jointly by Palgrave Macmillan and the University of Manchester Press, has just appeared.


Among many lecture venues, the two highlights were the Kelly Writers House Fellowship at the University of Pennsylvania (a three-day residency) and a name lecture for Forma e Sentivo, a series of lectures in Rio di Janeiro including Tzvetan Todorov, Giorgio Agamben, and Thierry de Duve at preceding and subsequent lectures. In March, she was one of three judges for the Bollingen Prize at Yale. This September, there was a Poetics Festival in Wuhan, China in honor of Perloff’s 80th Birthday, with many poet and critic friends from the US attending along with Chinese scholars. At the festival, the Chinese edition of Perloff’s Radical Artifice (1992) was presented. The China trip was followed by one to Paris in October (for the “Gertrude Stein Collects” exhibition/symposium at the Grand Palais), Atlanta in November (for keynote at SAML), and São Paulo in December for their Literary Criticism Seminar.
As part of the Getty Institute’s Pacific Standard Time project, Professor Peggy Phelan was commissioned by Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (LACE) to research and edit a volume devoted to the history of performance. *Live Art in LA: Performance Art in Southern California, 1970-1983* will be published by Routledge in spring 2012. Phelan is currently on leave and in residence at the Stanford Humanities Center, where she is writing and thinking about Robert Frost, Samuel Beckett, and poetry.

Assistant Professor Vaughn Rasberry spent his summer working with a German language tutor and completing an article on the Cold War discourse of totalitarianism. During a trip to the Moorland-Springarn Library at Howard University, he conducted archival research on the international reception history of African-American writers of the post-World War II era. Last spring, he presented a paper on African-American literary responses to the French-Algerian War at the annual convention of the American Comparative Literature Association. This fall, he welcomed Stanford’s Class of 2015 with a lecture, “From the European Enlightenment to the Global Cold War—Via African-American Studies,” for the New Student Orientation. He looks forward to presenting his new work at the Post45 colloquium to be held at Caltech in November, as well as participating in Stanford’s Center for the Study of the Novel’s spring conference on the question: Is the Novel Democratic?

As part of her ongoing research into American “plant-mindedness,” Senior Lecturer Judith Richardson had a marvelous time this summer tooling around Orange County, New York, seeking out sites and archives related to such figures as Jane Colden, a pioneering 18th century botanist, and Andrew Jackson Downing, the famous horticulturalist and landscape architect. Perhaps the most wonderful and illuminating experience of the trip came late one August afternoon, when she found the site of what had once been “Pine Hill,” the farm of Hector St. John de Crevecoeur. Standing there and looking out over a luminous, still-rural landscape, she felt a moment of real insight into the French transplant’s perspective as he wrote *Letters from an American Farmer*. Now back at the other “Farm” she is writing up a piece on Nathaniel Hawthorne’s unruly trees, while also pursuing some more hands-on research as she tries not to kill the plants in her own garden.

In 2010-11, Senior Lecturer Chris Rovee enjoyed directing the English Honors Program for the first time. He led a group of highly motivated seniors through Honors College and oversaw their work as they completed a set of splendid thesis projects. His own ongoing research, on late romanticism and the origins of photography, brought him to archives in Rome and London, where he studied thousands of photographs produced in the 1840s. These included the very first photographs of Rome—the subject of a chapter in the book he is writing, tentatively titled “Camera Romantica: Literature and Photography before 1839.” Rovee gave papers from this book-project at a series of conferences: in Sydney, he spoke on “The Impossibility of Romantic Photography;” in London, Ontario, he gave a talk on “Photography and Evolution;” and in Park City, Utah, he presented his work on Anglo-Italian tourism and photography, “Italy Daguerreotyped.” In addition to the work-related travel, Rovee continues to drive with his son, Julian, around the West to follow their favorite baseball team, the Phillies, who went 9-1 on this summer’s ten-game road trip.

