



The Phoenix

NEWSLETTER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH—RUTGERS UNIVERSITY CAMDEN

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Retirements of Marie Cornelia and Robert Ryan



Marie Cornelia and Robert Ryan (Florence, 2001)

The character of the Department of English will change dramatically this coming year with the retirements of Marie Cornelia and Robert Ryan, two of the most highly respected and influential faculty members in the department's history. Both are distinguished scholars, have earned multiple teaching awards, and have made significant contributions to the department, the college, and the university. Their departures complete a series of recent retirements by faculty members who arrived at Rutgers in the early to mid 1970s, including Diane McColley, Donald Mull, and William Lutz.

Marie Cornelia and Robert Ryan both earned their advanced degrees in New York City and came to Rutgers (with Bill Lutz) in 1971, Dr. Ryan as a faculty member in Camden College of Arts and Sciences, Dr. Cornelia as a faculty member in University College, then an evening college with its own faculty and administration until its merger with CCAS in 1984. Both served extended terms as department chair, Cornelia in the late 1980s, Ryan succeeding her in the early 1990s. Dr. Cornelia was the founding director of the Graduate Program in Liberal Studies, a post she held from 1994 to 1998, and Dr. Ryan again followed in her footsteps, taking a position that he still holds. Both have been extremely active in the International Studies program here on campus, and among the ten study tours that Marie Cornelia has led since the program's inception were four trips to Venice, Florence, and Rome to study "The English in Italy," a course she offered jointly with Robert Ryan (most recently in 2001). For the quality of their teaching as well as their innovations in courses and curricula, Drs. Ryan and Cornelia have been honored repeatedly. Dr. Cornelia won the Alumni Outstanding Faculty Award in 1985, the Provost's Teaching Excellence Award in 1995, and the Lindback

Retirements, continued on page 5

Installation of Multicultural Children's Literature Collection

by Nagehan Bayindir, Kristin Bentley, Brianne Graham, and Melissa Marshall, and Sarah Solvibile

On December 1 Carol Singley and several of her students unveiled the Multicultural Children's Literature Collection at a Friends of the Library program at the Paul Robeson Library. A collection of over one hundred titles has been established as a result of Dr. Singley's having received a grant from the Bildner Intercultural Fund. Dr. Singley delivered the main address, and English majors Nagehan Bayindir, Kristin Bentley, Brianne Graham, Melissa Marshall, and Sarah Solvibile introduced books of folktales and fairytales, read portions of Ed Young's *Lon Po Po* (a Chinese version of *Little Red Riding Hood*), and provided the audience with insight into the steps taken to complete the project.

The collection draws on a rich history of international cultures *Literature, continued on page 6*

From the Writing Program: Composition Roundtable at NEMLA

Several of our former teaching assistants, all of whom taught composition in our Writing Program, will present their pedagogical innovations and curricular development projects at the Northeastern Modern Language Association Conference, April 2-5, 2006, in Philadelphia. Marie Cornelia will chair the roundtable, which is organized around the theme of "helping students develop a public voice," a proposal authored by Writing Program Director Holly Blackford.

At the panel, Christine Fitzsimons, veteran composition instructor at Rutgers and currently a faculty member at West Chester University, will share her experiences with leading her students in collaborative, community-oriented writing projects such as the "Epistolary Exchange Project," funded by the Bildner Family. Renee Baker, formerly an English teacher at West Philadelphia High School, will talk about the effectiveness of the epistolary exchange project with her freshmen, and contrast it with the difficulties of implementing a scripted state curriculum. Jesse Merandy, a recent graduate of our master's program and now a doctoral candidate at the City University of New York, will discuss electronic research projects and the construction of student web sites in his composition curriculum. Emily Beach, recently graduated from our master's program and now a teacher at Friends Academy of Westampton, New Jersey, will reflect upon her experiences coordinating the 2005 CompPoster Fair here at Rutgers and explain how a public presentation of research furthers the goals of the revision process in the writing course.

These four accomplished teachers will join four other roundtable participants, from Drexel, Boston University, Ursinus College, and Georgetown, to converse about the profession and the much-debated topic of the public voice in composition.

The Director of the Writing Program is Holly Blackford: blackfor@camden. Her recent article on outreach by the Writing Program appeared in Diversity Digest, an e-magazine of the American Association of Colleges and Universities.

