

Loose Canons

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Emory University English Department

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Life in the great beyond

By Karen Bloom (Ph.D. '99)

I was visiting my family over winter break when a friend of mine called to wish me a happy new year. I was out; my brother answered the phone. According to my brother's account, my friend, who likes to joke around, asked for "Dr. Bloom," and David thought it was a wrong number. It was only when Jay asked for "Karen" that my brother realized it was a correct connection, stopped trying to hang up on him, and took a message. You know you're in trouble when your own brother doesn't recognize your name.

I tell this story not because it testifies to the brilliance of the Bloom children, but because the beginning of my first year in a tenure-track assistant professorship seems to be in large part about defining myself in a way that I and those around me can recognize and accept. Even the transition into something terrific has challenges, and many of them arise from the need to re-negotiate a private and public self. It's not an unpleasant task, but that does not make it an easy one all the same.

My report is something of a bookend to Elizabeth West's, since I am describing "life at a small teaching institution in the middle of nowhere" after her "life at a big research institution in the middle of nowhere." Some of the issues that she and I face are similar. Even with a year's exemption from university and departmental service, it is in actuality impossible not to take on obligations. The business of a school needs to be done, after all. Some responsibilities may look like service but are really teaching. Sitting on Honors Committees is teaching, for example, and so in the first three weeks of school I found myself on three of them. Independent studies are also considered part of the regular teaching load, so I had one of those in my first semester, as well.

Some of my challenges are similar to those Elizabeth outlined, but the context is different. Big or small, schools require faculty members to publish, and here there is also much encouragement to present at conferences. I, too, live in the middle of nowhere, which lends campus events a certain significance they might not have otherwise. It also makes my presence or absence at these events more significant. Fortunately, there are cities (and opera companies) I can get to with some patience--I can dine in Harrisburg if I wish, which is a pretty exciting proposition once you've lived in the middle of nowhere. Admittedly, central Pennsylvania is pretty homogeneous, but Susquehanna does act on its professed principles: we actively recruit students and faculty from diverse backgrounds, and we feature programs in women's studies, diversity studies, and Jewish studies, all run out of the English department. For myself, I have a Jewish community and synagogue minutes away, which means I am not a fish out of water.

Some aspects of my situation are entirely different. Moving a family has one set of issues; moving just oneself has another. Teaching is far more important than publishing at small schools, so student evaluations are the tea leaves of a career. I am in the northeast, near family and old friends. The township--not town, entire township--has 5000 people, and

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Calendar of Events

Novelist **Allegra Goodman** will present a reading on Monday, March 20, at 8:15 p.m. in the Jones Room (311 Woodruff Library) and a colloquium on Tuesday, March 21, at 2:30 p.m. in the Woodruff Library's Jones Room. These events are co-sponsored by the Institute for Women's Studies and Emory Women's Center.

Author **Leo Bersani** will give a lecture on *Plato and Freud* to the English Department and Emory community on Monday, April 10, at 3:00 p.m. in the Kemp Malone Library, N-301 Callaway Center. Bersani served for many years as chair of the French Department at the University of California and is the author of 12 books on modernism, psychoanalysis, and sexuality.

Poet **Adrienne Rich** will present a reading at the English/Creative Writing Awards Night on Tuesday, April 18, at 8:00 p.m. in Glenn Auditorium. A colloquium featuring Ms. Rich will be held on Wednesday, April 19, at 2:30 p.m. in the Jones Room (311 Woodruff Library). These events are co-sponsored by the Hightower Fund and the Friends of the Emory Libraries.

Loose Canons

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A special thanks to Susan Maxwell, an old friend of the department, for her expert design, layout, and editing of this issue.

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all three of the people who work in my bank not only know my name, but wave at my car when I drive by. That's pretty small. I like my colleagues enormously, and they have welcomed me very warmly. My department chair calls to make sure I am weathering the latest natural disaster all right (flood in the fall, nor'easter in the winter)--and I am barely keeping up with the dinners I owe people. In addition, the whole department has been active in telling students about me and my courses, especially my Gothic Novel course this semester, to make students aware of me and what I have to offer.

Complicating this mix is my adjusting to the newness of everything. Becoming a full-time, tenure-track, real-live assistant professor does seem to require something of a mental shift beyond "Wow! This is great!" It's not just the delight of finally having those rights, privileges, and honors thereunto, although I did thrill when they repainted my office when I asked, and it is a great relief to have a retirement plan. There are many aspects to being in the faculty part of an institution that require a reconsideration of place and voice, such as authoring the department's recruitment letter to parents and students, voting on significant issues at faculty meetings, or talking to classes in other departments about Restoration drama because at Susquehanna University, I am the only authority on the European 18th century in my department. It's wonderful, no doubt about it, and a little daunting.

Furthermore, I'm not the only one making an adjustment to my presence around here, and that was something I hadn't anticipated. I am constantly finding new and exciting ways to realize that my arrival does not simply change my life, but also everyone's who was already here. Occasionally, other people remind me that someone else occupied my office in the past. For most of note but nothing of in-am here. The occasional however, does make me difficulties if I had moved beloved SU institution professor who specialized Other faculty, students, perception of my department has no doubt shifted with a fourth English hire in three years, a fifth woman of nine English professors, someone who teaches a field seemingly as boring as they come. It behooves me to be sensitive to that. To be patient until the university and I get used to each other. To be quiet until I have alleviated my ignorance enough to speak constructively about issues that other people have lived with for years. Joining a faculty is joining an institution with a memory belonging to everyone else but you, at least for awhile.

Becoming a full-time, tenure-track, real-live assistant professor does seem to require something of a mental shift..

them, it's something to terest; they are glad I student remark, appreciate the potential into the office of a rather than a well-liked in a different field. and administrators'

Three things have helped me make the transition. First, I have accepted my ignorance and the inevitability of frequent and occasionally horrendous errors. I do a lot of apologizing and thanking people; I try not to mind that. Second, I maintain a sense of humor and a sense of adventure about even the smallest things. Of the seven power-point presentations that I scheduled for my survey course in the fall semester, not once did the technology do what it was supposed to do. I laughed, the students relaxed, and the media services people fixed it (six times, anyway). Third, I attended a conference in the fall semester. Listening to papers and talking to other scholars reminded me of who I am, my keenest loves, my deepest antipathies, and the fact that it might not be much, but I do know something. Everything remained new at work, but I remembered how I define myself, and with that understanding, other uncertainties--and their sheer number--fell into perspective again.

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Emory freshmen are on the whole intrigued by poetry, but they have been taught too long that poetic language is obscure, and they are not easily budged from their convictions that the way of poets is high and mysterious. High on my list of “Things Never To Teach Again” is a poem about logging I found in *The Norton Anthology of Modern Poetry*. It was written by Gary Snyder, and it’s called “Getting in Firewood”:

The sour smell,
 blue stain,
 water squirts out round the wedge,

Lifting quarters of rounds
 covered with ants,
 “a living glove of ants upon my hand”
 the poll of the sledge a bit peened over
 so the wedge springs off and tumbles
 ringing like high-pitched bells
 into the complex duff of twigs
 poison oak, bark, sawdust,
 shards of logs

And the sweat drips down.
 Smell of crushed ants.
 The lean and heave on the peavey
 that breaks free the last of a bucked
 three-foot round,
 it lies flat on smashed oaklings

Wedge and sledge, peavey and maul,
 little axe, canteen, piggyback can
 of saw-mix gas and oil for the chain
 knapsack of files and goggles and rags,

All together the dead and the down.
 The young men throw splits on the piles
 bodies hardening, learning the pace
 and the smell of tools from this delve
 in the winter
 death-topple of elderly oak.

Four cords.

The night before class as I prepared to teach the poem I felt great admiration for Snyder’s attention to details and increasing dismay at the errors in the glosses supplied by the editors of the text. So the next day I spent much time unteaching the editors’ misconceptions. “Rounds,” I explained, are not really “small logs” but short sections of large logs; it’s the poll itself that’s likely been “peened over”--misshapen from long and hard use--not, as the notes claimed, the angle of the swing; and “shards of logs” refers to the shells of bark that peel easily off decaying wood (hence all the ants), not to “fragments” of logs.