Last year was Professor Nancy Ruttenberg’s first year as Director of Stanford’s Center for the Study of the Novel, where she launched two initiatives: the Stanford-Berkeley Liaison and the Undergraduate Initiative. Descriptions of these initiatives and the Center’s events may be found on page 15 of this newsletter. She moderated a panel for the International Conference on the Reception of Hebrew Literature in Europe and the United States, put together by Stanford and the Ca’Foscari University in Venice. She then presented a paper entitled “Melville/Dostoevsky/Italy” at the University of Rome which hosted the Eighth International Melville Conference on the topic “Melville and Rome: Empire—Democracy—Belief—Art.” Finally, she served as keynote speaker at the Division of Literatures, Cultures, and Languages conference on the topic of “Agency and its Limits: Action, Paralysis, Lethargy, Arrest.” Her paper was entitled “The Beggarly Traps of (Literary) Being: The Case of Melville’s Bartleby.” A complete version of this talk was just published by Palgrave-Macmillan in a book edited by Samuel Otter and Geoffrey Sanborn entitled *Melville and Aesthetics* (2011). The title of Ruttenberg’s article in that volume is “The Silhouette of a Content’: Bartleby’ and American Literary Specificity.”

Finally, she won a grant from the Stanford Institute for Creativity and the Arts (SiCa) to organize an interdisciplinary conference on conscience to take place in fall 2012, with additional major funding from the Europe Center at the Freeman Spogli Institute, the Office of the Dean of Humanities, and the Dean of the Stanford Law School.

During the past year, Professor Ramón Saldívar continued working on two research projects: a monograph titled *Race and Narrative Theory in “Postrace” American Fiction*, and an edition of literary and historical documents by one of the founders of US—Mexico border studies, the late Américo Paredes. This second project is tentatively titled *Américo Paredes and the Post-war Writings from Asia*. The first of these projects poses the question of whether a case can be made for defining US “minority” novels of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century in *formal* rather than *thematic* terms. Normally, we think of “minority” novels as narratives that tell a story of the immigrant experience, of slavery and its after-

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math, of the relocation of Indians, of Asian exclusion, or of the imperial incorporation of Mexicans into the US after 1848. What Saldívar wants to consider here is whether the way the story is told, the shape and kind of narrative pattern that an author chooses, can also tell us something about the meaning of ethnicity and race in the American experience. In this work, Saldívar looks at a range of contemporary “ethnic” novels to establish a formal definition for ethnic and minority narratives. A portion of this work representing its conceptual statement has now appeared in the Cambridge History of the American Novel (2010). In the larger argument that will make up the completed book, Saldívar argues for an epochal turn in the form of ethnic literature in the post-9/11 era. Portions of two other chapters, focusing on what Saldívar is calling “historical fantasy” as a new development in novelistic technique in the post-postmodern and so called “postrace” eras of the early twenty-first century, were also published this year. One appeared as “Speculative Realism and the Postrace Aesthetic in Contemporary American Fiction,” in a volume titled A Companion to American Literary Studies, ed. Caroline Levander and Robert Levine (Wiley-Blackwell, 2011) and the other under the title “Historical Fantasy, Speculative Realism and Postrace Aesthetics in American Fiction,” in American Literary History 23.3 (Autumn) 2011. Finally, a fourth unrelated piece focusing on his ever present enchantment with Faulkner appeared as “Faulkner and the World Culture of the Global South,” in The Oxford History of the Novel in English, vol. 6, ed. Michael A. Elliott and Priscilla Wald (Oxford UP, 2011).

Lecturer Alice Staveley presented new work at the Pacific Coast Conference on British Studies (PCCBS) on the history of women in the compositing trades and its historical impact on Virginia Woolf’s identity as self-publisher. She also discovered a short uncatalogued periodical submission by Woolf about her bedtime book lists that she is annotating as part of a larger inquiry into Woolf’s reading practices in the context of modernist periodicals. In September 2011, she had a baby boy, Jacob Arjun Staveley Vakil.

Professor Jennifer Summit organized and hosted the ADE (Associated Departments of English) Summer Chair’s Seminar at Stanford this past June: highlights included keynote presentations by Andrea Lunsford and Russell Berman (DLCL) and a plenary session on the new literacy and undergraduate education from the working group, “What is a Reader?” (a video is featured on the group’s website, http://whatisareader.stanford.edu). Last winter she delivered the International Spenser Society’s annual Hugh Maclean Memorial Lecture at MLA: it has been published as “Bequeathed Care: Re-thinking Spenser’s Contemplation,” Spenser Review 41 (2011): 1-10 (http://www.spenserreview.org/index.php/spenserreview/article/view/42). This fall, she and her co-editor, Caroline Bicks (Stanford PhD, now of Boston College) received the 2011 Collaborative Project Award from the Society for the Study of Early Modern Women for their volume, The History of British Women’s Writing, 1500-1610 (Palgrave, 2010).


