A letter from the Chair – Gavin Jones

It’s a pleasure to begin the academic year by welcoming new colleagues to the department. I’m thrilled that Elaine Treharne has joined us from Florida State University. A native of the lovely seaside town of Aberystwyth in Wales, Elaine is an expert in Old English literature. Her work will complement the department’s strong interests in the history of the book, and in the growing field of the digital humanities. Adena Spingarn will begin a two-year term as a Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow. Adena arrives from Harvard University, and will teach courses in American and African American literature. Finally, Mark Algee-Hewitt starts work as a postdoctoral fellow in our Literary Lab. Mark will join the Lab in its trailblazing work to bridge the techy/fuzzy divide by bringing computer technologies to literary interpretation.

2012 marked the retirement of Professor Andrea Lunsford. Andrea joined our department in 2000 and founded Stanford’s Program in Writing and Rhetoric. I can think of no one who has done more to bring awareness to the craft of writing as an everyday, essential practice, to be understood and cherished by all. From a chair’s perspective, it may seem daunting to have a colleague with a book called Everything’s An Argument! But nothing could be farther from the truth. I know that Andrea’s warmth and intellectual generosity will be dearly missed by us all, including the many graduate and undergraduate students she’s taught and mentored over the years.

Last year was a busy one for the department, as the following pages will reveal. We hosted successful career events both for our undergraduates and our graduate students. We founded a new poetry reading competition, “Poetry. Out.Loud.” which drew participants from across the campus. The Creative Writing Program hosted a range of visitors and speakers, including Martin Amis, Zadie Smith, and Louise Glück. It was also an award-winning year for several of our faculty and staff, and a bumper year of publication of novels, biographies, and critical works.

The department will face several exciting challenges in the year ahead. Stanford is an institution that thrives on innovation, nowhere more so than in undergraduate education. This year and next, Stanford will begin rolling out its new freshman breadth requirements and new “Thinking Matters” courses, which will replace the traditional Introduction to the Humanities program. This is the perfect time to reconsider our course offerings and our teaching mission to ensure that English remains a crucial part of undergraduate education at Stanford.

With the advent of new technologies of reading and writing, the literary landscape has changed greatly over the last two decades. The digital revolution is now sweeping the world of higher education. New online courses are springing up everywhere, and a national debate ensues over the nature and value of online versus classroom learning. In the year ahead, I would like to consider whether and how the teaching of English—which tends to thrive in face-to-face interactions—can benefit from these online innovations.

I look forward to another exciting year of publications, visitors, and conferences at the Center for the Study of the Novel. The department is also proud to announce its new public book club, “Another Look,” designed to introduce neglected classics to a broader audience, and to continue our literary conversations beyond the classroom. Perhaps I’ll see you at this or at another of our many events.
On the afternoon of June 17th, the English department’s graduation ceremony commenced in Memorial Church. Before the distribution of diplomas, Department Chair Gavin Jones and several graduating students delivered brief speeches. These speeches celebrated the class of 2012, Stanford University, and the English department.

Jones began the ceremony by greeting all in attendance:

“Have you reckon’d a thousand acres much?
Have you reckon’d the earth much?
Have you practis’d so long to learn to read?
Have you felt so proud to get at the meaning of poems?

Stop this day and night with me and you shall possess
the origin of all poems,
You shall possess the good of the earth and sun,
(there are millions of suns left),
You shall no longer take things at second or third hand,
nor look through the eyes of the dead,
nor feed on the spectres in books,
You shall not look through my eyes either, nor take
things from me,
You shall listen to all sides and filter them from your self.”

You may recognize these lines from Walt Whitman’s “Leaves of Grass.” You may also recognize from these lines that, when I sat down to think of something new to say at graduation, I was a little stuck.

It’s a daunting task to address you young souls who have refused to reckon acres much. You who have sought to possess the origin of all poems—to possess the good of the earth and sun. You who have followed your intuition in pursuit of beauty and truth.

It’s daunting to address the parents and the families of these young souls—those of you who have perhaps reckoned your acres far too much to put your kids through college; those of you who right now stand astride the tectonic plates of your lives, as you witness the flowering of all of your love and care as parents and guardians, all of your nights of worry and days of joy.

The degrees that will be awarded today are measures of scholarly achievement. But they are also a single, seismic measure of the degrees of all you’ve done—as parents and friends and family members—to make this possible.

Confronted with the difficult task of finding new ways to say “well done” and “farewell,” it’s tempting to look to the words of poets, to quote and parse our predecessors or our leaders. “Your time is limited, so don’t waste it living someone else’s life,” said Steve Jobs in his Stanford Commencement address of 2005. “Don’t be trapped by dogma—which is living with the results of other people’s thinking. Don’t let the noise of others’ opinions drown out your inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition.”

Or as Walt Whitman put it, in strikingly similar terms: “You shall not look through my eyes either, nor take things from me, / You shall listen to all sides and filter them from your self.”

The other road to take, when tongue-tied by the occasion, is to look to the words of youth. That is, to tell an anecdote about one’s own kids. It never fails. So perhaps you will indulge me on this Father’s Day, as I read a page from our family’s little scrapbook—from October 2008, perhaps around the time when many of you began your journeys at Stanford.

Putting my six-year-old son to bed one night, we were talking about the things he is good at. He said when he grows up, he wants to be the best thing—he wants to be a saint. I said this meant that he had to be good. He said, it meant that he had to be good as a grownup. Then we started talking about how to be good and do good in the world. I talked about coming up with ideas and with things that will help people. He said, “Yeah, you can do most good by being a scientist, then you can be a saint.” So, as a parting goodnight shot I said, “That’s right, now you can lie in bed and think of needed inventions.” He responded, “I know the most needed invention: a God contactor. You could invent a laser that is really powerful and could shoot up to God’s cell phone. You could make it so that it only goes to the metal gold. Because only God has the gold cell phone.”

Teaching English at Stanford can make one feel sometimes trapped between God and a great gold cell phone—or at least, between the pursuit of truth and the allure of commerce and information technology.

But the inventions that are really needed are already in prototype. You may not be able to invent a laser-powered God contactor, but you do understand the technology of text, the wondrous inventions of words, poetry, symbols, images. As writers and readers and interpreters, you are the divine scientists. You are the discoverers of truths and revelations that are always new, and always unfolding. As Whitman put it, there are millions of suns left for you to pursue.
Finally, I would be remiss not to pass on the advice that my own father would always give me, whenever I left the house: “Be good,” he’d say. “And if you can’t be good, be careful.”

But fatherly wisdom falters when it’s time to leave parents and teachers behind, to see things with your own eyes and to do things on your own terms. So I’m delighted to hand things over now to our student speakers, Molly Keran, Brienne Bilsky, and Caroline Chen, who will offer some reflections on their time at Stanford.

*Molly Keran* completed her Bachelor of Arts degree with distinction in English with a creative writing emphasis and departmental honors:

There are many things I could say about my years at Stanford, but it is most tempting to say that I am just lucky to be here in the first place. After all, who am I but some girl from Nebraska who likes to read? I am lucky, unbelievably lucky, to have found a home at Stanford and a place in a department as wonderful as the English department has been. The professors and administrative staff have done so much more than just learn my name; they care about my life even more than they care about my essays; they want not only my success but also my happiness. When I did probably the worst thing you can do upon meeting a potential advisor—that is, break down in tears and rant hysterically about how I had to go to grad school or else I’d be a failure—this professor did not send me away and refuse to ever see me again, although I wouldn’t have blamed her if she had. Instead, she let me cry for over an hour right there in her office and made me promise to come back in a week, to see how I was doing. In the end, she became my honors thesis advisor and helped me through what has been the biggest intellectual project of my life.

My classmates in the English major have also supported me in ways I never anticipated. They have shared with me the books they love, the stories and poems they have written, the lessons they’ve learned in classes I never got the chance to take. They stayed up with me for all-nighters and bought me doughnuts at two in the morning when I needed an energy boost, and when my vision was too blurry from exhaustion to check for typos, they read my papers and found all the mistakes.

So yes, I have been lucky. And I think most of us in the English major would say we are lucky, for these reasons and for many more. But to say it is just luck, to leave our experience as a matter of fate, is to fail to realize that we must live up to what we have been given, even if it was just luck that gave it to us. Stanford may have made us lucky, and may have left us slightly embarrassed by our privilege, but it has made us better. I am a better reader, a better thinker, and a better human being than I was four years ago. The English major has forced me to be better.

I am well aware, of course, that every other month or so we must justify the existence of the humanities, including the English major. “What is its purpose?” skeptics ask. “What practical skills do you learn by reading a bunch of old books?”

Well, look around you. Look at the friends and colleagues you have made, the people you’ve argued about books with, talking about how Virginia Woolf is a genius and Ernest Hemingway is a jerk. Look at the peers who have forced you to think as you have never thought before. And look at the professors who taught you how to write a sentence so that it isn’t just clear and strong and argumentative, but also beautiful. Look at the scholars who have shown you how to love books with your heart and your mind. Look at your parents, your siblings, your friends, your supporters: the people who may have accepted your love of literature, who may love literature too, or who may have balked when you told them you didn’t choose en-
The second speaker was Brianne Bilsky, who received her doctorate in English upon the completion of her dissertation, titled “The Page Redux: American Literature in the Information Age.” This fall, Bilsky began a job as the Director of the Peer-Assisted Learning Program and the Magellan Project and Fellowships Coordinator at Washington and Jefferson College.

In behalf of my fellow graduates, I’d like to begin by thanking everyone who has played such an integral part in our time here at Stanford. Thank you to the English faculty for being our academic mentors; thank you to the department’s support staff for your behind the scenes guidance; and thank you to all of our families and friends for always believing in us, even if we sometimes didn’t.

Although no two graduate school experiences are the same, the life of every English PhD student is in large part defined by a series of encounters with two very small but often very daunting words: so what. As admissions we quickly learn that the standard way of breaking the ice with your new colleagues is to walk up to them and say, “So, what do you study?” Hoping that no one realizes they made a mistake in admitting us, we try to calmly offer up the declaration we made in our personal statements. This usually means one-word answers ending in “-ism” (Romanticism, Modernism, Postmodernism) or answers that cite historical periods (Medieval literature, the long eighteenth century, early American).

Having mastered the art of the short answer, we begin our coursework where our professors routinely turn to us in class and say, “So, what do you think?” Clearly our short and not very specific answers are useless here, so we slowly learn how to join these conversations as well, conversations about literature that falls within our stated interests and literature that does not. At the end of each quarter, we’re given several opportunities to commit our thoughts to paper. No problem. We’re in graduate school because we mastered the academic essay form as undergraduates, right? Hardly.

When our professors return those early grad school essays, we often see “So what?” written in the margin next to that sentence—usually somewhere around page two—that one sentence that we took so long to craft and that we thought was an original argument. But once we put aside our pride, we realize they were right to decorate our margins with those two little words because pointing out an interesting observation is not the same as making an interesting argument. When we are asked to teach, we take this insight into the classroom, and we find ourselves writing the same two words on our students’ papers, trying to help them learn from our mistakes and become better writers than we were at that age.

In the third year, we must really commit to the “So, what do you study?” question as we’re told to choose a literary field and become familiar with it. So we spend almost an entire academic year reading 75-100 works of literature, and around April—because as we know April is the cruellest month—around April those two little words come back to us, this time signaling our exhaustion and apathy. By April of our third year we think we can’t possibly read, retain, or care about one more work of literature.

But soon enough all of that reading is behind us and we move on to a more baffling question: “So,” our advisors begin, “what is your project going to be about? What are you going to work on?” With this question we suddenly realize what a luxury it was to simply read great literature and try to think of interesting things to say about it. Now we have to actually do something meaningful with all of that material. We have to produce knowledge.

After taking a few years to figure out what that means, we begin to introduce our projects to the academic world beyond the walls of Stanford. We attend conferences, craft job letters, and with any luck discuss our work in interviews with faculty from other universities. And just as we knew when we were admissions that almost all of those early conversations would begin with the “So, what do you study?” question, we also know that many of these late-stage conversations will begin with someone saying, “So, tell us what you work on. What is your
Graduate school trains us to respond confidently and convincingly when other academics ask us this question, but on our way to these conferences and interviews, we inevitably encounter a much different audience, one that often terrifies English grad students. This audience is the outside world. If you’re like me, the outside world usually takes the form of the non-specialist, yet unnaturally inquisitive seatmate on some lengthy flight. As we read our obscure literature and edit our conference papers, we hope that the person next to us doesn’t take an interest in our work and try to strike up a conversation with those all too familiar words: “So, what do you do?” Being asked this question by someone who doesn’t do what we do seems to cause more anxiety for an English graduate student than any question our professors could ask us because this question forces us to think about what it really means to earn a PhD in the humanities. What is it that we actually do as English graduate students? Of course we write a dissertation, but that’s only one part—albeit a very lengthy part—of the process. We also develop a set of skills. We have learned, among other things, how to close read not just texts but also the world around us; how to identify and solve problems; how to effectively communicate our ideas; and how to teach others to develop this same set of skills.

Higher education is changing. We hear this from any number of news sources on any given day. We hear that it’s increasingly difficult to secure a tenure-track job, especially in the humanities. Most of us who are graduating today can attest to that. Many of us are still figuring out what the next long-term step will be, and this, like many of the other steps on the path to a PhD, can be a daunting task. But if we remember what it is that we’ve actually become experts in during our time as graduate students, then what seems like uncertainty from one angle becomes possibility from another, and we know that when we are asked the final so what question, “So, what’s next?” We can confidently reply, “Absolutely anything!” Thank you and congratulations.

Caroline Chen was last to address the class of 2012, reciting an original poem. Chen received a Bachelor of Arts degree with distinction in English with a creative writing emphasis, departmental honors, and a minor in mathematics.

Florence, May 2011

We are not young. We are old enough, now, that we do not sleep in our childhood beds in our childhood homes. We are old enough that nobody cares whether or not we sleep, whether or not we come back home at night. Fridays, we gather under the yellow lights in the park, lie on the iron benches, and talk: trading stories like playing cards, trying to read our futures in each other’s faces. But we are not lost. In the dark, we cling tight to each other’s hands as we cross the parallels, wheel around corners, learning by heart the thirty-three cantos of Dante’s Inferno: We were not made to live as brutes, but as followers of virtue and knowledge, we recite, over and over as we walk through the night, from one end of this city to the other, down the long quiet cobblestone streets, waiting for the light of the early new morning.
Out of the Past
by Professor Kenneth Fields

When I came to Stanford as a graduate student in 1963, Gary Lindberg was in my class. He and his wife Judy lived in the same small College Terrace apartment building as Gita and me, and we got to know and love them. Gary was a quiet, smart young man from Harvard out of Minnesota who, as an ex-Lutheran, still felt the need to play some religious music, perhaps Bach, every Sunday. Gary later taught at the University of New Hampshire and published a book on Edith Wharton and another on Melville’s The Confidence Man. He died as a very young man of lymphoma, leaving Judy and a very young son. Judy later married Mike De Porte, who also taught at New Hampshire, and was a Stanford PhD too. A few years back, Mike died of the same disease that killed Gary. I have a good story about Mike, but it will have to wait for another time.

