



The Phoenix

NEWSLETTER OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH—
RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-CAMDEN

SPRING 2008

Howard Marchitello Settles In

The Department of English is pleased to welcome Howard Marchitello, who joined our faculty as a tenured Associate Professor this Fall. Professor Marchitello came to Rutgers from Texas A & M University, where he taught from 1990 till this past Spring. He is a graduate of Hobart College, and he earned his Ph.D. at the State University of New York at Buffalo. A specialist in literature of the early modern period, he steps into the position vacated by the retirement of Marie Cornelia.

Howard Marchitello's areas of scholarly interest include Shakespeare, sixteenth and seventeenth-century British literature and culture, science studies, and literary and critical theory. Among his publications are a book on *Narrative and Meaning in Early Modern England*, published by Cambridge University Press; two edited books, including *What Happens to History: The Renewal of Ethics in Contemporary Thought* (Routledge); an edited journal volume on the

influential Bulgarian philosopher and literary critic Tzvetan Todorov; and numerous articles, book chapters, and reviews.

His current major project, called "Hamlet Machine: Early Modernity, Literature, and the Culture of Science, 1585-1623," explores the relationship between early modern science, on the one hand, and literature and culture, on the other. Marchitello describes the project as "a kind of archaeology of science" that attempts to find important features of what will become science in the historical moments when science as an identifiable set of disciplinary maneuvers is just beginning to emerge. The book examines a wide range of early modern institutions and phenomena—travel and exploration of the New World, devotional literature, the Shakespearean stage, and Galileo's astronomical studies, among others—in order to identify those habits of thought and practice that will eventually form the various discourses of science.

For Howard Marchitello education is "all about change, for both students and their professors." As a classroom teacher he works to make sure that students leave his courses with a different—"ideally, a radically different"—understanding of the subject matter and perhaps of themselves.

Continued on page 6



Howard Marchitello in Cefalu, Sicily (2007)

INSIDE

News of Faculty.....	2
Undergraduate Research Symposium.....	2
Creative Writing.....	3
Remember Us.....	3
In Brief.....	4
News of Students.....	4
Ex Cathedra.....	5
Alumni Reunion.....	6

Poems and translations by **J. T. Barbarese** are published or forthcoming in *The Southern Review*, *Boulevard*, *Sewanee Review*, the *Southern Poetry Review*, *Margie*, and in the anthology *Poetry Daily Essentials 2007*. Dr. Barbarese has also contributed an essay on Ernest Hemingway called "A Bert and Ernie Stylistics" to a volume forthcoming from Kent State University Press. In July, he did guest spots on KYW Radio and on Fox 29 on the final novel in the Harry Potter series.

NEWS OF Faculty

Jill Capuzzo continues to write for several sections of the *New York Times*—the daily metro pages, the Sunday New Jersey section, Escapes, Real Estate, and Styles. *New Jersey Monthly* recently assigned her to write a comprehensive article assessing the status of real estate in New Jersey for the magazine's upcoming "Best Towns" issue, due out this spring.

An essay by **William FitzGerald** on first-year composition pedagogy will appear in the next issue of *Reader: Essays in Reader-Oriented Theory, Criticism, and Pedagogy*. He will present a paper on developments in scientific writing curricula at the 2008 Conference on College Composition and Communication in New Orleans.

An essay by **Lauren Grodstein**, "Notes on Gefilte Fish," is forthcoming in *Alimentum*, a literary journal dedicated to her favorite subject, food. This past fall she read and discussed her short story "Homewrecker" as part of the lecture series at the Louis and Mildred Resnick Institute for the Study of Jewish Life at SUNY New Paltz. She also discussed her own fiction at the "Emerging Voices" panel discussion at the New York Center for Independent Publishing.

M. A. R. Habib's latest book is *Modern Literary Criticism and Theory*, published by Blackwell. Meanwhile, his first book, *The Early T. S. Eliot and Western Philosophy* (1999), has been reissued in paperback.

Tyler Hoffman has published an article on Robert Frost's 1930s road trip poetry in the *Robert Frost Review* and a book chapter on American Civil War poetry in *Teaching Nineteenth-Century American Poetry* (MLA, 2007). A book chapter on Thom Gunn will be included in *Multiformalisms* (Word Press, 2008), and an article on Wallace Stevens will appear in the *Wallace Stevens Journal*. Dr. Hoffman also has been commissioned by the editors of the new *Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics* to write entries on "Performance" and on the "Poetry Slam."