Professor Emerita Elizabeth Traughtt was in Japan in February where she participated in several events, including a workshop on historical pragmatics. She was on a train on the way to see a Buddhist temple when the earthquake struck, and was unaware of what had happened until later that evening. She gave an invited lecture to the Pragmatics Association of Japan in Kyoto entitled “He… withdrew, disconcerted and offended, no doubt; but surely it was not my fault’ on the function of adverbs of certainty at the left and right peripheries of the clause.” She also gave a paper at the 12th International Pragmatics Association meeting in Manchester, UK, in July. Publications include “Grammaticalization” in Andreas H. Jucker and Irma Taavitsainen, eds., Historical Pragmatics, 97-126. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton (2010), “La linguistique: étude a l’aptitude au langage,” trans. by Christine Pagnoulle. Diogène 229-230: 31-51 (2011), and “Grammaticalization and (inter)subjectification” in Hiroyuko Takada, Michi Shiina, and Noriko Onodera, eds., trans. by Hiroji Fukushima. Introduction to Historical Pragmatics, 59-89. Tokyo: Taishukan (2011).

Professor Blakey Vermeule spent the past year at the Stanford Humanities Center writing a book about the unconscious as it is currently understood by cognitive neuroscience. She also participated in a two-week seminar at the Center for Advanced Studies in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford on cognitive neuroscience for humanists. During her leave year, she spent some time learning to surf and getting her SCUBA certification.

Associate Professor Alex Woloch gave a keynote lecture at a conference on Directions of Realism at the Humanities Center at Johns Hopkins University; he also gave invited lectures at UCLA, for the Department of Comparative Literature at Princeton University, in the Speakers Series for the English department at Michigan State University and for a panel entitled “What Was Literary Criticism?” sponsored by the Division of Literary Theory and Criticism at the MLA. An essay on Bruegel’s paintings entitled “Partial Representation” is forthcoming in a volume called The Work of Genre: Selected Papers from the English Institute (edited by Robyn Warhol) and another essay entitled “Character Insecurity in Sense and Sensibility” is appearing in Narrative Middles (edited by Caroline Levine and Mario Ortiz-Robles).
In the 2010-11 academic year, the Stanford English department introduced a revised system of requirements for the English major. The new requirements include a year-long sequence of courses on the development of literature through time, which offer students a bold outline of English literary history from *Beowulf* to Cyberpunk, emphasizing major turning points (from the invention of the printing press to the rise of the novel) and long term continuities (like the persistence of the lyric “I”). They also include courses that are focused on particular methods of critical interpretation (from poetics to narrative theory) and on the development of genres or themes through history. Designed to give the English major more structure and (through an increased number of electives) more freedom, the new curriculum culminates for seniors with a Senior Seminar, a capstone course focused on close interaction with the faculty on cutting edge research topics.

In addition, the English department prides itself on its active and outgoing undergraduate community. Camaraderie between students and faculty extends beyond the classroom and faculty office hours in undergraduate community events organized by the English department Student Advisors. The Student Advisors are social and intellectual pillars who not only promote events, but also provide guidance throughout the declaration and graduation process. The English department continued the traditions of the Senior Banquet, Commencement in Memorial Church, as well as some new developments such as the “Cellar Door” undergraduate blog and lunchtime symposia with faculty.
Second-year PhD student Derek Mong published a poetry collection, Other Romes, in March of 2011. He has also had the following adaptations from Latin published in The Southern Review with a prose introduction: “The Rope Dancer” and “The Coming of the Hon- eyed Age.” This summer, The Minnesota Review published a similar adaptation: “The Ego and the Empiricist.”

Fifth-year PhD candidate Allison Rung presented versions of her dissertation prospectus about the conventions of the railway in the British novel, first at the Modernist Studies Association conference in Victoria, and this summer at the Dickens Universe at UC Santa Cruz. In addition, she had the honor of reading the admissions files of the incoming first-year cohort, whom she welcomed to the department in September.

