

English Department Alumni e-Newsletter

Northeastern University, English Department (617) 373-4540 www.english.neu.edu

Fall 2007

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From the Chair



Welcome to our English Department e-Newsletter! We are very excited about having this new way to keep in touch with our many alumni and friends. Every semester there is a lot going on in the English Department, and we would like to share some of the news with you regularly. We want especially to hear from you, as well.

English continues to be one of the more popular undergraduate majors at NU, now with around 300 students. They are the main

reason we are in the business of teaching English, and every year they seem to push us even more to innovate and to challenge them in their learning. This is the first year of the new General Education requirement in the University, and our majors are busy tackling various subjects in the arts/humanities, social sciences, and science/technology. Of course, they are also (as usual) excellent writers and perceptive readers in English courses and across a range of the Northeastern curriculum. And they are still well supported by a vibrant co-op program that provides the opportunity for on-the-job, experiential learning related to their classroom studies.

The Graduate program also continues to flourish, with a number of our alums now teaching around the country or

engaged in other interesting professional careers. They have been trained and encouraged by a very distinguished and dedicated faculty, one that continues to grow and enrich our course offerings. This past year or so we have been joined by Carla Kaplan, from the University of Southern California, and Elizabeth Dillon, from Yale University.

There is much more news following! But we want to hear your news and invite you to [drop us a line](#). Also, let us know what you might like to see in the *Newsletter* in the future.

Looking forward to hearing from you ...



Tim Donovan
Chair

Alumni Spotlights: Graduate Program Alumni In Georgia & Chicago

Amy Kaufman, PhD '06, will begin in September, 2007, as an assistant professor of English at Wesleyan College, a women's college in Macon, Georgia. Amy's dissertation, directed by Professor Kathleen Kelly, was a study of feminist revisions of Arthurian legend. At Wesleyan she will work to help establish two new majors, in Women's Studies and Medieval Studies, and says she's "looking forward to opportunities for collaborative and interdisciplinary teaching." She credits her Northeastern experience with "balancing a comprehensive graduate education with a practical, marketable degree." Amy has three

articles forthcoming in 2007—in the journals *Arthuriana*, *Studies in Medievalism*, and *Parergon*—as well as a chapter on medieval gaming, co-written with Northeastern English doctoral candidate **Cory Grewell**, in a collection on contemporary "neomedievalism."

The Medieval Institute at Western Michigan University is home to the annual Kalamazoo International Medieval Congress, with over 600 sessions. Northeastern faculty and graduate students giving papers at the 2007 Congress included **Professor Kathleen Kelly**, **Cory Grewell**, and **Michelle**

Teti, MA 2007. **Michelle** is pursuing a doctorate in Medieval Studies at Western Michigan, supported by the award of a teaching assistantship.

The English department faculty at [Columbia College, Chicago](#), an "arts and media" college, boasts three Northeastern alumni. The most recent arrival is **Pegeen Reichert Powell**, MA 1995, PhD Miami University, Ohio, who will take up a tenure-track position in 2007. Pegeen joins husband [Douglas Reichert Powell](#), PhD 1999, who has been teaching composition and cultural studies at Columbia College.
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Professor Loeffelholz Edits Norton Anthology



Edward Hopper. 1942. Nighthawks. Oil on canvas

“Working on the Norton means making difficult choices—we can’t include new authors without dropping other works.”
- Mary Loeffelholz

Professor Mary Loeffelholz is the new editor of the *Norton Anthology of American Literature Volume D: 1914-1945*, which has just been released in its 7th edition. The *Norton Anthology of American Literature* was among the earliest assembled of American literature anthologies and remains the most widely adopted, not only for college classrooms in the United States but in many other countries as well.

New material added by Professor Loeffelholz includes Raymond Chandler’s hardboiled detective story *Red Wind*, the poetry of Mina Loy, and eight color plates representing the visual culture of the period, ranging from paintings like Edward Hopper’s *Night Hawks* and Archibald J. Motley’s *Black Belt* to Dorothea Lange’s Depression-era photograph *Towards Los Angeles, 1937* and

the famous World War II poster of “Rosie the Riveter.”

English major Caitlyn Keckeisson (class of 2009) worked on the volume with Professor Loeffelholz as a research assistant funded by the College of Arts and Sciences FURI (Faculty Undergraduate Research Initiative) program: she unearthed old *Life* photographs of painter Georgia O’Keeffe examining bones in the Arizona desert, researched newspaper accounts of Ethiopia’s role in World War II in order to clarify the *Norton*’s footnotes to a wartime poem by Marianne Moore, and retrieved contemporary reviews of Kay Boyle, whose award-winning story of Austria on the eve of Nazi occupation, “The White Horses of Vienna,” appears in the *Norton* for the first time.

Professor Loeffelholz observes that “working on the *Norton*

means making difficult choices—we can’t include new authors without dropping other works—but as editors we know that the whole of American literature is always going to be greater than the sum of its parts, and we hope to give students and general readers a sense of that whole and how to explore it.”

