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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR



Dear Alumni/ae and Friends of the Department of English and Comparative Literature,

A great deal is happening in our department, and we are reviving the long-defunct departmental newsletter as a way of letting you share in some of the excitement. We have faculty winning awards and devising exciting new courses, students writing novel and interesting dissertations, and many conferences in the planning. We hope that the stories and interviews included in this newsletter will give you something of the flavor of contemporary departmental life. *U.S. News and World Report* currently ranks our department fourth in the nation. We are proud of that ranking and want you to know about the intellectual achievements of our faculty and students that have won us that distinction.

Electronic distribution makes it easy to reach you, and we intend to publish the newsletter twice a year, once in the fall and once in the late spring. We are eager to hear your reactions. Please let us know if you have suggestions for articles or if you want to tell us a bit about your life after leaving the department. Of course, if you wish to be removed from the mailing list, let us know that also.

Best,
Jean E. Howard

COMMENTS

should be addressed (with the subject heading "NEWSLETTER") to **Jean E. Howard**, Chair of English & Comparative Literature, at jfh5@columbia.edu or to **Michael Mallick**, Newsletter Coordinator, at mgm3@columbia.edu.

THE REMARKABLE CAREER OF KARL KROEBER

After his final semester teaching, having reluctantly decided on retirement at age 83, Karl Kroeber agreed to address the Phi Beta Kappa inductees during the 2009 commencement week. Kroeber, now Mellon Professor emeritus in the Humanities, brought to the occasion his familiar combination of impish wit, feistiness, modesty, and bluntness.

In the blunt mode, he deplored the "dangerous . . . ethical collapse that in the last 30 years has debased primary ideals of our national civil life" with a cowed citizenry having "*chosen*," in the absence of any truly credible threat, "to live fearfully rather than hopefully." However, he expressed faith in the possibility of change, citing the election of Barack Obama, exhorting the students honored that day for their intellectual caliber: "I hope to hear you say, loudly and clearly, we reject fear, we desire to engage with reality, however difficult and uncertain, never to evade it."

For Kroeber, the classroom has always represented not refuge from the world but a forum where he and his colleagues "insist on the healthiness of confronting realities, including ethical realities . . . It is only in the classroom today that there seems genuine resistance to the popular change in America's motto from *e pluribus unum* to "Don't ask, don't tell." Kroeber then, as if breaking frame, cast his foregoing confrontational remarks as "illustrating how I teach—which is not to pass on old prejudices but to press irritating and provocative inquiries so as to raise new questions and unexpected possibilities." [Full text of Kroeber's PBK speech]

Former students confirm the challenging and provocative atmosphere of the Kroeber classroom experience. Charles Ardai (writer, entrepreneur; CC '91) recalled, "Entering his classroom was an experience of sudden clarity akin to the first time I put on glasses: So THAT'S what the world looks like! He challenged



his classroom like a matador mastering a ring full of bulls, ferociously, teasingly darting in and startling us awake with jabs that drew blood; and he awakened in me a love of poetry that has been my constant companion ever since." Rider Strong (actor, writer; CC '04) also thrilled to the challenge Kroeber brought to the classroom: "within a week, he knew your specific reading habits; he would recognize the baggage you had brought with you from years of lazy teaching. If you looked for a 'theme,' or if you tried to find issues of 'identity,' even if you simply wanted to pin down what

(continues on page 5, including an interview with Karl Kroeber)

CARL HOVDE, 1926-2009; CARL WOODRING, 1919-2009

As we were preparing this newsletter for distribution, we learned that two of our department's emeritus faculty had recently passed away: Carl Hovde, 82, on September 5 (for notices, see [The New York Times](#) and [Columbia Spectator](#)); and Carl Woodring, 90, on September 12.

Professor Hovde, an Americanist, taught at Columbia from 1960-95, serving as dean of Columbia College from 1968-72. A memorial service will be held in St. Paul's Chapel on October 22 at 3:30.

Professor Woodring joined Columbia's English Department in 1961 and retired in 1988; his teaching and research specially focused on British Romantic poetry and its cultural, political contexts. A memorial service will be held in Austin, Texas (at a date to be determined).

JOY HAYTON RETIRES AFTER 28 YEARS AS DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATOR

After a storied career as one of the longest-serving departmental administrators in Arts and Sciences, Joy Hayton retired from the English Department in October of 2008. She had held the post since July 1980 when then-chair Martin Meisel hired her as the Departmental Administrator. The job fit her interests and strengths, and few of those who have passed through the department in the last three decades can separate their fondness for the department from their fondness for Joy.

English by birth, Joy received her B.A. and Diploma in Education from Manchester University, taught high school French for several years, and then came to the United States where she worked for ten years in Columbia University's graduate admissions office. That post initiated her career-long interest in graduate affairs, and she became legendary for her encyclopedic memory for the many graduate students who had passed through

the department's program and for her unparalleled mastery of the intricacies of graduate funding and program requirements. Students would enter her office visibly distraught, having just gotten word that their housing was being terminated or their stipend check had gone missing; an hour later they would re-emerge in a state of evident relief when Joy had, again, found a way around the problem.

Asked what she liked best about the job of departmental administrator, she says that fixing things was, indeed, what gave her the greatest pleasure. Her job satisfaction came from helping the many people who turned to her for resolution of their problems or presented her with administrative snarls that she could untangle. She particularly enjoyed seeing the untenured faculty progress through the ranks, and she was delighted when she could provide the research assistance that made the publication of the first book easier

or arranged a course schedule that left untenured faculty the most time for writing. She also liked the variety of her job which, she says, was constantly changing as the university initiated new financial and record-keeping systems, as the student body changed, and as chairpersons turned over. Adjusting her style to that of a new chair was always a particular challenge. "You had to figure out," she says, "what a new chair needed and what would complement their particular strengths and weaknesses. Some were very detail-oriented, and others weren't. Some lacked people skills. You just had to adjust the best you could, and the individual quirks were what made working closely with someone interesting." And being around smart people, she says, was always simply fun.



PAMELA RODMAN APPOINTED ADA IN ENGLISH



Pamela Rodman assumed the position of Academic Departmental Administrator in the Department of English and Comparative Literature in October of 2008, and she brings a formidable list of qualifications to the task of

managing an increasingly complex academic unit. A graduate of Horace Mann High School in Riverdale where she excelled at math and science, Pam went on to receive a B.A. from Harvard in the biological sciences and an MBA from Wharton School of Business. After holding a number of positions in health care organizations, including five years as Administrator in the Department of Urology at the Columbia University Medical Center, Pam decided last year that it was time to change her working environment. The ethos of the Medical Center had for her become increasingly corporate with a lot of time devoted to the bottom line. She was also somewhat depressed by dealing everyday with patients, many of them severely ill.

Rodman's transition to the Morningside campus and to the Department of English and Comparative Literature has been a happy one.

