Fall 2011

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Department of English

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Over the past ten years the English department has built a strong program in English literature of the Renaissance period. The core faculty involved are three specialists in Shakespeare and other Renaissance drama (Meg Dupuis, Tony Ellis, and Grace Tiffany) and a specialist in Milton and other seventeenth-century prose and poetry (Beth Bradburn). The courses they have been able to offer at the undergraduate and graduate levels include general courses in Shakespeare, Renaissance literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and Milton; and also special courses in non-Shakespearean Renaissance drama and Puritan literature.

The Renaissance faculty have also worked increasingly closely with literature faculty in related disciplines such as late-medieval English literature and early American literature. Special topics courses have been team-taught by a Shakespearean and a Chaucerian (Holy Road Trips: English and American Literary Pilgrimages, taught by Grace Tiffany and Eve Salisbury in 2009, and Scarlet Letters, currently being co-taught by Beth Bradburn and Americanist Scott Slawinski). These Renaissance (or Renaissance-ish) courses have proved increasingly popular among both undergraduates and graduate students, and have sparked interest among both student groups in specialized doctoral work.

The faculty have also worked together on presentations and, in some cases, performances at scholarly conferences and other events. In September of this year, Beth Bradburn, Grace Tiffany, Western’s Medieval Institute’s Rand Johnson, and English graduate student Jessica Neuenschwander attended the Purdue biannual conference on Renaissance prose, focused this year on the King James Bible. Eve Salisbury and Tony Ellis worked together, on two recent occasions, to direct and perform in Tudor plays at the International Medieval Congress here at Western. (The Renaissance faculty also serve as members of the Medieval Institute.)

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I’ve been at Western Michigan University for a while now – just over a decade, but in the past few months, in my new role as department chair, I’ve really gotten my first comprehensive look at the overall excellence of our department. While before, I admired all of the programs in our department, now I really understand the work, talent, and extreme dedication of all our faculty and students, both graduate and undergraduate.

I’ve come to admire the uniqueness of the Prague Summer Program, whose courses only last a few weeks each June and July, but whose excellence is due to the vast professionalism of the staff, both in Kalamazoo and the Czech Republic. I have also come to understand the immense dedication of our editorial staffs of our publishing programs and journals: New Issues Press, Comparative Drama, Third Coast Magazine. I’ve also witnessed the amazing outreach our department conducts – readings through our Frostic Endowment, our New Play Project seminars, teacher workshops and institutes by our National Writing Project site, Third Coast Writing Project, and the continued and constant connections with local and academic communities by our faculty and students.

I’ve also come to know the nuts-and-bolts of the work of some of our unsung departmental heroes: our undergraduate and graduate advisors, who work constantly to help our students at all levels; our office staff, each of whom keeps our department (and their chair) moving smoothly through paperwork and all the tasks that keep our organization running efficiently. Mostly, however, I’ve come to admire the dedication of all our faculty, both full and part time, and their commitment to the success of all our students – from our English 1000 instructors to our graduate faculty, each and every one of our instructors are working constantly to mentor, teach, guide, and build the intellectual abilities of their students.

I’d also like to pay tribute to our retiring faculty:

Dr. Ellen Brinkley, a long-time mentor and the guiding (and founding) force behind the Third Coast Writing Project. Under Ellen’s leadership, the TCWP has become one of the premier NWP sites in the entire national network. She has engaged, led, and inspired thousands of classroom teachers throughout Michigan and beyond.

Dr. Tom Bailey, a man as identified with the WMU English Department as anyone I’ve ever known. Serving at WMU since 1970, among so many other things, Tom has been an associate provost, a chair, Ombudsman, and a dedicated faculty member. His presence and passion has made WMU a better place – and positively affected an entire generation of students.

Professor Beth Amidon, one of my personal role models for positivity and professionalism. Beth has singlehandedly created our development program and taught with excellence in children’s literature and elementary English education for years. She is the best attributes of all our faculty wrapped up in a single person.

I wish all three of these wonderful scholars, teachers, and professionals only the best as they move towards the next stages of their lives. We are all better for your presence.