This academic year, fourth-year PhD candidate Claude Willan has presented on Swift and Mandeville at the PAMLA in Honolulu, presented a paper on Alexander Pope’s letters at the MLA in Los Angeles, and chaired two panels on Restoration and Eighteenth-Century literature at ASECS in Vancouver, where he also presented on the paintings of Antoine Watteau. He had a short piece published in Notes and Queries on Pope’s Epistle to Cobham; a co-authored essay on the New Historicism forthcoming in a collection from University of Tennessee Press, The Limits of Literary Historicism; an article on Pope’s early letters and a new self-portrait by the poet in The Library. He also co-chaired the English Graduate Student Council and served on the Graduate Finance Committee. He contributed to the Stanford English department’s “Timeline” for 100A: Literary History I and 116A: Milton. He continued to review key recent work in Restoration and Eighteenth Century Studies for the Routledge Annotated Bibliography of English Studies. He also worked with the “Mapping the Republic of Letters Project” on digitizing data relating to John Locke, Jeremy Bentham and Espirit Calvet with Dan Edelstein at the Stanford Humanities Center and with the Bentham Project in London.

Advanced PhD candidate James Wood spent last academic year as a Geballe Fellow at the Stanford Humanities Center. His article “Propping up the King’s Two Bodies in Richard II,” co-authored with Ema Vyroubalová, was published in Early English Studies in fall 2011.


Third-year English PhD candidate Ryan Haas spent the summer studying German at Humboldt University in Berlin. In the winter, he will be discussing his working paper, “Implicit Knowledge in Johnson and Coleridge,” at a 2012 ACLA seminar on “Literary Change.”

This past year, aided by a Graduate Research Opportunity grant, fifth-year PhD candidate Emily Kopley pursued dissertation research on Virginia Woolf’s reading of poetry, in French, British, and American libraries. Some of this research informed a paper pre-circulated for the Modernist Studies Conference, which in turn sourced a short monograph published in June, Virginia Woolf and the Thirties Poets (Cecil Woolf Publishers). At the annual Virginia Woolf conference, held this year in Glasgow, Emily spoke on Woolf’s vexed response to the poetry of her nephew Julian Bell. Glasgow’s bookstores helped Emily build her collection of Virginia Woolf and Hogarth Press material, for which she won second place in Stanford’s Byra J. and William P. Wreden Prize for Collecting Books and Related Materials. Emily also published an article about Woolf’s influence on the contemporary poet Rachel Wetzsteon (Virginia Woolf Miscellany 79), and presented a paper on Arthur A. Cohen at the conference of the American Literature Association.

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SEVERAL OF THE GRADUATE AWARD WINNERS LINDSEY DOLICH, DALGLISH CHEW, ALLEN FROST, LONG LE-KHAC, AND NATALIE PHILLIPS

STANFORD UNIVERSITY
**PHDs AWARDED IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

2010-11


Ruth Kaplan  “Fashioning the Reader: Forms of Engagement in British Poetry of the Long Sixteenth Century”

Joseph Shapiro  “Beyond Early American Exceptionalism: Class and The Rise of the U.S. Novel, 1789-1846”

Jessica Weare  “Competing Narratives: British Memoirs and Fictions of the First World War”

**Killefer Dissertation Fellowships:**

—  Sarah Perkins  
Dissertation in progress: “Dixie’ in the Making of American Literature”

—  Irena Yamboliev  
Dissertation in progress: “Ornament and Prose: Style, Affect and British Decadence”

**Whiting Dissertation Fellowship:**

—  Michael Benveniste

**Mabelle McLeod Lewis Fellowship:**

—  Kenneth Ligda

**Mellon Dissertation Fellowships:**

—  Hannah Doherty
—  Justin Eichenlaub
—  Stephen Osadetz
—  Rebecca Richardson

**Geballe Dissertation Fellowship:**

—  Jillian Hess
—  Ryan Zurowski

**Diversifying Academia, Recruiting Excellence (DARE) Doctoral Fellowship:**

—  Bridget Whearty

Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity (CCSRE) Research Institute Graduate Dissertation Fellowship  2011-2012:

—  Steffi Dippold
—  Elda Maria Roman

Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity (CCSRE) Graduate Fellowship  2011-2012:

—  Whitney Trump

Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity (CCSRE) Graduate Fellowship, 2011-2014:

—  Teresa Jimenez

**2011 CENTENNIAL TEACHING AWARDS**

—  Lindsey Dolich
—  Allen Frost
—  Long Le-Khac

**DEPARTMENT DISSERTATION FELLOWSHIPS**

2010-11

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—  Kenneth Ligda

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**2011 ANDREW SMITH MEMORIAL PRIZE WINNER**