What is to be done in the face of such losses, which is our life? Not much, except maybe a few stories, imperfectly remembered, that will bring back something of those we’ve loved. One of Gary’s favorites was of his oral examination, that academic circumcision most of us don’t remember with pleasure. He was giving his presentation on Edith Wharton, and was reading an especially tense and dramatic passage, the account of the death of Lily Bart in The House of Mirth. Suddenly he was startled by a loud slap on the table, and he looked up to see Tom Moser, the director of his dissertation and our department chair, with his head flung back and rolling from side to side. Gary said for a moment he thought perhaps he was having a stroke. Then Tom sat up, smiling, and burst out with, “Awww, good old Edith!” A moment like that, in the middle of that awful ordeal, is pure gold, and more rare. It is my hope that when Tom reads this, he will smile and shake his head and exclaim, “Aw, good old Gary!”

Wharton’s title comes from Ecclesiastes: “The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.” Despite the words of the preacher, let us endeavor to live in the house of fools. ✡

A Time When Books Reigned
by Cynthia Haven

Professor Denise Gigante traces the power of the book in the nineteenth century and then looks forward to the future of the written word. Her research for her forthcoming book with Harvard University Press, The Book Madness: A Story of Book Collectors in America, which earned her a John Simon Guggenheim Foundation fellowship, also recalls the half-forgotten English essayist and “tastemaker” Charles Lamb.

Gigante tells a tale of how movements can flip into their own opposite: how transatlantic book-collecting and literary idolatry morphed into a fuzzy, off-the-page future. Passionate devotion to particular books has yielded to a universally available, disembodied text.

Gigante’s research recalls an era when “bibliomaniacs had a relationship with books—they saw them as companions, friends, mentors, real presences in the world. A character from Tom Jones could be as real to them as anyone they might meet.”

Gigante’s newest intellectual adventure began with the Jay Fliegelman Collection of “association copies” now in the Stanford Libraries. The collection is important not just for the books that it holds, but for the signatures, notes and dedications to and from the era’s leading cultural figures contained in them. When a book had the pencil marks of an admired literary friend or had been owned by a deceased colleague, it deepened the conversation between book and reader.

[Excerpted from the Stanford Report]
A professorial office is not only what Auden called a “Cave of Making,” a books- and papers-storage area, a study, a haven and a meeting place. An office is also a rhetorical and expressive statement about the person who occupies it.

When you enter the office of ANDREA A. LUNSFORD, who retired in June 2012 as the Louise Hewlett Nixon Professor of English, you are struck first by the way you get in: through the almost permanently open door to Andrea’s office. That open door has been an enduring sign of her generous willingness to engage with anyone who seeks her out, from an undergraduate newly arrived on campus to a graduate student seeking support and advice with a dissertation project. Throughout her years as a professor of English and as, until two years ago, the Faculty Director of the Program in Writing and Rhetoric (PWR), Andrea has been tirelessly ready to enthuse with, stimulate and guide hundreds of Stanford students who have crossed her threshold.

Once you have crossed into her office, you are immediately struck by the numerous framed certificates and awards testifying to public recognition of the extraordinarily distinguished career Andrea has had as the country’s leading scholar of rhetoric and writing studies. (With her fastidious modesty, Andrea will demur from this description. However, my rapid but conclusively survey of opinions from other leaders and authorities in the field leads me to believe she will be wrong to object.) She has served as Chair of the Conference on College Composition and Communication and Chair of the Modern Language Association Division on Writing, and as a member of the MLA’s Executive Council. When, more than a decade ago, Stanford decided that it needed to reinvigorate its undergraduate writing program in the most substantial way possible, it went to the top and hired Andrea away from Ohio State University where she was directing the Center for the Study and Teaching of Writing. Since that time, her vigorous and highly successful efforts have had a direct impact on the communication skills of tens of thousands of Stanford undergraduates.

Inside Andrea’s office, you are struck too by the exceptional orderliness of the space she works in. It is an order which expresses the self-discipline and clarity of mind that have enabled her to pursue many intellectual interests—from rhetorical theory, women in rhetoric, collaboration, cultures of writing, style, the graphic novel and technologies of writing—while writing or coauthoring some 19 books as well as numerous essays and chapters. Her works include The Everyday Writer; Essays on Classical Rhetoric and Modern Discourse; Singular Texts/Plural Authors: Perspectives on Collaborative Writing; and Reclaiming Rhetorica: Women and the History of Rhetoric.

Andrea earned her BA and MA degrees from the University of Florida, and she completed her PhD in English at Ohio State University in 1977 under the famed rhetorician Edward P. J. Corbett. In the decades since she completed her graduate studies Andrea has traveled and written endlessly, giving talks, supporting colleagues, arguing for her intellectual convictions and conducting workshops on writing and program reviews at scores of North American universities. But even while she has been contributing so much for a national audience and giving her time so copiously to agenda-setting at very high levels in the conversation about higher education, she has always cheerfully and selflessly sustained her local commitments and her investment in person-to-person exchanges in her immediate world. For example, Andrea was the motive force behind the founding of Stanford’s Hume Writing Center in 2001. And for every year since then, week in and week out whenever she has been on campus, Andrea has quietly kept up the unglamorous but essential work of meeting individual students for one-on-one consultations in the Hume Center about their writing.

I have never asked Andrea about her office’s collection of ruby slippers. Rather than being tied down by a clear explanation, I prefer to remain free to speculate. But one message, simple and fundamental, is just that wherever you find yourself landing, if you try hard enough and long enough and if you are generous enough, you can change things. For innumerable students, for her legions of readers and her many admiring colleagues and friends, Andrea Lunsford has genuinely changed things at Stanford.
In Memoriam

Poet Adrienne Rich died on March 27, 2012.

She was a professor in the English department from 1986 to 1993 and published many poetry and nonfiction collections. A memorial in honor of Rich was held on April 16th. Professor Emeritus Albert Gelpi spoke at the memorial about the power of her writing and her extraordinary influence on poetry:

Barbara [Gelpi] and I met Adrienne in the early sixties just after Snapshots of a Daughter-in-Law was published, those poems speaking in the unmistakable voice that made Adrienne Rich a major presence in American poetry and American culture. During the long years of our friendship, much happened to her, to us, to you all, to our native land, our life. That long and loving friendship is part of who Barbara and I are, who we have become over the years. Those precious memories will remain with us. But what Adrienne would want from me at this gathering is not personal reminiscences but attention to the poems.

Adrienne was a poet of witness, or rather she grew into a poet of witness, a peerless poet of witness for our time and place. Snapshots signaled the shift from the earlier poems, in which formal closure shielded and protected the poet from her own vulnerabilities and from the ruptures convulsing the world outside the poem. She introduced a reading of these new poems in Cambridge in spring, 1964 by saying: “instead of poems about experiences I am getting poems that are experiences…something is happening, something has happened to me and if I have been a good parent to the poem, something will happen to you who read it.” No longer the poet’s imaginative, psychological, moral life sealed off from the world of violence and contention by language: the world fact and the poem artifice. Now, instead, language as the poet’s imaginative, psychological, moral instrument to contend with the violence, to engage and oppose it. As she would say, “The words are purposes. / The words are maps.”

By the tumultuous late 60s, in Leaflets and The Will to Change, Adrienne, along with a number of other poets, was standing witness against the Vietnam War. By the 70s, her own struggles to summon up and realize “the fullness of her powers” made her a prophetic voice for women around the world—straight and lesbian—in calling the oppressive structures of patriarchy to judgment.

In “Planetarium” (1968) her imaginative identification with the astronomer Caroline Herschel informs her—and transforms her—with energies and purposes and forces that seem cosmic. These are its closing lines:

I have been standing all my life in the direct path of a battery of signals the most accurately transmitted most untranslatable language in the universe I am a galactic cloud so deep so involuted that a light wave could take 15 years to travel through me And has taken I am an instrument in the shape of a woman trying to translate pulsations into images for the relief of the body and the reconstruction of the mind.

That poem anticipates the great poems of Diving into the Wreck and The Dream of a Common Language. And through the often agonized strain of self-exploration and discovery Adrienne came, with increasing urgency and clarity, to see sexism and homophobia interlocked with racism and classism and economic exploitation in an unjust system that afflicted American society and that America was afflicting on weaker nations dependent on our power. In the 80s and after, with volumes like Your Native Land, Your Life,
Professor Emeritus of English Charles Fifer passed away October 8th, 2012.

Fifer taught at Stanford from 1956 to his retirement in 1991. He was born in Illinois, served in World War II, and taught at several universities before coming to Stanford. His teaching and research focused on eighteenth-century literature, and for many years, he was the Director of Freshman English.

Fifer is remembered fondly by his colleagues and former students. Below, Professor Ken Fields and Professor Emeritus Bliss Carnochan, both of the Stanford English department, reflect on Fifer’s impact on his students and his legacy as a scholar.

Professor Ken Fields:

“H e was my teacher, my colleague, my friend, and he was ‘Bud.’ I never got used to Charles, the name he decided we should call him fairly late in his career. I think I resented it a little. He loved the eighteenth century, and shared something of the wit of that period. He directed Freshman English, as we harshly called it, when it was assumed that we could teach students to write better about literature if we were willing to spend long hours reading papers and reminding them to keep their erasers in order, as Pound paraphrased Propertius.

He had a quick, almost sneaky wit, marked by a sideways look, and a shift of his feet, often a little kick as he lifted his heel and laughed. I’m not making this up. I remember him in a little circle at a party when someone was complaining about the rudeness of a retired colleague. Someone else said, ‘Well, he was always very polite to me,’ and Bud said, ‘Maybe he liked some people better than others’—then, that quick little kick.

He loved [his wife] Norma, as we all did. She was the soul of grace and wit, a teacher and poet, with nothing of Bud’s nervousness. I’m sure that everyone felt welcomed and loved in her presence. They had no children, but the Fifers’ family Christmas parties to which all of our children were invited, were a special part of what I think of as the nearly-vanished ‘Old Department.’ Small children and children who had grown up going to those parties would gather with us under the psychedelic swirl of the Jesse Allen paintings that always seemed a little strange on the Fifers’ walls.

When Norma descended into her long illness, with less and less of her poet’s heart, we all grieved for her and for Bud. And now Charles Fifer is gone. So long, Bud.”

Professor Emeritus Bliss Carnochan:

“There was another Charles Fifer (this one definitely Charles, not Bud) besides the man touchingly portrayed by Ken Fields. The other was the one who worked for almost 30 years on a volume for the Yale Research Edition of James Boswell. The heroic age of editing literary texts, initiated by great scholars in the Renaissance, has by now largely if not entirely passed. But it was fully alive in the 1950s and the years that followed. The general editors of the Yale Boswell, not shy in their ambitions, planned both a trade edition and a research edition that, they hoped, ‘will consist of not fewer than 30 volumes.’

Now, more than 35 years after Charles’s contribution to the research edition (The Correspondence of James Boswell with Certain Members of the Club, 1976), I find only nine published volumes of that edition including his. Perhaps more are to come, but the great editions of the post-war years (amongst eighteenth-century authors, Boswell, Pope, Dryden, Swift, Johnson) are likely to represent a near-final flowering of a grand tradition.

Even a quick glance at The Correspondence of James Boswell with Certain Members of the Club displays how demanding that tradition was and (given,
A busy year at The Center for the Study of the Novel (CSN) began with the visit of Professor Jed Esty (English, University of Pennsylvania) who discussed his new book, *Unseasonable Youth: Modernism, Colonialism, and the Fiction of Development*. Professor Franco Moretti of Stanford’s English and Comparative Literature departments, and Professor Colleen Lye of the English department at Berkeley served as respondents.

In the spring, novelist and essayist Zadie Smith was the Ian Watt Lecturer and presented a talk entitled “Why Write?” and attracted an especially enthusiastic audience.

The annual conference asked the question “Is the Novel Democratic?” and brought together an international group of scholars: Professors Elizabeth Anker, Nancy Armstrong, Elizabeth Maddock Dillon, Brian Edwards, Meltem Gürle, Kent Puckett, Vaughn Rasberry, Mariano Siskind, Alan Tansman, and Ban Wang. Their talks are currently being prepared as a special issue of the journal *The Novel: A Forum on Fiction*. The conference brought together students and faculty from various humanities departments at Stanford as well as at Berkeley.

The Working Group on the Novel featured a presentation by Professor Alex Woloch, who shared a preview of his upcoming book on George Orwell and the poetics of Democratic Socialism. Professor Amir Eshel of German Studies and Comparative Literature discussed David Grossman’s *To the End of the Land*. Professor Héctor Hoyos from Iberian and Latin American Cultures talked about the Latin American narconovella. In addition, we read and discussed works-in-progress by graduate students Jillian Hess (English) on George Eliot’s *Middlemarch*, Justin Eichenlaub (English) on the suburb in Wilkie Collins, Darci Gardner (French) on Proust, Mike Benveniste (English) on Ishmael Reed’s *Mumbo Jumbo*, Meredith Wallis (Modern Thought and Literature) on *Winnie the Pooh* and property law, Helen Shin (Comparative Literature) on Neal Stephenson’s *Snow Crash*, and Hannah Doherty (English) on Walter Scott and the novel.

Finally, CSN continued two initiatives launched in 2010-2011: the Berkeley-Stanford Liaison and the Undergraduate Colloquium. The former encourages collaboration between CSN and Berkeley’s Consortium on the Novel and promotes graduate student research. The Liaison arranged two informal discussions and planned to institute a series of Stanford-Berkeley novel forums for sharing graduate student work. The mission of the Undergraduate Colloquium is to enrich Stanford undergraduate education by fostering participation at CSN. Meetings of the Colloquium took place twice per quarter and were facilitated by graduate students and designed to complement CSN’s programming through additional discussions of scholarship on the history and theory of the novel.

In 2012-13, we have already enjoyed a New Book Event, Simon Dickie’s *Cruelty and Laughter: The Unsentimental Eighteenth-Century Novel*, with respondents Terry Castle (English) and James Turner (Berkeley English) and the Ian Watt Lecture with Nobel Laureate J. M. Coetzee. Next, Margaret Cohen (Stanford Comparative Literature) will discuss her new book, *The Novel and the Sea*. The spring conference will ask, “What is the Nature of Literary Being?” Speakers include Peter Brooks, Branka Arsic, Sylvia Molloy, Cristina Vatulescu, Carrol Clarkson, Garrett Stewart, David Kurnick, and Claire Jarvis.

The CSN initiatives were facilitated by the graduate staff: Lucy Alford and Virginia Ramos of the Division of Literatures, Cultures, and Languages (DLCL), and Irena Yamboliev and Nate Landry of the English department. Undergraduate Molly McCully Brown (English) served as the coordinator for events associated with our undergraduate initiative. Thanks to our designer Davey Hubay, our website was expanded to include information about this year’s offerings, and you can view our full poster archive and history of past events.


