

WORDS³

Polonius: "What do you read, my lord?"
Hamlet: "Words, words, words."

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SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY EDWARDSVILLE
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Hail and Farewell "Then go thou forth, / And fortune play upon thy prosp'rous
helm..." —William Shakespeare, *All's Well That Ends Well*

"I love and reverence the
Word, the bearer of the spirit,
the tool and gleaming
ploughshare of progress."

—Thomas Mann

The Magic Mountain

On Saturday, September 8, the Department officially wished our retirees well and welcomed our new faculty members at a "Hail and Farewell" party, a term harkening back to Larry LaFond's Navy days. Hosted by emeritus professor **Lloyd Kropp** and wife **Carolyn**, the Department enjoyed a potluck dinner with a Mediterranean theme. Following dinner, new professors emeriti **Alice Farley**, **Eugene Redmond**, and **Isaiah Smithson** were honored with words both warm and humorous. Allison Funk recalled how Alice Farley would send brief notes of encouragement or support to faculty members, closing each one with her signature phrase "Happy Trails." Ron Schaefer spoke of how he and Eugene Redmond battled an invasion of ants in their Nigerian rental house one summer. Attendees

nodded in agreement when Joel Hardman mentioned that although Isaiah Smithson never attended large parties, he was always very social in the hallways and would engage colleagues in long talks.

Although he is not retiring from his second career just yet, we also bid **Mike Burke** farewell. Mike joined the faculty at St. Louis Community College Meramac and reports that

he is enjoying the five-minute commute to the office.

Happily, the Department welcomed our new assistant professors: **Helena Gurfinkel**, specialist in Victorian literature and critical theory, and **Adrian Matejka**, poet, (along with his partner Stacey Brown and daughter Marley). **Tina Noto** also joined the Department as an Instructor. Returning to SIUE for the year is **Linda Laube**, who is teaching Linguistics courses. **Amanda Steible** and **Adam Cleary** join us as Instructors on a one-year appointment.



Adrian Matejka [r], Stacey Brown [c] and Marley

Photograph courtesy of Ruth Bell



Helena Gurfinkel

50 SIUE
1957-2007

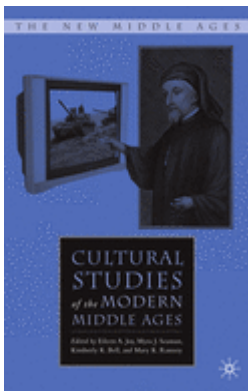
"Words, as is well known, are the great foes of reality."

—Joseph Conrad
Under Western Eyes



Eugene Redmond and Sharon James McGee at the Executive Mansion. Redmond was inducted into the Illinois Senior Hall of Fame.

Photograph courtesy of Eugene B. Redmond



Words from the Chair

“...skewered through and through with office pens and bound hand and foot with red tape.” —Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield*

I am delighted at the publication of our first issue of WORDZ³, a newsletter of SIUE's Department of English Language and Literature. From 1989-1995, our Department produced a newsletter showcasing undergraduate and graduate program

developments, faculty achievements, student awards, journal news, news of alumni and retirees, etc. That newsletter was published in hardcopy, and the associated costs of publication and distribution eventually led to its demise. With this revival of

the newsletter, under a fresh name and in an electronic format, we hope to continue to inform each other of the exciting work of our Department, and to celebrate the many accomplishments of its members, past and present. Enjoy!

Faculty Highlights

In September at a ceremony at the Executive Mansion, **Eugene B. Redmond** was inducted into the Illinois Senior Hall of Fame in the Arts category.

Allison Funk, Geoff Schmidt, Valerie Vogrin, and **Adrian Matejka** received a SAGE grant from the Graduate School.

Charles Berger, Adrian Matejka, and **Valerie Vogrin** received \$8K SRF grants; **Helena Gurfinkel** and **Howard Ramsby** received \$4K SRF grants for Summer 2008.

