

Suffolk University English Department

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Dear Literate Person,

The English department is resuming the annual newsletter that was begun once upon a time and that lapsed eight years ago. It will go out to our present majors and also to those who graduated from Suffolk with a degree in English. However, any greeting that included all of you would be clumsy. "Dear English Alumni/Alumnae and Present English Majors" would have been marked "awk & ambig" if you had written it on one of your themes, and to address you as "Dear Former English Majors" allows for the possibility that you were once an English major and made the regrettable choice to switch. Hence the salutation.

Last year's Christmas Party was enjoyed by professors and students. From left to right: Professor Karen Corr, Professor Da Zheng, Delicia Shorter (student), and Professor Gerald Richman.

MEMORY CHECK

Now, just as a reminder of your undergraduate days, here's a quiz. Match the writers listed below and the circumstances of their deaths.

A. MOLIERE

B. ERNEST HEMINGWAY

C. PERCY SHELLEY

D. AMBROSE BIERCE

E. EDGAR ALLAN POE

F. MAXIM GORKY

G. CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE

H. SAKI (H.H. MUNRO)

I. SIR WALTER RALEIGH

1. disappeared in Mexico without a trace.

2. found drunk in a gutter; he may have died of rabies from rat bites.

3. while he was supposedly under medical treatment, his death was hastened by administration of camphor, digitalis, and strychnine.
4. beheaded.
5. put a double-barreled shotgun in his mouth and pulled both triggers.
6. while playing the lead role in one of his own plays, went into convulsions on stage, but because the role was that of a hypochondriac, spectators applauded his fatal seizure as splendid acting.
7. killed in the trenches in World War I; his last words were "Put out that bloody cigarette!"
8. supposedly killed in a tavern brawl (but probably assassinated by his own government).
9. drowned when his sailboat overturned in a storm.

The English department is united in hoping that nothing so drastic happens to any of you.

ALUMNI NEWS

We are fortunate to have several of our graduates now associated with the department. After several years in the Registrar's Office, Deanna Stanford ('95) has brought us her intimate knowledge of the workings of the college and is Staff Assistant to the chairman. In addition, she is studying for her M.S. degree in Secondary Education. Ingrid Bandle Strange ('96) is also doing graduate study in Secondary Education at Suffolk and works with Deanna in taking care of all of us. As well as being department secretary she is Publishing Coordinator for the Eugene O'Neill Review, the 20th volume of which is now off the presses.

Three other S.U. graduates are teaching part-time for the department in freshman composition and sophomore survey courses. Our adjunct faculty includes David Gallant ('85) who is finishing his Ph.D. from University of Rhode Island. Emily Hegarty ('86) has her doctorate from CUNY, with a focus on contemporary American literature. In addition to teaching at Suffolk she is doing free-lance writing. Karen Perry Corr ('90), with an M.A. from Boston College, is dividing her teaching time between Suffolk and B.C. She and her attorney husband, an S.U. Law School graduate, last year bought a house in Melrose.

Agnes Hegarty Gallant ('89) is a Special Education teacher at an alternative education program in Somerville, where most of her students are adolescent males diagnosed as learning disabled or hyper-active or both. Her husband Cliff Gallant ('88) (no relation to David) was also a Suffolk English major and teaches in a grade school in Belmont. Meg

Savilonis ('90) is in her second year of teaching at the Montgomery Academy in Montgomery, Alabama.

Tom Connolly ('83), Ph.D. from Tufts, is currently in the Czech Republic for his second year as a Fulbright Scholar and lecturer at Ostravska Univerzita. He writes that his students will be taking a national test which includes such British writers as Mrs. Gaskell, but the economic conditions of the schools are such that students have no books on many of the writers they will be examined on--even the better-known ones such as Conrad and Hardy. If you can spare primary or secondary materials on any American or British writers of the kind likely to be taught in literature classes, they would be of enormous benefit to the Czech students and faculty. (Write c/o the Newsletter, please.) Suffolk will ship the books to Tom for distribution.

Several of our graduates are or will be working abroad. Patrick Benedetti ('94) is teaching English in Japan. Julie Lee ('96) is leaving shortly for her Peace Corps assignment in Zimbabwe.

Becky Watson ('78) is Evening Supervisor of the Hematology Dept. at New England Medical center, and though her occupation is unrelated to her English degree or her M.A. from Tufts, she informs me that she can write her inter-office memos in iambic pentameter. Becky is one of our more widely traveled graduates, having visited every country in Europe and many in Asia, Africa, and South America. On a visit to Prague this last year she stayed in the room which served as Vaclav Havel's cell during his incarceration.

Patricia Belcher Scanlan ('83) worked for 23 years in state government in administrative, personnel, and human resources positions, and has recently changed careers. She now teaches at Katherine Gibbs School in Boston, combining what she learned in English and in her previous work. Her courses include English grammar, management, business, human resources, verbal communication, macro and micro economics.