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This last point has been an unforeseen benefit to starting a new job. With the familiar stripped away, all I have left is the corny stuff: what I believe in and why I believe in it, how I have learned to be a person, a scholar, a teacher. I have to return to scholarship’s essential discipline--how to focus, how to get many things done in a short period of time, how to fulfill numerous responsibilities to myself and others--as well as its essential elements--the thrill of understanding, the “excruciating pleasure” of writing, the satisfaction of thinking hard, the incandescence of discovery. Equally crucial, I must return to what I love best--*Tom Jones*, Montagu’s Turkish Embassy letters, *Persuasion*, “I am his majesty’s dog at Kew?/Pray tell me, sir, whose dog are you?” It has been reassuring to find that the need to define myself in this new place (take that as literally, theoretically, or metaphorically as you like) has also left me with the materials I need to do it. If I can get even my brother to recognize my name after this year, my work will be complete. 🌿

Alumni

We don’t want to lose you!
 Information changes? If you have moved, have a new e-mail address, or a new position, please send this information to Jackie Aly.

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Managing research with EndNote


By Carole Meyers ('97)
Academic Technology Coordinator
Emory College

Have you ever spent an evening wrestling with the MLA Style Guide while preparing a last minute bibliography? Are you tired of writing down the citations you pull from MLA only to then have to retype them when you create a list of works cited? Do you lose the small scraps of paper on which you have written citations? If you answer "yes" to any of these questions, a software package named EndNote may help.

EndNote is bibliographic management software that lets you create a personal database of citations. EndNote knows how to accommodate material in different formats, and it allows you to add notes on particular works. You can also enter keywords that will allow you to find a work in the future and to generate lists based on keyword entries.

EndNote interfaces with both Word and WordPerfect, adding a pull down menu that allows you easily to insert complete citations into your manuscript. When you are finished writing, EndNote will generate a works cited list with one click of the button. Need to change the list's bibliographic style from MLA to Chicago? No problem—simply change the style selected and click again.

Entries into EndNote may be entered manually or pulled automatically from databases such as MLA and Abell. You can use Netscape to access a database and then export a found set, which you can then import into EndNote. Or, even better, you can use EndNote itself to access MLA and avoid the export-import process.

EndNote runs on both Macintosh and Windows computers. It is available free of charge to current Emory faculty, students and staff from the Software Distribution Center in Cox Hall. More information on EndNote at Emory, including training opportunities, can be found at [www.http://www.library.emory.edu/Endnote/](http://www.library.emory.edu/Endnote/) 

Graduate Student News

Patrick Bixby presented "Perversion and the Press: Victorian Self-Fashioning in Joyce's 'A Painful Case'" at the 14th annual Miami Joyce conference in February. He will present "'Fictioning History': Michael Foucault and the Rhetoric of Sexuality" at the tenth annual Philosophy, Interpretation, Culture conference at Binghamton University in April.

Dean's Teaching Fellowships for 2000-2001 have been awarded to **Brian Cliff, Scott Ellis, Margie Koehler, Connie Monson, and Peter West.**

Anna Engle presented a paper titled "'It was a glorious resurrection, from the tomb of slavery': Frederick Douglass's Discourse of Conversion" at the conference on Religious Faith and Literary Art at Baylor University on February 26.

Patrick Erben translated, annotated, and introduced three German-American selections for the forthcoming anthology *Early American Literatures*, edited by Carla Mulford and published by Oxford University Press.

Patricia King will present a paper titled "The Poetry of Joy Davidman and the Politics of Recovery" at the Imagining of the Space Between: Literature and Culture 1914-1945 conference at the University of Western Ontario in May. Patricia's essay "Rigoberta Menchu" will be published in *Encyclopedia of Life Writing* (Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, London) later this year.

Jeff Massey read his essay "The Time of the Gift in Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*" at the 1999 Southeast Medieval Association conference in Knoxville.

Aimee L. Pozorski will present a paper at the conference on College Composition and Communication in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in April, with Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater and Bonnie S. Sunstein, authors of *FieldWorking: Reading and Writing Research*. The workshop is titled "Ethnography in Undergraduate Writing Courses: Issues in Theory and Pedagogy." Aimee also will present her work on "Futurism, Feminism, and Mina Loy" at the Rethinking the Avant-Garde conference at the University of Notre Dame, in April.

Natalie Prestwich presented a paper titled "Romeo and Juliet's Eyes and 'I's': The Narcissistic Love in Text and Film" at the Pacific Rim Literary Conference *Telling Images, Revealing Words* in Anchorage, Alaska, in February. Natalie received a grant-in-aid to attend a weekly seminar spring semester at the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C., titled "Hamlet and Periodization in 2000," which will be led by Margreta de Grazia.

Alumni News

Marshall Boswell has signed a long-term, renewable contract as the 20th-century Americanist at Rhodes College in Memphis. He published a short story, "In Between Things," which is forthcoming in *Missouri Review's* spring edition. His article "The World and the Void: Creatio ex Nihilo and Homoeroticism in Updike's *Rabbit is Rich*" appears in the recently published *John Updike and Religion: The Sense of the Sacred and the Motions of Grace*, edited by James Yerkes.

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Rebecca Finlayson and **Marshall Boswell** welcomed the birth of their son, Graham Finlayson Boswell, on January 25, 2000. **Rebecca** is an adjunct professor at Rhodes College in Memphis.

Jennifer Margulis was nominated by the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences to be included in the 1999-2000 edition of *Who's Who Among Students in American Colleges and Universities*. Jennifer has two book reviews that are to be published in *African Studies Review*. One review is on James Walvin's recent biography of Olaudah Equiano, and the other review is on Allan Austin's *African Muslims in Antebellum America*.

Leigh Tillman Partington graduated in August 1999 (Ph.D.). Her adviser was Ron Schuchard, and her dissertation title was "Forging Ireland: Lady Gregory's Re-Vision of Irish History." The fall 1999 issue of *The South Carolina Review* featured Leigh's "'Roughly Hammered Links': Lady Gregory, Irish Ballads, and Political Memory" and her review of James Pethica's edition of *Lady Gregory's Diaries, 1892-1902*. Leigh and her husband, George, became the proud parents of Eleanor Leigh Partington on September 3, 1999. Eleanor weighed 7 lbs. 9 oz. and was 19 3/4 inches long.

Faculty News

Mark Bauerlein published essays and reviews in *Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy Newsletter*, *MLN*, *REAL: Yearbook of Research in English and American Literature*, and *The Encyclopedia of American Cities*. He delivered a lecture on "Social Constructionism: Philosophy of the Academic Marketplace" to the English Department at the University of Pittsburgh. He led the plenary session of the annual convention of the Association of Literary Scholars and Critics on "Humanities and the Undergraduate Curriculum," the papers of which were published in a special issue of *Humanitas/Communitas*, edited and introduced by Professor Bauerlein.

Martine Brownley will give the Goodrich Lecture at Wabash College in April.

Jim Grimsley's fifth novel, a fantasy titled *Kirith Kirin*, will be published in April by Meisha Merlin Publishing of Atlanta. He recently sold a science fiction short story, "Peggy's Plan," to *Asimov's Science Fiction*. In January, Jim gave readings in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem at the Hebrew University (his novel *Dream Boy* was recently published in Hebrew, the occasion for the trip). Jim toured 14 U.S. cities to promote his new novel *Comfort and Joy*. Jim's new play, *Thoroughly*, will be read by the Southeast Playwrights Project in March as part of a fundraiser for that organization. He has been asked to be the keynote speaker for the Magnolia Fund Dinner in Durham, North Carolina, an event to raise funds in support of AIDS treatment. He also will appear in the Agnes Scott Writers Festival in March.

Xuefei Jin (Ha Jin) recently published poems in *The Carolina Quarterly* and *The Kenyon Review*. His novel *Waiting* was picked as a best book of 1999 by *Time Magazine*, *Entertainment Weekly*, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *Chicago Tribune* and was a notable book by ALA and *New York Times*. In February, Xuefei lectured and gave a reading at Sweet Briar College and presented the Edwin B. Lee lecture at Hamilton College.