In October **Timothy Martin** was a featured lecturer at a meeting of the American Friends of James Joyce in New York. He spoke on "Joyce and Italian Opera."

In December **Geoffrey Sill** made a presentation about the Writers' House to the Executive Board of the Haiku Society of America, which has expressed interest in creating a haiku archive in Camden, the home town of haiku poet Nick Virgilio.

Carol Singley gave the keynote address in Caldwell, New Jersey, at the "Big Read," an initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts designed to revitalize the role of literary reading in American popular culture. Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence* was the featured novel. She is



currently serving on the search committee for a new campus provost.

Wharton and
The Big Read

Lisa Zeidner was on sabbatical in Fall 07, working on her fifth novel, "The Terrorist of Love." Part of her writing time was spent at the artist's colony Yaddo. Her fourth novel, *Layover*, is still grinding its painfully slow way toward the screen.

Friday, April 25: Undergraduate Research Symposium

This spring the second annual Undergraduate Research Symposium has the special honor of welcoming the author of *Chocolat* and *The Girl with No Shadow*, Joanne Harris, to our campus as its keynote speaker. Ms. Harris will speak about her research



Joanne Harris

experiences for these books and answer student questions. Following the session, she will sign copies of *The Girl with No Shadow*, required reading for this semester's composition courses. Faculty, alumni, and all current students are welcome and are also encouraged to attend the student panel sessions that will follow. The symposium takes place in the Fine Arts building on Friday, April 25, beginning at 12:15pm. For further information, contact Betsy Allen (elizalle@camden) or Candice Kaup (ckaup@camden).

The Phoenix

The Phoenix is a biannual publication of the Department of English, Rutgers University, Camden NJ 08102

Phone (856) 225-6121

Fax (856) 225-2873

Email English@camden.rutgers.edu

Edited by Timothy Martin

Designed by Rob Janssen

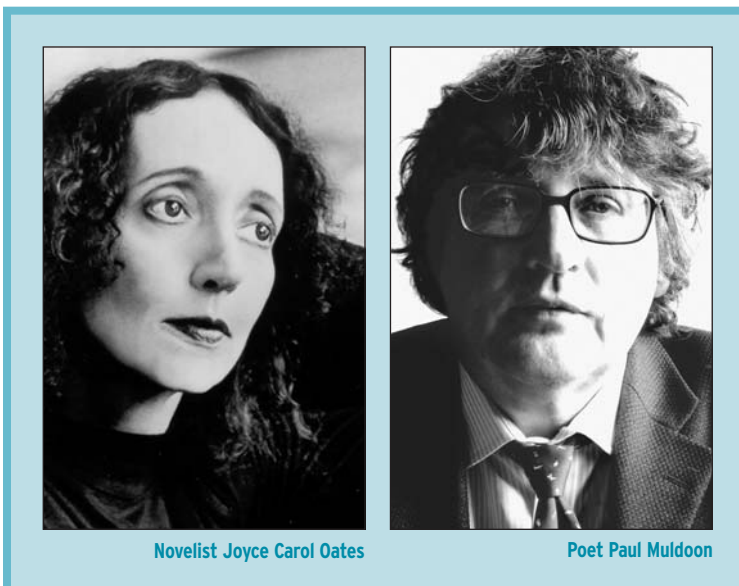
Phoenix image by Sonia Krutzke

Creative Writing at Rutgers-Camden

The 20th annual Spring Writers' Conference, to be held on Saturday, April 12, 2008, promises to be an exceptional event. The keynote readers this year will be Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Paul Muldoon and novelist Joyce Carol Oates. Ten other accomplished writers will give readings and conduct workshops, including memoirist Jane Bernstein and screenwriter Joseph Gangemi. This special anniversary event will feature many New Jersey writers, including four Rutgers-Camden graduates: fiction writer Susan Muaddi Darraj, poet Gregory Pardlo, and *Painted Bride Quarterly* editors Kathleen Volk Miller and Marion Wrenn. As usual, all events are free and open to the public. A full schedule can be seen at camden.rutgers.edu.

