

HAPPENINGS: ENGLISH NEWS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING SUMMER 2009

Letter from the Chair, Peter Parolin, parolin@uwyo.edu

Greetings from Hoyt Hall as the summer sun shines down on the University of Wyoming campus. I hope that wherever you are, this letter finds you well and enjoying wonderful summer pursuits. In the English department, I've been taking stock of the productive academic year that has just passed and preparing for the new year that is soon to begin. I'm happy to report that all the branches of our big department – literary studies, creative writing, and rhetoric and composition – are thriving, and supporting our mission of research and fine undergraduate and graduate teaching.

Our faculty members published several impressive books over this past year and they also won major teaching awards. As for our students, they also succeeded spectacularly, doing successful research at UW, organizing readings in Laramie, publishing their work, and gaining admission to fine PhD programs in literature and in creative writing. In this newsletter, I will share more details about our student and faculty accomplishments. As always, I am proud to be associated with the wide range of superb people who uphold the finest traditions of UW English and blaze new trails into the future. For ongoing news about the department throughout the year, please check out our website,

<http://uwacadweb.uwyo.edu/English/>



Craig Arnold, 1967-2009

Perhaps the saddest news we received all year was the loss of Craig Arnold, a magnificent writer, colleague, and friend. Craig was in Japan climbing a volcanic mountain as part of his research for a new book of poems when he fell and died. Since joining UW in the fall of 2004, Craig taught courses on poetry, playwriting, the graphic novel, and food culture (he was also an unforgettable cook). He spent a year in Rome as a recipient of the American Academy's

Rome Prize; he spent a semester in Colombia on a Fulbright fellowship; and this spring he was in Japan on a Japan – U.S Friendship Society fellowship. As well, just last year, Craig published his second volume of poetry, the beautiful *Made Flesh*. This book extends and deepens the talent on display in Craig's first collection, *Shells*, which won the prestigious Yale Younger Poets Prize when it was published in 1999. We will miss Craig sorely, but I can assure you that we will also

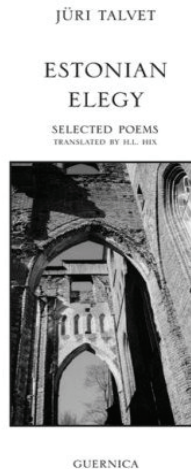
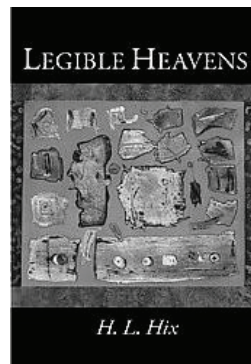
always remember his prodigious gifts and great spirit.

I'd like to take this occasion to invite all of you, as friends of UW English, to a celebration of Craig Arnold that we will hold in the UW Art Museum lobby from 5-7 p.m. on Wednesday September 2. Hors-d'oeuvres will be served. If you would like to attend, please rsvp to cw@uwyo.edu by August 31.



Faculty Publications

In addition to **Craig Arnold's** *Made Flesh*, this past year has seen the publication of other exciting faculty books, including **Harvey Hix's** *Legible Heavens* and his translation from the Estonian of **Juri Talvet's** poems, *Estonian Elegy: Selected Poems*. **Mary Sheridan-Rabideau** published *Girls, feminism, and grassroots literacies: Activism in the Girl-Zone*, which has already won the 2009 "Civic Scholarship Book of the Year Award" from the scholarly journal *Reflections*. Faculty also published important articles and creative pieces in major journals in their fields. We were especially proud of **Brad Watson's** story, "Visitation," which appeared in *The New Yorker's* edition of April 6, 2009, and which has since been selected for the *O. Henry Prize Stories 2010*, forthcoming next year. Also forthcoming in the next year or two are several more faculty books, which I look forward to mentioning in future newsletters!



Eminent Writers

We also have great news to report on our Eminent Writer front: after a terrific year in the department, **Joy Williams** has agreed to stay on with the MFA Program in Creative Writing as a Part-Time Writer-in-Residence. As well, three major writers will join us for shorter stays as our eminent writers in 2009-10: **Claudia Rankine** in September 2009, **Philip Gourevitch** in January 2010, and Pulitzer-Prize winner **Edward P. Jones** in February-March 2010. All of these writers will do public events that will be announced on our website.