Thanks so much for your continued support of our department. We remain committed to providing the best education to all our students.
In the spring of 2010, Grace Tiffany and Eve Salisbury accompanied a group of students to an event at Detroit’s Oakland University to form part of an audience for a series of medieval plays performed by students in Oakland’s theater department.

As a means of combining scholarship and teaching, Meg Dupuis and Grace Tiffany have collaborated on a new anthology of essays about teaching Shakespeare’s *The Taming of the Shrew*, to be published by MLA in 2013, and have spoken about the experience of editing that volume at the most recent departmental keynote talk.

The Renaissance faculty continue to expand their collaborative work in ways that directly enhance their teaching.

**Student News**

**Chad Sweeney**’s (PhD creative writing) book of translations from the Persian, with scholar Mojdeh Marashi, will appear this fall from White Pine Press: *The Art of Stepping Through Time: Selected Poems of H.E. Sayeh*. In January, Chad’s fourth full-length book of poems will appear from Forklift Press, entitled *Wolf Milk: Lost Poems of Juan Sweeney* (bilingual edition, Spanish/English). Chad’s poem “Little Wet Monster” first appeared in *American Poetry Review* and has been selected for this year’s *Pushcart Prize Anthology*.

**Dan Mancilla** (PhD creative writing) sends word of recent publications:

“The Future of the Middleweight Division” appears in *Barrelhouse #10* Fall 2011

“Shangri La Dee Da” appears in the *Malahat Review #176* Fall 2011

“The End of Chicago” appears in *Bayou*, Fall 2011.

**Andrea England** (PhD creative writing) was a national finalist in the Mississippi Valley Poetry contest over the summer. And she was also nominated for a Community Star Award for her work with the Creative Expressions program, a collaboration between Kalamazoo College, Western, Kalamazoo Ministries and Kalamazoo Corrections KPEP. Andrea facilitated a creative writing workshop made up of young men and women transitioning between Kpep and home, or hoping to transition to home after being in prison. This is the second year she has helped facilitate the workshops.

**Christine Triezenberg** (PhD) helped to organize and participated in a panel discussion entitled “*Gone with the Wind* in the 21st Century: Is Margaret Mitchell’s Beloved Bestseller Still Worth Reading?” at the main branch of the Atlanta-Fulton Public Library in downtown Atlanta on, August 13.

**Diana Stout** (PhD), Associate Professor at Davenport University (DU) and Associate Chair for the English Department presented, “Changing Attitudes: Getting Students to Think Like Writers” at the annual Lily Conference held in Traverse City in September. The theme for this year’s conference was Brain-Based Learning. She presented this topic as a online lunch-and-learn session at DU in November. Diana is studying to complete her doctoral exams next spring.
Bonnie Jo Campbell is our distinguished alumna for 2011-2012. Bonnie received her MFA from the English Department in 1998.

Bonnie Jo Campbell is the author of the novel *Once Upon a River* (W.W. Norton) and a 2011 Guggenheim Fellow. She was a 2009 National Book Award finalist and National Book Critics Circle Award finalist for her collection of stories, *American Salvage*, which won the Foreword Book of the Year award for short fiction. Campbell is also author of the novel *Q Road* and the story collection *Women & Other Animals*. She’s received the AWP Award for Short Fiction, a Pushcart Prize, and the Eudora Welty Prize. Her poetry collection *Love Letters to Sons of Bitches* won the 2009 CBA Letterpress Chapbook award. Campbell lives in Kalamazoo, Michigan, with her husband. She holds a second degree black belt in Koburyu Kobudo, an Okinawan weapons art, and in her spare time gardens and hangs out with her donkeys Jack and Don Quixote. You can check out her website at www.bonniejocampbell.com and her writer’s life blog, “The Bone-Eye at http://bone-eye.blogspot.com/"

“Bonnie is a wonderful example of the high quality of our graduates and the outstanding education and mentoring they receive in our department. I’m enthused that she has accepted our invitation. She will also be the keynote at our Friday, March 23, 2012 departmental awards ceremony (mark your calendars now!)” – Jonathan Bush, chair

David Martin, BA, 1979
David serves as the Vice President of Academic Affairs for the Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design. After completing his studies at Western, David earned his MFA at the University of Pittsburgh. He taught composition and creative writing and literature at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee for ten years before joining MIAD, where he teaches composition, poetry writing, humanities and service-learning. He is now completing his twentieth year. David’s poetry and fiction have appeared in over forty literary magazines, most recently in *Awakenings, Entelechy*, and *Wisconsin Academy Review*.