For more information on CSN and to join the mailing list, visit novel.stanford.edu.
POETRY. OUT. LOUD.

Stanford’s new poetry performance competition

Poetry is often thought of as silent text confined to the page. But its roots are, of course, planted firmly in an oral and communal tradition. The goal of Poetry Out.Loud. (POL), a poetry performance competition, was to revive this tradition.

Last spring, Justin Tackett, Mary Kim, and Jesse Nathan (all first-year PhDs) designed and launched POL, which was open to any Stanford student. Each competitor was asked to perform a well-known poem or excerpt (three to five minutes) from memory and to give short introduction about his or her reasons for choosing it. Competitors were judged primarily on their vocal delivery and asked to keep body gestures to a minimum.

The level of interest in POL was impressive. The preliminary round included competitors from each undergraduate class, the graduate level, and the Stegner Fellowship. Disciplines well beyond English, including bioengineering, earth systems, biology, and architectural design, were represented. From this preliminary round, ten performers were selected for the final competition.

The POL competition was held on May 15th, 2012 in the Terrace Room, which was packed with undergraduates, graduates, faculty, and staff from across the university. All ten finalists gave outstanding performances of poems ranging from the works of the Romantics and Victorians to the Modernists and Beat Generation, right up to contemporary writers still with us today.

Professors John Felstiner and Ken Fields graciously acted as judges and, after the students were finished and the winners chosen, they offered insightful critiques of the evening’s performances. Light refreshments were served while audience members mingled, discussing and debating their favorite poems and performers.

Congratulations are due to English sophomore Teresa Caprioglio for her first-place ($300) performance of Matthew Arnold’s “Dover Beach,” Biology PhD Philip Greenspoon for his second-place ($200) performance of Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s “Kubla Khan,” and English senior Morielle Stroethoff for her third-place ($100) performance of Alfred, Lord Tennyson’s “The Lady of Shalott.”
Welcome New Faculty: Elaine Treharne

Introduced by Professor Stephen Orgel

It is a great pleasure to welcome Professor Elaine Treharne to the English department as our senior medievalist. She taught for many years at the University of Leicester in England, and more recently at Florida State University, as part of an innovative program in the history of the book. Her research focuses on Early English texts from c. 700 to 1500, particularly on manuscript culture, and on the technology of texts from the earliest times to the present. She writes that she is “particularly interested in the materiality of the manuscript book, its tactile nature, and the multiple layers that make up the codex”—she refers to this aspect of a manuscript as its “architexuality.”

Treharne has written or edited some two dozen books: most recently, she has published Living Through Conquest: The Politics of Early English, 1020-1220 (OUP, 2012); the ebook (with her co-directors on an Arts and Humanities Research Council project) The Production and Use of English Manuscripts, 1060 to 1220 (http://www.le.ac.uk/ee/em1060to1220/index.htm); and, with Greg Walker, The Oxford Handbook of Medieval Literature (OUP, 2010). Treharne and Walker are also the General Editors of the OUP series Oxford Textual Perspectives. Her current projects include The Phenomenal Book, analyzing the interactions between manuscripts and their users, the digital reproduction of manuscripts and the theoretical implications of touch and the “voluminous;” Beauty and the Book: Arts and Crafts to Modernism, 1890-1940, which will examine the phenomenology of the book in the work of Elbert Hubbard, Eric Gill, Edward Johnston, Philip Lee Warner and David Jones; The Oxford Very Short Introduction to Medieval Literature (OUP, 2013); and the new four-volume Encyclopaedia of Book History: Manuscript, Print and Digital Technologies for Wiley-Blackwell (2014).

Treharne is a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, and, in 2011, was the Ida Beam Distinguished Visiting Professor at the University of Iowa. She has been awarded a number of grants and honors, including an American Philosophical Society Franklin Fellowship and a Princeton Procter Fellowship. She is a Trustee, and former Chair and President, of the English Association, for which she is also General Editor of Essays and Studies. She is the Medieval Editor for Review of English Studies, Early Medieval Editor for Blackwell’s Literature Compass, Medieval Editor for The Year’s Work in English Studies, and for Oxford Bibliographies Online: British and Irish Literature. She serves on numerous advisory boards for journals and as a consultant for various international palaeographical and digitization projects.

She is also a superb Latinist, a dog lover, and a delightful dinner companion.

The Literary Lab

In its second full year, the Literary Lab, housed on the fourth floor of Margaret Jacks Hall, has significantly expanded and evolved along multiple lines.

Two new pamphlets join its distinctive line of self-published research in the Digital Humanities. In September, Stanford English PhD alumnus Ed Finn published the Lab’s third pamphlet, a study of the contemporary literary marketplace and David Foster Wallace’s position therein. Like the two pamphlets before it, “Becoming Yourself: The Afterlife of Reception” has made a splash in the New York Times ArtsBeats blog. Later, in May, Associate Director Ryan Heuser and English PhD candidate Long Le-Khac published the Lab’s fourth pamphlet, a culmination of a two-year research project investigating large-scale changes in word usage across the nineteenth-century novel called “A Quantitative Literary History of 2,958 Nineteenth-Century British Novels: The Semantic Cohort Method.”

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE
Welcome New Postdoctoral Fellows

MARK ALGEE-HEWITT

Mark Algee-Hewitt’s research focuses on the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in England and Germany and seeks to combine literary criticism with digital and quantitative analyses of literary texts. In particular he is interested in the history of aesthetic theory and development and transmission of aesthetic and philosophic concepts during the Enlightenment and Romantic periods. He is also interested in the relationship between aesthetic theory and the poetry of the long eighteenth century.

Although his primary background is in English literature, he also has a degree in computer science. As the co-associate research director of the Stanford Literary Lab, he is working to bring his interests in quantitative analysis, digital humanities and eighteenth-century literature to bear on a number of new collaborative projects. His current book project, The Afterlife of the Sublime, explores the history of the sublime by tracing its discursive patterns through over 11,000 texts from the long eighteenth century, seeking clues to the disappearance of the term at the end of the Romantic period. As a Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow at McGill University, working with the Interacting with Print Research group, Algee-Hewitt was also involved in a variety of projects that combine literary interpretation with quantitative analysis. He is a co-coordinator of the Book History Bibliography, a new dynamic online resource and recommendation engine that visualizes connections between contemporary resources on book history using statistical methods. He is also working with Andrew Piper on the Werther Topologies: a project that seeks to identify lexical patterns that will aid in tracing the impact of Goethe’s Sorrows of Young Werther on the nineteenth-century development of the German novel.

Algee-Hewitt has taught a variety of courses in literary history and theory in both the English and German departments at McGill University, Rutgers University and New York University, where he received his PhD in 2000.

ADENA SPINGARN

Adena Spingarn is a postdoctoral fellow with the Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship of Scholars in the Humanities program at Stanford University. As part of her fellowship, Spingarn will teach in the English department through the spring of 2014. Her teaching and research will focus on nineteenth- and twentieth-century American literature and cultural history, with a special emphasis on African American literature and literary history.

Spingarn comes to Stanford following the completion of her PhD at Harvard University. She is currently at work on a book project, Uncle Tom in the American Imagination, which examines Uncle Tom’s transformation in American cultural understanding from a heroic Christ figure in Harriet Beecher Stowe’s 1852 anti-slavery novel, Uncle Tom’s Cabin, to a submissive race traitor. She has contributed to Theatre Survey, Uncle Tom’s Cabin in the National Era, The Root, and Vogue.

Expanding its research ambitions, the Lab took on three large-scale research projects this year, all of which were directed collaboratively by undergraduate researchers, graduate students, faculty and staff. “Towards a Stylistics of the Novelistic Sentence,” which will be published as a pamphlet in the winter of 2013, went beyond the word-counting often seen in the Digital Humanities to quantify patterns of sentence syntax, and potentially sentence style, in the nineteenth-century novel. “Network Theory and Dramatic Structure” continued the project begun by Franco Moretti in his March 2011 New Left Review article, “Network Theory, Plot Analysis.” Analyzing the plots of plays as social networks, this project has radically increased its scope to include all of Shakespeare, but all of ancient Greek tragedy and comedy, Seneca, Racine, Corneille, and Ibsen.

Finally, “A Geography of Nineteenth-Century Fiction” has begun to map the places mentioned in the novels of this period, and to discover trends in place-naming that are in many cases contrary to expectation.

The Literary Lab has also grown institutionally by partnering with two other digital research initiatives on campus: the Spatial History Project, founded by Richard White and directed by Zephyr Frank; and the Humanities+Design Lab, whose flagship project is Mapping the Republic of Letters. Together, these three labs now officially form a center on campus, known as the Center for Spatial and Textual Analysis (CESTA). Housed in the fourth floor of the technology building Wallenberg Hall, CESTA is now host to workshops, talks, research workstations, on-site staff, and facilitates dozens of interdisciplinary digital research projects in the humanities.
Rare Find: a New Sixteenth-Century Female Poet

by Professor Elaine Treharne

In West Virginia University Library, pasted down into the back of a sixteenth-century edition of Chaucer’s works, a Latin poem from the 1560s remained, till recently, unread and unknown. It turns out to be a literary treasure. The fourteen-line, sonnet-like poem is signed “Elizabeth Dacre”—the identity of an aristocratic Englishwoman who also signed the front of the book itself. It is likely that she owned the Chaucer when it was first published in 1561 and slipped the poem into the volume for safekeeping. That Dacre was a staunch Catholic during the reign of Elizabeth I is interesting in itself; that she read Chaucer—an author claimed by both Protestants and Catholics in the sixteenth century—is particularly important information for book historians.

Elizabeth Dacre was, for a short time, one of the most powerful women in England. She married Thomas Howard, fourth Duke of Norfolk, cousin of the Queen, in January 1567, in a quiet ceremony that surprised the Spanish ambassador. State Papers reveal that the ambassador wrote to his king: “The duke of Norfolk was married on the 29th, without any rejoicing or demonstration. He was married at the house of his wife’s mother, who with her daughter are good and virtuous Catholics, and if they quite win over the Duke to their religion, it will be a great gain to the country, as he has a large following and is a good and upright gentleman.” Sadly, Elizabeth and Howard were only married for seven months before she died in childbirth in September 1567.

Before her marriage to Norfolk, though, Elizabeth was married first to Lord Dacre of the North, with whom she had at least four children. Despite these two marriages and what must have been a busy, aristocratic life, little else is known about Elizabeth—until my discovery of the poem placed in the Chaucer volume. Significantly, her skillful work is addressed to neither of her husbands. Instead, this poignant poem is explicitly entitled “Ad Anthoninus Cokinii,” “To Anthony Cooke,” a known gentleman, scholar, tutor to King Edward VI, and father of famously well-educated daughters, among them Mildred Cooke, wife of William Cecil, Lord Burghley. In the love poem to Anthony, Elizabeth says, “I hope that silent Dacre will not be scorned by you…sweet Coke,” and “Believe that among servants there is not any more faithful.” She talks about trying to say goodbye to him with her eyes, since words would not permit her to take leave of him. She ends the poem with a Martial epigram, surely meant as a rather obvious sexual joke (“Long enough am I now; but if your shape should swell under its grateful burden, then shall I become to you a narrow girdle”). Such explicit statements of love and desire hint strongly of a close relationship between Coke and Dacre, whether it was one spent learning Latin poetry, or one much more intimate.

From this poem, we see a curious personal and social bond never previously known about. We discover much more about the identity of this noblewoman, who’s only ever previously merited a few comments in the footnotes of scholarly works. As is apparent, she was not only a skilled Latin poet and linguist, remarkable for a time when so few women were permitted a literary voice, but also a desired and desiring woman, who has left behind a most singular record of female passion.

[Poem and discussion to be published as “Tristis Amor: an unpublished verse love letter from Lady Elizabeth Dacre Howard to Sir Anthony Cooke,” in Renaissance Studies soon, and already available online in that journal.]

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PROFESSOR EAVAN BOLAND WINS PEN LITERARY AWARD

Professor and Creative Writing Program Director Eavan Boland received the PEN Center USA Award in 2012 in Creative Nonfiction for A Journey with Two Maps: Becoming a Woman Poet (W.W. Norton & Co., 2011).
Another Look: The New Stanford Book Club

by Cynthia Haven

Book clubs have proliferated across the United States, though most stick to middle-of-the-road bestsellers. Once in a while, however, you run across an off-the-beaten-track book you may not know about, praised by a leading literary figure. Where do you go to talk about this unfamiliar, top-notch fare?

Look no further. Stanford is allowing readers to get an insider’s look at literature via a seasonal book club, “Another Look,” the brainchild of award-winning writer Tobias Wolff, a Stanford professor of English. Each quarter, interested readers are invited to a discussion of the book by Stanford faculty and other members of the literary community.

“The book club offers a wonderful opportunity for the writers and scholars of the English department and the Creative Writing Program to introduce these neglected classics to a broader audience,” said Gavin Jones, chair of the English department. “I’m excited at this opportunity to continue our literary conversations beyond the classroom.”

The series kicked off with William Maxwell’s 144-page novel *So Long, See You Tomorrow*. The discussion took place on November 12th during which Wolff talked about the book with Bay Area novelist, journalist and editor Vendela Vida and Stanford Assistant Professor of English Vaughn Rasberry, followed by an audience discussion.

For Wolff, “Another Look” started in a conversation with colleagues: “We had occasionally held lunchtime discussions of a story or novel or poem for interested students and members of the department, and these had proved popular. Well, why not open our arms a little farther and invite the university community to participate; or, better yet, open our arms out wide to the community at large?”

The books will be on the short side as well. “We recognize that the Bay Area is a busy place—and we recognize that people have limited resources of time. We don’t want to suggest books of discouraging length,” said Wolff.

For the second event in February, poet Kenneth Fields will present Janet Lewis’s 1941 *The Wife of Martin Guerre*, a 109-page novel. The name might ring a bell with some Bay Area readers: Poet Janet Lewis was also the wife of Stanford’s eminent poet-critic Yvor Winters.

On Lewis’s death in 1998, the *New York Times* wrote: “There are many who will assure you that when the literary history of the second millennium is written...in the category of dazzling American short fiction her book, *The Wife of Martin Guerre* will be regarded as the twentieth century’s *Billy Budd* and Janet Lewis will be ranked with Herman Melville.”
Creative Writing Program News

Wallace Stegner founded the Creative Writing Program at Stanford in 1946 with the aim of providing talented writers the guidance, encouragement, and funding to further their writing knowledge and craft.

We offer a unique interaction between students and the Stegner Fellows and lecturers, all of whom are working writers with a passion for good writing and a real ability to teach it. We see classrooms as an exciting space where important conversations about craft and literature can happen, and where innovation and tradition are happily balanced. We offer unique studio courses like “The Graphic Novel,” as well as advanced mentoring situations like the Levinthal Tutorials.