This will be our last Spring Writers' Conference for several years, as we

excitedly turn our attention to the first entering class of our new Master of Fine Arts program in Creative Writing. The



Spring Conference will be replaced by a series of readings and informal meetings with writers during the year, which will be

open to the public as well as to our MFA students. Upcoming visitors for 08-09 will include Binnie Kirshenbaum, Percival Everett, and Josh Ferris, whose first novel was named one of the ten best books of the year by the *New York Times Book Review*. For a full roster of visitors, as well as information on the new MFA program, see mfa.camden.rutgers.edu.

Be sure to mark your calendars for the 22nd annual Summer Writers' Conference, to be held from June 23 to July 2. The intensive program of readings and workshops can be taken for both undergraduate and graduate credit. Visiting writers this year include Jonathan Galassi, Aaron

Hamburger, and Karen Karbo. All readings are free. For a full schedule, see summer.camden.rutgers.edu/writconf.html.



Remember Us

If you're thinking of making a gift to Rutgers, please remember that you can direct your gift to a Department of English account rather than to Rutgers in general:

- the **Department of English-Camden Fund**, which helps support experimental courses, implement new technology, and develop new programs
- the **Camden Writers House and Writing Programs Gift Fund**, which supports the department's plans for a new building dedicated to the *Mickle Street Review*, the Nick Virgilio Haiku Association, the undergraduate Writing Program, and the new Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing
- the **Betty Harris Jones Fund**, which awards an annual prize to an outstanding graduating student
- the **Miriam Thomas Chaplin Endowed Scholarship**, which provides substantial scholarship support to our most accomplished English majors
- the **Gloria H. Moffatt Scholarship Fund**, which provides scholarship aid for students in English or Journalism

Make your check payable to the Rutgers University Foundation, *using the memorandum line to specify which fund you have in mind*, and mail it with this coupon to:

Development Office
Rutgers University
411 Cooper St.
Camden NJ 08102

> In Brief

Making Our Mark in Pop Culture Studies

Former and current students from Rutgers-Camden were very much in evidence at the conference of the Mid-Atlantic Popular Culture Association, held in Philadelphia this Fall. Teaching assistant Candice Kaup lent a feminist voice to a Harry Potter panel in a reading of *Chamber of Secrets*. On a panel about comic books, fellow teaching assistant Peter Bryant presented on *Maus*, arguing that Art's struggles with composition symbolize the deep struggles of trauma. Our former students were also represented. Karen Deaver (M.A.'07) gave a paper on the history of dance and children's education, and Lynda Hinkle presented on the bullying of gay youth in Young Adult fiction.

Holly Blackford will co-chair the Childhood Studies panels for next year's conference, which will be in Niagara Falls. She would be happy to help graduate students get involved (including road tripping in her mini-van). She suggests that grad students with an interest in popular culture consider submitting a paper to conference organizers. It remains, she says, "a very grad-friendly conference, low-key and peppered with graduate student prizes."

Three Marks of a Scholar

A scholar knows that
there is no "e" in the
Humphry of *Humphry Clinker*
there is no apostrophe in
Finnegans Wake
there are three words in
The Waste Land

An article by **Brian Collins** ('09) entitled "Fatigued Family" will be published in *Reserve and National Guard* magazine this March. The article is a profile of a local national guardsman preparing for what he expects to be his final deployment to Iraq.

A film script by **Chad Damiani** ('95) and his writing partner, called "Kamikaze Love," has been nominated for the Black List, a Hollywood-based review of the best-liked and most enjoyable scripts of the year.

NEWS OF Students

Linda Hamilton (M.A.'94) is now "of counsel" in the Business and Finance Department of Ballard Spahr Andrews & Ingersoll, LLP (Voorhees office), working primarily with healthcare clients.

Elizabeth Kimball (M.A.'03) is in her fifth year of Ph.D. study at Temple University, writing a dissertation about language use and teaching in Philadelphia from 1750 to 1830. It focuses on three main communities: Anglicans, Quakers, and Germans.

Lori Lantz (M.A.'94) has translated *Bears: A Brief History*, written by German author Bernd Brunner and published by Yale University Press. The book explores how bears have unwittingly served humans as doubles and as "others" throughout history and what price they have paid for our misperceptions of them. Lori lives in Berlin.