What she especially likes, she says, is the chance to work with students and with faculty who have time actually to stop and talk, and to talk about jazz, dance, books, and movies—all interests of hers. At the Medical Center she managed a budget of close to \$20,000,000 and oversaw a very large staff of administrative assistants. The English Department has both a smaller staff and a smaller budget, and the ADA, from her perspective, has a more varied portfolio that includes, besides oversight of budget and staff, oversight of our graduate and undergraduate programs and daily interactions with our faculty and students and the many administrative officers in Low Library who authorize, facilitate, and sometimes impede the work of the department. Of the downtown campus she says, "It's just beautiful. And so serene compared to uptown. I love walking around it."

Pam's transition to the humanities took a while. Because her high school teachers were so impressed with her abilities at math and science, she entered the med school track at Harvard without really thinking about whether medicine was the right career for her. As senior year approached, she began to get cold feet and spent that year taking electives in psychology, sociology, fine arts and literature—all the things

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Thinking back over what has changed the most in the department in the last three decades, Joy says that perhaps the biggest change came with the consolidation of the department's offices into one space, something that did not happen until 1988-89. Before then, faculty and staff had offices in Hamilton and Lewisohn, as well as in Philosophy Hall. As she remembers it, Martin Meisel successfully argued that to be an effective department English had to have all its faculty under one roof. When a renovation in 1988 led to the construction of offices on the fourth floor of Philosophy Hall, that dream was realized.

The second biggest change came in 1990 when a major restructuring of the graduate program led to a vast reduction in the number of students admitted to the program and to a funding plan that gave all students the same financial package for six years. Before that, many students received no funding, and when they did, it could disappear the following year. As Joy says, these changes in the program completely altered the character of graduate life and the relationship of students to their professors and to the department. The cut-throat competition for attention and for money was vastly diminished, and the whole program became more democratic, more orderly, and more intimate.

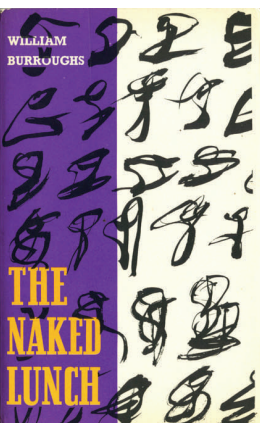
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NAKED LUNCH AT 50; THE BEATS AT COLUMBIA

Conference Celebrates 50th Anniversary of William Burroughs's *Naked Lunch*

From October 8-10, Columbia, in collaboration with NYU and the School of Visual Arts, will host a 3-day conference, "The 50th Anniversary of William S. Burroughs's *Naked Lunch*." This conference is one of a series of such celebrations worldwide honoring Burroughs' "novel"—often characterized more aptly as a "nonlinear narrative" or "sequence of vignettes," and usually modified by such adjectives as "cult," "seminal," "controversial." The kick-off event took place at the beginning of July in Paris, where *Naked Lunch* was first published by Olympia Press in 1959. The book, after first being widely banned, was later published in the U.S. in 1962, following the last major trial of a literary work for obscenity, owing largely to its frank depictions of heroin addiction and homosexuality. The Paris fête began with the launch of *Naked Lunch@50*, a collection of essays co-edited by Burroughs scholar Oliver Harris, who will be the keynote speaker at the Columbia symposium. Harris nicely summed up *Naked Lunch* for the Agence France-Presse in July: "It's not a 'pleasant' book. It's very funny, very dirty, very nasty . . . but what really gives it life is its form—a collage in a frenzy of fragments."

The *Naked Lunch* 50th anniversary celebration in New York will be centered at Columbia where consideration of textual matters will predominate, flanked by the preceding evening at NYU focusing on the legacy of *Naked Lunch*



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among New York artists, and by the following night's finale at the School of Visual Arts featuring film and performance, including a screening of a new documentary *The Beat Hotel*. Friday, October 9, at Columbia will be devoted to a series of talks especially addressing the manuscripts and variants of *Naked Lunch*,

followed by a panel discussion moderated by Ann Douglas, Parr Professor of Comparative Literature in Columbia's English Department. ([Full details](#) on speakers and topics.) The day will conclude with a reception in the Rare Book and Manu-

script Library in Butler, where an exhibition of Burroughs-related material will be on display: the original *Junkie* manuscript with the author's corrections; the "Interzone" manuscript, the textual source for *Naked Lunch*, including unused sections; correspondence from Burroughs and other Beat writers; first editions of *Naked Lunch* and *Junkie*; photographs of Burroughs as well as a 1959 self-portrait; a Dream Machine with Burroughs provenance; and a listening station with a clip of Burroughs reading from *Naked Lunch*.

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Photograph by Louis R. Cartwright, Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Columbia University

OTHER NOTABLE FALL EVENTS

The two conferences and lecture described below represent a few special upcoming events supported by the English Department. Please check the English Department's Events webpage from time to time to find out what else will be happening : <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/english/announce.htm> .

Etienne Balibar on "Secularism and Cosmopolitanism"

Etienne Balibar, Professor of Philosophy Emeritus at the Sorbonne and Distinguished Professor of the Humanities at the University of California, Irvine, will deliver a talk, "Secularism and Cosmopolitanism," Thursday, October 1 at 4 pm in the Maison Française. Professor Balibar is one of the most influential interdisciplinary thinkers alive today. From his early work as a collaborator of Louis Althusser to his recent Wellek Lectures on violence and civility, he has offered fundamental re-imaginings of concepts such as ideology, freedom, class, universality, secularism, and politics, concepts that are indispensable to today's cultural criticism. Himself a powerful critic of the present, he has written with unique and prophetic eloquence about the links between racism, nationalism, and the plight of non-European immigrants in a newly unified Europe.

Histories of Reading/Reading Processes

This conference, organized by Columbia's Eighteenth-Century Group and scheduled for Friday, October 16, will pursue further the questions raised in recent discussions on new literacies: what happens to the reading practices we cultivate in ourselves and teach to others in an age of new media, as we try to figure out what we do with objects of study – electronic literature, film, video games, graphic novels – that are both like and unlike the things we are used to reading? Scholars of the eighteenth century believe their field has a unique contribution to make to the ongoing conversation about futures for the discipline, first because their field has been one of the earliest and most active in the embrace of new databases and digital media, and second, because the eighteenth century was the period in which the disciplinary configurations that continue to shape the modern university were initially laid out. The conference will consist of two faculty-student panels, one on "Histories of the Discipline," the other on "Digital Experiments," concluding with a keynote talk by Matthew Kirschenbaum from the University of Maryland on matters digital and virtual. Professor Jenny Davidson, one of the event's organizers, sees this conference as "a testament to the growing strength of the eighteenth-century group. Matthew Kirschenbaum is a galvanizing speaker—his book *Mechanisms* is one of the most stimulating academic books I have read in years!—and we're really looking forward to putting together a day of conversations that should be of interest to people working in all sorts of different fields."