Meet-the-Authors Series: Join Us

This spring, Carol Singley, Holly Blackford, and Lauren Grodstein have planned a series of on-campus visits by authors of books for children and adolescents/young adults. Free and open to the public, the series is sponsored by the Center for Children and Childhood Studies and coordinated by Nyeema Watson. On March 3, Kirsten Smith, screenwriter of *Legally Blonde*, *10 Things I Hate About You*, and *Ella Enchanted*, will visit Blackford's adolescent literature class to discuss her first novel-in-poems, *The Geography of Girlhood*. From 12-1, Smith will discuss her work with campus and community audiences at the Children's Center (405-7 Cooper St.), after which she will sell and sign books.

On April 7, from 10-12 in the Gordon Theater, three authors of adolescent literature will have a panel discussion with students and the community. Lisa Rowe Fraustino is the author of *The Hickory Chair* (designated an American Library Association Notable Book), *Ash* (an ALA Best Book for Young Adults), and the Dear America book *I Walk in Dread: The Diary of Deliverance Trembley*. Another panelist on April 7 will be faculty member Lauren Grodstein, author of *The Best of Animals*, *Reproduction Is the Flaw of Love*, and *Girls Dinner Club*, a young adult novel published

under the pseudonym

Jessie Elliot. Our final panelist is Carol Plum-Ucci, graduate of our master's program and author of *The Body of Christopher Creed* (a Michael J. Printz

Honor Book and International Children's Choice Award) and *What Happened to Lani Garver* (an ALA Best Book for Young Adults). After the panel, Fraustino will conduct a writing workshop with ten students from Gill St. Bernard's high school. Fraustino will also participate in the Spring Writers' Conference on April 8.

On April 25, Rutgers-Camden will host Jean Marzollo, author of the best-selling *I Spy* books and the *Shanna Show* books, and both author and illustrator of many children's books, including *Little Bear*, *You're A Star*; *Ten Little Eggs*; and *Daniel in the Lions' Den*, among others. Visitors, including parents and children, can meet Marzollo at a book-signing from 3:30 to 4:30 at Camden Children's Garden, after which Marzollo will give a talk at the Campus Center (5:30-6:30). A mentor and friend to two of our recent master's program graduates, Jesse Merandy and Christine Fitzsimons, Marzollo will visit the children in grades K-2 at Lilley Elementary School in Sicklerville the following day. Blackford's 7-year-old daughter, who attends Lilley School, is looking forward to meeting the author and asking her where she can find some of the harder items in *I Spy*!

For further information contact Nyeema Watson: ncwatson@camden



Meet the
Authors



The
Phoenix

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

phone (856) 225-6121;
fax (856) 225-6602.

Edited by Timothy Martin,
Phoenix image by Sonia Krutzke.

News of Faculty

A story by **J. T. Barbarese**, “Winter Dogs,” appeared in *Story Quarterly* last autumn, and his translations of several poems by Jaques Prevert are forthcoming in *Subtropics*.

In December **Holly Blackford** published “Mrs. Darling’s Scream: The Rites of Persephone in *Wuthering Heights* and *Peter and Wendy*” in *Studies in the Humanities*. Her book chapter “‘I’m a Real Boy!’ Consciousness of the Breath of Life in Literature of Childhood” is forthcoming in *Approaches to Teaching Pinocchio* (MLA). Dr. Blackford received a grant of \$1250 from the Center for Children and Childhood Studies for further work on her book about reader responses to *To Kill A Mockingbird* and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

Mandy Bailey’s 2001 letter (on paper) now shares a file folder “Appreciative Students,” so labeled by **Betsy Bowden**, with one from a Penn State alumnus who can still recite the first thirty-four lines of the General Prologue even though (as he claims) he came drunk to his appointment in 1980. His letter also describes his Bob Dylan website, unaware that Bowden cannot use computers because (in ballad meter) *it hurts her eyes to try to read / from dancing dots of light*.

Marie Cornelia, with Gloria Bonilla-Santiago, has received a \$75,000 grant from the university’s Academic Excellence Fund to expand the Educational Policy track of the Master’s program in Public Administration.

In January, **Shayn Fiske** chaired a session and presented a paper titled “Art in the Age of Powerpoint Presentations: Visual Media, Victorian Poetry, and the Vindication of Aura” at the Hawaii International Conference on Art and Humanities. Her proposal for a new minor program in Classical Studies, pending

approval by the faculty senate, is set for launch in Fall 2006. Meanwhile, work on her book project, “Heretical Hellenism,” continues.