David was one of the “Kalamazoo 5”, five WMU alums who entered Pitt’s MFA program between 1980-1983. “We all left our mark on Pitt’s Cathedral of Learning either through our sparkling wit and WMU preparation, or our infamous whiffle ball golf games.” He writes: “I am sad to hear of the passing of Ed Galligan. He was a great lion of a teacher with a very warm heart.”

Gloria Monaghan studied in the undergraduate program under Stuart Dybek and Herb Scott. She is currently an assistant professor of Humanities and Social Sciences at Wentworth Institute. Gloria has a chapbook coming out in the fall. She says, “Thank you- I am truly in debt to my former teachers at WMU. They helped shape my creative world and my life.”

Hedy Habra’s (MA ‘84 and MFA ‘89) collection of short fiction *Flying Carpets* is forthcoming from March Street Press, and she has published stories in *The Smoking Poet Luciole Press, Parting Gifts* and *The Saranac Review*. She has poems in *Poet Lore, Luciole Press, Parting Gifts* and *Pirene’s Fountain*. Several stories and poems appear in the following anthologies: *A Generation Defining Itself Series: Anthology Series: A Long And Winding Road; Mediterranean.nu; The Japan Anthology*. 
and Writing as Revision Anthology.

The English Dept. has news of Erin Neely Archuleta, (B.A. English Secondary Ed ‘02) and now a national figure in the field of literacy.

“The Valencia 826 National’s Director of Field Operations and Strategy, Erin Archuleta is still glowing from her trip to New Orleans on June 7th. Erin participated in the Target Plenary for the National Conference on Volunteering and Service, hosted by the Points of Light Institute and the Corporation for National and Community Service. Erin sat alongside five other leaders of education reform on a panel moderated by Soledad O’Brien in the forum called ‘Innovate to Educate: Community Solutions for Education Success.’”

Melinda Moustakis (Ph.D 2010)
The National Book Foundation has named writer and Western Michigan graduate Melinda Moustakis one of its 2011 “5 Under 35,” an honor that acknowledges notable young fiction writers under the age of 35. The writers were honored Nov. 14 in New York at a celebration hosted by filmmaker and author John Waters.

Moustakis is author of the book “Bear Down, Bear North: Alaska Stories,” which won the Flannery O’Connor Award for Short Fiction in 2010 and as a result was published by the University of Georgia Press. The collection of short stories inspired by her family’s Alaskan background was written as her doctoral dissertation in creative writing at Western in 2010. Her stories have appeared in *Alaska Quarterly Review, Kenyon Review, Conjunctions,* and elsewhere. She is a visiting professor at Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, Wash. (See Footnotes for an interview with Moustakis)

“There are four things that really astound me about her work,” said Jaimy Gordon, who was Moustakis’ dissertation advisor. “She perfectly balances her prose in comparison to her subject matter. She can be poetic. She can be restrained. But, she always makes the right choice about that. She finds really experimental, innovative ways of presenting the material. She makes so many new choices to work with the material structurally. All of these stories are delicious to read. Best of all are the wonderful, unforgettable characters. One thing a lot experimental writers do wrong is they forget people read to be involved in the lives of characters. She never forgets that.”

Moustakis was at WMU on December 1 as part of the Gwen Frostic Reading Series. For more information on Moustakis visit mendlamoustakis.com. For more information on the “5 Under 35” program visit nationalbook.org/5under35.html.

Roger D. Batton (’76) sent us an update since he left WMU: “I Majored in English - Creative Writing, Minor in communications. I own a small consulting firm in Three Oaks, MI called OakTree, Inc. and we’ve written and developed proprietary training /culture curricula for American businesses since 1989. OakTree provided such services to hundreds of clients, and students trained on our materials number in the hundred of thousands. The other interesting fact is that my youngest daughter, Ayla, graduated from WMU last spring with the same degree and is currently providing OakTree services to the Kalamazoo Beer Exchange. We both received a solid education from WMU’s English department. My career as a writer /consultant wouldn’t have been possible without my degree and education from WMU.”