New Faculty

For the upcoming year, we are looking forward to welcoming several new faculty members. I'll tell you more about them in the fall newsletter, but for now, let me introduce them: **Andy Fitch**, who did his PhD at the CUNY Graduate Center, comes on board as an assistant professor with a specialty in creative non-fiction. **Erin Forbes**, who completed her PhD at Princeton, arrives as our new specialist in 19th-century American literature. **Danielle Pafunda**, who joined us last year as a Visiting Assistant Professor, comes onto the tenure track with a joint appointment in English and Women's Studies. An innovative contemporary poet, Danielle holds her PhD from Georgia. **Val Pexton**, a short story writer who holds a UW MA and MFA and who has been a lecturer in the department for many years, joins us on an extended-term basis this Fall. We are very excited to welcome all these colleagues – faculty and students alike will benefit from their presence.

UW English Welcomes Distinguished Guests

After welcoming **Salman Rushdie** last fall, the department continued a vigorous visiting writers series in the spring. Faculty and students from the department and across campus came together for readings, lectures, and workshops offered by several distinguished visiting scholars and creative writers. Visitors included poets **Jennifer Davis**, **Lara Glenum**, **Arielle Greenberg**, **Chelsey Minnis**, **Evie Shockley**, and **Jake York**, fiction

writer **James Salter**, and University of Virginia literary scholar **Mark Edmundson**.

In Fall 2009, thanks to the labors of MFA director **Beth Loffreda**, we have another stunning line-up of visiting writers, including poet **Kate Greenstreet** and novelists **Don DeLillo**, widely hailed as one of the great American writers of our time, and **Thomas King**. For details of

these visits, please visit the Creative Writing Visiting Writers website at <http://www.uwyo.edu/creativewriting/info.asp?p=202>

Student Success

The College of Arts and Sciences selected three graduating seniors from the English department for the College's annual list of Top Twenty students this spring. Congratulations to **Jane Hawley**, **Deborah Sneed**, and **William Whyde**, all of whom have had stellar undergraduate careers. Congratulations, too, to **Eileen Pfefferle**, another outstanding senior the department also nominated for the A&S Top Twenty. **Deborah Sneed** won the Student Internationalization Excellence award for her study on an archaeological site in Greece last summer. The A&S Board of Visitors awards for Outstanding Student service went to **Aaron Galloway-Perrell** and **Deborah Sneed**.

Two department graduate students were among the winners of the University's most prestigious awards for graduate study: **Courtney Carlson** won the Ellbogen Award for Outstanding Graduate Student Teaching and **Jason Burge** won the Outstanding Master's Thesis Award for his creative thesis, *My Mulatto Foundling*.

Among our graduating MA and MFA classes, several students were accepted into strong PhD programs: **Khalid Al-rasheed** pursues his studies at Purdue, **Meagan Ciesla** goes to Missouri, **Davin Dearth** heads to Vanderbilt, **Beth Peterson** proceeds to Missouri, and **Tessa Travis** is on her way to George Washington (Tessa also presented this year at the International Popular Culture conference in New Orleans). **Emily Guier** will pursue a Master's in Library Science at Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

As part of their research for their creative theses, a number of MFA students won significant travel grants this year: **Christina Ingoglia** travelled to northern Canada as well as Peru, **Randy Koch** travelled to a conference in Bermuda, and **Bison Messink** travelled to Argentina. **Meggie Elliot**, an MFA graduate this year, is already in China teaching English. Much of this travel was made possible by funds donated by generous department donors; on behalf of us all, I thank you.

Scholarships:

The 2009 English department scholarships went to the following students:

English Study Abroad Scholarship: Caitlin Bohnenblust, Lindsey Grubbs and Lani Jackson

H.G. Merriam Award for Creative Work in the Humanities: Lori Howe

J. F. & Margaret Wilson: Gregory Hirst and Harry Whitlock

Jane L. Tanner Study Abroad Award: Jonathan Kawulok and Brianne Phillips

Ruth Hudson Scholarship: Lindsey Grubbs, Aubrey Knight

Sandy Schwartzkopf: Stephanie Martin

W. O. Clough: Rosa Beyer, Leslie Gallagher, Gregory Hirst, Stephanie Martin, Carla Rust and Harry Whitlock

Major Milestones



Congratulations are in order for **Michael Knievel**, who received tenure from the University this Spring, and **Bob Torry**, who was promoted to the position of full professor. These promotions recognize years of distinguished teaching and research by Michael, who joined our faculty in the Fall of 2002, and Bob, who has been with UW English since 1983. Cheers to these two cherished colleagues on their much-deserved success.



