



Department of English Language and Literature



Prof. Kevin McGuirk

Message from the Chair

Greetings! This is the second of what we hope will be a long series of annual newsletters bringing you stories about faculty members and students in the Department of English Language and Literature. Last year we sent 2500 paper copies of the newsletter to alumni throughout Ontario. With this year's digital newsletter we hope to reach many more. Please take a moment to read through the newsletter and visit our website.

Last year, the newsletter included notice of an alumni event: a reading by five alumni authors and special guest, Professor Eric McCormack, at the Starlight Club on King Street in Waterloo. It was a great evening. Over a hundred faculty, alumni, and current students socialized and listened to great readings by Emily Anglin, Colin Vincent, Melanie Cameron, Carrie Snyder, and George Elliott Clarke. (Note that Clarke was the recipient of an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Waterloo at Convocation in October and is the contributor of this year's Alumni Profile.) Thanks to all of you who attended, and thanks to Bernard Kearney, former English major at UW and owner of the Starlight Club, for hosting.

Finally, let me say: we'd like to hear from you! Tell us about what you've been doing since you graduated, so that we can include alumni profiles in later issues of the newsletter. Write to our Undergraduate Assistant and Department Webmaster, Maureen Fraser, at englalum@uwaterloo.ca. All the best in your endeavours this fall.

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Speakers Program 2006-07

October 27: Kate Lawson, University of Waterloo and Lynn Shakinovsky, Wilfred Laurier University

"Fantasies of National Identification in Charlotte Brontë's *Villette*"

January 26: Mike Groden, Distinguished University Professor, University of Western Ontario

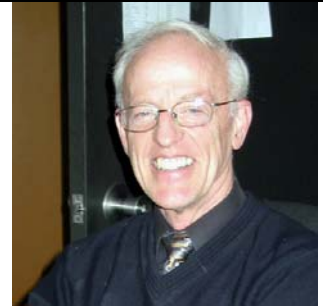
"Notes Toward a Biography of James Joyce's *Ulysses*"

March 29: Terry Eagleton, University of Manchester

Title TBA

Award-Winning Research

Prof. John North is the recipient this year of two prestigious awards for his work on *The Waterloo Directory of English Newspapers and Periodicals, 1800-1900*. *The Waterloo Directory*—preceded by directories of Irish and Scottish periodicals—is a 20-volume work of descriptive and analytic bibliography and an ongoing project. *The Directory* is available online at www.VictorianPeriodicals.com. The first award that Prof. North received this year in support of his research is a SSHRC Standard Research Grant for a substantial \$128,000, money that will be used to hire UW research assistants on the project, and for travel for research to England, among other purposes. The second, and arguably more prestigious, honour is this year's SHARP award for extraordinary achievement in the history of the book, announced by the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publication. The award describes *The Waterloo Directory* as "one of the great feats of humanities scholarship in modern times, an essential reference to which anyone who works on the history of the printed word in the nineteenth century turns time and time again" and as "taking its place among the distinguished company of great reference books." Recent reviews have placed *The Directory* alongside such reference works as *Johnson's English Dictionary*, *The Dictionary of National Biography*, and *The Oxford English Dictionary*.