The Levinthal Tutorials are quarter-long courses in which undergraduates design their own curriculum and work one-on-one with a Stegner Fellow in poetry, fiction, or nonfiction. Many Levinthal students describe the tutorial as their most rewarding academic experience while at Stanford, and we are grateful to Elliott and Rhoda Levinthal for making the tutorials possible.

The Creative Writing Program provided ample opportunities this year for undergraduates to flex their creative muscles outside of the classroom. We offered Poet’s House, a lively evening of creative prompts and poetry writing, as well as The Art of Writing workshops which are intensive, fun sessions of reading and writing with Jones Lecturers on a wide array of topics ranging from dialogue to the poetry of prose. We also sponsored a Poetry Into Film contest with a screening of the winning adaptations of a published poem into film.

We welcomed ten talented new Stegner Fellows who were selected from over 1,700 applicants. In poetry, we welcomed Kimberly Grey, Christopher Kempf, Hugh Martin, Jacques Rancourt, and Solmaz Sharif. In fiction, we welcomed NoViolet Bulawayo, Nicole Cullen, Lydia Fitzpatrick, Austin Smith, and Monique Wentzel. Three new Jones Lecturers—Dana Kletter and Nina Schloesser in fiction and Greg Wrenn in poetry—bring expertise and enthusiasm to our undergraduate writing courses.

Creative Writing continued to be a popular minor on campus, and our undergraduate workshops were in high demand, attracting students from a broad spectrum of majors. In addition to beginning, intermediate and advanced fiction, nonfiction and poetry writing, Creative Writing offered several innovative courses, including “Fiction into Film,” in which students adapted fictional works into the form of screenplays, and “The Stanford Arts Review,” a course focusing on critical writing about dance, literature, music, theater, film, fashion and art. Students in the course also launched the publication of The Stanford Arts Review magazine and wrote the content for each issue.

The Creative Writing Program looks forward to another year of fostering a dynamic community of writers and readers here at Stanford.

A COMMENCEMENT REFLECTION

The following is a reflection on the 2012 Commencement from Kendra Mitchell. Mitchell graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in English with a creative writing emphasis.

On the afternoon of graduation, we sat in Memorial Church, or MemChu in Stanford lexicon, specifically to celebrate earning an English degree. On that scorching Sunday, among my peers, professors, and all of those there to support us, we were able to reflect, together one last time, on being English majors.

I spent my first two years at Stanford dodging the English major, worried that it would not be sensible, valued, or fruitful. But when I finally entered the English department, none of those doubts, perpetuated so often by the media and some of my own Stanford peers, could withstand the warmth, passion, enthusiasm, and intellectual vibrancy that my professors brought to each class and inspired in myself and my classmates.

Celebrating the English major one last time during Commencement, in such a beautiful and exalted place as Memorial Church, was a final reminder that the English major is practical because it means something to us. Our love for it may have begun when our parents read aloud to us; when we buried our nose in a book and inhaled the scent of glue and paper; when a professor struck a chord in us while the person next to us flipped through Facebook pictures. Wherever our appreciation began, we acknowledged, on that Sunday, that we have chosen to make literature and writing a part of our identity.

What I took from our last celebration was a memory to come back to, one that reminded me of the beauty and power of what I had studied and the confidence that stories will always have a place in our lives and what we do, no matter how many paths we take or stumble upon.
CREATIVE WRITING
LECTURER AND STEGNER UPDATE


Jones Lecturer John W. Evans’s poems appeared in *ZYZZYVA*, *Poetry Northwest*, *Fogged Clarity*, and *Epoch*. His essays appeared in *The Rumpus* and *Best American Essays* 2012 (Notable Essay). His poetry manuscript was a finalist for contests including the Brittingham-Pollak Prize and the Cleveland State University Poetry Prize.

Stegner Fellow Miriam Bird Geen-bberg’s work appeared in *Sycamore Review*, *The Greensboro Review*, and *the Nashville Review*, and was nominated for a Pushcart Prize. She is a 2012-13 Winter Fellow at the Provincetown Fine Arts Work Center, and her chapbook *All night in the new country* will be published next year by Sixteen Rivers Press.

Jones Lecturer Maria Hummel’s poetry and prose appeared in *Narrative, The New York Times, Poetry*, and the centenary anthology *The Open Door: 100 Poems, 100 Years of Poetry Magazine*.

Jones Lecturer Scott Hutchins published his debut novel, *A Working Theory of Love*, on October 2. The novel is featured in *Publisher’s Weekly*’s “10 Best Fall Books” (category Literary Fiction) and is a Barnes and Noble Discover Great New Writers pick.

Jones Lecturer Tom Kealey’s story collection, *Thieves I’ve Known*, won the 2012 Flannery O’Connor Fiction Award and will be published by the University of Georgia Press in August 2013. A story from the collection, “The Lost Brother,” also won a Glimmer Train Open Fiction Award and will be published this winter in *Glimmer Train Stories*. Kealey’s essay “The Dreaded Middle: Guiding Your Script Out of the Doldrums” was published as a guide to screenwriters by *Script Frenzy*.

Stegner Fellow Dana Koster’s work has recently appeared in *Acreage Journal* and the *Southern Humanities Review*, as well as the anthology *Haiku of the Living Dead*. In February, two of her poems were performed onstage by the acclaimed Word for Word Performing Arts Company.

Stegner Fellow Anthony Marra won a Whiting Writer’s Award. His short story, “The Palace of the People,” will appear in this year’s *Best Nonrequired Reading*, edited by Dave Eggers. The story was originally published in January 2011.

Stegner Fellow Hugh Martin’s manuscript, *The Stick Soldiers*, won the 2012 A. Poulin Jr. Poetry Prize from BOA Editions, Ltd. The book was selected by Cornelius Eady and will be released in March 2013.

Stegner Fellow Ryan Teitman’s first poetry collection, *Litany for the City*, was published in April by BOA Editions. The book was selected by Jane Hirshfield as the winner of the 2011 A. Poulin Jr. Poetry Prize.

Jones Lecturer Greg Wrenn’s first book, *Centaur*, won the Brittingham Prize and will be published in spring 2013 by the University of Wisconsin Press. He was awarded the Lyric Poetry Award from the Poetry Society of America as well as the Margaret Bridgman Scholarship to attend the Bread Loaf Writers’ Conference. His poems have appeared in *Cutbank, The American Poetry Review, Memorious, The Yale Review, Beloit Poetry Journal, Indiana Review, Crazyhorse, FIELD, and New England Review.*

New Jones Lecturers in the Creative Writing Program

Dana Kletter is a writer and musician, a recent Wallace Stegner Fellow and current Jones Lecturer in Fiction. She received her MFA from the University of Michigan, where she won Hopwood prizes for Short Fiction and Novel. Her work has appeared in *The Sun, Michigan Quarterly Review, San Francisco Chronicle, Boston Phoenix*, and *Independent*, and on Mammoth, Hannibal, Interscope, and Rykodisc Records. Kletter is the fiction editor for the Stanford Storytelling Project. She is at work on a novel and a memoir.

Nina Schloesser was born and grew up in Guatemala City. A former Wallace Stegner Fellow, she is currently a Jones Lecturer in Fiction. She received her MFA from Columbia University. Her work is forthcoming in *Fence*.

Greg Wrenn’s first book of poems, *Centaur*, was awarded the 2013 Brittingham Prize and will be published by the University of Wisconsin Press in Spring 2013. His work has appeared or is forthcoming in *New England Review, The American Poetry Review, The Southern Review, The Yale Review*, and elsewhere. A former Wallace Stegner Fellow and a recipient of the Lyric Poetry Award from the Poetry Society of America, he was born and raised in Jacksonville, Florida, and received a BA from Harvard University and an MFA from Washington University in St. Louis.
**Nitro Nights**  
W. S. Di Piero  
Copper Canyon Press, 2011

W. S. Di Piero’s *Nitro Nights* is a chronicle of daily existence lived at the nerve ends. From the apocalyptic aura of a Fourth of July on the streets of San Francisco to that city’s jazzed-out nightlife to a box full of howling secrets, Di Piero peoples his world with hoboes and low-riders and a mysterious woman who “carries fire in a brown paper bag,” never once failing to see the beauty in them all.

**Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics, Fourth Edition**  
Roland Greene  

Through three editions over more than four decades, *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics* has built an unrivaled reputation as the most comprehensive and authoritative reference for students, scholars, and poets on all aspects of its subject: history, movements, genres, prosody, rhetorical devices, critical terms, and more. Now this landmark work has been thoroughly revised and updated for the twenty-first century. Compiled by an entirely new team of editors, the fourth edition—the first new edition in almost twenty years—reflects recent changes in literary and cultural studies, providing up-to-date coverage and giving greater attention to the international aspects of poetry, all while preserving the best of the previous volumes.

**Concise Anthology of American Literature, 7th Edition**  
Shelley Fisher Fishkin (co-editor)  
Prentice Hall, 2011

This concise version of a leading, two-volume anthology represents America’s literary heritage from the colonial times of William Bradford and Anne Bradstreet to the contemporary era of Toni Morrison and David Mamet. Supported by rich contextual information—both historical and critical—as well as solid headnotes and instructions, the *Concise Anthology* offers a balanced approach to American literature. Canonical authors like Melville, Hawthorne, Dickinson, and Whitman are joined by a wide array of selections by women and writers of color, including both African Americans and Native Americans.

**Ends of Enlightenment**  
John Bender  
Stanford University Press, 2012

*Ends of Enlightenment* explores three realms of eighteenth-century European innovation that remain active in the twenty-first century: the realist novel, philosophical thought, and the physical sciences, especially human anatomy. The European Enlightenment was a state of being, a personal stance, and an orientation to the world. Ways of probing experience and knowledge in the novel and in the visual arts were interleaved with methods of experimentation in science and philosophy. This book’s fresh perspective considers the novel as an art but also as a force in thinking. The critical distance afforded by a view back across the centuries allows Bender to redefine such novelists as Defoe, Fielding, Goldsmith, Godwin, and Laclos by placing them alongside philosophers and scientists like Newton, Locke, and Hume but also alongside engravings by Hogarth and by anatomist William Hunter. His book probes the kinship among realism, hypothesis, and scientific fact, defining in the process the rhetorical basis of public communication during the Enlightenment.

**Writing Together: Collaboration in Theory and Practice**  
Andrea Lunsford and Lisa Ede  
Bedford, St. Martin’s, 2011

Friends since graduate school, Andrea Lunsford and Lisa Ede have spent much of their careers writing together. Along the way, they have laid important theoretical groundwork for plural authorship in the humanities. *Writing Together* features their ground-breaking scholarship on collaboration, audience, rhetorics and feminisms, and writing centers. Five new pieces written especially for this collection reflect on 30 years of co-
Our Aesthetic Categories: Zany, Cute, Interesting
Sianne Ngai
Harvard University Press, 2012

The zany, the cute, and the interesting saturate postmodern culture. They dominate the look of its art and commodities as well as our discourse about the ambivalent feelings these objects often inspire. In this radiant study, Sianne Ngai offers a theory of the aesthetic categories that most people use to process the hypercommodified, mass-mediated, performance-driven world of late capitalism, treating them with the same seriousness philosophers have reserved for analysis of the beautiful and the sublime.

Ngai explores how each of these aesthetic categories expresses conflicting feelings that connect to the ways in which postmodern subjects work, exchange, and consume. As a style of performing that takes the form of affective labor, the zany is bound up with production and engages our playfulness and our sense of desperation. The interesting is tied to the circulation of discourse and inspires interest but also boredom. The cute’s involvement with consumption brings out feelings of tenderness and aggression simultaneously. At the deepest level, Ngai argues, these equivocal categories are about our complex relationship to performing, information, and commodities.

Through readings of Adorno, Schlegel, and Nietzsche alongside cultural artifacts ranging from Bob Perelman’s poetry to Ed Ruscha’s photography books to the situation comedy of Lucille Ball, Ngai shows how these everyday aesthetic categories also provide tractions to classic problems in aesthetic theory. The zany, cute, and interesting are not postmodernity’s only meaningful aesthetic categories, Ngai argues, but the ones best suited for grasping the radical transformation of aesthetic experience and discourse under its conditions.

Spectacular Performances: Essays on theatre, imagery, books and selves in Early Modern England
Stephen Orgel
Manchester University Press, 2011

Why did Queen Elizabeth I compare herself with her disastrous ancestor Richard II? Why would Ben Jonson transform Queen Anne and her ladies into Amazons as entertainment for the pacifist King James? How do the concepts of costume as high fashion and as self-fashioning, as disguise and as the very essence of theatre, relate to one other? How do portraits of poets help make the author readers want, and why should books, the embodiment of the word, be illustrated at all? What conventions connect image to text, and what impulses generated the great art collections of the early seventeenth century?

In this richly illustrated collection on theatre, books, art and personal style, the eminent literary critic and cultural historian Stephen Orgel addresses himself to such questions in order to reflect generally on early modern representation and, in the largest sense, early modern performance. As wide-ranging as they are perceptive, the essays deal with Shakespeare, Jonson, and Milton, with Renaissance magic and Renaissance costume, with books and book illustration, art collecting and mythography. All are recent, and five are hitherto unpublished.

Old Ladies
Nancy Huddleston Packer
Daniel and Daniel Publishers, 2012

The stories in this collection center on women of a certain age. They are widows, divorcées, the happily married, an artist, a cleaning woman, a professor, the leisurely rich, and the working poor. Whatever their life condition, all the protagonists are decidedly individual. Some are feisty, some shy, some gentle, some ornery, some who know exactly who they are, and some who are seeking to find out. And almost all discover something a little unsettling that changes their sense of themselves, for better or worse.

The Orphan Master’s Son
Adam Johnson
Random House, 2012

Pak Jun Do is the haunted son of a lost mother—a singer “stolen” to Pyongyang—and an influential father who runs a work camp for orphans. Superiors in the state soon recognize the boy’s loyalty and keen instincts. Considering himself “a humble citizen of the greatest nation in the world,” Jun Do rises in the ranks. He becomes a professional kidnapper who must navigate the shifting rules, arbitrary violence, and baffling demands of his Korean overlords in order to stay alive. Driven to the absolute limit of what any human being could endure, he boldly takes on the treacherous role of rival to Kim Jong Il in an attempt to save the woman he loves, Sun Moon, a legendary actress “so pure, she didn’t know what starving people looked like.”

In this epic, critically acclaimed tour de force, Adam Johnson provides a riveting portrait of a world rife with hunger, corruption, and casual cruelty but also camaraderie, stolen moments of beauty, and love.

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
Careers in Teaching Conference

On December 2nd, 2011 the English department welcomed guest speakers to “Careers in Teaching,” a conference funded by a SCORE grant from the Vice Provost for Graduate Education which was designed to inform graduate students about career possibilities in independent high schools and community colleges.

The day was attended by more than 60 people from 15 different Stanford departments, including English, the Division of Literature, Cultures, and Languages (DLCL), Biology, Anthropology, the School of Education, and Earth Sciences. The occasion was full of energy and optimism. Capturing in a word the spirit of the event, Eric Chandler of the Kent Denver School described it as “inspiring.”