Dalglish Chew: “Michael Chabon’s The Yiddish Policemen’s Union”

Hannah Walser: “Charles Brockden Brown’s ‘Psychology of the Empty Center’”

**2011 ALDEN DISSERTATION PRIZE WINNER**


Ema Vyroubalová: “ ‘These Confusions of Lewd Tongues’: Linguistic Diversity in Early Modern England, 1509-1625”

**JOBS PLACEMENT 2010-2011**

Joel Burges—University of Rochester

Edward Finn—University Innovation Fellow - Arizona State University

Jennifer Harford Vargas—Bryn Mawr College

Heather Houser—University of Texas at Austin

Ruth Kaplan—Quinnipiac University

Lee Konstantinou—ACLS New Faculty Fellow - Princeton University

Natalie Phillips—Michigan State University

Joseph Shapiro—University of Southern Illinois
As part of our continuing investment in students’ professional success and our desire to help students build their futures, the English department offered summer internship grants for a third year. Relying on the deeply-appreciated generosity of the Kaplan Endowment, the program offered twelve $1,000 summer grants. These grants were used to help subsidize all or part of a summer internship at an organization that allows students to put their academic experience as English majors to work.

The following are observations from this year’s grant recipients:

Clara Caruthers, Virgin Islands (VI) Scholars nonprofit teaching organization on St. John
“I wrote and edited for the VI Scholars organization as well, contributing to the daily blog and working on documents that outlined the Mentoring Program. Without all of the writing that I’ve done through English classes, I would not have been able to accomplish these tasks as well or as efficiently. Teaching, mentoring, and working with VI Scholars was an eye-opening experience.”

Sasha Engelmann, n+1 literary magazine in Brooklyn, NY
“The writing was fresh and potent, and the issues addressed were those making headlines and fueling discussions everywhere in New York. I felt like I was part of an organization that responded both critically and imaginatively to the topics shaping contemporary culture and life... Through all of these projects, my skills as an editor, critic, creative writer and translator were certainly tested and valued.”

Ellen Huet, San Jose Mercury newspaper in San Jose
“I’ve had so many chances to practice writing compelling and clear prose in a short amount of time—and I’ve learned to reread with a keen eye as well. But what was perhaps most heartening about this summer was learning that despite the decline of the traditional newspaper industry, the art of language in news writing lives on.”

Christine Kim, YMCA of San Joaquin Valley
“Due to the many questions that arise about the existing Y-SJC programs, the community’s needs, etc., I find myself applying much of the same concise, descriptive writing/speaking skills that are always desired in English lectures and sections, in emails and phone conversations... All of the basic writing skills that an English major cultivates and that many people take for granted, are so crucial, not just in the grant writing, but also in effectively communicating with everyone who takes part in the grant writing process.”

Tenyia Lee, Bedford/St. Martin’s publishing in New York City
“After the great experiences I had this summer, I very much hope to continue on to a career in publishing after graduation. All the people that I worked with this summer seem to share a love of learning, a joy in reading, and a passion for ideas—the same qualities that drew me to the students and professors in the English department at Stanford.”

Kyle Lee-Crossett, Gendered Intelligence (GI) nonprofit education and arts organization in London
“GI’s slogan is ‘Understanding gender diversity in creative ways,’ because educating people about what it means to be trans[gender] or issues facing trans[gender] people takes more than didactic lecturing or knowledge of legal codes. It takes empathy, imagination, new uses of language, art.”

Kaitlin Louie, Sweet Productions wholesale bakery in San Carlos, CA
“By the end of the internship I was—and still am—seriously considering a job in public relations or marketing in which I can extensively use my writing skills and academic training as an English major to craft eloquent writing.”

Peter McDonald, Move Well, Work Better injury prevention organization in Menlo Park, CA
“The most prominent example of use came in the practice of crafting narratives. Much of what marketing is is figuring out which stories to tell and then telling them. My background in creative writing very much came into play... Much of the focus gets put on using only statistics or scientific experiments as ways of understanding, but I think narrative analysis is just as important.”