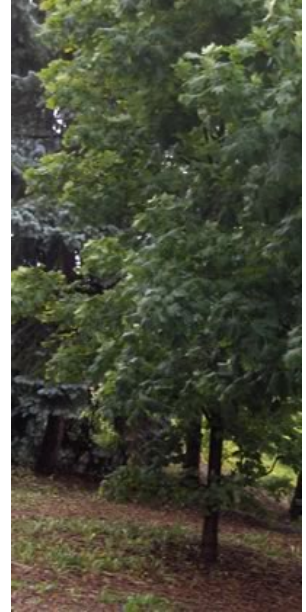
New Faculty

Duncan Greenlaw comes to St. Jerome's after teaching at Thompson Rivers University, the University of Calgary, and the University of Alberta where he also completed his PhD. His connections to Ontario are through studies at Queen's, but for most of his life Vancouver has been his home. His current research areas are twentieth-century Irish studies, theories of memory and history, discourses of political and cultural identity, and writers such as Beckett, Joyce, Yeats, and Muldoon. His book *Borders of Mourning* studies obituaries, commissioning talks, and hunger strike commemorations, while a forthcoming article in *Studies in the Literary Imagination* looks at Irish republican legacies and the city of Las Vegas in Muldoon's plays. He's now writing about representations of national trauma in Paul Greengrass' films *Bloody Sunday* and *United 93*. Outside of this he tells us that he is a keen film-watcher, a lapsed but reviving fiction writer, a rusty guitar player (occasionally in both senses), and an unreliable but usually even-tempered tennis player.

Marcel O'Gorman comes to Waterloo after serving as the first director of the interdisciplinary Electronic Critique Program (E-Crit) at the University of Detroit Mercy, a fact which explains the title of his recent book, *E-Crit: Digital Media, Critical Theory and the Humanities*. O'Gorman has also engaged in digital art projects that range from the performative "Dreadmill" to the sculptural "Screening Coffin" to the architectural "Spleenhouse." He is a vigilant advocate of project-based learning, and his core philosophy is that technology must be used to critique technology. In December, after a stint of commuting over the fall, he'll be moving to Waterloo with his wife Beth and his two children (Sophia, who is 8, and Blake, who is 4). According to O'Gorman, he is coming to Waterloo in part because he views it as an ideal environment in which to study how the discipline of English can evolve to suit a digital culture.

Across the Creek

Within the past year we welcomed a new full-time member to the St. Jerome's English Department, **Dr. Norm Klassen**, profiled in last year's newsletter. There are also two first-time sessional teachers here this fall: SJU alumna **Kelley Teahen** (English 210H), who recently left the Stratford Festival to take up a position at UW as Associate Director, Marketing and Communications, is teaching Arts Writing (English 210H); and UW grad student Sara Humphreys, who is presenting a paper at the Canadian Association for American Studies in October, entitled "'We're Coming for You': Oprah's Vigilante Sentimentalism," is teaching a section of English 251A. We're also delighted to welcome back **Andrew Deman** (English 208B), **Nadine Gingrich** (English 210I), **Dorothy Hadfield** (English 316/Drama 380), **Tim Paci** (English 208C), **Margaret Sweatman** (English 109), and **Pat Zettel** (English 305A). In May and June of this year, **Tristanne Connolly** did a fifteen-lecture tour of the Far East, including Tokyo, Kyoto, Singapore and Hong Kong, supported by a Cultural Personalities Exchange grant from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for promotion of Canadian culture and scholarship abroad. Among her talks on Canadian and British Romantic literature, she introduced UW English alumnus George Elliott Clarke's *Whylah Falls* to Japanese, British and American scholars at the Kyoto Modern Poetry Seminar, and was the invited speaker for the book launch of *The Reception of Blake in the Orient* (edited by Steve Clark and Masashi Suzuki, Continuum, 2006). Connolly has begun plans for further international collaborations, including co-organizing panels of Japanese scholars for the joint conference of the North American and British Romanticism societies in Bristol in 2007.



—Gary Draper, Acting Chair, Department of English, St. Jerome's University

Department News



FACULTY

The Department is sad to announce the passing of **Mary Gerhardstein** in June following a long battle with cancer. Mary moved to Waterloo from Montana, USA in 1963 to take a position as an Assistant Professor in the Department. From 1995 until her retirement in 2001 she served as Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies, Faculty of Arts.

Ken Graham is now Associate Chair, Undergraduate Studies, replacing Andrew McMurry. **Victoria Lamont**, Associate Chair Graduate Studies, is replacing Kathy Acheson. They both started their Administrative Appointments in June.

We welcome a new staff member, **Annette Dietrich**, who joined us in February 2006. She has worked on campus for 18 years in various positions. Annette is replacing Carol Kendrick as Graduate Assistant, who left to join the Faculty of Engineering, School of Architecture.