The panelists came from some of the best independent schools and community colleges in the country, including the Branson School in Marin County, the Castilleja School in Palo Alto, the Crossroads School in Santa Monica, Diablo Valley College in Pleasant Hill, Foothill College in Los Altos Hills, Horace Mann in New York, Kent Denver in Colorado, and the Menlo School in Menlo Park. They also included the president of the Association of Departments of English, Tom Hurley, and Jonathan Ball, the Director of School Services for the leading independent school recruitment firm, Carney, Sandoe, & Associates in Boston.

In the first session, Stanford PhD alumni spoke frankly about the deliberations that led them to their current positions. In the second, four panelists, all with a PhD in the humanities, explained the day-to-day experience of teaching in an independent school or community college. The third session focused on logistical matters, providing insight into how to apply and make oneself competitive for such positions. All of the panels involved full and vibrant discussion sessions. The participants were also able to speak with the panelists at greater length during the afternoon “breakout” session.

The “Careers in Teaching” conference was a great success among attendees and panelists alike.

“A number of current Stanford grad students spoke with me afterward to say just how eye-opening, mind-expanding, and inspirational our panel presentation had been. I’m not surprised: because before joining the faculty at Foothill College I knew virtually nothing about the vast California Community College system (or even about the CSU and UC systems with whom we work so closely),” Professor Scott Lankford of Foothill College noted in a reflection on the conference.

“So, regardless of which system you eventually choose to work with yourself, it’s crucial to get a more accurate overview of the total overall landscape of American higher education.”

The Keats Brothers: A Literary Event

by Advanced PhD candidate Stephen Osadetz

In November of 2011, more than a hundred people gathered to celebrate Professor Denise Gigante’s book, *The Keats Brothers: The Life of John and George*, which was named a *New York Times* Notable Book of 2011 and an Editor’s Choice in the *New York Times Review of Books*. Gigante’s book is a biography with a difference; it attempts to distinguish Keats, the man, from Keats, the legend, by entwining his life with that of his younger brother George, an impulsive adventurer who sought his fortune in the American wilderness west of Cincinnati.

The evening was organized by the Seminar on Enlightenment and Revolution, a Stanford Humanities Center workshop, and was co-sponsored by the English department. It featured speakers Eavan Boland, Director of the Creative Writing Program at Stanford; Lawrence M. Crutcher, a descendant of George Keats through George’s daughter Emma; and Stanley Plumly, author of *Posthumous Keats: A Personal Biography* (2008) and Director of Creative Writing at the University of Maryland. Additionally, several Stegner Fellows from Stanford’s Creative Writing Program each read selections from Keats.

In the book, Gigante animates John Keats into a person half a world away from his brother—not just an inhabitant of the waking dreams of the imagination, but a lover of bear-baiting and boxing matches, whose lungs gave out after the bitter winter of 1820.

“Almost everyone who reads poetry knows what it is to have their own vehement, possessive, and intent relationship with John Keats,” Boland said in her remarks, “but just for that reason it is easy…to invent a John Keats who belongs in the simplified world of literature rather than the complicated and actual world of event and circumstance. Books like Denise’s force us to take him out of the first and place him in the second.”

Plumly remarked that Gigante “takes on the pointedly difficult task of bringing George to life again as the crucially central character in John’s tragic life.”

In America, George intended to farm a piece of land along the Ohio River. Unprepared for the harsh winter, he quickly abandoned that idea and moved in with painter John Audubon, with whom he invested and then lost money in a steamboat venture. Learning that his younger brother, Tom, had died of consumption, George hurried back to England to collect his part of Tom’s estate. Having given George most of his money, John succumbed to the same disease as Tom hardly more than a year after George’s strained and hasty visit.

“I think Denise’s character portrayals are spot-on,” Crutcher said. “It turns out that George was very much in John’s thoughts as he wrote his major poems.”
A main event for Professor John Bender during 2011-12 was the publication of *Ends of Enlightenment* (Stanford University Press, 2012). Bender’s chief essays of the past 25 years make up this book, which treats questions about the nature of novelistic knowledge, and about the relationship of the novel to works of art and to science during the eighteenth century.

*The Culture of Diagram* (2010), which Bender co-authored with Professor of Art and Art History Michael Marrinan, is being translated into German and will be published in 2013 by Akademie-Verlag, Berlin.

Bender served as the delegate of the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies to the American Council of Learned Societies. Locally, Bender was chair of the Stanford University Committee on Libraries and, in the English department, leader of the process of outcomes assessment.

Professor and Creative Writing Program Director Eavan Boland won the 2012 PEN Center USA Literary Award for Creative Nonfiction for her book *A Journey with Two Maps: Becoming a Woman Poet* (W. W. Norton & Co., 2011). Her many poetry readings and talks included appearances as part of the O.B. Hardison Poetry Series at the Folger Shakespeare Library, the Smith Poetry Series, and the keynote address at the North American James Joyce Conference.

Senior Lecturer Emerita Helen Brooks’s conference paper entitled “Just as a perfect reader doth not dwell on every syllable: John Donne’s ‘Compound Good,’ His Unprecedented Poetry of Immanence, and the Neurological in the Evolution of Literary Forms,” was accepted for presentation at The John Donne Society Conference held in the Netherlands at the Scaliger Institute, University of Leiden, in June of 2012. She also continues to serve on the Executive Committee of The John Donne Society, on the Resource Faculty for Stanford’s Feminist Studies Program, and as a pre-major and transfer faculty advisor.

Brooks was invited to teach one of the “Classes Without Quizzes” at this year’s Stanford Alumni Reunion Homecoming on “Reconfigurations of Cognitive Space in the Early Modern Works of Donne, Shakespeare, and Caravaggio.” She was also invited to give two guest lectures this academic year at the Institute for the Study of Western Civilization in Cupertino, CA (affiliated with UC Santa Cruz) on *Othello* and *Hamlet*. She recently was invited to serve as a reviewer for a forthcoming four-book series on poetry designed for teaching, published by Enslow Publishers, Inc. Brooks is also continuing her research and writing for a book manuscript on cognitive innovations in the Early Modern poetry of John Donne in the context of intellectual and cultural history and recent scholarship in the neurosciences.

Professor Emeritus Bliss Carnochan published an essay on images that Egon Schiele made while in prison for a collection of essays on prison and the arts. He also published a short piece called “Church Monuments” (after George Herbert) in *Swift Studies*. “Church Monuments” is about a lifetime of “collecting” graves of the famous and not so famous. In a particular episode, Carnochan went looking for the grave of Richard Burton (the adventurer, not the actor) and ended up stumbling on that of Swift’s satiric victim, the astrologer John Partridge.

Professor Terry Castle wrote about “Outsider Art” in the *London Review of Books* in July 2011. In January, she lectured on the same subject at the Menil Collection in Houston, in connection with a large exhibition of “Outsider” works by Darger, Wölfli, and others. In September, she pub...
lished both a short piece on the avant-garde composer Stockhausen, the Twin Towers, and the ten-year anniversary of 9/11 in New York magazine and an illustrated reflection for the Paris Review on collecting vernacular and anonymous photographs. The following month she delivered the Clarendon Lectures at Oxford University on “Rococophilia: The Eighteenth Century and British Modernism,” and, in December, talked about autobiography at the University of Hawaii. This past May her article “The Case for Breaking Up with Your Parents,” on undergraduates and their parents, ran in The Chronicle of Higher Education and prompted considerable controversy, in print and online. She is now on the Board of Trustees of the American Council of Learned Societies.


Professor Michele Elam participated as a Faculty Fellow at the Michelle R. Clayman Institute for Gender Studies and was selected to serve in their women’s leadership project, the Public Voices: Thought Leaders Fellowship Program. She continued to serve on the Faculty Senate and Senate Steering Committee. She published several op-eds, including “Occupy Your Imagination,” (Boston Review) co-authored with Jennifer Brody, a longer version of which is appearing in an edited collection, Occupy The Future (MIT Press, 2012).


Elam gave several national and international talks, including “The Ex-Colored Among Us: Johnson’s Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man and the New Millennial Multiracialism,” at the Modern Language Association conference and gave the keynote, “The Play of Race,” for the Society for Multi-Ethnic Studies: Europe and the Americas in Barcelona in June 2012. She also was interviewed for and appeared in “Mixed Race,” a BBC documentary on global race mixing that aired this year.

Professor Martin Evans put the finishing touches on two new books: Textual Selves: The Human Presence in Literature, which analyzes authorial selves from Augustine and Montaigne to Milton and Byron, and literary selves from Thomas Hardy to Graham Greene, and The Reciprocal Vision: Transatlantic Fantasies, Fictions and Facts, which examines the way in which American and European authors have represented, and misrepresented, each other’s character and culture.


He wrote the Preface for Correspondence of Paul Celan and Ilana Shmueli, presented Celan to Peninsula Bible Church, Cupertino, published “Bringing Redemption to the World: A Translation Sampler” in Writing: A Mosaic of New Perspectives, and was interviewed for Arroyo Literary Review. His Celan, Neruda, Amichai, Rilke, and Enrique Lihn translations appeared in books, magazines, a Viennese film, and American lithographs.

At Stanford, John and Mary Felstiner spoke at Hillel’s Holocaust Remembrance Day and sponsored Lively Arts’ Juilliard Quartet. He judged the Department’s Poetry Recitation with Ken Fields, Special Collections acquired his Denise Levertov archive, and he’s planning Gary Snyder’s visit this year.

Perhaps the year’s strangest experience involved Claude Lanzmann, brilliant French creator of Shoah (Holocaust). Having re-watched that film’s 9.5 hours, Felstiner absorbed Lanzmann’s Green Room
complaints, then offered a large audience five mindful introductory minutes. Before Lanzmann began spiel-roving, he pointed to Felstiner and said, “That was wrong! And too long!”

Professor Ken Fields delivered a talk on Yvor Winters, entitled “Winters’ Wild West,” at Claremont McKenna College.

Fields is continually proud of his former students. When Fields first started teaching, one of his students was an undergraduate named Thomas P. Beresford. He went on to medical school, became a psychiatrist, and returned to Stanford as a Stegner Fellow in Poetry. Beresford has just published a book, Psychological Adaptive Mechanisms: Ego Defense Recognition in Practice and Research (Oxford, 2012). Two chapters, “Sublimation” and “Humor” contain detailed analyses of two poems from Fields’s Classic Rough News, “The Interior Castle” and “Poetic, with a line from ‘Basil Bunting.’” Fields asks to keep it in mind when you are shopping for holiday gifts.

Professor Shelley Fisher Fishkin finished writing a book, Reading America: A Companion to Literary Landmarks from Walden Pond to Wounded Knee (UC Press 2013). She published articles on transnational American Studies; digital palimpsest mapping projects; American literature in transnational perspective; feminist humor; and the enduring infamy of two authors celebrated for their appreciation of nature who were responsible for having started major forest fires in their youth—Henry David Thoreau and Mark Twain. She also published reviews in African American Review and Journal of American History.

She conceived of and was a key organizer of “Ms. @ 40 and the Future of Feminism,” a symposium at Stanford involving 25 events including a keynote talk by Gloria Steinem (whom Fishkin introduced). She also brought actor Fred Morsell to Stanford to perform “Presenting Mr. Frederick Douglass.”

Fishkin was appointed to another term as Director of Stanford’s American Studies program, and served on the steering committees of Modern Thought and Literature, Jewish Studies, and African American Studies, as well as on the Committee for the Review of Undergraduate Majors. She delivered endowed lectures at Washington University in St. Louis and at Michigan State, reviewed the Johns Hopkins English department, and keynoted conferences on Transnational American Studies at Hong Kong University and Tsingua University (Beijing). She was an editor of the Journal of Transnational American Studies, and was a member of the Governing Board of the University of California Humanities Research Institute.

As principal investigator, with Gordon Chang (History), of a transnational research project on the Chinese Railroad Workers of North America whose labor helped create the wealth with which Stanford University was built, she received a major grant from the President of Stanford and the UPS Endowment, and organized a planning conference with participants from China, Hong Kong, Canada, Taiwan, and the US.

Professor Denise Gigante’s The Keats Brothers: The Life of John and George, published by Harvard University Press, was chosen by The New York Times as one of the 100 Notable Books of 2011 and as an Editor’s Choice by The New York Times Book Review. In Salon, Carmela Ciuraru called it “a major accomplishment, one that will surely influence biographies of Keats yet to come” and the Australian Book Review proclaimed it “a welcome excursion from otherwise familiar terrain of biographical scholarship on Keats.” It received positive reviews in the Times Higher Education, The Independent, The Literary Review, and, among electronic media, “Newstalk” Ireland and Stanford’s own KZSU (“Entitled Opinions” and “Spotlight On”) featured programs about the Keats brothers. Professor Gigante gave talks on the book at Oxford University, Cambridge University, Princeton University, The Keats House in Hampstead, The Keats-Shelley Memorial House in Rome, the New York Public Library, and at bookstores including Barnes & Noble and Books, Inc.

She served as Faculty-in-Residence for the Bing Overseas Studies Program in Oxford winter quarter, teaching classes in Romantic poetry, and in the spring, she won a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship to work on her current book project, The Book Madness: A Story of Book Collectors in America.

Professor Roland Greene saw the long awaited publication of the Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics, Fourth Edition, for which he served as editor in chief (Princeton University Press, 2012). It includes 1,100 articles by nearly 700 contributors, for a total of 1.5 million words. His book Five Words: Critical Semantics in the Age of Shakespeare and Cervantes will appear early in 2013 from the University of Chicago Press. Arcade (http://arcade.stanford.edu), the digital salon established in 2010, continues to grow.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR MICHELLE KARNES RECEIVED THE DEAN’S AWARD FOR ACHIEVEMENTS IN FIRST YEARS OF TEACHING

Michelle Karnes was honored with the Dean’s Award, which “recognizes the efforts of exceptional teachers in the School of Humanities and Sciences.” Medievalist Karnes came to Stanford in 2008 and has since taught such popular classes as “History of the English Language,” “The Bible as Literature,” and “Medieval Literature: History and Practice.”

Associate Professor Blair Hoxby published “What Was Tragedy? The World We Have Lost, 1550-1795” in Comparative Literature 64 (2012); organized a panel on the Passions in Early Modern Theater at the Modern Language Association conference; and finished two essays that are forthcoming: “Passion,” for 21st-Century Approaches: Early Modern Theatricality, ed. Henry Turner (OUP), and “A Reading for the Passions: The Case of All for Love,” in Approaches to Teaching Dryden, ed. Jayne Lewis and Lisa Zunshine (MLA).

Hoxby also served on the executive committee of the Milton Society of America. He is currently completing two monographs, What Is Tragedy? Theory and the Early Modern Canon and Reading for the Passions: Tragic Performance in the Neoclassical Order. He also plans to organize or participate in conferences on Heroism in the Age of Beethoven, the English Restoration, Milton in the Long Restoration, and Theatrical Allegory. With Ann Coiro, he will be editing a multi-author volume on Milton in the Long Restoration.