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Review

By George de Man ('94)

Think of the fall 1999 issue of *The South Carolina Review* ("Ireland in the Arts and Humanities, 1899-1999") as the Emory issue. You have Ronald Schuchard on Yeats, Geraldine Higgins on politics, and poetry by Lucas Carpenter; you have Leigh Tillman Partington on Lady Gregory, not once, but twice. And you have me, an Emory graduate, writing about it.

In *The Countess Cathleen and the Revival of the Bardic Arts*, Professor Schuchard recounts the early efforts of W.B. Yeats and others to bring the chanted word to the Irish theatre. Yeats's restaging, for the Irish Literary Theatre, of his 1889 play *The Countess Cathleen* was fraught with political and artistic difficulties, beginning with the replacement of his hand-picked director, Florence Farr. The unfortunate production (which James Joyce attended and recreates in *Portrait of the Artist*) bewildered many with its pioneering use of rhythmic soliloquies and spoken verse. Yeats and Farr would spend the next decade developing their theories of an Irish theatre based on oral tradition, educating the public in experimental but highly influential lecture-recitals.

Dr. Partington's paper on Lady Gregory coincides with the publication of Gregory's diaries (James Pethica, ed., *Lady Gregory's Diaries 1892-1902*, Oxford UP), which she reviews. "'Roughly Hammered Links': Lady Gregory, Irish Ballads, and Political Memory" examines the playwright's literary criticism in the context of her dual loyalties. As a Unionist spouse with nationalist sympathies, Partington argues, Gregory performed a critical balancing act, bringing subversive folk ballads to a wider audience with one hand and passing politically correct judgements with the other.

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The English Department celebrates with Xuefei Jin

In the department, a flurry of e-mails portrays our excitement as we waited, then celebrated, with a friend.

Chris Lane October 13, 1999
This just in from the AP: Xuefei's Novel *Waiting* has been shortlisted for the National Book Award in fiction. The awards will be announced at this year's dinner, on Nov. 17, in New York. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the National Book Awards. Congratulations to Xuefei who is, shall we say, having a most impressive year!

Jason Jones October 24, 1999
Hi, all . . . Professor Jin's new novel *Waiting* is reviewed in today's *New York Times Book Review*. The review, a rave, is available on-line at www.nytimes.com/books/99/10/24/reviews/991024.24proset.html

Lynna Williams November 17, 1999
greetings: ha jin has won the national book award for *waiting*. he's at the dinner now in new york, and . . . whoopee! you all will have a chance to congratulate him in person when he reads in a friends of the library and cw event at 7 p.m. nov. 30 in the jones room of the library. wow.

Susan Peters November 18, 1999
This is TERRIFIC news! and remember, the library is sponsoring a reading/signing in the Jones Room for Ha Jin on November 30th at 7 p.m. Naturally, we were confident he was going to win so we signed him up early!

Paula Vitaris November 19, 1999
The award ceremony for the National Book Awards will be broadcast at 8 p.m., Sunday, November 21, on C-SPAN2. This, of course, is the ceremony at which Ha Jin won the National Book Award for Fiction.

Barbara Ladd December 1, 1999
I have been checking the News Hour regularly to try to catch Elizabeth Farnsworth's interview with Ha Jin. It ran last night and was great. I hear that he was giving a reading and doing a booksigning on campus too—but I hope some of you had a chance to see it.

Xuefei Jin December 1, 1999
Well, I didn't see it. My son saw it last night, but didn't like it. He said I'd been too nervous and mumbled too much. Anyway I am glad I got through it.

Brendan Corcoran January 20, 2000
Greetings to All—Driving south from Washington, D.C., yesterday, I had the pleasure of listening to Professor Xuefei Jin discuss *Waiting* on the nationally broadcast [except in Atlanta] public radio talk program, The Diane Rehm Show. Professor Jin spoke eloquently about, among many topics, the book, his experiences in China, and his thoughts on language and writing. For any who have been fascinated and moved by *Waiting*, I recommend listening to the program on-line. The Diane Rehm Show maintains an archive of past programs that can be accessed at www.wamu.org/dr/. This radio "colloquium" on the book proved to be very insightful. Once again, congratulations are due our friend and teacher, Professor Jin. 🌟

Xuefei Jin wins National Book Award

Creative Writing Professor Xuefei Jin, who writes under the name Ha Jin, received the 1999 National Book Award for fiction on November 17, 1999, in New York City for his novel *Waiting*.

When presented with the award at the ceremony, held at the Marriott Marquis, Xuefei expressed his appreciation to America, "the land of generosity and prosperity," and "...the English language, which has provided me with a niche where I can do meaningful work."

Xuefei says that he is thrilled to have won, but is more excited about what this attention means for his book, more than for him personally. "This is a relief for my book," he said, "not for myself."

In recognition of the distinction he has brought to the humanities at Emory, Xuefei Jin has been named to the inaugural Young J. Allen Professorship of English and Creative Writing.

Faculty news...continued from page 5

Christopher Lane presented a paper on Michel Foucault and psychoanalysis at the Chicago MLA in December. His review of *Henry James's Thwarted Love* and commentary on the current state of James studies appears in the latest issue of *The Harvard Gay and Lesbian Review*. And his essay on James's *The Tragic Muse* has been reprinted in a collection of essays on Victorian literature, published recently by Fairleigh Dickinson University Press.

Rick Rambuss was invited to St. Andrews University, where he gave a lecture on "The Most Un-English of English Poets." He also was invited by the University of Chicago and their Franke Institute for the Humanities to present a paper in February at the international conference they organized on "Hatred." In early March, Rick will be a featured speaker at NCTE's international conference on Shakespeare and Performance. His presentation is titled "Shakespeare and Popular Visual Culture." Rick will lead a seminar in May at the Shakespeare Association of America's annual meeting in Montreal on the topic "Eroticism and Religion."

Harry Rusche is developing a web site, "Shakespeare and the Players," that shows actors and actresses on postcards from the early part of the 20th century. The address is <http://shakespeare.cc.emory.edu/pindex.taf>.

Following the launch of **Ronald Schuchard's** *Eliot's Dark Angel* by the Friends of the Library at Emory in October, Oxford University Press (New York) hosted a launch at the Grolier Club of New York in November. The New York event was opened by Denis Donoghue, Henry James Professor of English and American Letters at New York University. In January, Oxford University Press (Oxford), the Institute of English Studies (London), and the University of London Librarian hosted a launch at Senate House, an event opened by Sir Frank Kermode of King's College, Cambridge University. 🌟

Worst of all was the way the notes mangled Snyder's description of his fuel can: "piggyback can/of saw-mix gas and oil for the chain." That line was glossed in this way: "chain" was said to be a good example of the figure synecdoche, a part of the saw standing in for the whole of the saw, as "head" stands in for the entire animal when one is tallying cattle in a field.

It is a foolish error. No one but a person trained to think that words cannot mean what they say could make such an error, an error born of the belief that there is no such thing as a straightforward poet. What's more, whoever believed that "chain" could not possibly mean "chain" contrived to smother that ignorance with more disinformation. I read the footnote in a state of disbelief. Snyder's sentence became a grammarian's nightmare, and adjectives and nouns, like sub-atomic particles in an elemental plasmatic state, floated free of their proper relationships and entered into bizarre new combinations.

It's hard to work up enthusiasm for poetry in students when they must first struggle through a slough of errors. Snyder could not have made it clearer. To run a chain saw first you need a mix of gas and oil to power it (that's the "saw-mix gas"), and you also need a supply of oil which is kept in a separate reservoir and which lubricates the steel bar around which the chain rotates. Without this constant bath of oil--literally, "oil for the chain"--the chain would become so hot as to seize in its track.

To whom does this matter? Certainly not to my freshmen. They thought my objections to the Norton footnotes were tedious and pedantic. Even more discouraging, most of them thought that it didn't make any difference, that the poem could be read equally in error and in truth. So shards are bark and the oil goes on the chain--okay, fine, whatever. Getting it right was not something they had been taught to expect of a poet. In the same way, once, I was told that the poet does not number the streaks of the tulip or describe the different shades in the verdure of the forest.