Among more recent Suffolk graduates is Matthew Maslin ('96), who has just completed his M.A. in English at Brown University. Clare Thompson ('97) is at University of New Hampshire, also working on an M.A. in English. John Mulrooney ('91) is enrolled in the MFA program in creative writing at New York University, considered one of the best in the country. Natalie Spadorcia ('95) earned an M.A. in English at Simmons and is teaching at a local junior college.

This year is the 30th anniversary of the first publication of Venture, the student literary magazine, and its first editor, Greg Wayland ('69) is now a reporter for Channel 4 in Boston.

Several who graduated with a degree in English are either now in law school or are practicing attorneys. Anita Sharman ('97) is a student at Suffolk Law School. David Caristi ('90) graduated from S.U. Law School in May. Ann Graglia ('89) is also a graduate of S.U. Law School. Debra Silva ('89) received her law degree from Boston

College, and is an attorney in a Boston firm. Jessica Ladd ('86), Harvard Law School graduate, is the Director of Greater Boston Legal Services.

Alexandra Hughes ('92) got her B.S. in Nursing from Simmons and has recently moved to Denver to work at the Rocky Mountain Poison Control Center. She is adjusting to the Wild West. One of her first inquiries was from a mountaineer asking about making his own antivenin from serum and rattlesnake poison.

David Ram ('82) is a tenured professor at Holyoke Community College. Steven Scippione ('80) is an editor at St. Martin's Press.

Joe Farrell ('93) and Leslie Appleton-Jones ('92) were married in December of 1996. He is a sales associate at Mercury Computer Systems in Chelmsford, a firm that specializes in building computers for radar and sonar systems. Leslie is a desktop publisher for First Timers, Inc. in Gloucester.

Patricia McGovern ('62) is a Democratic candidate for governor of the Commonwealth. A former member of the Massachusetts Legislature, she served as Chair of the House Ways and Means Committee.

Mary Ferris ('73) is an auditor with the Department of the Treasury in Boston, and is currently serving a three- year term as Alumni Trustee on Suffolk's Board of Trustees.

FACULTY NEWS

As for news of the full-time English Department faculty, two long-time members of the department, Professors Ruth Lottridge and Thomas Connors, both retired in June. She had been at the university for 32 years, and he for 40. Prof. Lottridge instituted the English honors program, and Prof. Connors was instrumental in the founding of Venture, the student literary magazine. A search committee headed by Prof. Gail Coffler is in the process of looking for two new faculty members to fill tenure-track positions.

Prof. Tony Merzlak is now the department chairman and Prof. Stuart Millner is Assistant Chairman. Former chairman Prof. Fred Wilkins, who retired from that position in 1995, continues to edit the Eugene O'Neill Review. He also organized the highly successful International O'Neill Conference held at Suffolk in 1995 and attended by such luminaries as Jason Robards, Jr. and Jose Quintero. Prof. Wilkins recently attended a memorial service for renowned O'Neill scholar Travis Bogard at O'Neill's boyhood home, Monte Cristo Cottage, in New London, Connecticut.

The other Fred, Prof. Frederick Marchant, who served several years as chair of Humanities, is now back with the English Department and heading its Creative Writing program. There is now available both a minor in that field, and a track for English majors. He is himself a role model for student writers. His book of poetry, Tipping Point, was winner of the 1993 Washington Prize in Poetry. It was published by Word Works, Inc. Washington, D.C.

In addition to poems published in such journals as *Ploughshares* and *Gettysburgh Review* and the widely read *Yankee Magazine*, he has had poems selected for three anthologies: *Writing Between the Lines* (UMass Press), *The Four Way Reader* (4 Way Books, NYC) and *American Poets of the American War* (State Publishing House, HaNoi, Viet Nam). Two of his poems have been translated into Vietnamese and published in the Vietnamese national literary magazine, *Van Nghe*. He frequently publishes essays and reviews in the *Boston Globe*, *Harvard Review*, *The Boston Review*, and *The Southern Humanities Review*. Prof. Marchant was poetry editor of *Harvard Review* from 1992-1995 and is currently a Contributing Editor for Poetry, Graywolf Press (St. Paul, MN). For three years he has taught a workshop for poets at the Writer's Conference at UMass-Boston, sponsored by the Joiner Center for the Study of War and Social Consequences. Twice in the past three years he has traveled to Vietnam, the first time to meet with writers in HaNoi, Hue, and HCM City as part of an official delegation from the Joiner Center. On the second occasion he traveled with Maxine Hong Kingston, novelist Larry Heinnemann and others on a visit in honor of the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam Writers' Association.

Another poet in the department, Prof. Robert Johnson, read a selection of his poems in April at the Denver University Conference for Writers and Critics, and publishes in various magazines. He also won a nomination for the coveted Pushcart Prize.