After a busy year of teaching a number of new classes (including a Senior Seminar called “Writing about Sex” and “Poetry and Poetics”), Assistant Professor Claire Jarvis again attended The Dickens Project’s annual Dickens Universe, where participants read and discussed Dickens’s 1852-53 novel Bleak House. She traveled to Madison, Wisconsin this autumn to present some material on Wuthering Heights at the 2012 NAVSA conference, and will present new work on Tom McCarthy’s 2005 novel Remainder at the upcoming MLA convention in Boston. She is currently finishing her book manuscript, tentatively titled Suspended Pleasures. She is looking forward to the spring, when she will have the chance to teach alongside Nick Jenkins and Mark McGurl in the Literary History sequence.

Following the January 2012 publication of his novel The Orphan Master’s Son by Random House, Associate Professor Adam Johnson’s reading tour took him to 39 cities. He was also a visiting writer at 14 universities and along the way gave 136 interviews for various media outlets. The novel has been translated into 15 languages.

Assistant Professor Michelle Karnes published her first book, Imagination, Meditation, and Cognition in the Middle Ages, with the University of Chicago Press in fall 2011. In the spring, her article “Julian of Norwich’s Art of Interpretation,” appeared in the Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies. She was also awarded the Dean’s Award for Achievements in First Years of Teaching.

Professor Emeritus John L’Heureux’s novel The Medici Boy will be published in March 2013. It explores the relationship between Donatello and the teen-age model for his Medici David, the first free-standing bronze nude in over a thousand years. The Medici Boy is a study of obsession in art, sex, religion, and politics at the beginning of the Italian Renaissance. It is L’Heureux’s 20th book.

Professor Emerita Andrea Lunsford officially retired on August 31, 2012, though she will be back to teach one class this coming year and to continue working with graduate students and tutoring in the Hume Writing Center. This year, publications include two new books: Everyone’s an Author and Writing Together: Collaboration in Theory and Practice, as well as the fifth edition of The Everyday Writer and the sixth edition of Everything’s an Argument. In addition, she has published several essays, including “Down a Road and into an Awful Silence: Graphic Listening in Joe Sacco’s Comics Journalism,” “Reflections on Lynda Barry,” and “Embracing Borderlands: Gloria Anzaldúa and Writing Studies.” “College Writing, Identification, and the Production of Intellectual Property: Voices from the Stanford Study of Writing” is forthcoming in College English.

This past year was a busy and productive one for Professor Paula Moya in addition to the usual teaching and university service, talks, travels, celebrations, and publications. As the newly appointed Director of the Program in Modern Thought and Literature (MTL), she oversaw the 40th anniversary celebrations for this storied and well-respected interdisciplinary humanities graduate program, including a symposium and a year-long lecture series featuring talks by prominent MTL alumni. She signed on as co-editor (with Hazel Rose Markus) of the Stanford Series in Comparative Studies of Race and Ethnicity and served her first year as elected delegate to the twentieth-century American Literature Division of the Modern Languages Association (MLA). She also had the pleasure of attending and learning about the work being done in the
PROFESSOR EMERITA MARJORIE PERLOFF ELECTED TO THE AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Marjorie Perloff was elected to the American Philosophical Society (APS) as part of the humanities class. The APS “promotes useful knowledge in the sciences and humanities through excellence in scholarly research, professional meetings, publications, library resources, and community outreach.”

Stanford Literary Lab.

Moya published several essays featuring her most recent research in one journal and two book collections, and wrote an invited blog post for On the Human, an online community of humanists and scientists dedicated to improving their understanding of persons and the quasi-persons who surround us, curated by the National Humanities Center. Finally, she continued to speak on the material contained in her latest book, Doing Race: 21 Essays for the 21st Century (Norton 2010), and was invited to talks at Hamilton College, Reed College, and San Luis Obispo.

Professor Sianne Ngai’s book, Our Aesthetic Categories: Zany, Cute, Interesting, is just out from Harvard University Press (September 2012). In the spring and fall of 2012, she gave the De Roy Lecture at Wayne State University, the Kemp-Malone lecture at Emory University, and the Holmes Lecture at Pomona College. She is currently at work on The Sad Marvels, a new project on literature and gimmicks.

Professor Stephen Orgel’s book Spectacular Performances was published jointly by Palgrave/Macmillan and the University of Manchester Press. In the spring, he spoke on Shakespeare’s geography at the Shakespeare Association of America meeting in Boston. Orgel also lectured on Inigo Jones and the intersection of architecture and theater at Oxford University, Cambridge University, and the University of Padua. He was a principal speaker at a symposium on Early Stuart Theater at Abo Akademi University in Turku, Finland (which is lovely but very difficult to get to). He also gave the keynote lecture, “Secret Arts and Public Spectacles: The Parameters of Elizabethan Magic,” for IASEMS, the Italian Association of Shakespearean and Early Modern Studies, at the University of Pisa. A collection of his essays in Italian is in the works.

Professor Emerita Marjorie Perloff’s Unoriginal Genius (2010) is now out in paperback from Chicago, the Spanish translation of Wittgenstein’s Ladder (L’Escalera de Wittgenstein) was published by Aldus in Mexico City, and a book containing her essay on Duchamp’s Readymades and essays on her work was published in Rio de Janeiro under the title Forma e Sentido: Poesia Contemporânea.


Lecture trips this past year have included Oxford for Moving Modernisms, Paris for a Gertrude Stein symposium, and Tokyo. For the centenary of John Cage, she gave keynote essays in Paris and New York and was interviewed by BBC and ABC Australia. She has just signed a contract with Chicago for her new book, tentatively called The Other Austrians: The Making of Modernism on the Periphery of Empire.

In April, Perloff was elected to the American Philosophical Society.

After serving four years as chair of the Drama department, Professor PeggyPhelan was especially happy to be named the Violet Andrews Whittier Fellow at the Stanford Humanities Center in 2011-12. While there, she began working on the poetry of Robert Frost, concentrating on the performance dimensions of sound. Live Art in LA: Performance in Southern California, 1970-1983, which she edited, appeared in the summer of 2012 from Routledge. Commissioned by the Getty Foundation as part of their Pacific Standard Time initiative, the volume analyzes and documents some of the key figures and moments in the history of live art. Additionally, her essay on the Abu Ghrabi photographs appeared in Atrocity Now: Photography in Crisis in 2012, a volume whose proceeds will be donated to Amnesty International. Recent talks include one on the choreographers Merce Cunningham and Pina Bausch, which she delivered at the Freie Universität Berlin, and one on the Dutch portrait photographer Renike Dijksstra, which she gave at the Guggenheim Museum in New York. Phelan will serve this year on the Graduate Studies committee for English and will teach a new course on family drama in spring quarter. She will also co-direct a Geballe Seminar with Audrey Shafer in the Stanford Medical School, entitled, “Recombinations: Art, Medicine, and Bio-Science.” She views the seminar as part of her preparation for a new course, “Narrative Medicine,” which she will offer in 2013.

Assistant Professor Vaughn Rasberry published an essay, “‘Now Describing You’: James Baldwin and the Cold War,” in an edited volume titled James Baldwin: American and Beyond (University of Michigan Press, 2011). In October, he had an essay-review in American Literary History titled “Black Cultural Politics at the End of History.” Finally, for the 2012 conference, “Is the Novel Democratic?” sponsored...
sored by the Center for the Study of the Novel, he presented a paper, “Invoking Totalitarianism: Democracy v. Jihadism in The German Mujahid.”

As part of her continuing project on nineteenth-century “plantmindedness,” Senior Lecturer Judy Richardson spent a lot of time with Nathaniel Hawthorne over the past year, and she will be talking about Hawthorne, Fuller, and others on a panel about the fruits of ruin at the American Studies Association meeting this November. Meanwhile, she continues to enjoy teaching (and even more, learning!) in the Literary History sequence.

Despite being on leave for the 2011-2012 academic year, Professor Nancy Ruttenburg retained her position as Director of the Center for the Study of the Novel. It was a vibrant year. Along with sponsoring a full schedule of Workshops on the Novel, the Center hosted a New Book event featuring Jed Esty’s Unseasonable Youth: Modernism, Colonialism, and the Fiction of Development, with respondents Franco Moretti (Stanford) and Colleen Lye (Berkeley). The annual CSN conference asked “Is the Novel Democratic?” Participants included Elizabeth Anker, Nancy Armstrong, Elizabeth Maddock Dillon, Brian Edwards, Meltem Gürel, Kent Puckett, Vaughn Rasberry, Mariano Siskind, Alan Tansman, and Ban Wang, whose papers are currently being gathered for a special issue of Novel: A Forum on Fiction. Finally, the Ian Watt Lecture on the History and Theory of the Novel for 2011-2012 was delivered by the novelist and essayist Zadie Smith.

The year was dedicated to organizing the Stanford Interdisciplinary Conference on Conscience, which took place on November 8-9 of this year, and which brought to Stanford a distinguished group of political scientists, constitutional and religious historians, professors and practitioners of law, theologians, philosophers of human rights, physicians, journalists, a cognitive scientist, a Senior Intelligence Officer in the US Air Force who publicly opposed “enhanced interrogation” techniques, novelists, poets, and our keynote speaker, Anne Aghion, a documentary filmmaker whose My Neighbor, My Killer explored the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide and the country’s ongoing struggle to establish a means of identifying those responsible and bringing them to justice.

In March 2011, Professor Ruttenburg participated in a conference held in Venice, Italy, at the Ca’Foscari University on “The Reception of David Grossman and Hebrew Literature in Europe and the US.” In May 2011, she gave the keynote address at Berkeley’s conference, “The Novel in Russia and America, a Comparative Conference.” Her talk was entitled, “America and Russia: The Problem of the Paradigm.” In June 2011, she presented a talk entitled “Melville/Dostoevsky/Italy” at the Melville Society’s Eighth International Conference on “Melville and Rome.”


Professor Jennifer Summit is spending the academic year 2012-13 as an A.C.E. (American Council on Education) Fellow at San José State University, where she is working with the President and the Provost on a set of issues related to student learning. A recent article, “Renaissance Humanism and the Future of the Humanities,” appeared in the online journal Literary Compass 9/10 (2012): 665-678. She is preparing to submit the manuscript of a new book, tentatively entitled Action vs. Contemplation: Why an Ancient Debate Still Matters, co-authored with Blakey Vermeule, to University of Chicago Press. The book is based on the IHUM course they taught together for four years.

Professor Elaine Treharne was Ida Beam Distinguished Visiting Professor at the University of Iowa, where she worked with faculty and students in English and at the Center for the Book on the materiality of medieval manuscripts and the digitization of early texts. In the early summer, Treharne published a study of the ideological significance and authority of English in her new monograph, Living Through Conquest: The Politics of Early English, 1020 to 1220 (OUP). She has also published five articles on a variety of topics, including “Borders,” in Stodnick and Trilling, ed., Handbook of Anglo-Saxon Studies (Wiley-Blackwell), pp. 9-22; and “Medieval Manuscripts: The Good, the Bad, the Ugly,” in Hussey and Niles, ed., The Genesis of Books: Studies in the Scribal Culture of Medieval England in Honour of A. N. Doane (Brepols), pp. 265-87, in which she examined the origins of modern palaeography and the male-dominated connoisseurship characterizing the field.
The Graphic Novel: *From Busan to San Francisco*

In 2011-2012, Jones Lecturers Scott Hutchins and Shimon Tanaka led the fourth edition of the Stanford Graphic Novel Project. The book that came out of it—*From Busan to San Francisco*—tells the harrowing story of Mido, a young Korean woman who, due to seemingly foolish mistakes, is caught in the underworld of international sex trafficking.

*From Busan to San Francisco* is a true product of the students, who together—and not without contention—invented, wrote, thumbnailed, drew, and produced the final product, a 160-page lushly-drawn and colored graphic novel. The course emphasizes nonfiction research, creative collaboration, long-form narrative structure, and the productive tensions of visual and written storytelling, all with the larger goal of giving voice to those who might otherwise go unheard in the hopes of doing good, seeking justice, and bringing about change.

Treharne’s discovery of a previously unknown sixteenth-century love poem, pasted into the back of an early edition of Chaucer’s works at West Virginia University Library (“Tristis Amor”: An unpublished love letter from Lady Elizabeth Dacre Howard to Sir Anthony Cooke,” *Renaissance Studies*, 2011), caused a stir on social media sites (including the Huffington Post), blogs and newspapers. The poem—a poignant Latin sonnet—was featured this Autumn in the department’s Literary History I course. Finally, in 2012, Treharne was appointed Medieval Editor for Oxford Bibliographies Online British and Irish Literature and an editor for Interdisciplinary Literary Studies.

Professor Bryan J. Wolf is the Jeanette and William Hayden Jones Professor in American Art and Culture with a courtesy appointment in the English department. Wolf recently completed a five-year term as Co-Director of the Stanford Arts Initiative, as well as the Co-Director of the Stanford Institute for Creativity and the Arts. Wolf’s fields of interest lie in the intersection of painting and literature, in the development of ways of seeing from the seventeenth century to the present, and in the origins of enlightenment culture and its fate in a post-Enlightenment world.

We continue to be proud of the relevance, importance, and advancement of the Stanford English majors and minors. English undergraduates study the human imagination expressed through the rich history of English and American literature. Whether it is in reading a play by William Shakespeare, a poem by Walt Whitman, or a novel by Toni Morrison, the department seeks to educate students in the history and practice of the creative process itself.

2011-12 was an exceptional academic year for the undergraduate program. Now in the third year of a new set of major and minor requirements, our curriculum established many new courses. For example, we introduced three senior seminars: “Eye-Catching, A Seminar on Literary Detail,” “Novels of Austen and Woolf,” and “Writing about Sex.” Each was a small, research-based seminar on a specific topic designed for English majors in their final year of study to take on projects of their own, and to develop pieces of advanced scholarly research.

We offered new elective courses that allowed faculty members to engage students in the topics that are currently shaping the field of literary studies. Such classes included Professor Mark McGurl’s “Wastelands,” which explored the devastation trope in Modernism; Assistant Professor Michelle Karnes’s “History of the English Language,” which traced the English language from its roots through its earliest written records; and Professor Blakey Vermeule’s “Beyond the Blank Slate: Topics in Cognitive Science and Literature,” which used literature and scientific theory to discuss the intersection of cognition and culture.

Outside of the classroom, the English department has an active and outgoing undergraduate community led by Director of Undergraduate Studies, Blair Hoxby. The Student Advisors coordinated mixer events, provided academic guidance to their peers, and liaised with faculty and administration. The English department has also placed additional emphasis on career development for undergraduates. We worked with the Career Development Center on campus to design programming specifically for English majors. Professor Blakey Vermeule has agreed to serve as the department’s first Faculty Athletics Liaison: a new advising role designed to address the unique needs of Stanford’s many scholar-athletes.