I'm not so sure. Now and then an artist comes along who can show us infinity in a grain of sand. But they are exceptions. The majority of us, if we look at a grain of sand, see just a grain of sand, and most of the time that's wonder enough. Gertrude Stein reports that when she and her brother were young they chanced to view a photograph of Millet's *Man with a Hoe*. "I remember looking at it a great deal," she writes. "And then we that is my brother and myself very moved not knowing exactly why but very moved showed the photograph to my eldest brother and he looked at it equally solemnly and then he said very decidedly, it is a hell of a hoe, and he was right." 🌱

Eliot's Dark Angel awarded the 1999 Robert PennWarren/Cleanth Brooks prize

Ronald Schuchard's *Eliot's Dark Angel* won the 1999 Robert Penn Warren/Cleanth Brooks Prize for literary criticism.

The prize, which will be presented in April at the Center for Robert Penn Warren Studies at Western Kentucky University, is awarded annually for a book "that exemplifies in spirit, scope, and integrity the innovative, critical interpretation of literature offered by Robert Penn Warren and Cleanth Brooks."

Editorial

By Tom Lilly
Graduate Student

I'm a parking-space bandit. Refusing to pay the rising parking fees, I skulk the asphalt to land a spot close to the quad. Most of the time, my efforts are fruitless. I resign myself to one remote neighborhood street, to my morning mile constitutional from Oakdale Road to Woodruff.

Traffic is the sin of Emory University. Parking decks outnumber student centers and, compared with the DUC, are more aesthetically pleasing. We need cars to survive in Atlanta, yet our institution makes us pay to stow our buns at the bakery. This would not be so outrageous if Parking Services privileged commuting students with parking-deck assignments. Paving Lullwater was a hollow victory. Protestors rallied more against the felling of some trees than against razing the garden apartments.

Daily, this pent-up misery spills from the university gates. Only four roads lead out of campus; only one city block within a half mile of campus, in any direction, permits public parking during business hours. Traffic crawls into Decatur any given afternoon. Emory is a major urban university with a major urban hospital system, attached to the headquarters of the most powerful health organization on the planet, in the middle of a booming metropolis. The emperor stands naked before the city, and we cover our shame by building automobile habitrails.

These atrocities have vindicated my crimes against the university for three years, but my resolve is slipping. Mostly, I blame cold weather. I tire of driving down Emory Road, or pulling into the dorm lot at the base of Asbury Circle, just to pass frosted windshield after frosted

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windshield each morning. Most cars there haven't even moved for days. And the way they're parked! SUVs block hydrants. Sedans cram into handicapped spaces. Coupes just ass-end out in the wrong direction, blocking the Georgia Power substation. These drivers actually break laws I respect; I figure, if I had paid for parking, the fact that no one fines these people would upset me more than the mere fact that they steal parking spaces. Such institutional indifference to high crimes belittles my statement. I want my rebellion to matter. Rattling the bars is useless when my deaf jailer points out that I'm not even in a cell.

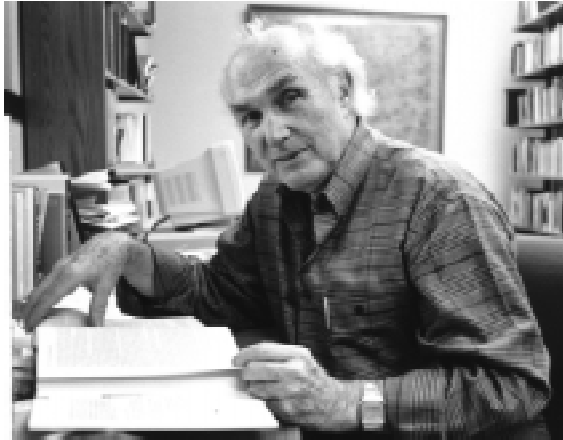
My endurance comes from the proud tradition of political protest that I represent. I often imagine myself shivering over borscht with Solzhenitsyn or marching on Washington with Dr. King. Mostly, I imagine bearing witness to Henry Thoreau's sublime "Resistance to Civil Government," in 1849.

I imagine myself in the lyceum hall as my grunting family ushers out. Everyone else in attendance shares this sentiment: "No wonder he lives in the woods. It's always the quiet ones...." I want to shake his hand and make a pamphlet of his speech to distribute on Boston street corners, because I realize that his imprisonment is his metaphor for the great injustices of chattel slavery and Manifest Destiny. His crime vilifies our social apathy and reifies our responsibilities to our shared community. As he strides off into the snowy woods, I shout behind him: "I will be your one honest man and break the law! My life shall be counter friction to stop the machine!"

Every time I park my car where it doesn't belong, I think: I am counter friction. Proudly, I share Thoreau's cell. We muse on furthering our agenda: what new crimes can we commit, who else can we disobey, how else can we obtain at once a better government? In the prison, we find the freedom we longed for and wonder why everyone else doesn't know about it. "There was a history

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In memoriam: Jerome Beaty (1924-2000)



A memorial service was held in Cannon Chapel on February 20 for Professor Jerome (Jerry) Beaty, our prominent scholar of Victorian literature whose career at Emory spanned forty years. Professor Beaty died of cancer in Atlanta on January 30.

The service was attended by family, friends, and colleagues, including

scholars from American and English universities and an honor guard from the Naval Air Station. His lifelong friend Russell Baker, the distinguished journalist and Pulitzer Prize winner, reminisced about Jerry's schooldays in Baltimore, the interruption of his undergraduate education at Johns Hopkins University by his service as a radar officer on Destroyer Escort in the Atlantic, and his return to take his B.A. in 1947. Jerry went on to take his Ph.D. at the University of Illinois in 1956, and after coming to Emory from the University of Washington in 1960 his scholarship and teaching earned him prestigious fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

The distinguished literary critic Barbara Hardy, University of London, recounted her 40-year scholarly friendship with Jerry, ranging from the appearance of his groundbreaking book *"Middlemarch" from Notebook to Novel* (1960) to the publication of *Misreading "Jane Eyre"* (1996). His friend and co-editor J. Paul Hunter, Professor of English at Chicago and former chairman of the Department, recalled Jerry's valuable "contrarian" (his but") as they produced several *Norton Introduction to* to 1999. Emory Professor

*Jerry Beaty's
career with
Emory spanned
40 years.*

the University of Emory's English special quality as a inimitable "Yeah, editions of the *Literature* from 1973 Ronald Schuchard

described Jerry's importance and influence as an academic mentor to younger scholars, and his former student Professor Kelly Mays ('86) of the University of New Mexico spoke on behalf of multitudes of Emory students whose intellectual lives were influenced by his teaching. Other aspects of his multifaceted life were described by his friend John Fuller, his Norton editor Peter Simon, and his longtime friend in baseball Professor of Psychology Eugene Winograd, who revealed that Jerry was also "a damn fine shortstop." The moving and memorable service was brought to a close by the presentation of the flag of the United States to his widow, Elaine Beaty (Ph.D. '82), by the Atlanta Honor Guard.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the World Wildlife Fund (1250 24th St. N.W., P.O. Box 97180, Washington, D.C. 20077-7180) or to the Cancer Survivors' Fund (DeKalb Medical Center, 2701 N. Decatur Rd., Decatur, GA 30033). 🌿

A Home Improvement Show Named Desire

I was, I have reason to believe, the last writer in America to get cable television. And once I did the deed, I discovered I was right to fear it.

This is my story.

It's a classically American story, filled with passion, with adversity, with television personalities over six feet. But it's a human story, too, about ownership, the pull of natural forces...oh, never mind. Here's the deal: First came the house, and then came cable, and then came this weird obsessive relationship with the home and garden channel.

I'm going public, as painful as it is, because 55.1 million American households have the same access to HGTV that I have—and 55.1 million people is exactly the number of people who are writing their first novel right now. And this very minute, on a quiet street in Atlanta, another writer is picking up a remote. It's too late for me, but there are others who can be stopped before they apply their first faux finish.