Approaches to the Late Medieval City

The Columbia University Medieval Guild is pleased to announce its 20th Annual Interdisciplinary Graduate Student Conference, "Approaches to the Late Medieval City," taking place on Friday, October 30. Medieval cities were spaces of exchange, conflict and creativity, drawing together multiple ways of acting in and thinking about the world. Medieval scholars have approached the city in a variety of ways – through the interconnections of literatures, performances, political contexts, modes of defining identity, and forms of authority. This conference will address such question as: How does the city shape late medieval social life and forms of creativity? How do cultural imaginings of self, community and nation, and the social organizations that are their practical counterparts, shape the city in turn? What continuities or fissures can we map in the spaces, times, ideas and practices of late medieval cities? Speakers will include: keynote speaker Sheila Lindenbaum (emerita, Indiana University), Anthony Bale (University of London), Elliot Kendall (University of Exeter), Paul Strohm (Columbia University), Marion Turner (Jesus College Oxford), and David Wallace (University of Pennsylvania). For more information, contact latemedievalcity@gmail.com.

(NAKED LUNCH *continued*)

Columbia and the Beat Writers

Along with Kerouac and Ginsberg, Burroughs is considered, in Ann Douglas's words, "a founding member of the "Beat Generation," the electric revolution in art and manners that kicked off the counterculture and introduced the hipster to mainstream America, a movement for which Jack Kerouac became the mythologizer, Allen Ginsberg the prophet, and Burroughs the theorist" (from [Douglas's introduction](#) to *Word Virus*, a selection of Burroughs' writing). Two of these founding members had strong ties to Columbia. Kerouac studied briefly at Columbia (1940-41), Ginsberg in his fashion stayed the course (1943-1949) and obtained his B.A. (some semesters were interrupted or replaced by suspensions or sojourns in sanatoria). Burroughs, through a friend from St. Louis, met the two writers in 1943, and for a time was part of the neighborhood if not the university.

For decades, Columbia seemed reluctant to acknowledge its association with the Beat Generation. But that reluctance recently has been giving way to greater recognition. One significant turning point occurred in 2004 when, in helping plan the closing festivities of Columbia's 250th-year birthday party, Jerry Kisslinger, Executive Director for Communications in Columbia's Office of Alumni and Development, had an inspiration: a reading of *Howl* at the erstwhile West End (with Ann Douglas, accompanied by students from her Beat Generation seminar, as one of the readers), along with musical performances and student poetry readings; the event drew a capacity crowd of 580. The *Howling*, as Mr. Kisslinger now amusingly thinks of it, has become an annual and increasingly expansive phenomenon (with such added features as a neighborhood walking tour, a reception in Rare Books and Manuscripts Library for a glimpse at the University's Ginsberg collection, lectures or panel discussions on the Beats), but always rhapsodically wrapping up with the reading of Ginsberg's poem (the next *Howling* will take place in February 2010).

Kerouac and Ginsberg, no longer perceived as embarrassments in Columbia's history, are now fondly referred to as "prodigal sons" on the CU Alumni website. As Ann Douglas puts it, though "the Beats were any institution's worst nightmare . . . they also turned out to compose this university's most significant and famous contribution to America's imaginative life in the last sixty years." We asked Professor Douglas, who has written much on the Beats and taught their works each year, for her thoughts on Burroughs, the Beats, the Columbia connection, as

well as on her experience in teaching these writers. She commented:

"I started teaching the Beats in 1980 in a senior seminar, but I couldn't make it an all-Beat course until Ann Charters' anthologies, *The Beat Reader* and *The Portable Jack Kerouac*, appeared in 1992 and 1995; before the 1990s, much of Jack Kerouac's writing in particular, the nucleus of the Beat Generation, was unavailable. Indeed, Kerouac's 'Essentials of Spontaneous Prose,' which he wrote in 1952 after his stylistic breakthrough with *The Subterraneans*, became a guide for Allen Ginsberg in writing *Howl* (1956) and for William Burroughs in writing *Naked Lunch*. In both cases, what

Kerouac provided wasn't a formula designed to achieve a standard product, but rather the reverse: a liberation into the unique and very different voice of each writer."

"Kerouac also provided the titles for both Ginsberg's poem and Burroughs' novel; and in the case of *Naked Lunch*, Kerouac and Ginsberg actually assembled it with Burroughs and several other Burroughs pals from the pages of the manuscript that Burroughs had strewn around the floor! Some of the variants will be on view in the Burroughs exhibition here—Burroughs was

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MEISEL ENDOWMENT ESTABLISHED

Last year the English Department was the recipient of a generous endowment gift from the family and friends of Martha Meisel, late wife of Martin Meisel, Brander Matthews Professor of Dramatic Literature, Emeritus. The Martha Meisel Memorial Fund was established to aid the Chair in pursuing the intellectual goals and activities of the Department, especially those related to theater and dramatic literature. "An appropriate memorial gift was the idea of our children, Maude, Andrew and Joe, leaving me to specify it," Martin Meisel explained. "I thought and they agreed that since we had spent four fifths of our married life—forty years of it—with me teaching or otherwise involved at Columbia (with all three children taking degrees there), Columbia was an appropriate venue." Having served as Chair of the English Department and as Vice President of Arts and Sciences, Meisel "had become painfully aware of the lack of anything like a discretionary fund for the Chair and the department, for contingencies, for enhancements, opportunities, emergencies, whatever—absurd when you think of the size, the budget, the range of the department's activities and needs. So it seemed a very useful thing to create. We stipulated that there should be no strings attached to its use by the Chair, as long as the mission of the department, and the university as an educational, knowledge-creating institution, was being served; but given how I had spent most of my time, and Martha's own interests, things related to drama and theater should be looked on especially favorably."



Martin and Martha Meisel, at home 2007

Imbued from childhood with a sense of commitment to be of service to society, Martha Winkley Meisel had been a Captain in the Salvation Army; enlisted in and taught for the Women's Army Corps; and later became a guide at United Nations Headquarters as well as a lecturer in its programs. In subsequent years, while tending to a growing family, she produced a considerable body of written work, including a taut autobiographical novel, a memoir of her WAC experience in the fifties, travel writing from the family's periods of living abroad, and a detective novel.

Jean Howard, current chair of the department, was elated by and grateful for the gift. "Like many departments at Columbia, the Department of English and Comparative Literature is rich in faculty and students and poor in the dollars we have available to support our ambitious intellectual life. It is extraordinarily generous of the Meisel family to provide this endowment to the department and characteristically astute of Martin to realize that such a fund would be a real and immediate help to us." For her part Howard intends to use the gift in its first years to support both the undergraduate and the Ph.D. theater programs.

KARL KROEBER (continued from page 1)

a book was ‘really saying’ – in his playful way, Kroeber would challenge your ideas until you felt like you were reading for the first time. And this wasn’t some kind of intellectual sadism, but a true respect for literature as an engagement, as a process of discovery. No right or wrong answers, just a restless seeking.”