Prof. Gail Coffler attended the first International Conference of the Melville Society this past July in the Greek seaport town of Volos. Her paper was "Greeks in White-Jacket: The Politics of Melville's Classicism." Attending the conference were scholars from Canada, Japan, and several European countries. As consultant for "Billy Budd" and Other late Manuscripts, Prof. Coffler annotated the classical and religious allusions in all of Melville's unpublished manuscripts for the Northwestern/Newberry definitive edition of Melville's works.

As a birthday gift for her husband, Walter Bezanson (who is also a Melville scholar) she commissioned from composer William Thomas McKinley--husband of Prof. Marlene McKinley--a clarinet concerto. *Alchemy* is an imaginative rendition of the four stages of creating gold. The work was recorded by the Warsaw Orchestra with virtuoso Richard Stoltzman as soloist, and both Professors McKinley and Coffler were in Warsaw with their respective husbands for the premiere performance. The concerto is being released this year on CD.

Prof. Marilyn Jurich was selected as one of the poets to attend a workshop held for three weeks in Prague this last August. She is also a frequent contributor of papers at conferences. At the Aphra Behn Society's conference in Athens, Georgia (October, 1996) she presented her paper "Authority and Absurdity in the Short Novels of Aphra Behn." Her essay "The Pseudo-Utopian Cosmographies of Stanislaw Lem" will be published in the up-coming *Utopian Studies Journal*. Greenwood Press in its Best Essays from the International Association of Fantasy in the Arts Conference is publishing her study entitled "Flowers, Grain, Herbs and the Great Horned Mother Deer, Or How to Retrieve Good in a World Accommodated to Evil: Four Fantasies for Children from Four

Countries." Prof. Jurich's book is also coming off the presses at Greenwood next year: *Scheherazade's Sister: Trickster Heroines and Their Stories in World Folktales*.

Prof. Peter Caputo spent this last summer in Rome, doing research for the book he is writing on mythology, and while there participated in a three-day seminar at Rome University: "How Myth Means: New Questions for Old Gods." He is working with the Vice President's office at Suffolk on a grant that would create a travel scholarship program for the Writing Center. If it is approved, highly qualified English majors will be offered an opportunity to join the tutorial staff in the fall and then participate at the end of the academic year in an all-expense paid research trip abroad.

In July Prof. Da Zheng presented his paper "Chinese Medicine, Chinese Americans, and Chinese American Literature" at the international conference : Chinese- American Interactions: 1840-1949" held in Nanjing, China. He also chaired the panel "American Culture and China." In November he will be discussing Bharati Mukherjee's "Fathering" at the meeting in Detroit of the National Council of Teachers of English. The December issue of *Prospects* is publishing his "Economy of Exchange," a study of Henry James's *The American*. Last year his book *Moral Economy and American Realistic Novels* was published by Peter Lang Publishing.

Prof. Bette Mandl was guest editor for last year's issue of the *Eugene O'Neill Review*, and her article "Gender as Design in *Strange Interlude*" appeared in it. Last year Garland Press published a book entitled *Neil Simon*, including her essay "Beyond Laughter and Forgetting: Echoes of the Holocaust in *Lost in Yonkers*." In 1995 her "'Alive Still in You': Memory and Silence" appeared in *A Shayna Maidel*, edited by Marc Maufort (Peter Lang Publishing). At the Northeast Modern Language Association conference in Montreal last year she delivered her paper "Williams' *Blanche* and Albee's *Martha: Sisters (or Brothers) Under the Skin*". Prof. Mandl regularly writes book reviews on works about modern and contemporary drama.

The department's computer mavin is Prof. Gerald Richman. Former and present students can keep in touch with the department through our Web pages. English Dept.: <http://www.clas.suffolk.edu/english>. In addition to teaching his own courses, he directs the university's Integrated Studies Program, and information on it can be found at <http://www.clas.suffolk.edu/is/is.htm> (He tells me that if the usual periods were placed at the ends of the two preceding sentences they could be a source of confusion. It has become the convention not to use them in such contexts because people trying to get in touch via computer could assume that the dot is part of the access code.)

Retired department chairman Prof. Stanley Vogel, whom many of you know, is living in Westport, CT, sufficiently close to NYC so that he can attend the opera regularly. He volunteers as docent for the Lockwood-Matthews Mansion Museum, and goes abroad once or twice a year, as was always his custom.

FROM THE EDITOR

This newsletter was written by Ann Hughes of the English Department at Suffolk University. Layout design was done by Sherry Mattson, Coordinator of Enrollment Services. If you have any comments regarding this newsletter, or if you would like additional copies, please contact the English Department.

For inclusion in the next newsletter the editor would appreciate information about your own activities, any professional or family news that you are willing to share. If you are not so captivated by modern communications technology that you've forgotten how to stick a stamp on a letter, you can contact Ann Hughes by mail (not e-mail, U.S. mail, please). Or if you must e-mail, send your communication to Deanna at dstanfor@acad.suffolk.edu.