Kate O’Connor, Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland, OR
“We went through all of the compiled notes [on Troilus and Cressida] line by line, evaluating each individual phrase on multiple levels: not just what a word means, but what it meant to Shakespeare; what it meant to Shakespeare’s audience; what it would mean to a modern audience; what the word implies about the character who says it, or is discussed; why it would be included or why it would be cut for a given production; and many other nuances.”
**Rutger Rosenborg**, Hayden’s Ferry Review literary journal in Tempe, AZ

“One of the major reasons that I was able to discern between good stories and bad stories (and poems) that were submitted for consideration at Hayden’s Ferry Review is because of the ‘training’ I received and continue to receive as an English major (and creative writing emphasis) at Stanford. The Stanford English major is focused on developing a critical eye for literature (and, I would argue, for art in general) so that students can discriminate between original, skillfully created writing and stale, recycled, and uninventive writing.”

**Liz Stark**, Apparatus Productions entertainment company in Culver City, CA

“The English department’s Literary History sequence educated me in the development of literary genres such that I could gauge screenwriters’ success in achieving them. To communicate effectively my opinion of a script, I often referred to novels or films to which I’ve been exposed during my studies in the Humanities.”

**Jenny Thai**, Questbridge nonprofit educational organization in Palo Alto, CA

“My internship project, which culminated in an hour long interview with one of the Quest alumni and a final draft of her profile, put my communicative and writing skills to the test… Investigative profiling, while very different from the analytical papers or short stories I’ve written for English classes, follows the familiar process of research, drafting and revising. There was still a lot of work to be done even when the internship concluded in early August, but I had laid the foundation work. In the end, it was very rewarding to present my employer a polished piece.”

**Martin Abramson** (MA 1955) has been writing book reviews for www.Poetsquarterly.com and Book/Mark. Now living in Fort Lauderdale, FL, his published reviews can be found on his blog: www.poet-lit.blogspot.com. His poetry can be found on www.martinabramson.net.

When **Anne Barker** (BA 1978) retired from investment management in 2002 and began to study herbal medicine, she returned to an interest in botany which had lain dormant since high school. After she qualified as a medical herbalist in 2006 and began private practice, Barker started working with a collaborative oral history project, Ethnomedica, based at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. Her travels around Scotland collecting stories of traditional remedies and plant lore for the project have led to lecturing in Ethnomedicine at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh, joining the Council of the Botanical Society of Scotland, and writing a book—Reminded Remedies: Scottish Traditional Plant Lore, which was published by Birlinn (for more information, visit [http://www.birlinn.co.uk/book/details/Remembered-Remedies-9781780270043/](http://www.birlinn.co.uk/book/details/Remembered-Remedies-9781780270043/)). She also cultivates old roses and other perennials in her small Edinburgh garden and continues to sing with the Scottish Chamber Choir.

**Anne Sutton Canfield** (formerly Anne Sutton, BA 1967) edited Elmwood Cemetery: Stories of Kansas City, published in 2010 by Star Books, a division of The Kansas City Star. The 240-page book was recognized by the Jackson County, Missouri, Historical Society as the “best historical book of 2010.” Canfield is Vice President for Communications at the Kansas City Art Institute, a four-year college of art and design, which celebrated its 125th anniversary in 2010.

**Keith Defolo** (BA 1948) is happy to tell you of the slender book he has published, Burma Will Live Again (Xlibris Corporation), a chronicle of fifteen stories that describe his adventures (1959-1962) when he lived in Moulmein, Burma before the military take-over in 1962.

**Camille T. Dungy** (BA 1995) published her third collection of poetry, Smith Blue, in May. The book received the 2010 Crab Orchard Open Prize for Poetry and will be published by Southern Illinois University Press. Her second collection was Suck on the Marrow (Red Hen Press, 2010). In 2009, she edited the anthology Black Nature: Four Centuries of African American Nature Poetry (UGA Press), which received the 2010 Special Recognition Award from the Northern California Book Awards. She is also co-editor of From the Fishouse: An Anthology of Poems that Sing, Rhyme, Resound, Syncopate, Alliterate, and Just Plain Sound Great (Persea, 2009). She has received fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Virginia Commission for the Arts, the Botanical Society of Scotland, and Just Plain Sound Great (Persea, 2009). She has received fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Virginia Commission for the Arts, Cave Canem, the Dana Award, and Bread Loaf, and is a two-time NAACP Image Award nominee, and finalist for the PEN Center USA Literary Award and the Library of Virginia Literary Award. Dungy is currently Associate Professor in the Creative Writing Department at San Francisco State University.