Ron Schaefer presented papers at the Mid-America Linguistics Conference, Oct. 2007 and at the Conference on Ditransitive Constructions, Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology,

Liepzig, Germany in Nov. 2007. Schaefer also had several papers appear this year: Schaefer, R.P. and F. O. Egbokhare. "On the Character of Locative Phrases with Emai Intransitive Verbs." *Studies in African Linguistics*; Schaefer, R.P. and F. O. Egbokhare. "Aspect-causative Interaction in Emai." *Berkeley Linguistic Society* ed. by Rebecca Cover and Yuni Kim.; and Schaefer, R.P. "Serial Verb Types, Particles, and Event Phases." *Globalization and the Future of African Languages*, ed. by F. O. Egbokhare and C. Kolawole.

Charles Berger's essay "Beyond the Last Thought: Moore after Stevens," will appear in the Dec. 2007 issue of the *Wallace Stevens Journal*.

Eileen Joy (with M. J. Seaman,, K. K. Bell, and M. K. Ramsey)

have co-edited *Cultural Studies in the Modern Middle Ages*, Palgrave MacMillan, Dec. 2007. Joy's co-edited special edition of the *Journal of Narrative Theory* will appear in Dec. 2007. In addition, Joy has been named special column editor for *The Heroic Age*, an online journal for studies in early northwest Europe. She also presented a paper, "The Thousand Tiny Itinerants of Saint Guthlac's Body," at the Midwest Modern Language Association (Nov. 2007).

Amanda Stiebel had two poems published in *White Pelican Review* and *Out of Line*.

Larry LaFond, Sharon James McGee and **Geoff Schmidt** received tenure and promotion to Associate Professor. **Seran Aktuna** received tenure.

Student and Alumni Highlights

Rumyana Hristova (AEL) has been awarded an SIUE Research Grant for Graduate Students for her project, "Exploration of Aspects of William Blake's Cultural Context." Rumyana also presented a paper at the Blake at 250: Celebrating the 250th Anniversary of the Birth of William Blake conference this summer (July 31 - August 1, 2007) at the University of York, York, UK.

Ruth M. Kistler (ToW '07) began the PhD program in rhetoric and composition at Florida State University this fall.

Marsha Goddard (ToW '95) is the Assistant to the Provost at McKendree University. In addition, she is adjunct faculty at SWIC.

Becky Burns (ToW '05) is an

Instructor of English at St. Louis Community College Meramac and became "Nana" to Rylie Morgan Burns, who was born Sept. 25.

Shannon Philpott (ToW '06) is an Instructor of English and Journalism at St. Louis Community College Meramac where she also advises the student newspaper, *The Montage*. Shannon proudly reports that "*The Montage* was just recognized nationally for a 3rd place win in a Best of Show competition against all 2-year colleges within the U.S. for a September '07 issue."

Keith Southam (TESL, '06) now lives in Berlin, Germany where he teaches ESL classes at Herlitz, Inc. (a massive German office supply company).

Chay Lemoine's literary research on Icelandic novelist Halldor Laxness has been front page news in Iceland in August and October. Lemoine (AEL, '04) has also published an essay on trying to work with the Freedom of Information Act: <http://tinyurl.com/yrv6aq> In his spare time, Chay teaches composition courses at SIUE.

Dan Keller (ToW and AEL '02) completed the PhD in Rhetoric and Composition from the University of Louisville in spring 2007 and is now an assistant professor of English at The Ohio State University-Newark. He's had two articles: "Literacy, Identity, and Gaming," and "Reading and Playing: What Makes Interactive Fiction Unique" published in collections this year.

Winnie Kenney (ToW '02) is a faculty member at Southwestern Community College and chairs Women's Her-story Month.

Department Loses Friend, Former Secretary

On November 21, we received the sad news that retired English Department secretary, **Henrietta (Henri) Johnson**, had passed away at her Edwardsville home. Henri was a secretary in the English Department for 34 years (1967-2002). Surviving numerous department chairs and faculty ups and downs, Henri is

remembered by many in the department who knew her as warm, friendly and wickedly funny. She is also remembered for her uncanny ability to find travel funds for faculty members and lecturers, even when funds appeared slim. Last December, Henri attended the department holiday party, vivacious and energetic.

For the past several months,

Henri had battled a particularly aggressive form of cancer. Several department members had seen or been in contact with Henri and reported that she continued to maintain a positive outlook, including adding a sunroom to her home recently.

Henri's husband, Earl, died earlier this year. She is survived by three children, five grandchildren, and five cats.