Besides an inspiring teacher, Kroeber is author of 14 books, including *Romantic Landscape Vision*, *Retelling/Rereading: The Fate of Storytelling in Modern Times*, *Ecological Literary Criticism: Romantic Imagining and the Biology of Mind*, *Artistry in Native American Myths*, and *Make-Believe in Film and Fiction*. In what follows, he reflects on his career and the interests that have informed his teaching and scholarship.

INTERVIEW WITH KARL KROEBER

Michael Mallick: You taught your first class at Columbia in 1952 and your last this spring – any changes in 57 years?

Karl Kroeber: A scholarly answer: yes and no. In the early fifties the students were all male, all white, everybody wore a tie, and you addressed each by his last name prefaced by Mr. A high percentage of students were from the 20 or so excellent Catholic high schools in and around New York; a smaller but solid percentage were Jewish – in those years the other Ivies had harsh quotas, which meant we got a lot of wonderful boys from Bronx Science and Stuyvesant; almost nobody from New England prep schools. Probably 80% were from New York City and environs and the “Middle Atlantic States,” a euphemism for New Jersey. Essentially these were the same kind of students – sons of immigrants – who entered Columbia College with my father, son of a German immigrant, in 1892. Probably 70% of my students entered wanting to become doctors, another 15% lawyers, the rest various kinds of professional men. They wanted to make a decent living, most of them came from non-affluent circumstances, but their primary aim was not money but to become fully educated so they could, as trained professionals, effectively contribute to improving society, making it a better place for themselves and their children. Teaching such students – especially the ones who were the first in their families to attempt higher education – was to me profoundly exciting and rewarding.

Today’s classes, besides including two genders shading into earth-tones away from zinc, never using last names (just as well, many are hyphenated), and dressing as sloppily as possible, come from all over the world – many foreign-born and those not seeming to have lived in 14 exotic countries before coming to Columbia. They all appear to have four-figure IQs, take far too many classes, and have absorbing extra-academic interests. Teaching such students is profoundly exciting and rewarding.

So I see vast shifts; but all I remember from my actual teaching is one year after another filled with fascinating students, every one unique, from whom I learned most of what I know, and whose individuality provided continuous stimulation and pleasure. I’ve always worked hard at teaching; I held long office hours, assigned a lot of writing and took pride in getting the papers back very fast, heavily annotated, and at the other end (too often forgotten in discussions of teaching responsibilities, which don’t finish with a final exam), written many thousands of recommendations. I enjoyed doing these things as the central part of academic life, all of which (even some committee work) I have found exhilarating. Maybe, I’ve reflected, a little too much so for be-

ing the husband and father I might have been.

MM: To me, and I know others, the most remarkable feature of your teaching is the extraordinary range of classes you have taught – can you explain that?

KK: Well, maybe I’m scatter-brained. Maybe I get bored easily. But also, I suspect that if you look closely you’ll see I’ve been teaching the same three things disguised as different topics. All my courses are at root about art, imagination, and storytelling, always inflected by a persistent fascination with natural science.

MM: The science puzzles me.

KK: Well, it is tricky, and I’m not confident about my powers of self-comprehension. But as I’ve thought back on my career, especially why I probably have taught more different courses than any other professor in the entire history of the Columbia English Department, the science inflection kept intruding. Partly it is family history; after all, my father was a member of the National Academy of Sciences. My mother and father were both profoundly interested in art, music, and literature (they even published in *PMLA*!), my father enjoyed translating Housman into German, and, of course, my mother wrote one of the great books of the 20th century, *Ishi in Two Worlds*. But the guests in our house when I was growing up were almost all scientists, often quite distinguished, people like Oppenheimer and the geographer Carl Sauer, or polymath historians like Leonardo Olschki. I learned then that excellent scientists are often deeply interested in the arts, and

“I suspect that if you look closely you’ll see I’ve been teaching the same three things disguised as different topics. All my courses are at root about art, imagination, and storytelling, always inflected by a persistent fascination with natural science.”

respond to them with insight and originality, whereas few humanists have the slightest intellectual interest in any science, and nowadays sometimes little in actual works of art. Both at Wisconsin

and Columbia I often found scientific colleagues more intellectually stimulating to talk with than humanists. Most humanists have little curiosity; they want to tell you what they know, which they regard as philosophic truth. Scientists are curious; they want to find out what you might know that they don’t – and if it can stand up to criticism.

Also, when I was a graduate student here, two of the professors who were very helpful to me were Joe Mazzeo (who wrote a history of biology), and Marjorie Nicolson, whose most important work is about the relation of science and literature. I was lucky in that the two colleagues I admire most and to whom I owe the greatest debts over many years (I met both at Wisconsin), Carl Woodring and Martin Meisel, challenge the rule that humanists are arrogantly ignorant of the most important sector of intellectual accomplishment of the past 400 years. Martin was originally trained as a scientist and has a wonderful, I’d say, unparalleled, grasp of its history, combined with an indecently detailed knowledge of G. B. Shaw and Victorian melodrama. Carl is so profound a humanist scholar that early on he perceived more clearly than any other professor I know that without in-depth understanding of what modern science has done and is doing you’re bound to misinterpret the cultural history of the past 250 years. This made him the most diversely successful of dissertation directors anywhere in our field in the mid-20th century. It is no accident that Carl and Martin have the widest and most solid knowledge of modern European literature, painting, and music of anyone I know in our profession.

My own scientifically oriented research, beginning in the early seventies, has been primarily pioneering in relations between literature and ecology, which has gained me some credit among environmentalists.

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I'm suspicious, however, of environmentalism that doesn't ground itself in solid, high-level science (I'm dubious about Thoreau) or doesn't follow Aldo Leopold and grow out of long-term *working* in natural world and with plants and animals. Visiting a western desert to report sensitive feelings is just another form of our lousy contemporary me-culture. What's really turned me on over the past two decades is the amazing developments in neuroscience, the basis of my book *Ecological Literary Criticism*. The two purely literary studies I hope to be granted life enough to finish will investigate the biology of the mind.

Inadvertently, you've just had an experience painfully familiar to my students – they ask a simple, sensible question and get buried in an avalanche of my rhetoric. Sorry about that. Have we time for something more, or did the bell ring while I was orating?

MM: Could we squeeze in something about art, imagination, and storytelling, and still leave a little room for your interest in American Indian literatures?

KK: No problem if you can listen as fast as I talk. Always my interest has been focused not on aesthetics but on specific works of art. Whatever the title of a course, I always teach specific poems, plays, novels, or specific paintings or specific movies. In the jargon of our profession I do nothing but "close reading," because that is the only way to enter deeply into works of art which are the most complicated, and enduring, artifacts – the only things man makes which approach the dynamic intricacy of nature. Great works of art are endlessly fascinating, challenging you to figure out how they were made and why they are made the way they are, and the different ways in which they can grab and hold other people's attention. Every work of art worth studying exhibits a high level of human skill and embodies significant ethical value, and nothing is more difficult, but also more rewarding, than learning to appreciate that particular manifestation of skill and the worth of its ethical form.

