

Postings

Musings and goings-on from the Department of English & Philosophy

Faculty Honored with Teaching and Research Awards

Three faculty members from the Department of English and Philosophy were honored last spring with awards bestowed by the university. Professor of English **Susan Swetnam** was named an Outstanding Researcher, and Associate Professors of English **Jessica Winston** and **Curt Whitaker** were recognized as Master Teachers.

Swetnam's most recent publications include *My Best Teachers Were Saints: What Every Educator Can Learn from the Heroes of the Church*, published by Loyola Press in February, and a book on the Carnegie libraries in the West tentatively entitled *Culture and Commerce* forthcoming from Eastern Washington University Press. Swetnam's record of publication is long and influential. She was awarded an Idaho Library Association prize for her first essay collection. She is currently working on a novel, a comic thriller entitled *Dagger Falls*, and revising a new book of essays about early widowhood, titled *Learning How to Listen; Remembering How to Sing*. Swetnam has received grants this summer to begin a study of Idaho writer Grace Jordan's journalism (from the Humanities/Social Sciences Research Committee at ISU) and to begin an oral history project about food and culture at the Monastery of St. Gertrude (from the Idaho Humanities Council). This is her third time being chosen as an Outstanding Researcher.



Swetnam

Winston has been teaching at ISU since 2002, and has spent a good deal of time developing new courses, including a course on contemporary adaptations of Shakespeare. "I enjoy teaching here," she writes, "since I have an opportunity to teach a wide range of students, from freshman non-majors to graduate students." Winston teaches a variety of courses in English,

Special items of interest and stories contained inside

- See inside for more department news.

Postings contains notes and updates that reflect the activities of the department. It also provides information about upcoming activities and other items of interest.

including English Composition, Introduction to Literature, and Genre Studies in Drama, but her primary passion and area of expertise is the English Renaissance, especially Shakespeare. She explains, "I can't remember when I decided I wanted to be a teacher, since it was when I was very young, but I became interested in researching and teaching Renaissance literature in particular in college, where I had an inspiring teacher, who taught me to appreciate the strangeness and difficulty of sixteenth-century writing." Winston received her M.A. and Ph.D. at the University of California, Santa Barbara, where she focused on Renaissance literature.



Winston



Whitaker

Whitaker majored in English and German at the University of California, Davis. He taught in high schools in Los Angeles before beginning his graduate studies in Renaissance and Eighteenth-Century Literature at the University of California, Los Angeles. He has published on Herbert, Marvell, and Milton and is presenting papers on Herbert this year in Calgary, Canada, and Salisbury, England.

Factoid: In the spring semester of 2007 there were 4,004 students registered in courses taught through the Department of English & Philosophy.

Ti Macklin and **JoSann Lien** have both been honored by the department as the first dual winners of the annual award for Outstanding Graduate Student Teachers of the year. Both Macklin and Lien, along with the undergraduate winners of the annual Student Essay Competition, were recognized at an awards ceremony on May 4.

National Women's Art Exhibit Draws Record Crowds

Women's Studies Co-Director and Assistant Professor of English **Brian Norman** reports that this year's juried National Women's Art Exhibit, sponsored by the ISU Women's Studies Program, was a grand success. The opening reception on March 19 was the largest gallery opening ever at ISU, with an estimated 350-400 people attending. The show featured work across media from oil painting to weaving, from amateurs to professionals, from Pocatello to Louisiana. Norman writes, "The show was particularly special this year because we secured a grant from the Idaho Commission on the Arts (state branch of National Endowment for the Arts) to sponsor a special exhibit in the Seasonal Gallery that features Native American fine arts craft traditions from the area." The exhibit featured everything from traditional feathered war bonnets to beaded cell phone covers. In addition, Drusilla Gould, Shoshone-Bannock tribal member and instructor of Anthropology, delivered a short talk on the cultural heritage of these traditions. During the opening reception, local Native artists demonstrated their craft by showing beadwork or buckskin projects in progress, and Miss Indian ISU Sherice Gould was in full traditional dress to discuss the importance of these crafts to the cultures of local tribal communities.



Faculty and students enjoyed a beautiful afternoon at FMC Park for the fall department picnic on September 7. Thanks to Rachel Warwick and Krissy Turner for helping to make this event a success!

Hal Hellwig is in the final phases of revision for his book on Mark Twain's travel writing. The book will be published by McFarland Publishing.