**Carol Edgarian** (BA 1984) published a novel, Three Stages of Amazement (Scribner) in March. She is also cofounder and editor of Narrative magazine ([www.narrativemagazine.com](http://www.narrativemagazine.com)), the leading digital source for storytelling, publishing over 300 artists each year.

**H. Bruce Franklin** (PhD 1961) teaches at Rutgers-Newark. In 2008, Franklin earned the American Studies Association’s highest award, the Bode-Pearson Prize for Lifetime Achievement in American Studies. The revised and enlarged 2008 edition of his book War Stars: The Superweapon in the American Imagina-
tion was just published in a Spanish translation and a Japanese translation will be appearing soon. More information is available on his web site: http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~hbf

Tim Gillespie (BA, 1971) recently retired after almost forty years as a public school teacher. This past November, Stenhouse published his resource book for high school and community college English teachers, Doing Literary Criticism: Helping Students Engage with Challenging Texts.

Dana Gioia (BA 1973, MBA 1977) has just accepted a newly created chair in “Poetry and Public Culture” at the University of Southern California. He will teach one semester each year. He will continue with the Aspen Institute as their Senior Fellow in the Arts. Meanwhile his opera (with composer Paul Salerni) Tony Caruso’s Final Broadcast was just released on CD by Naxos. The work was chosen as “the best new chamber opera” in competition sponsored by the National Opera Association. Gioia’s younger son, Mike, is a freshman at Stanford.

David T. Hanson (BA 1970) recently published his second photography monograph, Colstrip, Montana, his extended study of one of the largest coal strip mines in the country and the power plant and factory town that it surrounds. The photographs were made in the early 1980s and exhibited at The Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1986. The book includes an essay by Hanson and an afterward by Montana writer Rick Bass. Hanson also created a special collector’s edition of Colstrip, Montana in a custom slipcase with an original photograph.

Hanson earned an MFA in Photography at Rhode Island School of Design and taught there in the departments of Photography and Landscape Architecture from 1983-2000. He has received a number of awards for his work, including a Guggenheim Fellowship and two NEA fellowships. His photographs have been widely exhibited and are in the permanent collections of museums throughout the world. Hanson grew up in Montana, and landscape and land issues have been central to his artwork. In 1997, Aperture published a mid-career survey of his work, Waste Land: Meditations on a Ravaged Landscape, which included two essays by Hanson and contributions by Wendell Berry, William Kittredge, and Terry Tempest Williams. Hanson’s work was recently included in major landscape exhibitions at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and The Museum of Modern Art in New York. He makes his home in Iowa. For more information, visit www.davidthanson.net.

Will Hobbs (BA 1969, MA 1971) published his 18th novel for young adults in 2011, Take Me to the River (HarperCollins) is a suspense story that dramatizes contemporary border issues. The setting is the rugged and remote Lower Canyons of the Rio Grande downstream of Big Bend National Park. His next novel, Never Say Die, is off to the copyeditor at Harper and will be published early in 2013. It’s a survival story set on the north slope of Canada’s Yukon Territory and has much to do with climate change in the arctic. Hobbs reports that both of these novels grew out of personal experience followed by “tons of research.” His web site, WillHobbsAuthor.com, includes an interview for each of his novels in which he shares with kids (and his adult readers) the sources of his ideas.

Trained as a Shakespearean at Stanford, Alex Huang (PhD 2004) is currently Associate Professor of Comparative Literature at Penn State University, Research Affiliate in Literature at MIT, and the General Editor of The Shakespearean International Yearbook. His new book, Chinese Shakespeares: Two Centuries of Cultural Exchange (Columbia University Press, 2009), was awarded the MLA’s Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Prize and an Honorable Mention of the Joe A. Callaway Prize for the Best Book on Drama or Theatre.

He has also published Shakespeare in Hollywood, Asia, and Cyberspace (Purdue University Press, 2009; co-edited with Charles Ross). In fall 2009 he was the video curator of the “Imagining China: The View from Europe, 1550-1700” exhibition (curated by Timothy Billings) at the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, D.C. He has served as distinguished visiting professor at the Seoul National University (South Korea, summer 2010) and was on the faculty of Middlebury College’s Bread Loaf School of English (Summer 2011), offering seminars on Shakespeare, performance, and literary theory. As a board member of the Internet Shakespeare Editions, Huang is preparing a suite of videos to accompany the ISE edition of Hamlet.