Aimée Morrison gave birth to Aline Hope Barber in June 2006 and will be on leave until January 2007. We welcome **Sarah Tolmie** and **Heather Smyth** back from maternity leave.

GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS

PhD Defenses include:

Valerie Creelman, '05 (Supervisor: L. Magnusson). "Household Words: The Rhetoricity of 15th Century Gentlewomen's Household Letters." Valerie is now an Assistant Professor at St. Mary's University in Halifax.

Faith Jones, '05 (Supervisor: J. North). "Bardic & Ignation voices in the Poetic Rhetoric of Gerard Manley Hopkins' Mature Verse."

Erin MacDonald, '05 (Supervisor: V. Lamont). "Collective Hero: The Rhetoric of Realism in Ed McBain's 87th Precinct Series." Erin is a Professor in English/Communications at Fanshawe College.

Michael Truscello, '05 (Supervisor: R. Harris). "The Technical Effect: Free and Open Course Software, and the Programming of Everyday Life." Michael is a definite term Assistant Professor at Wilfrid Laurier University in Communication Studies, and a Sessional at the University of Waterloo. Michael's dissertation has also been recognized as one of the finest in Canada, coming in second for the (cumbersomely labeled but highly prestigious) 2006 Canadian Association for Graduate Studies and University Microfilms International Distinguished Dissertation Award for Social Sciences and the Humanities. Since the first-place dissertation was from the social sciences, this means that Michael's was the best humanities dissertation in Canada for 2006.

Catherine Scott, '06 (Supervisor: L. Warley). "Crippled Bodies and Crumpled Selves: The Construction and Use of Narrative in Memoirs by Disabled Americans." Catherine is an Instructor at Concordia University College in Alberta.

Bruce Dadey, '06 (Supervisor: K.V. McGuirk). "Rhetorics Rising: The Recovery of Rhetorical Traditions in Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* and N. Scott Momaday's *House Made of Dawn*." Bruce is an Assistant Professor of Rhetoric and American Literature at Laurentian University in Sudbury, Ontario. Bruce received an Outstanding Achievement in Graduate Studies Award at Fall Convocation, October 21, 2006.

Other News:

Veronica Austen, PhD Candidate, has been awarded the inaugural Certificate in University Teaching (CUT) Prize. This \$2000 cash prize, generously provided by an anonymous donor, will be awarded annually to the CUT participant who demonstrates the highest achievement on completion of the program.

Lara Varpio, PhD Candidate, has signed a contract with the University of Ottawa, Faculty of Medicine to join their new research academy in the field of Medical Education. Lara starts the position in January after defending her thesis, "Mapping the Genres of Healthcare Information Work: An Interdisciplinary Study of the Interactions Between Oral, Paper, and Electronic Forms of Communication", on Friday, November 3rd, 2006. Her supervisor is C. Schryer.

Archana Rampure, BA '99 completed a PhD at the University of Toronto and taught for us this past summer. She has accepted a Definite Term Assistant Professorship at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

STUDENT ASSOCIATION FOR GRADUATES IN ENGLISH (SAGE CONFERENCE)

In a day-long, student organized conference aptly named "Convergences," English Language and Literature graduate students joined their professors on May 5, 2006 to share their current research.

This first of four panels focused on the early modern period and featured a paper on gender stereotypes in libelous poetry by St. Jerome's **Prof. Ted McGee** followed by an analysis of epistolary influences in *Hamlet* by grad student **Diana Jakacki**. Panel two, entitled "Attending to Language," included **Prof. Fraser Easton's** talk on Phyllis Wheatley's slave poetry and a reflection on ethical criticism by grad student **David Hoff**.