Since her graduation last May, **Diana Marko** has been working at NBC-10 on "All That and More" with Tracy Davidson, keeping the show's content and website up to date. She will be moving to New York this spring to take a position at Rockefeller Center in NBC's Universal Page program.

A manuscript by **Gregory Pardlo** ('99), "Totem," was named winner of the 2007 *American Poetry Review* / Honickman First Book Prize in Poetry. It will be

published by *APR* in September and distributed by Copper Canyon Press. During the past academic year Greg completed coursework for the Ph.D. in English at the Graduate Center, City University of New York.

Joy Pilborough ('99) graduated from Parsons School of Design in 2002. She lives in Manhattan, where she is Senior Designer for Federated Department Stores (Macy's, Bloomingdale's, Lord & Taylor), designing lingerie and sleepwear.

Eileen Radetich (M.A.'01) won a grant from the Camden County College Foundation to support a lecture series on Walt Whitman, "Walking in Walt's Shoes." She is Assistant Professor of English at Camden County College.

In December **Paul D. Santangini** ('93) was sworn in as a Deputy Attorney General representing the State of New Jersey in prosecutions for the Division of Criminal Justice.

Karen Schramm ('83, M.A.'86) has published an article on "Technology Teens" in *English Leadership Quarterly*. She is Associate Professor of English at Delaware Valley College.

Henry Singer ('93) works in health care communications, as director of educational strategy and analysis for Vindico Medical Education, a company in the field of health care communications. He describes the job as "an extension of his work as an editor and science journalist." He and his wife of thirteen years have two daughters. In his free time, he rides motorcycles and restores old sports cars.

Joseph Wolff ('07) is a public information coordinator for *Yellowbook*: in other words, he writes the phonebook. He plans to pursue a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing.

Summer Wood ('97) is a student in the graduate program in History here at Rutgers, concentrating on Museum Studies. She runs a website about the languages of *Star Wars*.

No College Student Left Behind

On Monday March 10, members of the Rutgers-Camden community may encounter a number of conservatively dressed visitors carrying briefcases and clipboards. These individuals represent the tip of an iceberg that department

> Ex Cathedra

chairs and campus administrators know as the Rutgers 2008 Reaccreditation by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. A process that has been underway for almost two years on all three university campuses, accreditation is crucial to the university's reputation and its eligibility for federal funding, including research grants and student aid. It is also crucial, as President McCormick has recently reminded us, for "ensuring the high value of a Rutgers diploma."

Reaccreditation for a university of Rutgers' stature is not in doubt. But a Middle States report can cite shortcomings and failures to address past recommendations, and some important universities have recently been embarrassed by the process even when accreditation has been granted. Encouraged by a political climate that would hold publicly funded institutions accountable to taxpayers, and consistent with the recent "No Child Left Behind" initiative in Washington, accrediting institutions are now requiring universities to spell out exactly what they purport to teach their students, to develop precise measures that assess how effectively they do so, and to report the results. They are asking, for example, "What should an English major know? How many of your majors, when they graduate, know what they should know? How can you do better?"

You might think that this process would be easy. Perhaps, for example, we could say that if a student graduates with a C average or better, then she or

he has "satisfactorily" completed our program. And if 92 percent of our students graduate with a C average or better, then perhaps we can say that the department's grade is 92, an "A." But Middle States will not let us off quite so easily. Another simple method (and probably more acceptable to Middle States) would be to require all graduating students to sit for a general exam, either one we ourselves might write or an exam that we could purchase from a private company, something like the Graduate Record Exam (the college senior's version of the SAT).

> **"Our approach is to avoid creating intrusive new structures that could complicate our curriculum and mechanize our teaching. Instead, we hope to integrate assessment into a regular cycle of papers and exams so that students and faculty members can continue to do their work as freely and unselfconsciously as possible."**

At any rate, the Department of English has been thinking carefully about these issues since the beginning of this academic year, immersing itself in a culture whose jargon is heavy on the noun strings that make a pedant shudder: "student learning outcomes," "achievement measures," "assessment schedule." Borrowing to some extent from other universities who have undergone this process recently, we have defined three categories of learning: "declarative knowledge" (what we want students to know), "skills and abilities" (what we want

them to be able to do), and "attitudes" (how they feel and think about us, about literature, and about the general value of literary study). Our approach is to avoid creating intrusive new structures that could complicate our curriculum and mechanize our teaching. Instead, we hope to integrate assessment into a regular cycle of papers and exams so that students and faculty members can continue to do their work as freely and unselfconsciously as possible.