Family Congratulations

In April, our fantastic front-office associate, **Plum Schultz**, welcomed her first child, **Olivia**, into the world. To Plum, Daryl, and Olivia, we send the warmest wishes (it's also worth mentioning that Olivia's grandfather is former English department head, **Keith Hull**. Remember, Keith, it's never too early to start reading the baby *Paradise Lost*).



In June, **Danielle Pafunda** and **Adam Henne** (of the Anthropology Department and International Studies Program) welcomed their second child, Silas, who joins his three-year old sister, the wonderful Hazel. Congratulations to the Pafunda-Henne household!

Faculty Awards

On the teaching front, **April Heaney** was awarded the University's Golden Apple Award for her outstanding freshman teaching, **Duncan Harris** was named one of the College of Arts and Sciences Top Ten Teachers for the fifth time, and **Duncan** and **Ric Reverand** were both selected as Top Profs by the Mortar Board Society on campus. In the department, **Bob Torry** and **Rick Fisher** won the

Fred Slater award for outstanding lower-division teaching. Several faculty and one graduate student won the Promoting Intellectual Engagement Award for inspiring first-year students. The award was voted on by students and earned the selected faculty an invitation to present at Summit 09, a transitional program for incoming students. The PIE winners were: **Craig Arnold**, **Susan Aronstein**, **Sandy Clark**,

Duncan Harris, **Jason Kirkmeyer**, **Peter Parolin**, **Beth Peterson**, and **Bob Torry**.

Faculty awarded sabbaticals to pursue their research in 2009-10 are **Julianne Couch**, who is working on a book project, *Earth Wind & Sky: A Power Trip*, about our energy economy, and **Susan Frye**, who is working on a new book project on Mary, Queen of Scots.

Giving to UW English

All of us in English owe a huge debt of gratitude to our friends and alumni who so generously donate to the Department to support our endeavors. This year, your contributions strengthened our ability to bring so many exciting visiting writers and scholars to campus; to fund student scholarships; to support student research, conference travel and study abroad; and to help graduate students at those inevitable moments of crisis when, for example, a computer breaks down or a family member is sick in a distant city.

We are also delighted to be building the Janice Harris Student Excellence Fund, which was started last spring by an anonymous \$25,000 donation in honor of our colleague and former department chair, **Janice Harris**, who retired in May 2008. The Janice Harris Fund will support students' academic endeavors in Janice's name. My thanks to all who have donated to this fund. If you would like to contribute to the Janice Harris Excellence Fund or to the General English Department Fund, please fill out and return the donor card on this newsletter.

Please Stay in Touch!

As I hope this newsletter shows, we are very proud of the people who have come through our department over the years and we want to stay in touch. If you feel so inclined, please drop us a line to tell us what you're up to. Whatever your current pursuits, those of us in Hoyt Hall send you our warmest wishes and we welcome you to English department events whenever you are in town.

GIVING TO UW ENGLISH

Name _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

I would like to make a gift of \$ _____ to the

English Department General Fund _____

Janice Harris Excellence Fund _____

_____ Check (payable to UW Foundation) or

_____ Credit Card

Name as it appears on card _____

Account Number _____

Expiration Date _____

Please send donations to:

UW Foundation

1200 E. Iverson

Laramie, WY 82070.

For more information contact UW Foundation at

307-766-6300 or 1-888-831-7795,

email them at foundation@uwyo.edu

or visit them on the web at <http://uwadmnweb.uwyo.edu/foundation>

All gifts are tax deductible as defined by law

N10EG

University of Wyoming
Department of English
Dept 3353
1000 E. University Ave.
Laramie, WY 82071

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES DEPARTMENT OF
English