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Welcoming Brian Gogan

Brian Gogan joins Western Michigan University’s Department of English as an Assistant Professor in Rhetoric and Writing. He looks forward to contributing to the proposed undergraduate major and minor in Rhetoric and Writing, as well as working with colleagues on projects that support the university’s goals of interdisciplinarity, diversity, civility, and community.

His research interests include public writing, professional writing, letter writing, grant writing, critical theory, and Baudrillardian rhetoric. His work has appeared in College Composition and Communication and Who Speaks for Writing: Stewardship for Writing Studies in the 21st Century.

He holds a Ph.D. in Rhetoric and Writing from Virginia Tech. At Virginia Tech, he taught courses in college composition, business writing, and technical writing. In 2011, he received the Composition Program Award for excellence in teaching. He also served in the Center for the Study of Rhetoric in Society, where he collaborated on grant applications to the National Endowment for the Humanities, the United States Department of Education, the National Institute for Occupational Health and Safety, and the Michigan Humanities Council. In 2009, he was an inaugural fellow to the Blue Ridge Writing Project, a local site of the National Writing Project.

His other degrees include a Master of Arts degree from Marquette University and a Bachelor of Arts degree from Xavier University.

He enjoys swimming, running, cooking, watching movies, and attending art exhibitions. He resides in Kalamazoo with his wife, Amanda.
Faculty News

Katherine Joslin and Tom Bailey were both recently honored by President John Dunn at the Academic Convocation. Katherine received the 2011 Distinguished Faculty Scholar Award; Tom is a recipient of the 2011 Distinguished Service Award. President Dunn’s comments follow:

Distinguished Faculty Scholar - Dr. Katherine Joslin
Dr. Katherine Joslin, whose recent award-winning books have shed new light on such luminary figures as Jane Addams and Edith Wharton, has been named Western Michigan University’s 2011 Distinguished Faculty Scholar. Joslin’s most recent book, *Edith Wharton and the Making of Fashion*, earlier this year was selected as an Outstanding Academic Title by *Choice* magazine of the American Library Association. The Distinguished Faculty Scholar award is the highest accolade awarded to a WMU faculty member.

Distinguished Service Award - Dr. Thomas Bailey
Dr. Bailey, professor of English, was chosen from among nominees across the campus who have demonstrated exceptional service in areas that reflect innovative and effective programming, increase WMU’s stature, or extend WMU’s impact and presence in the larger community. He has been called “a true citizen of the University” for stepping in when needed in a variety of roles at the department, college and University levels.

Arnie Johnston, emeritus, played the title role in The Kalamazoo Civic’s production of *King Lear* in October.

On June 2, Rachel Swearingen (Ph.D.) delivered the paper “Ruth Hall: Fanny Fern’s Designing Widow,” and Scott Slawinski delivered the paper “A Range of Choices: Gender in Sukey Vickery’s Emily Hamilton” at A Gathering of Michigan Early Americanists, in Lansing, MI.

Staci Perryman-Clark has been elected to serve on the Conference of College Composition and Communication (CCCC) Executive Committee. The CCCC is the flagship organization in Rhetoric and Writing Studies, and her co-authored journal article (with Collin Craig) “Troubling the Boundaries: (De)Constructing WPA Identities at the Intersections of Race and Gender” appears in *WPA: Writing Program Administration* the Spring 2011 issue.