I teach that Percy Shelley was right when he said every great work of art is "a fountain forever overflowing." Every student gets something unique to himself or herself from whatever work we study, and if I can provoke each of them to articulate their experiences, I learn a lot. My part of the conversation – and the best criticism is always conversation, never monologue, discussion, not lecturing – is expressing what I am getting from my latest encounter, perhaps my fiftieth, with the work we're examining together. I scribble notes in the texts I teach from, and almost always when I teach from a book I've used before I wonder, "who was the dope who wrote these comments?"

Works of art are works of imagination, the amazing human faculty that should be, but isn't, the central focus of all study of art. Imagining is not day-dreaming or fantasizing *a la* Emma Bovary, and the very opposite of dreaming. Imagining is reality-oriented, the deliberate exploration of possibilities that may help us discover the greatest dangers and the most beautiful complexities of real life (what Flaubert did with blood, sweat, and tears in creating *Madame Bovary*), which is still far beyond anything we have so far learned. Imagination develops slowly – an infant has no use for possibilities; in our childhood we learn mostly by imitation, as with language. Imagination matures only after we have physically matured – there's never been a great work of art created by an immature person. But it is imagination that enables humans, the only creatures who possess it, to go on learning, growing mentally, and being creative far, far into old age – Sophocles and Ti-

tian.

The primary form of the imaginative exploring and discovering is storytelling. Sometimes it is scientific storytelling – Einstein observed that in science imagination is more important than knowledge. One sunny day Copernicus asked himself, what if, despite what I and everybody else sees, we're moving, not the sun – and the story of modern science began to unfold. But the purest and longest lasting forms of storytelling appear in art: Mycenaean culture vanished long ago, but Odysseus coming out of the wine-dark sea toward Nausicaa, his hands torn and bleeding from jagged rocks by which he saved himself from the cruel sea, is just as alive today as he was three thousand years ago. Hundreds of years after their death Rabelais and Shakespeare's words can make us explode with laughter. So you see, as I'm doing right now, whatever I teach I'm talking about art, imagination, and storytelling.

MM: And I'm guessing that explains your interest in Native American literature.

KK: Literatures, Michael. When Columbus got his continents mixed up, there were over 500 distinct native cultures in North America alone – distinct languages, social structures, religion, economic practices, etc. That had something to do with what happened to me. In the early 1970s I dropped into a meeting of ASAIL, Association for the Study of American Indian Literatures, the acronym expressing hostility aroused by the recent FBI mess at Wounded Knee. Native Americans wanted to start a journal about their literature, but, although they all disliked whites, their deepest distrusts were of "traditional enemies." So they asked me to be editor because I was not Indian, free of hereditary feuds. So I became first editor of *Studies in American Indian Literatures*, a pretty poor one, in part because nobody at Columbia, president, vice-president of Arts and Sciences, provost, dean, or chairman was willing to give the project the least support. None of the Americanists were interested, except Jack Salzman, who against all odds made a success of the Center for American Studies, until they rode him off campus on a rail.

It is hard to believe now, but then it was almost impossible for a Native American to get published, none of the big anthologies included anything literary, contemporary or traditional, from natives. I'm proud of having contrib-

uted a little to changing that – all the anthologies now carry native material, the Library of America includes a big section of native poetry in the first volume of their *American Poetry*. By 1990 the best way to get your novel published was to pretend you were a native. I was helpful also in getting a dozen or so junior English faculty, mostly west of the Mississippi, who were interested in Native American literatures promoted to tenure, although LaVonne Ruoff (wife of a student of mine) at University of Chicago/Illinois did more, and the American historians, who were miles ahead of American Lit people, were crucially helpful. Native American Studies are now big everywhere, except Harvard, Yale, Princeton. I'm delighted that joining our department this year is John Gamber, himself a Native American, and I think the best young scholar in the field today. That's happened, let me say very loudly, because of Jean Howard, who did a spectacular job as a provost charged with increasing minority faculty at Columbia. She didn't miss a beat when she shifted to chair of our department, and has worked tirelessly and skillfully to put us ahead in the Ivy League in this area – now supported by our terrific colleague, Frances Negrón-Muntaner. For me, it is like a wonderful going-away present.

"It is imagination that enables humans, the only creatures who possess it, to go on learning, growing mentally, and being creative far, far into old age — Sophocles and Titian."

THREE FACULTY RECEIVE TENURE

The Department of English and Comparative Literature is very pleased to announce that three of its untenured faculty members have been successfully promoted to tenure. The first, **Amanda Claybaugh**, received her Ph.D. from Harvard and works on nineteenth-century American and British literature. Her first book, *The Novel of Purpose: Literature and Social Reform in the Anglo-American World*, explored the role of social reform in shaping realist fiction in the nineteenth-century transatlantic world and examined novelists such as Charles Dickens, Anne Bronte, George Eliot, Thomas Hardy, Mark Twain, Elizabeth Stoddard, and Henry James. Published by Cornell University Press to an enthusiastic reception, the book has established Professor Claybaugh as a leading figure in nineteenth-century transatlantic studies. She is now engaged in a second project on the literature of Reconstruction and how the state was represented and imagined in texts from the decades immediately following the American Civil War. Deeply committed to her students, Claybaugh is a winner of Columbia's prestigious Presidential Teaching Prize and offers a number of popular undergraduate and graduate courses including the History of the British Novel, Literature of the American Renaissance, Narrative Theory, and Introduction to Scholarly Writing. She is, as well, an active departmental citizen and has served as M.A. Director and, this past year, as a highly successful Director of Placement for our graduate students.

Frances Negrón-Muntaner, who holds a joint appointment with the Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, also received tenure in our department this year. A journalist, filmmaker, and cultural critic, Negrón-Muntaner is already a recognized star in the field of Latino-American literature, film, and popular culture. She has edited a number of influential collections of essays that have helped to define the parameters of Puerto Rican and Latino/a Studies, and her pathbreaking book, *Boricua Pop: Puerto Ricans and the Latinization of American Culture*, incisively revealed the powerful impact of Latin fashion, music, and film on mainstream American culture. In it, she looks, for example, at the role of performers such as Ricky Martin and Jennifer Lopez in making the Puerto Rican body a symbol of sex, style, and beauty. She is at work now on several documentary films and on two new books, one dealing with reggaeton, a musical genre that fuses hip hop and dancehall reggae; the other a study of the way fashion and bodily presentation can be used as political statement. Professor Negrón-Muntaner considerably expands the reach of American literature offerings in the department where she has taught a number of popular courses on U.S. Latino literature and film, Diasporic Caribbean literature, and Latina feminist texts. She will serve next year as Director of the Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, a program in which she has already been Director of Undergraduate Studies.