Redmond's Birthday Celebration

Friends and colleagues gathered to celebrate **Eugene Redmond's** 70th birthday at the St. Louis History Museum on November 28. **Allison Funk** and **Jeffrey Skoblow** read poems that had been published in *Drumvoices Revue*. **Howard Ramsby** shared a photographic montage of Eugene, and **Ron Schafer** reflected on Eugene's collaboration with faculty at the University of Ibadan Haki R. Madhubuti, Quincy Troupe, and others, traveled to St. Louis for to pay tribute to Eugene. Allison Funk reported "It was truly an inspiring night in celebration of someone from our university community who has inspired our students as well as countless others from our region, nation, and beyond." During the evening, Chancellor Vaughn Vandegrift announced that he has forwarded Redmond's name to the Board of Trustees so that he may receive an honorary doctorate from SIUE.

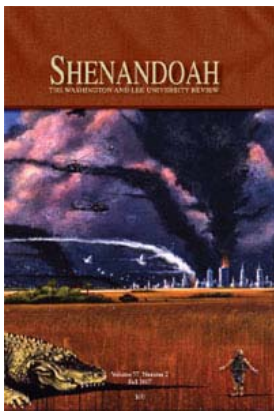
Sou'wester Celebrates (nearly) Fifty Years



Kyle Minor and Steve Davenport signed books at *Sou'wester's* Celebration. Lana Santoni, photographer.

Did You Know...

...that Provost Paul Ferguson has earmarked money for the English Department's journals in 2007-2008? *Riverbluff Review* and *Sou'wester*, have all received additional funding from the Provost's Office. Of course, your financial support is always appreciated also.



Sou'wester magazine sponsored the first ever *Sou'wester-fest*. On October 25. Over 70 people attended this event which brought together past and current editors, contributors (including **Jeffrey Skoblow**, whose short story "Riddle" appeared in the Fall 2004 issue), supporters, and special guests (including former SW GA **Justin Smith**, and Todd Anderson, assistant professor in SIUE's Art & Design Department, whose etchings will be featured on this year's

covers), in celebration of nearly 50 years of continuous publication.

The evening featured readings by **Steve Davenport** and Kyle Minor. Steve Davenport is a former *Sou'wester* assistant editor. His book of poems, *Uncontainable Noise*, was the winner of the Pavement Saw Transcontinental Award. Kyle Minor's recent work appears in *The Gettysburg Review*, *The Southern Review*, and the Random House anthology *Twentysomething Essays by Twentysomething Writers*. His

fiction appeared in the Fall 2006 issue of *Sou'wester* and a poem is forthcoming in Spring 2008. Relationships were forged, a handful of new subscriptions were sold, and close to \$200 in revenue and donations was generated. The refreshments and cash bar were a big hit, and the crowd didn't disperse until nearly 10 p.m.

—Valerie Vogrin

Sou'wester is published twice a year, in the Spring and the Fall. Subscriptions are one year for \$15 and two years for \$28. Subscribe on-line at <http://>

Faculty Highlights (continued from p.2)

Alice Farley presented her work on Harper Lee at the Southern Festival of Books in October.

Seran Aktuna, Joel Hardman and Larry LaFond presented a symposium, "When the Word Becomes the Way: Linguistic Theory in TESL Practice," at the Fifth International Conference on Language Teacher Education, May 31 - June 2, 2007 in Minneapolis, MN.

Allison Funk's new poem "True Prairie" was published in the Fall 2007 issue of *Shenandoah*, and she had two previous poems reprinted in an anthology entitled *Earth Shattering* (Bloodaxe Books, Scotland, 2007).

Sharon James McGee

presented a paper at the Writing Program Administrator's Conference in Tempe, AZ, July 2007.

Brian Abel Ragen continues to serve on the College Board English Literature Advanced Placement Test Development Committee, which not only prepares much of the test but helps develop curricula for AP courses across the country. Further, he is serving as a judge for the Council of Editors of Learned Journals' "Best Special Issue" Award this year. The entries range from *American Literature* to *Gastonomia* to *Fashion Theory*.

Larry LaFond presented "Motivation, Age, and L2 Phonological Development" with Elizabeth Burke at the 30th Annual Second Language Research Forum in Champaign-Urbana in October. Over the

summer, Larry also attended the CCAS Seminar for Department Chairs in Kansas City and for the fifth summer, he accompanied students in the TESL program to Cuernavaca, Mexico, where each year SIUE students teach English to the faculty and staff of Monterrey Tech (ITESM).