Chris Fitter’s essay “Recovering *Henry VI*: History, Politics and Stagecraft,” was published in *English Literary History* in 2005, and his essay *Historicizing Richard II* appeared in the Summer issue of *Early Modern Literary Studies*. His review of Robert Mayhew’s *Landscape, Literature and English Religious Culture* was published in *Notes and Queries* in September, and in October he gave a guest lecture on “Shakespeare and Sixteenth-Century Radicalisms” at the annual Shakespeare colloquium held at Fairleigh Dickinson University.

This fall **Lauren Grodstein’s** essay “The Monica Metaphor” appeared in *The Jewish Girl’s Guide to Guilt*, an anthology published by Dutton, and her essay “The Met in the Mirror” was published by Amazon as part of the launch of its “Amazon Shorts” series.

M. A. R. Habib is editing the *Cambridge History of Literary Criticism, Volume 6*, as well as the *Oxford Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. His *History of Literary Criticism*, published by Blackwell, will come out in paperback this year.

Tyler Hoffman is currently serving as president of the national Robert Frost Society. He presented a paper on Frost’s road trips in the 1930s at the MLA conference in December, and his essay “John Brown and Children’s Literature” recently appeared in *The Afterlife of John Brown* (Palgrave, 2005). Dr. Hoffman will give a paper on Frost’s children’s texts at the American Literature Association conference in San Francisco in May. He plans to finish work on his book on public performance poetry this summer.

Robert Ryan will be presenting a paper at the annual conference of the Nineteenth Century Studies Association in Salisbury, Maryland in March. The topic is “The Wordsworth Pilgrimage,” the phenomenon that brought many hundreds of people to the Lake District, in the hope of seeing the poet who had brought them religious consolation.

In November **Carol Singley** helped to organize an international conference, partially funded by Rutgers, on “Cultures of Adoption” at the University of Tampa. Dr. Singley presented a paper entitled “Narratives of Salvation (and Damnation?): Birth Mothers in Nineteenth-Century American Fiction” at this conference, as well as a paper on colonial literature entitled “Elected and Excluded: Seventeenth-Century Doctrines of Adoption” at MLA in December.

Lisa Zeidner is currently working on an adaptation of Lily King’s novel, *The English Teacher*, for Focus Features.

A story by **Carmen Adamucci** ('07), "We're Out of Limes," was published by the literary webzine *Humdinger*.

Rosemary Banks (M.A.L.S.'04) has been accepted into the M.F.A. program at Rosemont College.

Two poems by **Sarah Byker James** (M.A.'06), "Kensington, Philadelphia, 2004" and "Recipe for an Ending," will appear in the next issue of the literary magazine *Margie*. "Recipe for an Ending" was chosen as a finalist in the magazine's poetry contest.

Laurie Garrison (M.A.'00) finished her Ph.D. at Birkbeck College, University of London, in 2005. She now works as research assistant for a project called "Buried Treasure: The Lord Chamberlain's Plays, 1852-1866," a joint effort of Royal Holloway, University of London, and the British Library. The project entails cataloging and documenting content of plays submitted to the Lord Chamberlain's office for licensing, as well as digitization of selected plays.

Katherine Henry (M.A.'90) is Assistant Professor of English at Temple University. She will spend the next academic year teaching in Rome.

Karen Greco Hofheimer ('99) and her husband Bill have relocated from Orlando, Florida to Avon, Connecticut. In October they had a baby girl, Tessa, who is "as sweet as can be."

Louis Iovino ('94, M.A.'97) is working in New York and from home for a strategic consulting company in oncology. He and Jill have two boys, Ben (5) and Charlie (about nine months). He shares a birthday with the editor of the *Phoenix* and with the person immediately above him in this issue's "News of Students."

Elizabeth Mannion (M.A.'02) will defend her dissertation in March. She is a Ph.D. candidate in film studies and drama at Trinity College, Dublin.

On January 29 **Susan Muaddi Darraj** ('97, M.A.'00) and Elias Darraj welcomed their first child, daughter Mariam, into the world. Susan teaches at Harford Community College in Baltimore.

to it. "After nearly seven years," he writes, "I know a couple of things about writing. The most important, I think, is that it is all about telling an interesting, accurate and truthful story that means something to the reader. Nothing else matters much."

Kimberly Socha (M.A.'99) has been admitted to the Ph.D. program in Literature and Criticism at Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

NEWS OF *Students*

Robert Pulcini ('89), who directed the Academy Award-nominated movie *American Splendor*, will soon be directing *The Nanny Diaries* for Miramax.

In February **Evan Roskos** (M.A.'06) presented a paper entitled "Peace Sells, But Who's Buyin?": Uncovering Heavy Metal Protest Music" at the twenty-seventh annual conference of the Southwest/Texas Popular Culture and American Culture Associations. His M.A. thesis is on the use of guns in the novels of Don DeLillo.