He is currently working on a book on comedy, sponsored by an American Council of Learned Societies fellowship. He has co-founded, with Peter Donaldson, Global Shakespeares (http://global-shakespeares.org/), an open-access performance video archive and collaborative research project, featuring productions in the US, UK, Europe, Latin America, the Arab World and Asia. The digital archive was launched in August 2010. Over the past years, he has published in MLQ, Shakespeare Bulletin, Shakespearean International Yearbook, Shakespeare Studies, and Shakespeare Yearbook, given numerous invited lectures, and delivered a series of lectures on Shakespeare productions at the Edinburgh International Festival in the UK this past summer.

and thinkers, Jackson’s integrated account of a segregated world places white figures (e.g., Bucklin Moon, Lillian Smith, Norman Mailer, Jack Kerouac) on the map as well. Jackson’s detail may offer more than the casual sightseer seeks, but scholars will rely upon and mine his monumental work and the prodigious research upon which it is based. It should guide the way African-American and American literature is studied.”

**Pam Lewis**’s (BA 1965) novel, *A Young Wife*, was published in June by Simon and Schuster. Her two previous novels, *Speak Softly, She Can Hear* and *Perfect Family*, were also published by Simon and Schuster. For more information, please visit www.pamlewisonline.com.

**Edmund Russell** (BA 1980) is now an associate professor in the Department of Science, Technology, and Society and the Department of History at the University of Virginia. His first monograph, *(War and Nature: Fighting Humans and Insects with Chemicals from World War I to Silent Spring)* (Cambridge, 2001), won the Edelstein Prize of the Society for the History of Technology. With Richard Tucker, he edited the first collection of essays on the environmental history of war: *Natural Enemy, Natural Ally: Toward an Environmental History of War* (Oregon State University Press, 2004). His second monograph was published at the beginning of the year: *Evolutionary History: Uniting History and Biology to Understand Life on Earth* (Cambridge, 2011).

*This Birth Place of Souls: The Civil War Nursing Diary of Harriet Eaton*, edited with an introduction by **Jane E. Schultz** (BA 1976) was recently published by Oxford University Press.

**John Wasson** (PhD 1959) was a professor of English at Washington State University until he retired 17 years ago. He has now lived in an assisted living facility for two years since his wife of 30 years died. He spends his time exercising and doing crossword puzzles. He misses teaching Shakespeare for 35 years.

**Tanaya Winder** (BA 2008) co-edited a book with Joy Harjo published by Wesleyan University Press called *Soul Talk, Song Language: Conversations with Joy Harjo*.

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**IN MEMORIAM**

**Madeleva C. Peyton** (BA 1945) died in November 2010. She received her PhD in English language and literature from Pacific Western University in Louisiana in 1994. She taught grade school and high school in California and Illinois for 25 years. Her PhD thesis was a novel entitled *The Prince, the Pilot and the Lady Detective*.

**Neville Wilson** (MA 1978) died in October 2010 in Kennebunkport, Maine. According to his obituary, “Wilson was well educated, attending King’s College (Cambridge, England), Tufts University (magna cum laude, 1965), and Stanford University upon receiving a Woodrow Wilson Fellowship in 1965-66. After retiring from retail in 2002, Neville was able to return to his lifelong love and pursuit of painting and poetry. He published his first book of poetry *The Early Morning Clapboarder* in 2007. His poems remain a legacy of joy, love, and wonder of life. His life is well summarized in a quote he gave for a 2007 interview in the local Tourist News: ‘It takes time to reach the center of who you are. I found that life is ever changing, and there are no certainties, only possibilities. Love is man’s last great hope of peace and the source of all that’s important. The journey is what’s important.’”
We would love to hear from you!

The Department would appreciate receiving news items for the next English Newsletter, 2012, and notification of change of address.

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Stanford, CA 94305-2087

- When you contact us, please include your name, address (if changed), class, and degree. We will try to print everything sent in, but because of limitations of space we cannot always do so.
- Visit the Department web page: http://english.stanford.edu during the coming year for department news and events.
- Like us on Facebook. Join us on LinkedIn.