How will the major change? First, we expect to target four required courses for direct involvement with assessment: the Introduction to Literary Study, the two courses in the Literatures in English sequence, and new "Capstone" courses with limited enrollment that will be open only to advanced English majors. Some assignments in these courses—certainly not all assignments—may be captured for assessment. Second and more dramatically, we imagine, for reasons of assessment and others, a much simpler major program, a program that will enable students to take courses in a more effective sequence, including especially our many transfer students. We expect this new major to go into effect with the Fall 2008 catalog.

While the prospect of reexamining our goals and methods seemed at first a daunting one, it has been energizing to think how we might do better by our students, and perhaps even by our taxpayers.

I'm told that representatives of the Middle States Association like to buttonhole an occasional student and introduce themselves. I'm also told that nothing will please them more than if the student should say, "Oh, yes, the Middle States Accreditation. I've heard about that."

The Chair of the Department of English is Timothy Martin: timartin@camden.

Alumni Reunion: May 17

This year's theme is "Back to the Future . . . Back to the Campus . . . Extreme Makeover." The Alumni Office has planned many exciting events for this year's Reunion on the River. In addition to showcasing architectural developments on campus, it will host the third annual juried Alumni Art Exhibit in the Stedman Gallery. Special receptions will honor numerous groups, including the Golden Raptors (classes of the 50s) and Graduates of the 60s. In addition, there will be an Alumni Film Review, a display of Rutgers artifacts, a Walt Whitman city tour, shuttle tours from the Boathouse to the USS New Jersey, an Opera Interlude, music for listening and dancing, and more. For details and registration, visit alumni.camden.rutgers.edu.

Of special interest to English majors will be the Alumni Writers Display, which hopes to add to last year's resounding success by expanding the number of featured alumni authors. This display will be in a special area in the newly renovated Campus Center. Participating authors will receive complimentary admission for the entire reunion.

To have your work included as part of this display, contact Doreen Venables: dvenable@camden; 856-225-6113 (fax); 225-6028 (voice); 411 Cooper St, Camden NJ 08102.

Howard Marchitello Settles In

Continued from page 1

Because he sees education as transformative, his approach is to encourage students to question their prior conceptions, of Shakespeare, for instance, or even of the value of humanistic learning, and to revise or perhaps even reject earlier-held opinions or positions. He believes that his classes must be at least a bit unsettling intellectually in order to be successful, and he hopes that students finds his approach both challenging and exciting. "I respect students enough," he says, "to believe that the stakes in the classroom can be very high." Here at Rutgers, in addition to teaching Shakespeare (along with Chris Fitter) and literary theory (along with Rafey Habib), he will offer a full range of courses in Renaissance and early modern English literature.

Professor Marchitello describes Rutgers-Camden as an ideal combination of features of his previous institutions. "I was an undergraduate at a very small college, a graduate student at a large university, and spent my first seventeen years as a faculty member at a gigantic research university (with nearly 50,000 students). Rutgers-Camden strikes me as the perfect setting because it combines the best of all three models: it is small enough to feel intimate, large enough to be exciting, and by virtue of its broader context within a very expansive university, it brings the advantages of a major research institution to bear on its various missions."

A native of a small town in the Finger Lakes region of New York, Professor Marchitello is happy to be closer to his family roots and in a place that feels "a lot like home." He claims to have long been a fan of Philadelphia, and he has already joined a number of institutions and organizations: Art Museum and Zoo, public radio and TV stations, and his local historical society. "I'm very excited about the great diversity that comes with a metropolitan area and like the feeling of living in a place that understands it is part of a larger world." Among his interests are European travel, Italian language study, and hiking and cycling. He has recently taken up classical guitar.

Howard and his wife Lynne Vallone, a professor in the new Department of Childhood Studies, have two children in college, both of them English majors. The family have settled in Riverton.

Visit our website: <http://english.camden.rutgers.edu>

Address Service Requested

Non-Profit
US Postage
PAID
Bellmawr, NJ
Permit No 1271

Department of English
Armitage Hall
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
311 North Fifth Street, Building #036
Camden, NJ 08102-1405

CAMDEN
RUTGERS