Karen Simeonides (M.A.'03) is in her first year teaching tenth-grade English at Cherry Hill East.

Pete Skiba ('99) has worked as a newspaper writer in York, Pennsylvania; Grass Valley, California; Wilmington, North Carolina; and Orlando, Florida. He is now living on the Florida Gulf Coast and "happily writing" for the *News-Press*. In these various postings he has written stories on single, double, and triple homicides; fires and hurricanes; and housing sprawl and the environmentalist reaction

Alumni Reunion 2006: William Lutz to Be Forum's Inaugural Speaker

This year will mark an exciting change in the Alumni Reunion schedule. Activities and events will be held throughout the day, including speakers, performances, exhibitions, tours, and receptions and leading up to the traditional evening party and festivities. For the first time in several years, Reunion 2006 will be held throughout our beautiful campus, inside various venues and under connected carnival tents, enhancing our new campus-wide tradition of Commencement-Reunion Week. Save the date: May 20, 2006.

William Lutz, Professor of English Emeritus, author of *The New Doublespeak*, and the most recent recipient of the Alumni Association's Outstanding Faculty Award, will appear during the reunion as the inaugural speaker for the new Outstanding Faculty Award Forum.

Formal invitations, with all the details of the Reunion extravaganza, will be sent to all schools and classes. Further information is available at camden.alumni.rutgers.edu.

Retirements, continued from page 1

Distinguished Teaching Award in 1998, Ryan the Warren I. Susman Award for Excellence in Teaching in 1999 and the Lindback Award in 2004.



Robert Ryan

Marie Cornelia earned her M.A. and Ph.D. from Fordham University and taught at Nazareth College of Rochester for several years before her arrival at Rutgers. She is the author of *The Function of the Masque in Jacobean Tragedy and Tragicomedy* (University of Salzburg), and she has published numerous articles on English Renaissance literature as well as on the literature of other eras. She has taught Shakespeare and Renaissance literature regularly to both graduate students and undergraduates, and, in addition to her participation in the International Studies program (for which she also offered courses in “The London Theatre” and “The English Country House”), she developed new courses for the graduate program in Liberal Studies and for the former Intellectual Heritage requirement in the general curriculum. The depth and importance of her administrative work here in Camden are remarkable for a faculty member whose first love is teaching. In addition to serving as English department chair and director of Liberal Studies, she was Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs in University College, Director of the Women’s Studies program, and President of the Faculty Senate. Since 1999 she has been Associate Dean for Graduate Studies in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.

Robert Ryan earned his M.A. and Ph.D. from Columbia University, where he wrote his dissertation on “Keats and Religion.” He came to Rutgers after completing his course work at Columbia and, except for a year as visiting lecturer at Carysfort College in Ireland, has devoted his entire postgraduate teaching career to Rutgers-Camden. He is author of two scholarly books, *Keats: The Religious Sense* (Princeton) and *The Romantic Reformation: Religious Politics in English Literature 1789-1824* (Cambridge), the latter of which earned the Conference on Christianity and Literature Award and the British Council Prize in the Humanities. He was also editor, with Ronald Sharp, of *The Persistence of Poetry: Bicentennial Essays on John Keats* (Massachusetts). In addition to publishing numerous articles on such Romantic writers as Keats, Blake, and Mary Shelley, Dr. Ryan served for seventeen years as chief reviewer of books on John Keats for the *Romantic Movement Bibliography*. During that time he reviewed some sixty books and wrote annotations to more than 150 articles on Romantic writers. He has been a board member of the Nineteenth-Century Studies Association (1996-2002), the Keats-Shelley Association of America (1994 to the present), and the Wordsworth-Coleridge Association (2000 to the present). The Keats-Shelley Association of America named Robert Ryan its Distinguished Scholar for 2000. As department chair, he was responsible for hiring Carol Singley, Rafey Habib, Chris Fitter, Tyler Hoffman, and Richard Epstein.

Marie Cornelia, for whom the Fall of 2006 will mark the first September since kindergarten in which she will not be in a classroom, will devote her free time to travel, membership in a book club, volunteer work at the Kimmel Center, and to “reading what I want to read.” Most immediately, she and her husband Jim are planning a sixteen-day cruise this Fall from Rome to Istanbul. Robert Ryan plans, in retirement, to finish his book on William Wordsworth and Charles Darwin and to try his hand at playwriting, as well as pursue his interests in music, travel, politics, and gardening. Then, he says, “I will work at filling in some of the gaps in my education.”