Just four short years ago, I didn't even own a tool box. What I had instead was a pink Sam and Libby's shoe box. I was okay with that, since the shoes that came in the box were aggressively minimalist, and so were my tools. I had exactly two: a watercolor brush, for removing popcorn husks from my laptop keyboard, and a duplicate American Express card, for everything else. Sure, there were some hard times: an AmEx card, whatever the credit limit, can't make up for a broken thingamajiggy in the toilet tank forever. But there were good times, too, like the Sunday afternoon when I realized I had excellent credit *and* I could use the card to smooth out my bathroom grout. For a kid who'd glued herself to the craft table in Brownies, I had come a long way.

Then I bought a house.

We moved in, my shoe box and me, and then the cable guy came. He had to come, for baseball's sake, but when he left and I turned on the TV, it was an hour before game time. So I flipped channels, and there it was: a network devoted to houses and gardens. I laughed—I remember it as an Audrey Hepburn kind of laugh—and after ten minutes of watching a woman with a glue gun menace a bowl of artificial fruit I was still laughing.

That was the beginning. Before the summer was over, no one cut a seam, or used a sander, or braised a chicken without me. The shows all have "hosts," and they quickly became like family. That is, they secretly think they're smarter than I am, and when they give me advice, they always want me to write it down. And then they get that tone in their voices that suggests I'm lying about having a pencil.

Now I have a toolbox the size of a smallish condo development. I own a jigsaw, and a power drill, and I give friends completely unsolicited advice about window treatments. I was prepared to live with that, until I realized the characters in my *novel* had window treatments of their own—and were fixing toilets to relax. In chapter fourteen, when one of my characters died a long, lingering death, it was all I could do to keep everyone else from building a cherrywood coffin. I stopped that—but not before about 10 pages of discussion about woodgrain.

I thought about calling the cable guy, but I've fixed every other problem with my novel on my own. I knew the solution has to come from within.

So I have rules now.

I don't watch gardening shows. My characters no longer even have house plants.

I've cut out the hard stuff altogether: no fix-it shows. Nothing about building codes, or installing acoustic tile, or excavating sewer lines. My characters hire work done, when absolutely necessary.

Now and then, I'm tempted to break down—the novel is looking a little rundown to me, a little in need of repair—but when that happens, I know what to do. I watch MTV until the feeling passes. 🌿

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and a gossip which never circulated beyond the walls of the jail," Thoreau writes. Never were we more free, I imagine, than when we read those prison notebooks. Heroes are we criminals all, and Thoreau the greatest of us all.

But coldly, I recall my curiosity of the actual contents of that history and gossip, the first time I ever taught "Resistance to Civil Government." Thoreau discloses everything about his act of disobedience except this history. Why doesn't he share the calls of our fellow criminals-at-large? I imagine myself in the prison, again, by candlelight perusing these "songs" of "avenging" escapees. This dirty limerick is no *Paradise Lost*. I open the diary of Thoreau's arsonist cell-mate. "Sunday. Woke at ten. Ate half my gruel. Chatte with gaolor Moe. H. talks in his sleep. Somebody pay his fine." I begin to wonder whether crime is part of the process, not the resistance.

And I wonder: Is this more about building bigger walls to protect what we refuse to share? We are not swallowed whole like defiant Jonah; rather, our chains seem weightless, like lobotomized Harrison Bergeron. How do I know if my resistance isn't part of the greater momentum of the machine?

Until someone proves me wrong though, I won't change my present course of action. I still circle, park with extreme prejudice, and won't pay. However, I am no longer certain that I am the squeaky wheel needing grease. I'm a graduate student; I study and teach at Emory University. I am the institution's quintessential representative. The chill I feel now is that my own imagination is counter-friction to my desire to resist. 🌿



Poems

By Jon Loomis
Visiting Assistant Professor
Creative Writing

Happiness

Night. Crickets
winding their watches.
Summer burning out

at last, the lawn scorched,
the big catalpa slowly
stripping down to scabs.

A spider rappels
from the ceiling fan.
A chartreuse tree-frog's

glued to the screen,
haloed in moths.
The house settles

an eighth of an inch—
deep in their burrows
the fire ants rejoice.

Beach Point Aubade

When the wind aches in the pines,
and the million visible stars

douse their small fires
(as they will—as we pray

they will), when the wisteria
dangles its long green testicles

under the porch,
under the bruised sky—

I'm glad again for this body,
such as it is (stumbling

heartbeat, hair in the ears),
this body which loves you—

what else is it good for,
old dog, old sausage, old shoe?

"Happiness" was published in the fall 1999 issue of *FIELD*. "Beach Point Aubade" was published in the summer 1997 issue of *Poetry East*.

Danielle Sered awarded Rhodes Scholarship

The November 1999 issue of Loose Canons featured Danielle Sered in our "Uncompromising Undergraduates" series. At that time, she was a nominee for the Rhodes Scholarship.

To say that Danielle Sered is an outstanding student would be a gross understatement. A senior English major, she has published essays and poems in national literary and college magazines, she is a recipient of a national Beinecke Brothers Memorial Scholarship for graduate study and a Norton Scholars Prize from W.W. Norton and the Modern Language Association, and she is a member of Phi Beta Kappa honor society. Danielle recently was awarded a *USA Today* scholarship.

In December, Danielle was named a Rhodes Scholar by the Cecil Rhodes Scholarship Trust. One of 32 students selected from 935 applicants nationwide, Danielle ranks as the first female Emory undergraduate student to be honored with this prestigious award.

Danielle's excellent academic accomplishments, her participation and leadership in community endeavors, and her physical vigor were instrumental in her having been named Emory's 16th Rhodes Scholar. With this scholarship, Danielle will have the opportunity to earn her master's degree in English at Oxford University, England.

Reflections

By Danielle Sered

The week after I was awarded the Rhodes Scholarship, I was approached like a star quarterback after the Superbowl by countless reporters from newspapers on campus and off, radio and TV, all of them asking, "How does it feel?" I answered them honestly: I told them it was a surprise--especially after meeting the other candidates--that it was a truly humbling experience, that I was deeply thankful for the support and encouragement I had received here at Emory. At the end of the week, a very close friend asked me, "How does it feel?" I answered them differently. She was looking for a different answer.

*The strongest forces
in my life are
simply dazzling...*

The answer I gave her has been a long time coming, but it began some time last year when one month I received a travel grant, which allowed me to go to Ireland and complete my dream project, and then a few months later received the Beinecke Scholarship, which will fund the bulk of my graduate education. Until then, and even until now, I understood personal growth in one way: overcoming hardship intelligently. A person grew, I thought, by managing adversity, by surviving sorrow, by making it through a hard place or time. When first the travel grant and then the Beinecke came through, I had to ask myself: How can one grow out of a good thing? What does it mean to be deeply affected by positive change? When does fortune become substantial enough to shape a life?

I am in a place now where the strongest forces in my life are simply dazzling to me. And I am just beginning to learn how to grow from them. My hope is that by the time my plane lands in England in September, I might know how to embrace joy without guilt, to welcome luck without doubt, and perhaps even to walk through the wide open door of these next two years without the slightest hesitation. 🌟

One choice: From the ivory tower to the corporate tower

By Dansby Evans (Ph.D. '98)

My choice to seek and find employment outside the academy was neither easily nor quickly made. After envisioning and pursuing an academic career for seven or eight years, my shift to images of corporate towers, business suits, and mobile devices took some time to develop. While the process was gradual, and, at times, painful, I ultimately got the job I wanted in the city I wanted to live in, and I am extremely pleased with my choice. Further, my search for a non-academic position introduced me to a number of career opportunities for humanities Ph.D.s that offer security, stimulating work, and vast future options.

Following receipt of my Ph.D. in May of 1998, I was lucky to land part-time assignments teaching Freshman Composition at Emory and "Management Communications" at Georgia Tech's DuPree College of Management. Simultaneously, I was applying for tenure-track or, at least, contract teaching positions, but I was becoming increasingly frustrated by the "rules" and the lack of choices. While reportedly a good year for medieval positions, there were only two located in cities where I would consider living. I was not a little irritated by the idea that I was supposed to apply to all available positions in my field, so I decided to limit my search to five schools located in places where I could at least imagine living happily. Needless to say, I did not get any MLA interviews.