In addition, the English department continued its traditions of the Senior Banquet and the “Cellar Door” undergraduate blog. We look forward to further enhancing the mission of the Stanford English undergraduate program and delivering even more new courses and special events next year.

 undergraduate News

Undergraduate News and Events

New Course in a New Field: Literature and the Brain

In Autumn quarter, Professor of English Blakey Vermeule and Associate Professor of French and Italian Josh Landy taught a new course called “Literature and the Brain.”

Vermeule explains the importance of this cross-disciplinary course.

The course addressed how recent developments in neuroscience and experimental psychology have transformed the way we think about the operations of the brain. What can we learn from this about the nature and function of literary texts? Can innovative ways of speaking affect ways of thinking? Do creative metaphors draw on embodied cognition? Can fictions strengthen our “theory of mind” capabilities? What role does mental imagery play in the appreciation of descriptions? Does (weak) modularity help explain the mechanism and purpose of self-reflexivity? Can the distinctions among types of memory shed light on what narrative works have to offer?

Each week, an eminent neuroscientist or psychologist lectured on his or her area of expertise and then we followed up with a lecture linking that field to literary study. Lectures included Alison Gopnik (Berkeley) on Theory of Mind, William Newsome (Stanford) on functional specialization, Josef Parvizi (Stanford) on an overview of the brain, Stephen Kosslyn on mental imagery, Lera Boroditsky on thought and language, Brian Knutson on Emotion, Anthony Wagner on memory, and George Lakoff on metaphor.

A former undergraduate said she wished we had taught the course five years ago when she could have taken it. I told her that we couldn’t have taught the course five years ago because the subject did not yet exist!
English Undergraduate Summer Internship Grants

The English department is committed to investing in students’ career development to enable future success. For this reason, the English department was fortunate to continue offering summer internship grants for the summer of 2012. Relying on the deeply appreciated generosity of the Kaplan Endowment, four students received a grant in the amount of $1,000. 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:

**Stephanie DePaula**, Oddball Film + Video production company in San Francisco, CA

“A familiarity with words was more important than any other skill needed for this job, and the practices employed in earning my English degree have certainly generated that skill for me. I gained the most from my internship, however, through passions intensified in my time as an English major: a love of stories, experiencing different perspectives, a heightened attention to beauty.”

**Peter Espe**, Byliner publishing house in San Francisco, CA

“Beyond the obvious copy-editing connection, my knowledge of specific words and their connotations made me a natural at marketing. I was lucky enough to enter the company at a time when things like branding, product, and messaging were still very fluid, and I was able to work closely with others in the office to actually influence the messaging and branding of the company.”

**Rachel Kolb**

“Grains of Truth in the Wildest Fable’: Literary Illustrations, Pictorial Representation, and the Project of Fantasy in Jane Eyre”  
*Winner of a Marie Louise Rosenberg Honors Prize*

**Rutger Rosenborg**

*Winner of a Marie Louise Rosenberg Honors Prize*

**Alexandra Slessarev**

“The University in the New World: The Campus, Cartography, and the Colony in Nabokov’s Pnin and Pale Fire”  
*Winner of a Marie Louise Rosenberg Honors Prize*
Sixth-year PhD candidate Andrew Bricker won research fellowships from The Huntington Library, The UCLA Center for 17th-18th Century Studies at the William Andrews Clark Library, and The Lewis Walpole Library at Yale University. He was also the recipient of The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Dissertation fellowship and received a Modern British History and Culture Graduate Research Opportunity grant from the School of Humanities and Sciences that allowed him to conduct research at the British Library and National Archives in London. This past year he presented several papers based on his dissertation research on eighteenth-century libel law and satiric naming practices at the annual conferences of the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (ASECS) in San Antonio and at the Association for the Study of Law, Culture and the Humanities at the Texas Wesleyan School of Law in Fort Worth (where he also won a Graduate Workshop Award). He also chaired panels on Henry Fielding at ASECS and on law and aesthetics at the joint meetings of the North Eastern American and Canadian Societies for Eighteenth-Century Studies in Hamilton, Canada. This spring he will be chairing a panel on the eighteenth-century jurist and writer William Blackstone at ASECS in Cleveland.

Fifth-year PhD candidate Allen Frost was fortunate to spend five weeks this summer in his hometown of Conway, Arkansas, where he taught at the Arkansas Governor’s School, a summer program for academically motivated high school seniors that he himself attended in 1999. Frost taught an introductory course on literary theory and delivered two talks to students and fellow faculty members, one on hipsters, and the other on American literature and contemporary advertising.

Fourth-year PhD candidate Rhiannon Lewis received a fellowship from the Pigott Scholars Program for the 2012-13 academic year. She was one of two university-wide recipients in the program’s inaugural year. The fellowship is awarded to third-year graduate students from humanities departments.


This past year was an exciting one for fifth-year PhD candidate Long Le-Khac as two and a half years of intensive research in the Stanford Literary Lab came to fruition with two publications. Both were co-authored with Ryan Heuser, Associate Director for Research in the Literary Lab. The first, “Learning to Read Data: Bringing out the Humanistic in the Digital Humanities,” was a methodological reflection on the emerging field of digital humanities and was published in Victorian Studies in Fall 2011. The second, an extended report titled A Quantitative Literary History of 2,958 Nineteenth-Century British Novels: The Semantic Cohort Method, was published in Spring 2012 as the fourth research pamphlet from the Stanford Literary Lab. It presented findings from a long-term project developing computational methods to track large-scale language changes in the nineteenth-century novel.

Beyond his research, Long was honored to receive a Ric Weiland Graduate Fellowship in the Humanities and Sciences. He also continued as co-founder and member of the Graduate Student Pedagogy Committee as they expanded mentoring programs for first-year graduate students teaching for the first time, and hosted a series of teaching salons on topics such as teaching that bridges the critical and creative writing sides of the English major.

Second-year PhD student W. Andrew Shephard presented two papers at the 2012 Science Fiction Research Association Conference held this summer in Detroit, Michigan. They were entitled “Beyond the Wide World’s End: Themes of Cosmopolitanism in Alfred Bester’s The Stars, My Destination” and “A World Without Sin: Representations of Utopian Totalitarianism in Joss Whedon’s Firefly and Serenity.” “Beyond the Wide World’s End” was previously presented at the Stanford-Berkeley Conference in April 2012.

Second-year PhD student Justin Tackett is grateful to have received the Andrew Smith Memorial Prize for a first-year essay. He also published an article titled “Gerard Manley Hopkins (and Others) in OUP’s Periodical” in the September 2012 issue of Notes and Queries, part of which he presented at “The Future of Philology” conference at Columbia University.

Advanced PhD candidate Bridget Whearty presented papers from her larger project on medieval theories of death and the ethics of reading at the New Chaucer Society’s biennial congress and at the annual meeting of the Medieval Academy of America. Her paper “Medieval Necromancy and the Art of Dying” was awarded a Medieval Academy of America Graduate Student Paper Prize.

As a “Diversifying Academia” (DARE)
PHDs AWARDED IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
2011-12

Sarah Allison “Moral Style in Victorian Fiction”
Michael Benveniste “The American Ideology: Plot and Culture Since 1945”
Brianne Bilsky “The Page Redux: American Literature in the Information Age”
Steffi Dippold “Plain as in Primitive: The Figure of the Native in Colonial America”

Marissa Gemma “Exceedingly Correct: Stylistic Polemics in Nineteenth-Century American Literature”
Kenneth Ligda “Serious Comedy: British Modernist Humor and Political Crisis”
Kenneth Maynor “Pagan Nation: Constitutional Characters and the Fiction of American Faith”
Anton Vander Zee “‘The Final Lilt of Songs’: Late Whitman and the Long American Century”
James Wood “Anecdote and Enlightenment, 1710-1790”

DEPARTMENT DISSERTATION FELLOWSHIPS
2011-12

Killefer Dissertation Fellowships:
— Garth Kimbrell
Dissertation in progress: “Early Modern Private Theater and the Field of Cultural Production”
— Allison Rung

Mellon Dissertation Fellowships:
— Andrew Bricker
Dissertation in progress: “Producing and Litigating Satire, 1660-1760”
— Jenna Sutton

Mellon/ACLS Dissertation Completion Fellowship:
— Hannah Doherty

Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity (CCSRE) Graduate Fellowships 2012-2013:
— Elda Maria Roman
Dissertation in progress: “Symbolic Wages and Identity Taxes: Upward Mobility and Middle Class Narratives in Chicana/o and Black Cultural Production”
— Sarah Perkins
Dissertation in progress: “‘Dixie’ in the Making of American Literature”

Clayman Institute’s Graduate Dissertation Fellowship:
— Lupe Carrillo

EARLY CAREER GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS

Pigott Scholars Program Fellowship 2012-13: — Rhiannon Lewis
Ric Weiland Graduate Fellowship 2012-13: — Lindsey Dolich and Long Le-Khac

2012 ALDEN DISSERTATION PRIZE WINNERS
Kenneth Ligda: “Serious Comedy: British Modernist Humor and Political Crisis”

2012 ANDREW SMITH MEMORIAL PRIZE WINNER

2012 EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING PRIZE
Tasha Eccles: Exemplary teaching assistance in English 100B: Literary History II

JOB PLACEMENT 2011-2012
Sarah Allison—Adjunct, University of Michigan
Michael Benveniste—Assistant Professor, University of Puget Sound
Brianne Bilsky—Director, Peer-Assisted Learning / Magellan Project & Fellowships Coordinator, Washington & Jefferson College
Justin Eichenlaub—Lecturer, University of California-Berkeley
Marissa Gemma—Associate Director of the Hume Writing Center, Stanford University
James Wood—Adjunct, Trinity College, Dublin

Marissa Gemma “Exceedingly Correct: Stylistic Polemics in Nineteenth-Century American Literature”
Kenneth Ligda “Serious Comedy: British Modernist Humor and Political Crisis”
Kenneth Maynor “Pagan Nation: Constitutional Characters and the Fiction of American Faith”
Anton Vander Zee “‘The Final Lilt of Songs’: Late Whitman and the Long American Century”
James Wood “Anecdote and Enlightenment, 1710-1790”
**What To Do with an English Major: Write! Edit!**

On April 13th, 2012 the English department hosted a panel discussion with the purpose of shedding light on the all-too-common question, “So, what are you going to do with your English major after you graduate?”

The event sought to inform students on one possible career path: writing and editing. This panel discussion, moderated by English department Chair Gavin Jones and Professor Elizabeth Tallent, was comprised of local Stanford English alumni who are working as writers or editors in various industries.

One of the panelists, a senior editor at Zuora, Chris Holt (BA ’06; MA ’07) remarked on how essential it is for English majors to understand their value in the job market, especially in the fields of writing and editing.

“We live in an age when success is often associated with ‘techies,’ where students are often discouraged from taking the humanities because they aren’t considered practical or marketable,” Holt said. “But English students are not just masters of the written word and the keepers of old stories. Thanks to one of the best faculties on the planet, we’re taught how to communicate.”

In addition to Holt, the panelists included Carolyn Abram (’06), author of Facebook for Dummies; Max Doty (’04), senior writer at Electronic Arts; Catherine Lowell (‘11), writer for Checkmate online magazine; Natalie Jabbar (’09), development writer at Stanford University; and Kirstin Quade (’02), fiction writer and Stanford Jones Lecturer.

Each participant told the story of their post-grad journey to a career in writing and/or editing and answered questions from the audience. The alums all were generous enough to offer one-on-one consultations with undergraduates following the panel discussion. This enabled the current students to receive guidance from alumni who have an interest in similar careers.

Jabbar noted that the event was as inspiring to the panelists as it was to the students in attendance.

“It was truly encouraging to see the Terrace Room fill up on a Friday afternoon with undergraduates genuinely interested in pursuing various paths in writing,” said Jabbar. “Their engaging questions, along with the lively conversation among my fellow panelists, reminded me of why I decided to pursue an English major in the first place.”

The event was very successful and something we hope to continue in the future. With the variety of career paths our alumni have taken, the “What To Do with an English Major” series could continue by focusing on careers in law, medicine, education, publishing, film, and so many others.

Perhaps Holt said it best: “Students need an answer to the oft-quoted phrase ‘What do you do with a BA in English?’ The answer is ‘What can’t you do?’”

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**CREATIVE WRITING VISITING WRITERS**

The Lane Lecture Series celebrated 30 years as a major presence in the cultural life of Stanford University. Through their generosity, Jean and Bill Lane have made it possible for the most distinguished and exciting of contemporary writers to visit campus. For 2011-2012, the series featured Mary Oliver, Ann Patchett, and Martin Amis. The Lane Lecture Series honors the enduring power and importance of our literature by bringing writers and readers together, offering both campus and community an exhilarating experience of the written word.

Each year the Creative Writing program also welcomes an acclaimed poet and a fiction writer to teach writing seminars to Stanford undergraduates. These seminars are made possible with the generous support of Lawrence and Nancy Mohr and Isaac and Madeline Stein. These unique classes offer students a rare opportunity to study with a master poet or fiction writer. Each writer also gives a public reading and holds a colloquium. In 2011-2012, former US Poet Laureate Louise Glück was the Mohr Visiting Poet and acclaimed author and physician Abraham Verghese was the Stein Visiting Writer.
M artha Collins (BA 1962) has just published her sixth book of poetry The White Papers (Pittsburgh, 2012). Like her last book, Blue Front (Graywolf, 2006), this book focuses on race. Collins retired from ten years of teaching at Oberlin College in 2007 and is now writing full-time—though she taught at Cornell as Distinguished Visiting Writer in 2010 and continues to serve as editor-at-large for Oberlin’s FIELD magazine.

J eremy Cowan (BA 1991) owns a craft beer company called Shmaltz Brewing which makes He’brew Beer and Coney Island Lagers. He also recently wrote a book called Craft Beer Bar Mitzvah - How It Took 13 Years, Extreme Jewish Brewing, and Circus Sideshow Freaks to Make Shmaltz Brewing an International Success. More information about Schmaltz Brewing can be found at FaceBook.com/ShmaltzBrewing.

C harles L. Crow (BA 1962) is Professor Emeritus of English at Bowling Green State University in Ohio, but is now back in California, living in Walnut Creek. He has a senior Fulbright lectureship to the University of Zagreb, Croatia, for the spring semester of 2012. Crow has also just completed editing a second edition of his 1999 Blackwell anthology, American Gothic. The book has been in print continuously since publication and is used as a textbook in several countries. The revised edition will be brought out by Wiley-Blackwell next October, and will have the new subtitle From Salem Witchcraft to H. P. Lovecraft.