Adrian Matejka has new poems in the current issues of *Gulf Coast*, *Pluck!* And *Painted Bride Quarterly*. He also has contributed poems to an anthology *America! What's My Name?* In addition he gave a reading/presentation at the Gwendolyn Brooks Conference at Chicago State University in October, along with a local reading in November.

In July, **John Pendergast** presented a paper entitled "The Commodification of Genre on the Early Modern Stage" at the New Directions in Humanities Conference in Paris, France.

East St. Louis Visual Literacy Project



Students at the SIUE/East St. Louis Center Charter School review materials for "The East St. Louis Visual-Literacy Project."

Photograph courtesy of Howard Ramsby II

During the summer of 2007, I submitted and received an Illinois Humanities Council (IHC) grant entitled "The East St. Louis Visual-Literacy Project." The grant allowed me to work with a group of students at the SIUE/East St. Louis Charter School on a poetry exhibit and catalogue activity. Along with Alsandrya Essien, who teaches language arts at the Charter School, I worked with a group of twelve students over the last couple of months to complete the first major phases of the project.

First, we read and discussed poems by Gwendolyn Brooks, Langston Hughes, Tyehimba Jess, and Margaret Walker. Next, we looked over dozens of photographs and chose excerpts from the poems to match with the images. The students then produced captions to go along with the poem-image blends. I mounted the finished "visual-literary" on boards, and they were exhibited at three different sites in East St. Louis--The East St. Louis Public Library, the Clyde C. Jordan Senior Citizens Center, and Lilly-Freeman

Elementary School--from October 29 through November 9. Overall, the project gave the students at the Charter School the opportunity to showcase both their artistic and interpretive skills for a larger public. A catalogue based on the experience will appear in mid-December,

—Howard Ramsby II

Writing Camp 2008

Session 1: June 16-27

Session 2: July 7-18

Contact Sue Garrison
(sgarris@siue.edu)
for more information.

Writing Camp: Words from Kids

Each summer, nearly 100 elementary and high school students attend SIUE's Writing Camp. Founded in 1983 and directed until 2004 by Eugene Violette, the camp is now directed by English Department Instructor Sue Garrison. Rachel Garlinghouse and Kelly Schmickle of the English Department are two camp instructors. Summer 2008 will be the 25th year of SIUE Writing Camp.

Maggie Puchner-Hardman, a ten-year-old fifth grader at Woodland Elementary School in Edwardsville and daughter of English Department faculty member Joel Hardman and School of Education faculty member Laurie Puchner, has attended writing camp for three years. Maggie's seventh-

grade brother, Luke, has also attended writing camp for many years.

John McGee, an eight-year-old third grader at St. Paul's School in Troy, IL, is the son of English Department faculty member Sharon James McGee and David McGee. John attended writing camp for the first time in Summer 2007.

Maggie and John agreed [okay, their parents begged them] to be interviewed by WORDZ³ about their experiences at Writing Camp.

WORDZ³: Maggie, what is the best part of Writing Camp?

MP-H: Recreation is the best.

WORDZ³: John, what did you like best?

JM: Recreation and eating at

Taco Bell for lunch.

WORDZ³: Well, since we're talking about Writing Camp, what writing did you like?

MP-H: We made poems. That was my favorite part of the day. All the writing part is really good.

JM: I liked writing haiku poems, and I also liked my castle story.

WORDZ³: What would you tell other kids about Writing Camp?

MP-H: It's my favorite camp!

JM: I want to come back this summer!



Session 1, Group 1 Writing Camp Students "publish" sidewalk poetry

Photo courtesy of Sue Garrison

To our supporters and alumni:

The Department of English Language and Literature is committed to helping our students achieve excellence in critical reading, thinking and writing, because we believe these are essential ingredients of a liberal arts education. This work often leads us into many projects and activities that need and deserve funding assistance.