Just prior to Christmas break, both Emory and Agnes Scott College offered me part-time teaching appointments for spring semester. I was relieved to have "full-time" work, as my student loan repayments had begun and I certainly intended to continue living on my own. The promise of employment at two reputable schools was a boon; ironically, my luck in stringing together *ad hoc* teaching jobs cemented my resolve to find employment outside the academy.

In January, I decided to invest time researching non-academic jobs that were matched to my academic skills. I first visited Emory's Career Services, where I found information on various companies, a book on academic to the business résumé writing, interview that specifically targeted the website of the Woodrow that, among other things, is solutions to the current facing humanities Ph.D.s. I extensively searched job listing websites, such as monster.com, careerpath.com, and headhunter.net. I was overwhelmed by the thousands of available jobs, and I saw a number of positions that required the same skills I had honed during graduate school: analytical skills, writing and communication skills, and research skills.

Inspired by such hard proof of the hot economy I had been hearing about, I intensified my efforts. I crafted a business résumé and began sending out copies. I sought the advice of other Ph.D.s who had made the transition, such as Mark Ledden and Renee Dye, two Emory English Ph.D.s who last spring held a meeting of graduate students in Kemp Malone to discuss careers at McKinsey and Company. I also met with several career advisors and began networking through several Atlanta contacts. When I could locate their e-mail addresses, I sent managers and presidents of different companies electronic cover letters with résumés attached. And I read a number of books on careers, résumés, and interviewing.

I can say that--for me--the choice was right.

transitioning from the world, and resources on strategies, and companies Emory graduates. I visited Wilson Foundation, a group researching and seeking employment dilemma

Corporate tower...continued from left

Despite my diligence, I encountered a number of hurdles along the way. For example, I submitted over 90 resumes but landed only a couple of interviews, some really nice (and complimentary of my education) declination letters, and a few phone calls: not very impressive percentage-wise. I endured infuriating conversations with recruiters, encountered various dead-ends in my networking, received bad advice from mentors, and suffered intense anxiety. Ultimately, however, my persistence brought results.

In the February MLA short job list, a colleague brought to my attention an advertisement for "Communications Professionals" placed by Golin/Harris International, New York, seeking applications from "Ph.D.s across disciplines" who had excellent writing, analytical and research skills. The General Manager, who holds a Ph.D. in History from Columbia University, requested that an application letter and a C.V. be sent to him. I applied, and though it took Golin/Harris two months to call me for an interview and another three months to make me an offer, I felt a match was inevitable from the first time I met with them.

Golin/Harris International offers communications consulting services to Fortune 500 companies. That encompasses an enormous variety of daily tasks, including extensive document creation, dozens of daily phone calls and e-mails, budget responsibilities, and regular client contact. It also involves familiarity with print, broadcast, and on-line media and disseminating client communications through targeted channels. There is an occasional business trip, and I have been lucky to be involved in some fun New York-based projects, including the launch of the sothebys.amazon.com online auction site (which involved a bash at Sotheby's New York showroom), a brief appearance on the

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Corporate tower...continued from page 11

Today show, and several 'power' lunches. The work is collaborative, engaging, and dynamic, and the office--located in the Chrysler Building--is light-filled, spacious, and technologically advanced (dare I recall my part-time teacher work spaces?). Best of all, it is filled with English Ph.D.s, all of whom--for reasons similar to my own--have chosen careers outside the academy.

I continue to meet Ph.D.s who hold myriad non-academic jobs. In addition to my colleagues at Golin/Harris, I know or have met researchers for private institutions, editors and translators, writers, and consultants who hold doctoral degrees. Most professions are experiencing a labor shortage, and many organizations are recognizing the analytical and communication skills that humanities Ph.D.s can offer. While I would not recommend my career path for everyone, nor would I state that everyone would find the work I do fulfilling, I can say that--for me--the choice was right.

You may e-mail Dansby at dansby@sprynet.com
The Woodrow Wilson Foundation site is www.woodrow.org
Information dealing with "Humanities Ph.D.s and Careers Outside the Academy" can be found at www.woodrow.org/conferences/phd/



Andrea with Barrie Spurr at St. Andrews

Travels to the other side

By Andrea de Man

In May of 1999, I was one of two recipients of the newly established Dean's Travel Awards for Emory College staff members.

These generous awards are the result of several years of lobbying by the College Staff Council to afford staff members the opportunity for personal development and enrichment through travel. Any interested staff member may submit a proposal to the chair of the department who then nominates her or him in a letter to the Dean.

Recipients of these awards must travel to one of the countries where Emory participates in Study Abroad programs, although it is not required that one be there when the program is in session or assist with the program. The fledgling nature of the Travel Award prompted me to seek advice from the Center for International Programs Abroad, where I collected brochures and information about all the possibilities. I could have chosen to go to China, Japan, India, Spain or several other places, but decided instead on England and Scotland. Although I had been there before, I am the Undergraduate Secretary in the English Department, and I felt it would be beneficial for me and for Emory to visit some of the colleges and universities our English majors go to for a semester or more.

Through the CIPA office, I was able to get a list of English majors who were studying in the UK during the fall semester. A dozen or more of our students would be in places such as Brighton, London, Oxford, Manchester, Lancaster and St. Andrews, so I planned my trip with these locations in mind. I contacted the students by e-mail to let them know of my impending visit and asked if there was anything they needed. Their response was enthusiastic, and as we were approaching our spring registration, I assembled packets for these students with material I thought they might find helpful in making their decisions--transcripts, course offerings, and information about the English major requirements. I also made appointments to meet with two of the directors, Dr. Penny Chaloner, Director of the International Summer School at the University of Sussex in Brighton, and Dr. Barrie Spurr, who is the Associate Director of Admissions at St. Andrews.

The focus of my trip, however, was an itinerary rich in art, architecture, gardens, history and culture. I purchased a membership in The National Trust, an organization begun in 1895 to protect and maintain national treasures as diverse as ancient stone circles, Roman ruins, medieval castles, and historic homes and gardens. One of the many benefits of the membership is free admittance to literally hundreds of sites throughout Great Britain. For example, it was such a pleasure to walk the paths of gardens designed by Lancelot "Capability" Brown at Petworth House, south of London. Brown was an 18th-century landscape planner who extolled the beauty of the natural landscape. Osterly Park, nearby, was a crumbling Tudor mansion in 1761 when Robert Adam was hired to transform it into a neoclassical country villa. Some of Adam's most exquisite work is found here in his richly carved plaster work and straight-lined furniture. Waddeston Manor in Buckinghamshire was the home of Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild and was built in the 1870s. The house is



Only in England!

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What the teacher is learning

by Carol J. Luther (Ph.D. '89)

Reading Jane Tompkins's *A Life in School: What the Teacher Learned* and hearing her speak at a conference caused me to reflect on my own teaching situation at a community college. I was profoundly struck by Tompkins's misery as a student and as a teacher for much of her career. Her experiences were so different from mine that I began to consider my teaching circumstances in more detail. The disadvantages of working in a community college are obvious, but for those who are interested in teaching there are certain rewards.

Colleagues have greatly assisted my development as a teacher. While the college has a structure for professional development activities, many activities go on informally. When I am working on new assignments, I frequently discuss them at various stages with three or four of my peers and get many helpful suggestions. Colleagues and I often trade assignments (Do you have a good idea for an analysis essay? Do you have a good handout for teaching World Wide Web documentation?). Other instructors' unique methods have led me to experiment with new teaching techniques: small group projects, kinesthetic activities, visual presentations, and multimedia.

Collaborations with colleagues have been instructive. On two occasions, a colleague and I who were teaching different sections of the same course worked together in developing the syllabus and assignments. The first time we did it was the first time I had taught the course, and my colleague was more of a mentor. The second time I was able to contribute more. Nevertheless, on both occasions, this teamwork decreased the work of planning and creatively inspired both of us. Throughout the semester we shared developments in our classes, the partnership becoming the equivalent of a teaching seminar. On several occasions, I have also team taught a course with two other instructors. We had to divide the material and yet to provide consistent standards for students as we planned our individual units and cooperated in devising the major project for the course, the writing of a satire. I learned much from this teamwork.

In short, my energetic, supportive colleagues inspire me.