Faculty News

In addition to his work with Women's Studies, **Brian Norman** has been invited to contribute a chapter to a book on protest literature and the legacies of the American 60s to be published by The New Press. The book, *Beyond the Age of Great Dreams: The Literatures and Legacies of 1960s American Protest*, is edited by Zoe Trodd and Timothy Patrick McCarthy at Harvard University and it will feature the work of emerging and very prominent scholars as well as selections of actual protest literature. Norman's forthcoming book also examines the protest essay.

Susan Swetnam recently won a \$4,000 grant from the Idaho Humanities Council for an oral project at the Monastery of St. Gertrude in Cottonwood, Idaho, gathering information about how changing foodways reflect changing institutional culture there. And, she also recently served as Project Scholar for the Idaho Commission for Libraries, on a project that formulated three new "Let's Talk About It" reading-discussion themes for use in Idaho public libraries. She gave a reading and signed copies of her recently published book, *My Best Teachers Were Saints: What Every Educator Can Learn from the Heroes of the Church*, at the National Catholic Education Association Conference in Baltimore in April.

Tom Klein has two articles appearing this spring: one entitled "*Stonc aefter stane (Beowulf, 1.2288): Philology: Narrative Context, and the Waking Dragon*" is appearing in *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology* and one entitled "The Ghostly Voice of Ghossip in Faulkner's 'A Rose for Emily'" is appearing in *The Explicator*. As usual, Klein attended the International Congress on Medieval Studies in the spring, giving a paper on "Anglo-Saxon Literacy and the Franks Casket."

Brandon Hall's essay, "Teeth like Baseballs," which originally appeared in *A History of Teeth* (Rendezvous, vol. 37, 2002-03), has been picked up and will be re-printed in *Contemporary Literary Criticism*, vol. 229.

Andy Lilley recently had his article "Worth the Work" accepted for publication at the High Country News. The article is a profile of Jeremias Pink and Poky Free Bikes. Pink is one of the founders of Poky Free Bikes, a nonprofit organization, which helps people fix their bicycles or build a new bike at the shop out of donated parts. Poky Free Bikes is free. The article was first developed in Susan Swetnam's Advanced Creative Writing course this semester.

Faculty News

Jennifer Eastman Attebery was chosen as the Phi Kappa Phi spring scholarly lecturer at Idaho State University. The lecture, delivered on March 29, 2007, and entitled "Writing From the Rockies: A Folklorist's View of Swedish Immigrant Letters," drew a mixed audience of students, faculty, and interested townspeople. Attebery also delivered academic papers at two international conferences in the spring. Both are based on her interdisciplinary research into Swedish American folklore and history in the Rockies. At the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Studies, meeting at Augustana College, IL, in late April, Attebery spoke about "Midsommer and the Swedish-American Vernacular Calendar." At the Perspectives on Contemporary Legend Twenty-fifth International Conference, meeting at Utah State University in late May, she spoke on "Narratives as Embedded Genres in Immigrant Letters."

Sonja Launspach and **Janna Graham** presented papers and chaired sessions at the Rocky Mountain MLA Conference held in Tuscon, Arizona in October.

Brian Attebery is a contributor to a book that recently won the Susan Koppelman Award for Best Anthology, Multi-Authored, or Edited book in Feminist Studies in Popular Culture, given by the Popular Culture Association. Attebery's essay, "The Conquest of Gernsback: Leslie F. Stone and the Subversion of Science Fiction Tropes," appears in *Daughters of Earth: Feminist Science Fiction in the Twentieth Century*, edited by Justine Larbalestier. Brooks Landon of the University of Iowa writes of the anthology: "This collection not only sets new critical standards for all of us to aspire to in our scholarship, but also sets new stylistic standards for us to aspire to in our critical prose."

The award is named for Susan Koppelman, who was the first woman to receive the American Culture Association Governing Board Award for Outstanding Contributions to American Culture Studies. She was honored by the Women's Joint Caucus for the American and Popular Culture Associations by the establishment of the annual Susan Koppelman Award for Best Anthology, Multi-Authored, or Edited book in Feminist Studies in Popular Culture. Susan Koppelman is a feminist literary historian especially focusing on U.S. women's short stories. She is the editor of ground-breaking critical collections of American women's short stories and also edited the first anthology of feminist literary criticism.