The third panel, on Canadian Literature, featured **Prof. Shelley Hulan's** paper on Isabella Valancy Crawford's work and grad student **Alex Mason's** thoughts on the implicit postmodernism of Mavis Gallant's *Green Water Greek Sky*. The conference concluded with a panel on "Visual Semiotics," with the eclectic combination of **Prof. Kathy Acheson's** analysis of Early Modern animal illustrations and grad student **Ian Blechschmidt's** explanation of the propaganda at play in contemporary comics.

The Student Association of Graduates in English (SAGE) was congratulated for putting together such a well organized, well attended, and intellectually exciting event.

by Angela Roorda, reprinted from Arts Research Update, June 2006, Volume 2, Issue 10

RECENT FACULTY PUBLICATIONS - NEW BOOKS

Kathy Acheson has produced a valuable edition of *Anne Clifford's Memoir of 1603 and Diary of 1616 to 1619*, to be published by Broadview in their Literary Texts series.

"Lady Anne Clifford was a brilliant and powerful figure who successfully challenged the rule of patriarchy in seventeenth-century England, and whose life gives the lie to a whole complex of assumptions about what was possible for women in early modern society. Her diaries and letters, preserved from her youth into old age, show her continuously creating herself. Katharine O. Acheson is an expert and illuminating guide to Clifford's life and papers."

Stephen Orgel, J. E. Reynolds Professor in the Humanities, Stanford University

Peter Buse, **Ken Hirschkop**, Scott McCracken and Bertrand Taithe *"Benjamin's Arcades: An unGuided Tour"*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005. xii, 205 pp.

Walter Benjamin worked on his Arcades Project for 14 years: it was a sprawling, ambitious study of Paris as the harbinger of modern life. He left more than a thousand pages of notes and quotations, which have baffled



Lady Anne Clifford

readers since. This collective volume is a guide to reading the now published and recently translated *Arcades Project*; it provides accounts of the key concepts, discussion of its novel method, valuable information on its intellectual sources and much needed historical context.

English Department Alumni Profile



George Elliott Clarke

George Elliott Clarke is a renowned scholar of and contributor to the long and rich tradition of African Canadian writing. Currently the E.J. Pratt Professor in Canadian Literature at the University of Toronto, Dr. Clarke has received numerous awards including the highly prestigious Governor General's Award for Poetry and a Trudeau Foundation Fellowship. A public intellectual in the best sense, he is a frequent contributor to the popular media and a recognized commentator on issues that pertain to race, cultural diversity, and social justice in Canada.

George Elliott Clarke Waterloo English 1979-85 – accomplished author and Professor of English at the University of Toronto

For Prof. Mary Gerhardstein

The University of Waterloo is known for world-class computer scientists, engineers, and mathematicians, and also environmentalists, architects, and optometrists: it is *the* technological university *par excellence*. So why would a black kid and aspiring poet from Halifax, Nova Scotia, want to pursue a Bachelor of Arts in a place where humanities students were perceived as fanciful dreamers, as possessing a secondary rank *vis-à-vis* the movers of earth and the shakers of atoms?

Well, the truth is, when I enrolled at UW in the spring of 1979, I didn't know it was a high-tech citadel. No, I decided to apply to UW because Canada's foremost expert in African-Canadian history, Dr. James Walker, taught here (and still does).

Ironically though, in his reply to my query letter, Prof. Walker advised me to first study history at Dalhousie University, and then come to UW to do an MA with him. However, at the same time I received this excellent advice, the always-enterprising UW sent me information on the Co-op program.

Having been raised in a family where debt was considered a no-no, but also being 19 and living on my own, the idea of earning money while earning a degree appealed desperately to me. Thus, I opted to come to UW to pursue a Co-op Honours English BA. (A further irony: As my work-terms and class schedule unfolded over the next five years, I was never able to take a course with Prof. Walker!)