Dr. Perryman-Clark also received word of a book contract with Peter Lang Press for *Afro-centric Teacher-Research: Rethinking Appropriateness and Inclusion.*
Robert Bradley and Karl Sandelin, English Department Distinguished Alumni 2008-2009 and 2009-2010, respectively, visited their academic home department as part of their 2011 Homecoming activities. Both of them took classes with Dr. William R. Brown, the English Department’s second chair, after whom Brown Hall was named. Sandelin and Bradley were greatly pleased to see their former professor honored by the new mural recently added on the left of the Brown Hall main entrance. They also visited Richard Utz’s ENGL 5300 class on The Matter of Troy in Medieval Literature, speaking to students in the class about their experience at Western and actively participating in classroom discussions about Benoit de St. Maure’s *Roman de Troie*, Boccaccio’s *Il Filostrato*, and other matters regarding various cultural, literary, and political translationes of texts from Classical Antiquity through the Middle Ages.

**Nancy Cutbirth Small** and **Tom Small**, emeriti, have authored *Using Native Plants to Build Community in Southwest Michigan and Beyond*. This book includes 270 pages of practical, specific advice and inspiration to help create a more environmentally friendly landscape in yards large and not-so-large. Also featured are 150 original illustrations by distinguished area artists, including Ladislav Hanka, Amelia Hansen, Liz Henderson, Nancy Stroup, and Nancy Halliday.

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**Alumni Bookshelf**

Have you published a book?

Would you like to inspire Western’s future writers?

Please consider donating a copy of your book(s) to our new alumni bookshelf. We are planning a permanent display of our alumni’s work.

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**Faculty News Continued**
Remembering Ed Callan
by Seamus Cooney, emeritus

Ed Callan, fond as he was of making up limericks, appreciated wit, so following Polonius’s advice I’ll be brief.

He was christened Edward Thomas O’Dwyer Callan by his nationalist mother in memory of an Irish Bishop who, dissenting from the official church position, wrote a famous letter condemning the treatment of the 1916 rebels. But from childhood he was called Eamonn, his mother also being a supporter of the revival of the Irish language. He spent his formative childhood years in County Monaghan in the Patrick Kavanagh country and was nurtured to the rhythms of Irish speech and never lost them despite his multiple sojourns in foreign parts. This is all the more striking when we consider that after childhood, his younger years were spent in England and then in South Africa among local idioms and rhythms of speech with markedly different tunes. Perhaps the uprooting helped preserve the childhood echoes of the Irish lilt, although of course contributing too are his later wide reading in the literature of the Celtic revival and his impressive auditory memory for both poetry and prose. As many will testify, given half an excuse, he would recite reams of verse in English and Irish both, not to mention long stretches of “Finnegans Wake.”

His South African years left him with a committed belief in the equal dignity of all men, and thus led eventually to his writings on Alan Paton and to Paton’s visit to Kalamazoo. This belief also showed itself in his role in the black student demonstrations at WMU in the late sixties, where he exerted himself as a trusted intermediary between the administration and the demonstrators.

Meanwhile his unflaggingly productive academic career at Western Michigan University flourished, with books and articles published on three continents on Alan Paton, W. H. Auden, and W. B. Yeats and culminating in his appointment as Distinguished University Professor. His work on Paton of course arose initially from his first-hand experience of apartheid in South Africa; Auden was his dissertation topic; but in his later years his teaching and scholarship turned again to Irish subjects, resulting in two books on Yeats and then his painstaking work on his one-man shows about Yeats and Synge. The Yeats piece – an “entertainment” was his unassuming subtitle for it – got its first U.S. performance here in Kalamazoo, with Ed playing Yeats.

That gives me an excuse to end with a few lines of a Yeats poem. Yeats is in the Municipal Gallery in Dublin, in elegiac mood, surveying portraits of figures from Ireland’s recent history, many of them his famous literary comrades. He ends with comments on a portrait of “Synge himself, that rooted man”, and we, Ed’s unfamous friends – and recalling the several others who have predeceased him, such as John Lindbeck, Joe McCauley, Irving Lo, Phil Denenfeld, John McNally, and Fred Rogers – will have little trouble applying the lines, with a few adjustments as needed, to the man we mourn.

You that would judge me, do not judge alone
This book or that, come to this hallowed place
Where my friends’ portraits hang and look there-on;
Ireland’s history in their lineaments trace;
Think where man’s glory most begins and ends,
And say my glory was I had such friends.
Remembering Bob Palmatier  
by Bill Combs, emeritus

I joined the WMU English Department in 1962. In that Paleolithic age, Bob and I had desks in converted classrooms in the Administration Building.