The third new member of the tenured faculty is **Alan Stewart** who specializes in English Renaissance literature. Born and educated in Britain, he is interested in how the learned classes lived their professional and literary lives in sixteenth-century and early seventeenth-century England. He has written biographies of Sir Philip Sidney, Francis Bacon, and James I, and his first critical book, *Close Readers: Humanism and Sodomy in Early Modern Britain*, published by Princeton University Press, examined how men trained in humanistic scholarship such as secretaries, schoolmasters, and counselors used networks of male association to further their careers and the knowledge transactions in which they were involved. Stewart has recently published an exciting new book, *Shakespeare's Letters*, in which he analyzes the culture of letter-writing in Elizabethan England and the social and dra-

matic function of the 111 letters that are mentioned in Shakespeare's plays. As a teacher, Stewart is wonderfully versatile, offering big lectures in Shakespearean drama and a range of other courses on letter-writing in the Renaissance, sixteenth-century poetry and prose, early modern book history, and global trade in the early modern period. He is already a key advisor on a number of dissertation projects.

The department is immeasurably stronger for having Professors Claybaugh, Negrón-Muntaner and Stewart as permanent members of the tenured faculty. Together, their work signals both the mix of traditional and emerging scholarship to which the department is committed and also the exciting range of courses that we are able to offer our students.



Frances Negrón-Muntaner, 2008, at a CARICOM (Caribbean Community / Common Market) meeting, addressing NY/ Caribbean education initiatives

KARL KROEBER (continued from page 6)

After the first few years in this field all my teaching, and writing, focused not on contemporary but on traditional native literatures. The point is that these were all **oral** literatures – none of the native North American cultures had writing. This was a tremendous revelation to me – especially because I entered the field just when American anthropological linguists, like Hymes and Tedlock, were beginning to publish revolutionary analyses of the formal qualities of texts, some contemporary, but most from the vast collections made by Boas, my father, and Sapir and their students of traditional tellings. Most professors of literature know zilch about oral literatures (even though in the total history of literature probably 96% has been oral), and the few exceptions know only something of the fine work of Parry and Lord with the Homeric epics, which are part of an atypical Mediterranean tradition. Native American oral literatures have, I believe, much more ancient roots, and never use the formal devices we are familiar with, such as rhyme, repetitive meter, fixed stanza pattern. Their literary form is entirely different from ours. In part this reflects that oral cultures are for us almost unimaginably different from cultures founded on writing. If your culture exists, is enacted, **only** when you or others speak, you attend to what you say and listen to others in a fashion different from the way we listen or read, not least because when every utterance is recognized as the primary means by which one's culture is manifested, you are much more careful and conscious about what you are doing with language and its astounding capabilities for linking people's inner lives.

This is what made teaching traditional native literatures specially exciting for both me and the students. The oddity of the subject drew a broad spectrum of applicants (I had always to limit enrollments) – students of literature, of course, but also of different sciences, from the biological to computer people, as well as students in anthropology, psychology, and religion. For the first three weeks everybody was baffled, but as I kept hammering away at close readings of short texts, forcing students to write about what they weren't understanding, they became intrigued by the very difficulty and began to make discoveries, and class discussions became steadily richer. I learned a tremendous amount about the material in every class, and by the end of the se-

(concludes on page 9)



Ann Douglas at the now annual *Howling*

(continued from page 4)

NAKED LUNCH / THE BEATS & CU

already practicing a version of the ‘cut-up’ method he later adopted more formally.”

“I think my course was probably the first course exclusively on the Beats offered by an Ivy League school, but given that the school was Columbia, the place where the Beat movement began in 1944 (and, I believe, continues to this day) it’s remarkable that its advent was so *late*. I can’t walk around the Columbia campus without thinking: Kerouac and Ginsberg stood right here on these steps (John Jay)—was this where they discovered, with excitement, that they both had the habit, when leaving a place they loved, of saying, ‘goodbye step,’ ‘goodbye room,’ or window or whatever? I wish Columbia would mark the apartments on 118th and 119th Streets where Burroughs, never a Columbia student but soon adopted by the younger Ginsberg and Kerouac as *their* Columbia professor, promised to ‘edify your mind with the grand spectacle of fact.’ What Burroughs brought to the Beat mix was quite possibly the best intellect in New York, a wit excelled only by Swift’s, and an instinct for facts that spared no one. ‘The history of the planet,’ he wrote, ‘is a history of idiocy highlighted by a few morons who stand out as comparative geniuses,’ a maxim that seems to get truer every year.”

“The Beats let all the cats out of the bag—Burroughs and Ginsberg were, with Truman Capote, the first shamelessly, proudly, openly-gay writers in the U.S; the young black Amiri Baraka was a member of the second-wave Beat Generation, and so were a group of first-rate women, led by Joyce Johnson and the poet Diane di Prima. What they had in common was enormous talent, fearlessness, an instinct for innovation, and honesty—about their identities, their art, and their politics—maintained in the face of a sometimes violently fearful country fast turning into an over-militarized global imperium. That’s why I need and love and still teach them. It’s about *courage*.” ■

A SAMPLING OF FACULTY HONORS AND AWARDS 2008-09

AMANDA CLAYBAUGH’S *The Novel of Purpose: Literature and Social Reform in the Anglo-American World* (Cornell UP, 2007) was awarded the 2008 Sonya Rudikoff Prize for Best First Book in Victorian Studies given by the Northeast Victorian Studies Association.

BRENT EDWARDS received a 2008 Distinguished Columbia Faculty Award, given annually to faculty of unusual merit across a range of professorial activities — including scholarship, University citizenship, and professional involvement — with a primary emphasis on the instruction and mentoring of undergraduate and graduate students. (Since this award’s inception in 2005, the English Department has received greater recognition than any other department, with past recipients including Nicholas Dames, Sharon Marcus, Robert O’Meally, Jenny Davidson, and Farah Griffin.)

EILEEN GILLOOLY has been named a 2009-10 Fellow at the National Humanities Center, where she will work on her project: “Anxious Affection: Parental Feeling in Nineteenth-Century Middle-Class Britain.”

MICHAEL GOLSTON has been named a 2009-2010 fellow at The Dorothy and Lewis B. Cullman Center for Scholars and Writers. He will be working on his project: “Allegory, Surrealism, and Postmodern Poetic Form.” He also received The William Carlos Williams Society’s 2008 Louis Martz Prize for best work on Williams published in 2007 for his chapter on Williams in his book *Rhythm and Race in Modernist Poetry and Science*.

JEAN HOWARD’S *Theater of a City: The Places of London Comedy 1598-1642* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007) won the Barnard Hewitt Award for Outstanding Work in Theater History for 2008.

SHARON MARCUS’S *Between Women: Friendship, Desire, and Marriage in Victorian England* (Princeton UP, 2007) won the Perkins Prize for best study of narrative, the Albion prize for best book on Britain after 1800, the Alan Bray Memorial award for best book in queer studies, and a Lambda Literary award for best book in LGBT studies.