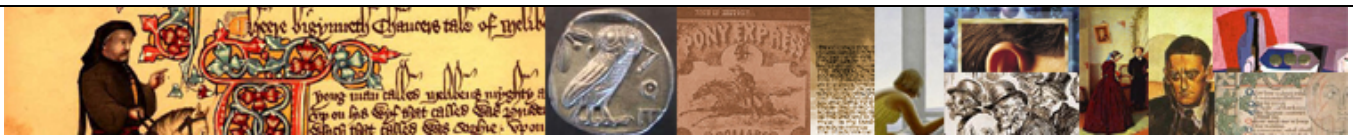
Between my arrival at UW in September 1979 and my graduation in May 1984, I acquired not just rich, real-world experience, but also a poet's education. My English professors composed a memorable, formidable, and stimulating 'school': Mary Gerhardstein's dour persona would dissolve, occasionally, into beautiful and instructive mirth in response to one first-year student speech-act or another; Paul Beam's classes resembled Frygian, 'scientific' cults, but I still employ his lit-crit formula ("Line-Image-Setting-Structure"); Roman Dubinski turned me on to John Milton (I carried *Paradise Lost* around with me for years); John North cemented my appreciation for Gerard Manley Hopkins and the KJV; Joseph Gold alerted me to the delights of Can Lit—and the KJV (Part I); Rota Lister was a terrifically patient and insightful creative writing teacher; the dramatic George Hibbard and energetic Ted McGee reanimated Shakespeare; Eric McCormack entranced me with his appreciation of the bizarre and odd in life; Gordon Slethaug taught an amazing course in American Literature; and Peter Hinchcliffe's Canadian Poetry course provided a

profound historical and critical grounding. (Although I never had the pleasure of studying with Stan Fogel, his ideas seemed to light up everyone who simply passed by his office.)

Apart from my memories of these amazing professors (and please forgive me if I have omitted anyone inadvertently), I also recall two work-terms controlling Toronto traffic signals by computer (a job which came with immunity from prosecution for any rush-hour accidents triggered by my errors), plus another two work-terms working as a researcher at Queen's Park (a "Poli Sci" job I snookered by acing the interview). Thanks to Paul Beam's suggestion, I volunteered at *Imprint*, UW's student newspaper, in Spring 1982, becoming a book reviewer, then a columnist ("Essaies" – *pace* Bacon—and "Speeches"), then news editor, then (elected) Editor-in-Chief (1984-85). I learned much about journalism and much about politics (thanks to a year-long battle with a Nixonian student union prez). In Fall 1982, I helped to found the Creative Writing Collective, which issued pamphlets of poetry and, then, one actual student anthology, *Poets Haus* (1982), all of which served to inform my writing of my first book of poetry, *Saltwater Spirituals and Deeper Blues* (1983). (Its manuscript, shaped in Prof. Lister's class, won First Prize in Nova Scotia's provincial poetry competition.)

But my years at Waterloo were also marked by delicious dalliances and flirtations (including one with the Marxist-Leninist-influenced newspaper, *The Chevron*, and one with the Waterloo Christian Fellowship); moonlit strolls through Waterloo Park, or along Laurel Creek, or around Columbia Lake; all-night essay writing at Donut Castle; Stratford trips to see the plays; *Oktoberfest* schnitzel and sausage and sauerkraut; and the anarchic newspaper production nights (more like substance-abuse orgies) during my editorship of *Imprint*. I also read voraciously in and out of the gorgeous Dana Porter Arts Library—a poet's home away from home. But I also enjoyed hanging out at the funky drop-in that was Integrated Studies (now Independent Studies)—the then-last bastion, along with the always-open Campus Centre (where I worked, part-time, rolling up and doling out quarters in the Games Room), of UW's glorious "Red Campus" days of the radical 60s. I also met many astounding writers: Prof. McCormack, but also on-campus poets Stuart MacKinnon and Rienzi Cruz, and then-local folks like Jane Urquhart.

So despite its advertised tech savvy and no-nonsense, business values, UW was, for me, powerful preparation for becoming and being a poet. I had to learn how to defend my art, yes, but also how to write with clarity and with one eye open to the world.



ALUMNI let us know what you are doing. Keep in touch by mail, fax, or email:

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