Daryl Wood Gerber (BA 1974) has published three books for A Cheese Shop Mystery series, published by Berkley Prime Crime, a division of Penguin (writing under the pseudonym Avery Aames). Her most recent book was published in February, Clobbered by Camembert. She won the Agatha Award for best first novel, The Long Quiche Goodbye, published July 2010 (award won in April 2011). Both The Long Quiche Goodbye and the second, Lost and Fondue, are national best-sellers (mass market paperback). Two more books in A Cheese Shop Mystery series are forthcoming. Gerber has also been granted a contract for a new series, A Cookbook Nook, under her own name, Daryl Wood Gerber. The first will debut in 2013.

R eginald Gibbons (MA 1971; PhD in Comparative Literature 1974) has been named the Frances Hooper Professor of Arts and Humanities at Northwestern University, where he has taught since 1981, and was earlier (1981-97) the editor of TriQuarterly magazine.

K atie Beman Ginder-Vogel (BA 1997; MA 1998) has been working as a freelance copywriter since 2010 and lives in Madison, WI with her family.

R ichard Holeton (BA 1975) was awarded a 2012 National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) fellowship in fiction. He is one of four California writers (another is Stanford Creative Writing lecturer Stephanie Soileau) and 40 nationwide to win the prestigious $25,000 fellowship, offered in alternating years to prose and poetry writers. His manuscript, recognized by the NEA panel, included stories that he had published in the Indiana Review and Mississippi Review. He has also recently published, exhibited, and/or performed electronic literature (fiction meant to be experienced using a computer display) at venues including Karios, A Journal of Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy, the Computers and Writing conference, and Digital Arts and Culture. Holeton is a former Stanford English lecturer who taught freshman writing for 11 years; currently he is the Director of Academic Computing Services, part of Stanford Libraries.

B ruce Franklin’s (PhD 1961) 2007 book The Most Important Fish in the Sea: Menhaden and America influenced the Atlantic States Fisheries Commission’s decision to reduce overfishing of menhaden.

J enna Land Free (BA 1999) works as a writer, ghostwriter, and editor in Seattle, Washington. She is a partner with Girl Friday Productions, girlfridayproductions.com. Her projects include book collaborations with Marie Tillman (memoir—for Grand Central Press), Amy Lyman (business—for Jossey-Bass) and others, editing translations of novels, and writing lesson plans for classic books (for eNotes). She uses her English major background each and every day, and is constantly grateful for the ability to write quickly—learned the hard way at Stanford-in-Oxford.

P aul J. Karlstrom (BA 1964) published the biography Peter Selz: Sketches of a Life in Art (University of California Press, 2012). His wife, Ann Heath Karlstrom (BA 1965), was the developmental editor and collaborator. Paul received his PhD in art history from UCLA in 1973 and was West Coast Regional Director of the Smithsonian Institution’s Archives of American Art from 1973 to 2003. Ann retired in 2010 from the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco after 33 years directing their publishing programs. The subject of the Karlstroms’ joint venture, Peter Selz, is an art historian whose colorful life offers material for alternative views of the development of modern and contemporary art in this country from the time of his immigration from Germany in 1936. Among his accomplishments were introducing the study of German Expressionism with his own book in 1957, groundbreaking exhibitions during his seven years at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and becoming the founding director of the University Art Museum at UC Berkeley. Now 93, Selz continues his involvement in the art world, and his lively, even controversial, life and career provided a stimulating joint project for the Karlstroms.

On April 21 at the Los Angeles Times Festival of Books, Dan Olivas’s (BA 1981) novel, The Book of Want (University of Arizona Press, 2011), was awarded first

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE
Erica Olsen’s (BA 1988) collection of short fiction, Recapture & Other Stories, was published by Torrey House Press in October 2012. The collection explores themes of landscapes and memory in the American West. For more information, please see http://www.recapturerstories.com. Olsen lives in Utah and will be doing events in her neck of the woods this fall and some events in California in the spring.

Jan Schreiber (BA 1963) has collaborated with poet and professor David Rothman to establish an annual symposium on poetry criticism, held each July at Western State College in Colorado. The symposium, part of a low-residency MFA program offered at WSC, brings together respected poet-critics who present papers on both theoretical and practical aspects of poetry criticism in a seminar-like environment. 2012 marks the third annual occurrence of the symposium, which is open to the public. More information is available at formalversemfa.org/symposium/. Schreiber, who earned his PhD at Brandeis under J. V. Cunningham, has published three books of poetry and two books of poems in translation. He is currently completing a volume of essays on twentieth-century American poets.

Molly Schwartzburg (PhD 2004) has a new job as Curator for the Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections at the University of Virginia. For six years, Schwartzburg was curator of the literature collections at the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas at Austin. Her work in Texas included curating or co-curating exhibitions on Norman Mailer, the Beat Generation, Edgar Allan Poe, the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam, and most recently, a bookshop in Greenwich Village in the 1920s. The online exhibition version of the last, “The Greenwich Village Bookshop Door: A Portal to Bohemia 1920-1925” was featured in the “Essay” section of the Sunday New York Times Book Review in September 2011. Schwartzburg also worked extensively with the David Foster Wallace Papers and Library, which arrived at the Ransom Center in 2009 and have been in heavy demand ever since. Her essay on the archive’s purchase and cataloging appears in The Legacy of David Foster Wallace, co-edited by Lee Konstantinou (PhD 2009) and also featuring an essay by Heather Houser (PhD 2010). Schwartzburg has enjoyed her encounters with visiting Stanford colleagues in Austin and hopes all and sundry will stop by Special Collections when in Charlottesville.

Autumn Stanley (MA 1967) worked at the Stanford University Press as an editor and in the rare books department of the Stanford Library. She also was a visiting scholar with Stanford University’s Center for Research on Women (CROW), which became the Michelle R. Clayman Institute for Gender Research. Her recent publications include Raising More Hell and Fewer Dablias: The Public Life of Charlotte Smith (1840-1917) and Marcie’s Daffodil.

Dick Warwick (BA 1968) won the title of “all-around champion” for his recitations of original and classic verse at the National Cowboy Poetry Rodeo in August 2011 at Kanab, Utah. His latest CD, released in January 2012, is titled “Cowboy Poetry Lite” and includes 14 of this barnyard barnyard’s more whimsical poems.

Kathleen Welton (BA 1978) is an award-winning editor and publisher. She collaborates with both authors and organizations on book, ebook, and new product development initiatives. During her career, she has served as Director of Book Publishing for the American Bar Association, Vice President and Publisher for IDG Books, Vice President and Publisher for Dearborn Trade, and Senior Editor for Dow Jones-Irwin. Her latest book, The Little Book of Success Quotes was selected as an Award-Winning Finalist in the Self-Help: Journals and Quotes category of the 2012 International Book Awards.

Kevin Wherry (BA 1978), who also graduated from the Stanford Teacher Education Program (STEP), is now retired and staying at home to take care of his three adopted boys: Tyler, age 12; Carson, age 9; and Austin, age 8.

Craig Williamson (BA 1965) has just published two books of translations of Old English poetry with the University of Pennsylvania Press—Beowulf and Other Old English Poems and A Feast of Creatures: Anglo-Saxon Riddle-Songs. Williamson is currently working on a translation of the complete poems of the Anglo-Saxons and a study of the medieval roots of J. R. R. Tolkien’s middle-earth fiction. He is the Alfred H. and Peggi Bloom Professor of English Literature at Swarthmore College. He can be seen reading from his Beowulf translation and chanting a portion of the poem in Old English at http://www.swarthmore.edu/x34024.xml.

Howard Winn (MA 1953) pursued his PhD at New York University while teaching at State University New York (SUNY). Winn has had somewhere between 300 and 400 poems published in journals of varying sorts, from the high end such as New York Quarterly, Southern Humanities Review, Descant, Toyon, Xavier Review and Beloit Poetry Review to some quite obscure little magazines, as well as inclusion in a couple of anthologies, one published by the Ashland Po-
entry Press and another published at a SUNY unit. He is, after fifty years of teaching—three in California and 47 in New York—now Emeritus Professor of English, State University of New York. He continues to have fond memories of working with Yvor Winters, Richard Scowcroft, and Wallace Stegner.

**Katie Zeigler** (BA 1995, MA 1996) spent the summer at Oxford studying literature under the dreaming spires. From there, she packed her bags for Washington, D.C. to work at the American Enterprise Institute. A brief stint in public relations later, she returned to California with her husband, Bram, and went on to become a Vice President with Porter Novelli, working in their consumer group until the birth of her first son, Campbell, who recently turned nine. He was joined in 2005 by his younger brother, Brodie, and both bring her innumerable joy.

Since leaving the fast-paced world of client relations, Zeigler has found her calling as a freelance writer and artist, having developed her own artwork business, k.t. blue designs (www.ktblue.com). In the last three years she has branched out into teaching and now brings her love of art and history to elementary school children. She also writes two blogs, one for her art business and freelance work (ktblue.wordpress.com) and one as a reviewer of children’s books (mymamas-goodnight.wordpress.com).

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**In Memoriam**

**Robert Lawrence Balzer** (BA 1935), a wine critic and educator who wrote an influential column in *The Los Angeles Times* for three decades during a career that stretched from the post-Prohibition era through the explosion of the California wine industry he championed, died in December 2011.

Known for his erudition and flamboyant personality, Balzer wrote a wine column for the newspaper from 1964 to 1995. He was also the author of a dozen books, including *Balzer’s Book of Wines and Spirits* (1973) and *Wines of California* (1978).

For 14 years beginning in 1970, he produced one of the first subscription-based wine guides, *Robert Lawrence Balzer’s Private Guide to Food & Wine*. “He was off the charts,” said Marvin R. Shanken, editor and publisher of *Wine Spectator* magazine, who called Balzer “California’s first truly great wine writer.” [Excerpted from an obituary published in *The Los Angeles Times* on December 9, 2011.]

After a 10-month fight with cancer, **Steven Olsen** (PhD 1981), 63, passed away peacefully on July 6 in the arms of his family and friends.

He completed his graduate studies at Stanford with a doctoral dissertation on the poetry of Conrad Aiken. Steven then began a distinguished career as professor of English that included numerous scholarly publications and teaching posts at Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Virginia, Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota, and Peninsula College in Port Angeles, Washington.

He was recognized with many honors during his career, including for **Outstanding Service, Washington Community College Humanities Association**, and was selected three times for inclusion in **Who’s Who Among American Teachers** for educational excellence and “making a difference” in the lives of his students. He also participated in Peninsula’s faculty exchange program with partner universities in China, and taught English and English Literature in China for several semesters in various years.

Steven accepted a teaching post offered by Guilin University of Electronic Technology (GUET) in the beautiful city of Guilin, Guangxi Province, southern China. Steven and his wife, Lisa, lived in Guilin for nearly three years, but he finally decided to retire altogether from teaching. Sadly, Steven’s retirement plans were cut short, and his battle with cancer began soon thereafter, culminating with Steven’s peaceful passage on July 6.

[Excerpted from an obituary that appeared in *The Peninsula Daily News* on July 15, 2012.]

**Barbara Packer** (BA 1968), Professor Emerita of American and English Literature at UCLA died on December 16, 2010, after a long struggle with cancer.

For thirty years Barbara Packer taught UCLA students nineteenth-century American literature, Milton, and Chaucer. In recognition of her contributions as a teacher, she was awarded the Luckman Distinguished Teaching Award, the Eby Award, and the Friends of English Award. An influential critic of Ralph Waldo Emerson and the Transcendental movement, she was awarded the Distinguished Achievement Award of the Emerson Society.

Her first book, *Emerson’s Fall* (1982), has been described by the critic Harold Bloom as “much the finest critical guide to Emerson’s early and middle major essays.” One of a small band of scholars who edited Emerson’s works for Harvard, she wrote the historical introduction to his late work, *The Conduct of Life* (2007). Her account of the Transcendentalist movement in the *Cambridge History of American Literature* (1995) was later published as *The Transcendentalists* (2007). She was celebrated not only for her writing, which married wisdom and humor with great insight into the thought and life of her subject, but also for her rare moral integrity. A former colleague at Yale, Paul Fry, remembers “her mercuric wit and her infallible ethical sense—qualities that don’t always or even often coexist. She was loved and respected by everyone who knew her.” She received her PhD from Yale (1973). After teaching at Yale she joined the UCLA faculty in 1978. [Excerpted from an obituary published in *Visalia Times-Delta* on December 23, 2010.]

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**In Memoriam**

**Katie Zeigler** (BA 1995, MA 1996) spent the summer at Oxford studying literature under the dreaming spires. From
“LIES EMILY DICKINSON TOLD ME”

“We outgrow love, like other things / And put it in the Drawer / Till it an 
Antique fashion shows / Like Costumes Grandsires wore.” (#887) and 
“Because I could not stop for Death / He kindly stopped for me...” (#712)

You wrote me once that Love could be outgrown,
And I believed you because when my dad left the house to 
sleep forever, I felt nothing different – I didn’t miss his scent. 
Maybe it was easy because I put Love on the top shelf, out of reach, 
out of sight, just like you told me to. A deep pool of iron ore 
opening up at the place where I let the cabinet come to a close.

Or maybe Love left because I could no longer wear the play-clothes 
with watermelon patches—the ones from my childhood which had grown 
too small, tearing (into silk) neatly-penned lines, drawn by a cross- 
hatching oar 
dipped in ink, which tacitly informed my father that he was no longer 
allowed to 
make silly faces or to chase me around our living room table or to teach 
me how to put a thermometer in my tea so that on Mondays, I could 
be absent

from Mrs. Thompson’s second grade class. But Emily – you sent 
me a poem, and it told me that Love would fade and close 
and become a rusting antique which would rest in the pocket of a rich 
man’s drawer. And yet here my love is – sitting next to me – forking 
my side with a groan

telling me “oh, let’s not put me aside,” as my hand reaches to 
open the drawer, whispering to me not to listen to you anymore.

My dearest Miss Dickinson, you promised that Death would be even more 
than a Gentleman. Why is it, then, that every time I’ve sent 
Him a letter, writing across the envelope, “Please Deliver to 
My Father,” I feel like I’ve come to a hallway’s close 
and my heart drops from me to hit the floor of its own 
accord, because I can see aspects of my father’s handwriting in mine: each 
looped R, each scratched H, each lilting Y, and the small niche 
we’ve since come to place between my father’s “Mr.” and my mother’s 
“Mrs.” ... Or 
do you recall a time, Emily, when you would have told me that your own 
gentleman, Death, would kindly wait in the street as I eagerly bent to pick 
up a lucky cent?

Emily Dickinson, you spoke of him stopping for me with his carriage close 
at his side – his paper cane probing me kindly and his expression, polite, too.

But when Death stopped for me, it was only for a tight moment or two 
and yes, we curtseyed, and yes, we smiled. But when he kissed my cheek, 
it was before riding his carriage across my chest, grinding my ribs into 
my clothes.

Emily Dickinson, you lied when you said it would be easy to not think 
more, 
To lock the feelings away in a drawer and replace them with rational, 
good sense 
or to substitute memories of my father with those that are my own.

But I listened when you told me my father was someone I should have 
outgrown... 
I’ve dutifully forgotten all his favorite phrases and all his favorite tenses, 
and have promised myself not to look at his picture anymore.