FRANCES NEGRÓN-MUNTANER was recognized in 2008 by the United Nations’ Rapid Response Media Mechanism as a Global Expert in the areas of mass media and Latin/o American culture and politics. Professor Negrón-Muntaner was also awarded a grant by the Creative Capital Warhol Foundation Arts Writers Grant Program to pursue research on Jean-Michel Basquiat; projects were judged on the basis of a dual commitment to the craft of writing and the advancement of critical discourse on contemporary visual art.

ROSS POSNOCK was elected in 2009 to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

JOSEPH SLAUGHTER’S *Human Rights, Inc.: The World Novel, Narrative Form, and International Law* (Fordham UP, 2007) was awarded the 2008 René Wellek prize for comparative literature and cultural theory. Professor Slaughter was also a recipient of a 2009 Guggenheim Fellowship.

MARK STRAND was awarded in 2009 the Gold Medal for Poetry from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. This award is given every six years to honor the body of work of a distinguished poet and is considered the Academy’s highest tribute. Past recipients have included John Ashbery, Richard Wilbur, Robert Penn Warren, Archibald MacLeish, John Crowe Ransom, W.H. Auden, William Carlos Williams, Conrad Aiken, Marianne Moore, and Robert Frost.

RECENT FACULTY PUBLICATIONS

Amanda Claybaugh, *The Novel of Purpose: Literature and Social Reform in the Anglo-American World* (Cornell UP, 2007)

Nicholas Dames, *The Physiology of the Novel: Reading, Neural Science, and the Form of Victorian Fiction* (Oxford UP, 2007)

Jenny Davidson, *Breeding: A Partial History of the Eighteenth Century* (Columbia UP, 2009)

Brent Edwards, editor, W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (Oxford UP, 2007)

Eileen Gillooly, co-editor, *Contemporary Dickens* (Ohio State UP, 2008)

Michael Golston, *Rhythm and Race in Modernist Poetry and Science* (Columbia UP, 2007)

Erik Gray, *Milton and the Victorians* (Cornell UP, 2009)

Jean E. Howard, *Theater of a City: The Places of London Comedy, 1598-1642* (U of Pennsylvania P, 2007); co-editor, *The Norton Shakespeare* (W.W. Norton & Co., 2008)

Sharon Marcus, *Between Women: Friendship, Desire, and Marriage in Victorian England* (Princeton UP, 2007)

Edward Mendelson, *The Things That Matter: What Seven Classic Novels Have to Say about the Stage of Life* (Anchor, 2008); editor, W. H. Auden, *Collected Poems* (Modern Library, 2007); Auden, *Selected Poems* (Vintage, 2007); Auden, *Prose, Vol. III, 1949-1955* (Princeton UP, 2008)

Frances Negrón-Muntaner, editor, *Sovereign Acts* (South End Press, 2009)

Robert O’Meally, *Romare Bearden: A Black Odyssey* (DC Moore Gallery, 2008)

Martin Puchner, co-editor, *The Norton Anthology of Drama* (W.W. Norton & Co., 2009)

Bruce Robbins, *Upward Mobility and the Common Good* (Princeton UP, 2007)

Victoria Rosner, *Modernism and the Architecture of Private Life* (Columbia UP, 2008)

Joseph Slaughter, *Human Rights, Inc.: The World Novel, Narrative Form, and International Law* (Fordham UP, 2007)

George Stade, *Equipment for Living: Literature, Moderns, Monsters, Popsters, Us* (Pari Publishing, 2007)

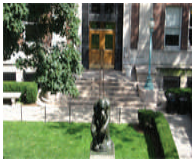
Alan Stewart, *Shakespeare’s Letters* (Oxford UP, 2009)

Mark Strand, *New Selected Poems* (Knopf, 2009)

Paul Strohm, editor, *Middle English* (Oxford UP, 2007)

THE DEPARTMENT WELCOMES THREE NEW FACULTY MEMBERS

The Department welcomes **JAMES ELI ADAMS** to the ranks of its senior faculty in 19th-century British literature. Addressing in his work a wide range of Victorian literary and cultural matters, Professor Adams is perhaps best known for his work on gender and sexuality in Victorian literature. His first book, *Dandies and Desert Saints: Styles of Victorian Masculinity* (1995), draws on work in feminism, queer theory, and cultural studies to rethink simplistic notions of Victorian manhood. In 2004, he served as general editor of the four-volume *Encyclopedia of the Victorian Era*, and this last spring Adams published his ambitious *A History of Victorian Literature*, which has steadily been garnering praise for its erudition, its impressive scope, and the liveliness of its prose. Adams has already launched a new project entitled *The Uses of Inheritance: Identity and Agency in Britain, 1789-1895*. His educational background is unusual for an English professor: before studying at Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar, Adams received a Bachelor of Science in Literature and Mathematics from M.I.T. He obtained his Ph.D. from Cornell where he was a member of the English Department faculty from 2000-2009, previously having taught at Indiana University and the University of Rochester. In the coming year at Columbia, his course offerings will include a graduate seminar on "The Industrial Novel" (that is, mid-Victorian fiction responding to the economic volatility and class conflict that accompanied the rise of industrial production; with such authors as Disraeli, Gaskell, C. Bronte, Kingsley, Dickens, George Eliot); and two undergraduate seminars, one on Dickens, the other enticingly titled "Secrecy and Scandal in Victorian Literature" (which will explore those two preoccupations in two major cultural developments, sensation fiction and the rise of aestheticism).



JOHN GAMBER, a joint appointment in English and the Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race, received his Ph.D. from the University of California, Santa Barbara. His research interests in ethnic and literary studies include ecocriticism, transnationalism, immigration, relocation, American Indian, Asian American, African American, and Chicana/o and Latina/o literatures. His current book project, entitled *Positive Pollutions and Cultural Toxins*, examines the role of waste and contamination in late twentieth-century U.S. ethnic literatures. For his first year at Columbia, Professor Gamber will teach a seminar on *Novels of Ecological Disaster* (which will include Don DeLillo's *White Noise*, Karen Tei Yamashita's *Through the Arc of the Rain Forest*, Alejandro Morales's *The Rag Doll Plagues*, Octavia Butler's *Parable of the Sower*, Ruth Ozeki's *My Year of Meats*, Ana Castillo's *So Far From God*, Leslie Marmon Silko's *The Garden in the Dunes*, Kurt Vonnegut's *Cat's Cradle*, Linda Hogan's *Power*) as well as a lecture on Representations of Native America. His contribution to Native American Studies at Columbia (Gamber has published pieces on Gerald Vizenor, Louis Owens, and Craig Womack, among others) will further strengthen Columbia's emerging leadership in this field. The incoming director for CSER, Professor Frances Negrón-Muntaner, indicates that the Center will be home to a new Columbia concentration in Native American Studies; Gamber, along with faculty from many other fields, will contribute to this concentration as well as teach a range of other courses in 20th-century American literature.