Bob was born in Kalamazoo, went K-12 to the Old Campus School and State High, then did a B.A. and M.A. at WMU. After a few years of teaching in Vicksburg and Allegan, he joined Western’s English Department, where he stayed until he retired in 1992.

Sometime before 1965 he began and finished a PhD in Linguistics at the University of Michigan. His dissertation was on the syntax of the Ormulum, the early 13th century collection of homilies so beloved by and valuable to generations of classical, pre-transformational grammarians who worked in the already defined but not exhausted fields of orthography, syntax, phonology, and the like instead of deep structures. This isn’t to say that Bob didn’t explore the deep structures. He was part of the admirable group in the English Dept. who, reflecting the revolution of Chomsky and others, developed an excellent, and tough, course called English Language, which was required of English majors and minors for several decades. A huge amount of self-education was required of the creators of this pioneering course.

Bob put his ingenuity and several kinds of knowledge to good use when he became Head of the new, small Department of Linguistics. All smallness and survival may have in common is alliteration. My example of Bob’s useful ingenuity is the way the teaching of a number of critical languages was managed without many university resources. (I know there’s some redundancy in that statement. When was this ever not the case?) Bob would hire a competent speaker-informant, usually a native speaker of the language who would work on pronunciation, conversation, and the like. Bob, along with the excellent Dan Hendricksen, also formerly of the English Dept. and a PhD in Linguistics from UM, would deal with the historical and theoretical aspects.

During the last several years before he retired, Bob started concentrating on what I’ll loosely call figurative language, especially metaphors not from high literary art. An example is Sports Talk: A Dictionary of Sports Metaphors, which he wrote with Hal Ray of the WMU Physical Education Department. I recall several times hearing, on WMUK, Bob explaining the etymology and unknown history of various sports terms. Nobody knew better than Bob that such dictionaries can’t and shouldn’t be definitive. Life, especially politics, may be a game, but baseball has just nine on a side and basketball five. Yet every hour hundreds of people are told they must step up to the plate or that the ball is in their or the other court. Bob could help us make it new!
Remembering Lynn Welsch
by Karen Vocke and Ellen Brinkley

English faculty, area teachers and Third Coast Writing Project teacher consultants across southwest Michigan are saddened by the recent death of Lynn Welsch, a middle school English language arts teacher at Fennville Middle School. She retired from teaching at the Fennville Public Schools in June of 2010, after 31 years as a seventh grade language arts teacher.

Lynn was a member of the Western Michigan University Third Coast Writing Project (TCWP)’s first Invitational Summer Institute in 1994 with Dr. Ellen Brinkley, director. Lynn continued to be an active participant. Just a few days before she passed away, she was making plans to coordinate a summer workshop for TCWP on the topic of English Language Learners. Lynn was a recent MAET graduate of our department. As a part-time instructor, Lynn taught ENGL 3770, Language and Literacy in the Multilingual Classroom.

A longtime advocate and teacher for migrant and English Language Learners, Lynn focused on the needs of students in Fennville Public Schools whose families spoke little English and often moved away in the fall, returning in the spring. Too often these students were given worksheets and seated in the back of the room.

Lynn worked with one of the National Writing Project (NWP)’s special divisions, the English Language Learners Network, to collaborate nationwide with other educators to learn about and train others about approaches to teaching that were especially effective in working with English learners.

Lynn regularly led conference sessions on ELL issues and served as a member of the leadership team for the National Writing Project’s English Language Learners Network. Lynn worked very closely as well with Dr. Karen Vocke on a research project on migrant education in southwest Michigan. Lynn’s chapter on digital storytelling is featured in Karen Vocke’s book, Where Do I Go From Here? Meeting the Unique Educational Needs of Migrant Students (Heinemann, 2007).

We honor Lynn Welsh’s dedication to her students and her profession.
What’s New With You?

Please tell us where you are and what you’re doing. We would love to include you in our next alumni update section.

Email us at engl_news@wmich.edu and include the year and degree with which you graduated, any fond memories of the English department, as well as something you’ve done since your times as a Bronco.