Further, as I pondered Jane Tompkins's experiences with her students at four-year universities, I reflected on the challenge of teaching at the community college level. In the public community college we are at the forefront of fighting the nonintellectual, materialistic popular culture and of preserving civilization as we know it. I say that both humorously and seriously. If we here cannot inspire an appreciation of good writing and literature in the student who has entered college with a GED, an unimpressive high school record, or a desire to get a two-year degree as quickly as possible so as to get that fabulous job that awaits at cyberspace.com, what will become of the literary culture that we love and the future of scholarly endeavors in state-supported higher education? If these students do not find something of intrinsic value in their education now, I fear more budget cuts in public higher education as they become the taxpayers and voters of the future. Might the study of Emily Dickinson's poetry, for example, become nearly extinct if her poetry is not taught with all the passion, scholarly knowledge, and skill that we have within ourselves? Not if I can help it! 🌿



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spectacular, with a vast collection of 18th-century French decorative arts and important portraits by Sir Joshua Reynolds and Thomas Gainsborough; it also houses an extravagant wine cellar containing many of the most sought-after wines in the world, some dating from 1855. Labels for some of the later bottles are the result of commissioned works of art by artists as familiar as Salvador Dali, Francis Bacon, Marc Chagall and Pablo Picasso.

Abbotsford, the home of Sir Walter Scott, houses a library of 7,000 books, including Robert Burns's personal copy of *Tam o' Shanter*, with his corrections, which he gave to Scott. Scott's own *Lady of The Lake* is on display. Mementoes of Robert Macgregor, the Highland rogue better known as Rob Roy are in glass cases—his leather purse, sword, gun, his skene dhu (dirk), the silver brooch of his wife, Helen. Locks of hair tied with ribbon belonging to Lord Nelson and Bonnie Prince Charlie, the stitchery purse of Flora McDonald, the heroine from the Isle of Skye, a ring belonging to Lord Byron and willed to Scott by Byron, portraits of "Old Beardie", Scott's great-grandfather, a wooden box made from Shakespeare's mulberry tree...these are all part of a collection of curiosities assembled by this author of *Ivanhoe*, *Rob Roy*, *The Lady of The Lake*, and other stories.

Throughout England there were constant reminders of fall: crisp air, the smell of burning leaves and coal fires, glorious sunsets and rich, starry skies. The Pleiades and Cassiopeia don't look *quite* as magnificent in Atlanta as they do on the White Moss Trail in the Lake District near Windermere, and roasted chestnuts don't smell *quite* as rich and aromatic as they do there. Boathouses on the lake near Bowness were closed tight for the winter and the only sounds were geese honking overhead and voices of smaller birds...suddenly from

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nowhere came the deep cry of "Pull!" and two groups of boys appeared in their racing war canoes.

Villages and churches were preparing for harvest celebrations. Ducking in from the rain, I would find altars mounded with the riches of the field—gooseberries, sheaves of wheat and other grains, nuts, vegetables, flowers. In one church, apparently in the middle of a food drive for the hungry, communicants had placed cans of Irish stew, spaghetti and meatballs, Spam...I wonder who was the lucky recipient of THAT one! Strains of "We Gather Together To Ask The Lord's Blessing" and "We Plow The Fields and Scatter (the good seed on the ground...)" from the creaky church organ filled the sanctuary, and little children practiced a church play.

In Oxford, after a day at the colleges and the Ashmolean, I went to the theater to see "Closer," a sexually-charged study in personal ambiguities. Feeling the need of a bit of classical theater, I went to see a dynamic production of Marlowe's "The Jew of Malta" at the Almeida Theater in London several days later. This evening was made even more memorable by the companionship of Rachel Boulton, who helps coordinate Emory's Study Abroad programs in England. And my trip into London wouldn't have been complete without a visit to the National Gallery, with Uccello's "Battle of San Romano" and "The Madonna of the Rocks" by Leonardo. The Tate has an enormous and comprehensive show of the works of Turner.

At the beginning of my trip, I located a radio station that played classical music, and I was amazed that I was able to receive it throughout England. Miles and miles of driving were made pleasurable by the rich sounds of Albinoni's *Adagio in G Minor*, Barber's *Adagio for Strings*, and Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez*. Meanwhile, pheasants—30 or 40 at a time—would be flushed from the hedgerows by the sound of the car; moss terraces near waterfalls and Constable skies of mountain range-like

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Faculty Profile: Catherine Nickerson

By Jacquelyn Aly

Kate Nickerson is an associate professor of American Studies and English. She holds a joint appointment in the Graduate Institute of Liberal Arts and the English Department and is a member of the associated faculty in Asian Studies and Violence Studies.



"...if the teacher is not respected,
and the student not cared for,
Confusion will arise, however clever one is.
This is the crux of mystery."

Tao Te Ching Attributed to Lao Tsu

When Kate Nickerson successfully completed the tenure process in the spring of 1998, she encountered a compelling need for change, for reentering the world, and for reconnection of mind and body. As a graduate student and then an assistant professor striving for tenure, Kate "lived in her head." In her article

"Riding the Post-Tenure Tiger" in the December 1999/January 2000 issue of *The Academic Exchange* Kate summarized, "I had been taking the idea of the life of the mind far too seriously, intently cultivating my mental skills and acting as if having a body was simply a tragic condition to be endured."

Kate's need to reintegrate—though not entirely clear to her as that—propelled her in a direction that ultimately helped restore her health, taught her much about her own process of learning, and enhanced her teaching. As a self-defined act of rebellion against the focused years of intellectual work, she turned to the challenge of learning Tai Chi. Kate chose Tai Chi for a number of reasons: it was a physical activity which she found extremely intimidating; she would have no guarantee of success; she would be a novice, giving up the security of being an expert (which had made her comfortable in the classroom); and it put her in the position of being a very dependent student. As she began to learn, she was taught—and experienced—the mind and body reconnection she sought. Through Tai Chi, Kate learned to observe and analyze her own learning process and became more sensitive to how she learned best. She incorporated these insights into her philosophy and style of teaching. In Kate's article in *The Academic Exchange*, she observed that "...the most powerful yin-yang irony is that in trying to rebel against the life of the mind and my identity as tenured professor, I learned inadvertently how to be a better teacher."

Kate goes on to describe these insights and changes:

I realize I am discerning larger issues about the yin and yang of learning: that mastery comes only through the daily practice of admitting deficiency, and that you can only become someone's student by becoming your own teacher. I have a new sense of a responsibility to guide students into, through, and out of the productive but uncomfortable stage of confessed ignorance and to reacquaint them with the sheer pleasure of learning new things...I'm also taking what I've learned about teaching styles directly to my students, urging them to think about how they learn and stressing self-tutoring as a life-long necessity.

Last year, Kate received the Center for Teaching and Curriculum's 1999 Excellence in Teaching Award in the Humanities. The award recognized not only her fine teaching but also the careful documentation of this teaching in her portfolio, which included teaching

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evaluations by peers, self-evaluations, student evaluations, her statement on scholarship and teaching, and a catalog of teaching and advising. Winners of this award are selected by a committee of Emory College faculty.

Excerpts from student evaluations illustrate the impact of Kate's teaching style on some of her students:

- Professor Nickerson epitomizes what a teacher should be...she has had a wonderful effect on her students.
- The professor's encouragement of expression and her own ideas were the highlight of the course. She was enthusiastic and brought life to some topics which I would normally consider dead.
- Many new thought processes raced through my mind as I tried to match wits with--or simply understand--my fellow students and professor. Very exciting. Classes were intellectual masterpieces. The course makes you think and the professor makes sure.

For Kate, the greatest benefit of tenure is that it offered her the freedom to continue to evolve both in teaching and research. She was excited to find that she no longer felt bound to filling a particular niche and realized there were many doors opening. The result of this freedom is clearly demonstrated in her expanding research interests.

Throughout Kate's academic career, her research has centered on looking at representations of violence in many cultures and contexts. She questions: Why is violence powerful? How does it get glamorized? How does violence become beautiful in film-making after 1975? What are the meanings of violence? How is it that violence can become quite pleasant to watch? How does Lizzie Borden, an axe murderer, become an icon of feminist rebellion in the 70s and 80s?