ELEANOR JOHNSON is the newest addition to the Department's Medievalist faculty. Professor Johnson received her Ph.D. from the University of California, Berkeley; she specializes in late medieval English prose and poetry, medieval poetics and philosophy, law and literature in the Middle Ages, early autobiography, and vernacular theology. In addition to her scholarly work, she has completed two collections of poetry (*The Dwell* and *Her Many Feathered Bones*), scheduled for publication this year. In this double commitment to scholarly and creative work, she joins other department faculty such as Jenny Davidson (eighteenth-century scholar as well as novelist) and Frances Negrón-Muntaner (cultural critic as well as filmmaker). Johnson finds the two kinds of writing at times interrelated or reinforcing one another, saying that "the idea for my current medieval book project, concerning the formal and conventional differences between verse and prose, originated in my own poetic practices and experiments." In addition to the *Canterbury Tales* lecture, she will be offering a new seminar on *Stoic Autobiography*, a course with implications for the evolution of the autobiographical genre in the West, a genre with origins in works of Augustine and Boethius. Johnson explains the "reason they're called 'stoic' is because they are designed both to manifest and encourage a profound ethical/spiritual fortitude From these seed crystals grow the autobiographical genre as we think of it—something that promises to be "factual" but is, in point of fact, often fictive."

KROEBER (continued from page 7)

mester almost everyone was taking pleasure in having attained some understanding, but more in realizing that they'd just begun to scratch the surface. In that sense I think these classes were consistently the most successful, in the Socratic sense, that I taught, because we all learned how ignorant we

were, that is, how wonderfully rich the world is in things to be discovered.

MM: Karl, thanks very much.

KK: My pleasure – love to talk about myself. ■

PAMELA RODMAN (continued from page 2)

largely excluded from a pre-med curriculum. "It was when I looked ahead and tried to imagine myself dissecting a human cadaver that I knew I really did not have the stomach for medical school." After casting about for an alternative, she decided on business school where, she says, she found the work challenging and fun. After Wharton she combined her business training with her medical background and became a health care administrator at Mt. Sinai and eventually made her way to the Columbia Medical Center and then to English.

Rodman's interests outside of work, however, have long focused on the arts. She is a fan of theater and ballet, reads voraciously, and is passionate about movies. These are interests she shares with her

daughter, Melissa, who, following her mother's footsteps, is a high school student at Horace Mann.

The faculty in the English Department is delighted with the professionalism Pam brings to her job. A dynamo with budgets, she is also something of a genius at clearing up administrative logjams, whether that means prying loose a paycheck stuck somewhere in the system or figuring out how to get the facilities clearance for an office renovation. As the Chair, Jean Howard, remarked, "Pam makes my job immeasurably easier. Without a good ADA, departments just grind to a halt. We are incredibly lucky she decided it was time to come over to the humanities." ■

JOY HAYTON *(continued from page 2)*

In retirement, Joy intends to be busy. As everyone who knows her can attest, she loves to travel. This year, which she calls her “gap year,” she has already been to the United Kingdom (more than once), to Mexico, Arizona, New Mexico, and Italy. This summer she visited Nova Scotia, and in the fall she heads to Nepal and Bhutan. When she returns, her travel schedule will slow somewhat, and she intends to do work in the area of adult literacy, a project to which she has been committed for a number of years, and perhaps adopt a new collie. We also hope to see her at department lectures and functions where she can take pride in the department she was so instrumental in building. ■



Graduate Reception, May 2009, Front Lawn outside Philosophy Hall

GRADUATE PLACEMENT 2008-2009

In a year of economic contraction, the department is extremely pleased to announce that nineteen Ph.D. students found academic positions. Professors Amanda Claybaugh and Erik Gray did spectacular jobs as this year’s Placement Directors. Listed below are names of those students who got jobs, their dissertation titles, and places of employment.

• **TENURE-TRACK POSITIONS**

- Arne De Boever**, “Literary Sovereignities: The Contemporary Novel and the State of Exception,” at the California Institute of the Arts
Allison Deutermann, “Hearing and Listening in Early Modern Drama,” at Baruch College, City University of New York
Lianne Habinek, “Such Wondrous Science: Brain and Metaphor in Early Modern English Literature,” at Bard College
Adam Hooks, “Vendible Shakespeare,” at the University of Iowa
David Kornhaber, “The Birth of Theatre from the Spirit of Philosophy: Friedrich Nietzsche and the Development of Modern Drama,” at the University of Texas, Austin
Felicity Palmer, “Beyond Freedom and Constraint: Female Sexuality in the Novels of Yvonne Vera, Calixthe Beyala and Goretti Kyomuhendo,” at the University of Southern Mississippi
Cóilín Parsons, “Literary Maps: Cartography in Anglo-Irish Literature,” at the University of Capetown
Ellen Rentz, “Sin, Penance, and the Late Medieval English Parish,” at Claremont McKenna College
Jesse Rosenthal, “Moral Sensibilities: Ethical Feeling and Narrative Form in the Victorian Novel,” at Johns Hopkins University
Stefanie Sobelle, “The Architectural Novel: Postmodernism’s Literary Construction Sites,” at Gettysburg College
Claudia Stokes, “The Work of Fiction: Literary Realist Self-Definition and the Intellectual Foundations of American Literary History,” at Trinity University

• **VISITING POSITIONS**

- Emily Lordi**, “Re-attunements: Black Women Singers and Twentieth-Century African American Literature,” at Cornell University

• **LECTURER POSITIONS**

- Sarah Rose Cole**, “The Third Sphere: Male intimacy and Developmental Narrative in Nineteenth-Century Britain,” at Harvard University
Jeannie Im, “Modernity in Translation: Figures of Empire in the Novels of Mary Shelley, Samuel Beckett, and Assia Djebar,” in the New York University Expository Writing Program
Donna Kornhaber, “Authoring the Afterlife: Cinema and the Remaking of American Drama in the 1920 and 1930s,” at the University of Texas, Austin
Casey Shoop, “Meta-California: Culture, Critical Theory, and the Ends of History in the Golden State,” at the University of Southern California

• **POST-DOCTORAL POSITIONS**

- Ramona Franziska Mosse**, “Between Tragedy and Utopia Revolution and the Political Stage after 1945,” at the Freie Universität Berlin

• **ADJUNCT POSITIONS**

- Ondrea Akerman**, “Getting Lost: Modes of Disorientation in Twentieth-Century Literature,” at Columbia University and at the City University of New York

• **TEACHING POSITIONS AT PRIVATE SCHOOLS**

- Jon Williams**, “Languages of Kingship in Ricardian Britain,” at the Pierrepont School in Westport, Connecticut

GIVING TO THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

Gifts from alumni and friends enable the department to provide special support for students and faculty.

To make a gift to the department, please use the link below:

<https://giving.columbia.edu/giveonline/?schoolstyle=327>

You may also write to the Department’s Chair, Jean Howard, at jfh5@columbia.edu.