Marie Cornelia’s and Robert Ryan’s years at Rutgers will be celebrated, fittingly, at a joint gala celebration on Friday evening, June 2. Please contact Dee Jonczak (deedalee@camden) for further information.



Marie Cornelia

Mickle Street Review 17/18: “Walt Whitman and Place”

In April 2005 the English department hosted an international conference celebrating the 150th anniversary of the first publication of Walt Whitman’s monumental *Leaves of Grass*. The conference was co-sponsored by the Mid-Atlantic Center for the Humanities at Rutgers-Camden, the New Jersey Council for the Humanities, and the Camden County Cultural and Heritage Commission, among others.

The theme of the conference, Whitman and Place, recognized the fundamental importance of place to Whitman’s life and work, and established Whitman as a distinctive poetic voice of the mid-Atlantic region.

A selection of papers delivered at the conference has been compiled and published online in the *Mickle Street Review*, the department’s annual electronic journal devoted to the study of Walt Whitman and American art and culture more generally.

The issue is available at
<http://www.micklestreet.rutgers.edu>

Writers’ Conferences

The 18th annual Spring Writers’ Conference will be held on Saturday, April 8, 2006. The conference is a day of readings and workshops featuring a dozen nationally-known novelists, poets, essayists, journalists and screenwriters, among them National Book Award winner John Edgar Wideman, author of *Philadelphia Fire* and *God’s Gym*. All events are free and open to the community. The workshops—where you can have your own writing discussed—require advance registration. For further information, call (856) 225-2925 or check this website:

<http://www.camden.rutgers.edu/RUCAM/writersconf/>

The 20th annual Summer Writers’ Conference is scheduled for June 21-27, 2006. An intensive series of readings and workshops, the conference can be taken for both undergraduate and graduate credit, as well as on a non-credit basis. All readings are open to the public. Visiting writers include poet Kim Addonizio, novelist Danzy Senna, and essayist Tom Bissell. For further information, see <http://summer.camden.rutgers.edu/writconf.html> or contact the conference director, Lisa Zeidner: zeidner@camden.rutgers.edu.

Literature, continued from page 1

and includes stories from countries as diverse as Chile, Japan, and Norway, as well as tales from the Native American, Cajun, and Puerto Rican traditions. Although the collection is primarily a resource for students enrolled in our children's literature courses, many of whom will enter the teaching profession in regional schools, it is also available to local residents, alumni, teachers, and their students. In addition, acquiring the collection has provided a unique educational experience to a handful of undergraduates who earned independent study credit by researching and selecting the books that form the collection.

The Bildner Intercultural Fund has awarded Dr. Singley a second grant to select realistic multicultural titles for grades six through eight. As with the fairy tales, students have compiled a list of one hundred realistic multicultural works, which the library will purchase this year. This collection will enable students and teachers to integrate global cultures into their classrooms. The project has enabled us to grow as students and future teachers, as well as giving us new awareness of the diverse cultures that surround us. With this ongoing collection, we invite our community to discover the variety of cultures that surround us in our daily lives.



Carol Singley and Geoffrey Sill with students (left to right) Brianne Graham, Melissa Marshal, Nagehan Bayindir, Kristin Bentley, and Sarah Solvibile

Haiku at Rutgers-Camden

Graduate and undergraduate students will be able to register for a seminar in haiku poetry in the Fall 2006 semester at Rutgers. The seminar will be led by Ralph Quinn, who holds a Master of Arts degree in Far Eastern Languages and Civilizations from the University of Chicago. Students will read traditional Japanese haiku in translation, as well as examples of "international" haiku, and will also study the influences on Japanese culture of Shinto, the various schools of Buddhism, the Tea Cult, and other Japanese arts.

The first annual Nick Virgilio Haiku Conference will be held in the Fine Arts complex on campus on Saturday, March 25. Haiku poet Ruth Yarrow will present a talk about haiku and lead a workshop for teachers on "Capturing Awareness with Haiku." Another haiku poet, Therese Halscheid, will give a workshop on "Teaching Haiku to Young People." Registration will be limited to 50 persons. The conference is co-sponsored by the English department at Rutgers-Camden and the Nick Virgilio Haiku Association, with support from the Camden County Cultural and Heritage Commission. Through the generosity of the Virgilio family, the first ten English students who register for the conference will have their registration fees waived.

The conference coordinator is Jennifer Costa: JCCosta@camden.

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Department of English

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