Della Borton reviewed Kate's recently published book *The Web of Iniquity: Early Detective Fiction by American Women* in the July issue of *The Women's Review of Books*. Borton says, "Nickerson explores the historical and literary contexts within which detective fiction emerged. Her book makes an important contribution to the study of the ways popular genre fiction written and read by middle-class women--fiction traditionally considered conservative--challenged domestic ideology."

A second manuscript, "Lizzie Borden and the Fascinations of the Past" is a work-in-progress. Kate states that Lizzie Borden was fascinating and an icon in her own time. She was acquitted by a Victorian jury because they could not conceive of a lady committing such a crime. Lizzie's story resurfaced in the 1920s when Americans became fascinated with Victorians, whom they viewed as being repressed and strange. There was a disturbing trend in the 70s and 80s when Lizzie Borden--axe murderer--became an icon of feminist rebellion. Today there is an active Lizzie Borden Society, and the house in which the murders occurred is now a bed-and-breakfast. Kate is looking at the representation of Lizzie Borden as an icon in different contexts and across several generations of American culture.

A new project Kate is considering is a study on the influence of Bruce Lee on African Americans who were in their teens in the early 70s. At that time, Bruce Lee movies were shown in the same theaters that showed blaxploitation films such as "Shaft" and "Superfly." Men who saw these films while in their teens viewed Bruce Lee as a figure of power who was inspiring, hopeful, and offered an empowering way to deal with racism. Kate has talked to some of these men, who indicate that their perspectives were not about violence but about self-confidence, self-defense, and self-mastery. Kate's research will partly consist of interviewing martial arts teachers who are now in their 40s and will probably be a book-length project.

Beyond that? Who knows. After all, this is Kate Nickerson, who trusts her own process and who embraces the importance of life-long learning, the challenge of new experiences, and the freedom to evolve. 🌟

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clouds created a heavenly spectacle, and sheep-filled meadow upon meadow made having rented the car worthwhile.

I had remembered Glasgow as a smoky, industrial city, but this time I knew I could find its better side. My hotel was a short walk from the university, where I found an item of possible interest to anyone who has taken an oral examination or is about to: the Orals Examination Chair. Built in 1775, it has a dolomite slab for a seat, imbedded in the wood. Over the head is a carved laurel garland with an hourglass. The student's time is up when all the sand has flowed through the hourglass, upon which is engraved "Fluxit," meaning "It has flowed through." Maybe we could get one of these for the Malone Library! At the Hunterian Museum next to the university, I visited the re-created home of Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh. They were among a group of energetic and enormously talented artists and students in Glasgow in the late 1880s, and this reconstruction of their home from about 1908 is an architectural gem. While Frank Lloyd Wright was creating his masterworks in the United States, the Mackintoshes were carving out their niches as innovative and insightful designers in Glasgow.

After a day spent at St. Andrews, I began the last leg of the trip. I had traveled from London to Brighton, Oxford to the Cotswolds, the Lake District to Lancaster and Manchester, Glasgow to Edinburgh, and was now headed back to London. In a matter of hours, I would find myself on a plane heading home. From the spires of cathedrals to meals of mussels and roasted lamb, from fall apple festivals to Anglo-Saxon ruins, from the ha-has and water follies of landscapes to the post-modern architecture of my friend Charles Jencks, from the pre-Raphaelite paintings to the Scottish colorists, I had absorbed it all. My life has been enriched. 🌟

Richard Ellmann Memorial Lectures

The Department of English is the home of the Richard Ellmann Lectures in Modern Literature, chaired and directed by Professor Ronald Schuchard. The biennial lecture series, inaugurated by Seamus Heaney in 1988, was endowed in honor of the literary achievement of Richard Ellmann (1918-1987), who served Emory University as the first Robert W. Woodruff Professor from 1980 to 1987.

The lectures aim to perpetuate the tradition of Ellmann's writing, which set the highest standards of critical inquiry and humanistic scholarship, and his public lectures, which were unparalleled in their appeal to a worldwide audience.

In addition to Seamus Heaney, Ellmann lecturers include Denis Donoghue, Helen Vendler, Henry Louis Gates Jr., and A.S. Byatt.

The next lecture series will be given by the English novelist David Lodge in October 2001.

The Ellmann lectures are published for Emory by Harvard University Press.

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In her essay "The Quotable Yeats: Modified in the Guts of the Living," Geraldine Higgins compares the use and misuse of poetry in the hands and mouths of politicians. Both Republicans and Unionists would like to claim Yeats as their own, as the printed exchange between Social Democratic and Labour leader John Hume and Ulster Unionist head David Trimble demonstrates. The debate extends far beyond the practice of taking old chestnuts from "The Second Coming" or "The Lake Isle of Innisfree," however; Higgins argues that these borrowings represent an attempt by both sides to frame their ideas within the context of a cultural tradition.

Dr. Carpenter (Oxford College), author of the poems "The Discovery of the C.S.S. Hunley" and "Flannery O'Connor at Lourdes," is on leave in Brussels.

In the Spotlight: Creative Writing's Grimsley and Skibell

Jim Grimsley joined the English Department last fall as senior resident fellow in the Creative Writing Program. Following is an excerpt from an article written by Richard A. Hermes that appeared in the fall 1999 edition of *Emory Magazine*.

This fall, after spending 19 years in a clerical position at Grady Hospital, he [Grimsley] comes to Emory as the senior resident fellow in the Creative Writing Program. Grimsley's appointment might be viewed as unconventional; he does not hold an advanced degree, and he has not trod the traditional academic path. But over the years, he has relentlessly hammered out a reputation as a prolific dramatist and novelist with a powerful voice and an authentic vision of a stark, unforgiving South.

During nearly two decades as a secretary at Grady Hospital, Grimsley struggled to receive recognition as a writer. In 1988, he won the George Oppenheimer/Newsday Best New American Playwright Award for *Mr. Universe*, which premiered at Atlanta's 7Stages Theater, where Grimsley still serves as the playwright-in-residence. In the ten years between 1983 and 1993, Grimsley saw 14 of his plays produced.

Winter Birds [his debut novel] received the Sue Kaufman Prize for First Fiction from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and a PEN/Hemingway Award citation. His second novel, *Dream Boy*, was nominated for the Lambda Literary Award for Fiction and won the American Library Association's Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Book Award for Literature. In 1998, his most recent novel, *My Drowning*, earned him the Georgia Author of the Year award for Fiction. His fourth novel, *Comfort and Joy*, has already been published in Dutch, French, and German, and the English-language edition arrives in the United States this fall.

Joseph Skibell began his appointment to the Creative Writing Program in fall 1999 as assistant professor of English. Following is an excerpt of an article that highlighted Skibell's recent novel *Blessing on the Moon*. The article, written by Andrew W.M. Bierle, appeared in the fall 1999 edition of *Emory Magazine*.

The narrator of Joseph Skibell's novel, *A Blessing on the Moon*, dies on the first page. Skibell's protagonist, Chaim Skibelski, rises from the dead to seek spiritual enlightenment and, ultimately, peace. Along the way he encounters his dead fellow villagers, slain members of his own family, and the talking, disembodied head of the German soldier who killed him.

A Blessing on the Moon is an allegory of the experiences of European Jews during the Holocaust, and its creation was a deeply personal odyssey for Skibell, who lost at least 18 relatives in the Holocaust and who patterned and named the character Chaim Skibelski after his own great-grandfather.

Critics have praised Skibell's literary debut as a tour de force, and the book has received the Richard and Hinda Rosenthal Foundation Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the Steven Turner Award for First Fiction from the Texas Institute of Letters.

Skibell received his bachelor's degree from the University of Texas at Austin in 1981, and from 1993 to 1996 he was a James A. Michener Fellow at the Texas Center for Writers, where he earned his MFA in creative writing. From 1996 to 1997, he was a Jay C. and Ruth Hall Fellow in Fiction at the Wisconsin Institute for Creative Writing at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, and it was there he completed *A Blessing on the Moon*.

A playwright as well as a novelist, Skibell has seen his work produced at theaters in Austin, Fort Worth, Los Angeles, Tampa, and Seattle. He also has written for film and television, and one of his responsibilities at Emory will be to inaugurate a screenwriting class.