We would welcome your continued generous support for student awards and honors, need-based scholarships for Summer Writing Camp, or assistance with graduate student travel for professional conferences or international study. The continuance of our literary journals is made possible through the purchase of subscriptions, and we are thankful to those of you who support our Department in this way. You can make your tax-deductible contribution by visiting <http://www.siu.edu/artsandsciences/giving/> for on-line giving or mail-in giving options. Please call or write if you would like to discuss our current special funding needs and how, through your gifts, you may play an important role in the life of a student or our Department.

Sincerely,

Larry LaFond

Upcoming Event

“Gathering in the Garden,” a benefit featuring creative readings by award-winning poets, playwrights and fiction writers, along with musical interludes and visual arts. Fort Gondo, A Compound for the Arts, Cherokee St., St. Louis. **January 4** at 7 pm. Donations will support local vacant-lot community gardening.

*Wordz*² is a collaborative effort of the Department of English Language and Literature at SIUE. Without news from faculty, alumni, and students, we would have nothing to print. We hope that your accomplishments can be noted in the next edition, tentatively scheduled for late spring 2008. Information for the newsletter is channeled through Sharon James McGee



Corot, Jean-Baptiste Camille. *Woman Reading in a Landscape*. 1869. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. 27 Nov. 2007 http://www.artchive.com/artchive/C/corot/woman_reading.jpg.html

The Final Word: What Members of the English Department are (re)Reading

Matt Bai's *The Argument: Billionaires, Bloggers, and the Battle to Remake Democratic Politics* —**Howard Rambsy**

After Dark by Haruki Murakami —**Geoff Schmidt**

Dodie Smith's 1948 novel now reprinted *I Capture the Castle* and Elizabeth Gilbert's *Eat Pray Love* —**Nancy Avodian**

A History of Appalachia by Richard Drake and *The Stories of Breece D'J Pancake*—**Ashby Tyler** (GA, Creative Writing)

Citizens: A Chronicle of the French Revolution by Simon Schama and the translated novels of Roberto Bolano—**John Pendergast**

Simon Winchester's *The Professor and the Madman* and Elizabeth Kostova's *The Historian*—**Matthew S. S. Johnson**

Amy Hempel's short story collection—**Kendra Cunningham** (GA, TESL)

Milan Kundera's *The Curtain: An Essay in Seven Parts*—**Eileen Joy**

Treasure Island (with my eight-year-old son) by Robert Louis Stevenson and *Generous Orthodoxy* by Brian McLaren—**Sharon James McGee**

Orhan Pamuk's *Istanbul: Memories and the City* —**Seran Aktuna**

Soon I Will Be Invincible (Austin Grossman), *Spook* (Mary Roach), *Proust was a Neuroscientist* (Jonah Lehrer)—**Joel Hardman**

Life on the Mississippi (Mark Twain) and *The Stuff of Thought* (Steven Pinker) —**Larry LaFond**

Hail & Farewell: The Party in Pictures

Photographs courtesy of Ruth Bell



Ron & Diane Schafer



Sheryl Hasenstab, Seran Aktuna,
Laurie Puchner, and Jill Anderson



Ron Schafer shares stories of Eugene
Redmond.



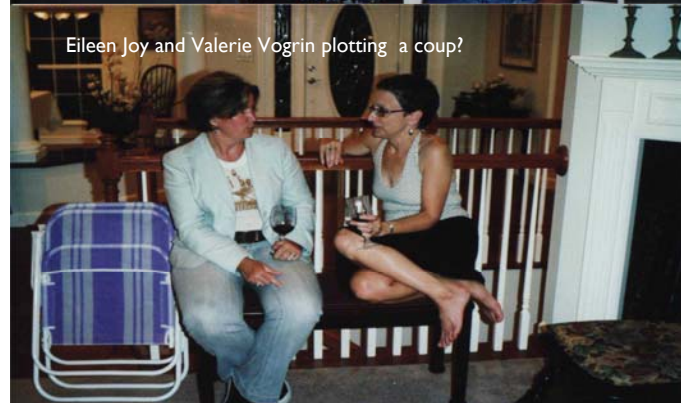
Linda Laube with our gracious
hosts: Carolyn and Lloyd Kropp



Michael Hasenstab, Tina Noto and
friend Roger



Mary Burke, Sharon McGee, Mike Burke, David McGee



Eileen Joy and Valerie Vogrin plotting a coup?



Geoff Schmidt takes notes from Eugene Redmond.