The **American Interest Group** and the **Linguistic Reading Group** are still going strong. For information about topics and or schedules, please contact the following individuals:

American Interest Group— Brian Norman, 282-4387

Linguistic Reading Group—Sonja Launspach, 282-2237

Undergraduate News

Literary Association Marathon Reading

ISU President **Arthur C. Vailas** kicked off the annual Literary Association Marathon Reading at 9 a.m. on Thursday, April 5, outdoors on the ISU Quad. Students, faculty, staff, and the general public were invited to stop by, listen, and even take a turn reading two books by Italo Calvino, *The Nonexistent Knight* and *The Cloven Viscount*. It took six hours to complete the reading (an improvement over the 12+ hours it took last year to read *Catch 22*). Members of the Literary Association (the club for undergraduate English majors) are to be commended for doing an especially fine job in setting up the reading; particular recognition should go to officers Jackie Bonilla, Diane Yerka, Maria Lai, and Derek Aitken.

The **Composition Committee** honored three undergraduates as winners of the Annual Student Essay Competition Award on Friday, May 4. They recognized the fine efforts of **David Roberts** for his English 102 essay, "Obesity: A Nature vs. Nurture Conundrum," **Elisa Scott** for her English 101 essay, "Mommy, are we rich?", and **Theresa Yupe** for her English 90 essay "Reservation Life." **Dawn Lattin** and **Will Donovan** are the instructors of these students.

English major **Lori Peck** won the Ford Swetnam Poetry Prize in the Spring.

Graduate Student News

JoSann Lien was a runner up for the ISU Graduate Student of the Year Award. She came to ISU in the fall of 2005 to facilitate a change in career direction after having worked for four years as an English teacher in Coeur d'Alene High School in North Idaho. After graduating from ISU with her master's degree in May 2007, she plans to teach part-time and eventually pursue a Ph.D. in English, specializing in postcolonial and/or American transnational studies. Her particular research interests are in the Caribbean, the American South, and African literatures. Her review of John Lowe's *Bridging Southern Cultures: An Interdisciplinary Approach* (Louisiana State UP, 2005) is forthcoming at the *African American Review*.

Three English graduate students participated in the Graduate Student Symposium in English Studies at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, on Friday, March 9, 2007.

Mike Stubb's presentation was entitled "South of the Snake." He read poetry from his collection of the same name that is part of his creative thesis in our doctoral of arts program.

Price Hamilton presented a section of his M.A. thesis entitled "Project Comics: A Modern Folk Literature." His paper looked at the role comics play in popular culture.

Monty Vierra presented "The Subalterns Speak in Ursula K. Le Guin's *The Telling: A Postcolonial Coup*." Applying aspects of postcolonial theory to Le Guin's newest science-fiction novel, Vierra showed how the two major characters, Suttu and Vara, overcame the constraints of the bureaucracies they served to give voice to their own values and concerns.

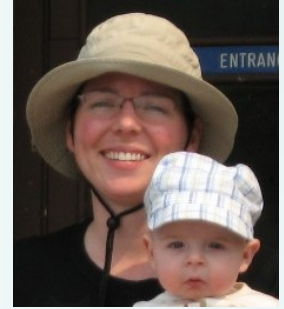
Curt Whitaker gave two conference papers in the spring, "Baptisms and Burials: The Presence of the Book of Common Prayer in Herbert's Nature Poetry," at the Rocky Mountain Medieval & Renaissance Association Conference, and "Sir Thomas Fairfax and the Mowers of Nun Appleton," at the Renaissance Society of America Conference. The Herbert piece was published by *The George Herbert Journal* over the summer.

Over the years, friends and alumni of the department have been charitable with their contributions, and we sincerely appreciate your generosity. These contributions have allowed us to bring guest speakers and artists to campus, provide match funding for much needed technology and system upgrades, assist with funding the literary magazine *Black Rock & Sage*, and offer more scholarship opportunities. If you are interested in contributing to the department, please contact Terry Engebretsen, chair, engeterr@isu.edu or call the department office at 208-282-2478.

Department Babies



Quentin Ray Lien
April 26, 2007
Son of JoSann and Nolan Lien



Adam Winston Skidmore
March 13, 2007
Son of Jim Skidmore and Jessica Winston



Eliza Jo Stubbs
April 2, 2007
Daughter of Mike and Wendy Stubbs

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