POLITICS and the TERRORIST NOVEL

A lecture by
Frances C. Blessington
Professor of English,
Northeastern University

November 7, 2007
Noon – Barrs Room

A presentation of the
English Department’s
Barrs Lecture Series.

For more info, call
(617) 373-3692.

2007 Samuel French Morse Poetry Prize Awarded



Virginia Chase Sutton,
www.virginiachasesutton.com

The 2007 Samuel French Morse Poetry Prize, selected by Charles Harper Webb, has been awarded to *What Brings You to Del Amo* by Virginia Chase Sutton. The prize, established by the English department in 1983 and the outcome of an annual competition, is given for manuscripts of first or second books by poets writing in the U.S. It honors Professor Morse’s distinguished Northeastern career as a teacher, scholar, and poet, and includes publication of the winning manuscript by Northeastern

University Press/University Press of New England and a \$1000 cash award.

Ms. Sutton’s collection is the twenty-fourth book in the series. Previous volumes have won additional prizes, including the Norma Farber First Book Award and a Tufts Award. Among earlier Morse Prize winners are Carl Phillips, Lucia Perillo, Jennifer Atkinson, Michelle Boisseau, Dana Roeser, Ted Genoways, Frank Gaspar, and Annie Boutelle. Previous judges include Anthony Hecht, Peter

Davison, A. R. Ammons, Marilyn Hacker, David Ferry, Sonia Sanchez, Charles Simic, Carolyn Kizer, and Rosanna Warren.

The Morse competition is conducted by members of the English department, including Frank Blessington, Joseph DeRoche, Victor Howes, David Kellogg, Ellen Noonan, Stuart Peterfreund, and Guy Rotella. Guy Rotella edits the series.

Peter Burton Hanson Writing Prizes

On March 22, 2007, the English Department honored the winners of the fourth annual Peter Burton Hanson writing prizes. The awards are named

in the honor and memory of Peter Burton Hanson, A&S '91, an English major, who perished along with his wife, Sue Kim and young daughter, Christine Lee, aboard United Airlines Flight 175, on 9/11/01. Prizes were awarded in the categories of Scholarly Writing and Creative Writing, areas in which Peter Hanson himself excelled. Faculty selected the winners from a number of excellent submissions.



Left to right: **Stephen Macuso**, **Laura Mangano**, and **Nicole Cooper**.

Finding the Perfect Ending (25 Years Later)

The following email was received in January 2007.

"Hello, Professor Peterfreund:

"I took a Creative Writing class of yours [back in the spring of 1981], and I wrote the attached poem. At least, I wrote all but a suitable conclusion. I still write occasionally, and I would often pick it up and look at it, trying to come up with a better ending. Last fall, a mere 25 years later, as I read it one more time, I ignored what I had written and came up with a new finish.

"With 50 years under my belt now, I've experienced many years of education, but what I learned in your class always comes to the fore when I'm writing. You told me (and the class) to add the real people, places, and feelings to help the reader be in the moment rather than be told of the moment.

"I just thought I'd share this 'newly' completed poem with you, and thank you again for what remains my favorite class."

Steven Van Houten (1982, CBA)

Read Steven's poem on the Web: www.english.neu.edu/newsletter.

The winner in the category of Scholarly Writing was **Laura Mangano** for "The Genderless Mind: An Examination of Intellectual Androgyny in the Selected Works of Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Virginia Woolf." Laura wrote the essay for Professor Patrick Mullen's Survey of British Literature II course in Fall 2006. **Nicole Cooper** received an honorable mention for "Reconciling the Duality: An Investigation of the Victorian Working Woman," written for Professor Laura

Green's Victorian Literature course in Fall 2006.

In the category of Creative Writing, **Stephen Mancuso** took the top prize for his *New York to Boston: A Collection of Poems*, written for Professor Frank Blessington's Poetry Workshop in Spring 2007. Honorable mention was awarded to Laura Mangano for "The Suicides of the Seraphim," a short story written for

Professor Frank Blessington's Fiction Workshop in Spring 2006.

The winners read from their work and were celebrated at a special reception attended by faculty, students, and friends and family of Peter Burton Hanson.

Undergraduate Program Curriculum News

In response to student requests, the English Department has improved its summer course offerings. Students will now be able to choose from a wider selection of courses in the summer, including courses that fulfill core and major requirements. Certain courses, such as Shakespeare, will be offered every summer, while other courses, such as Modern Novel and Modern Poetry, will be alternated year to year. Creative writing, linguistics, and film courses will be offered every summer, as will surveys, period courses, and offerings that fulfill

the experiential education requirement. These changes should make it easier for students to fulfill requirements and to plan their schedules in advance.

Northeastern's new NU Core, a university-wide general education requirement, will be implemented beginning in Fall 2007. Incoming first-year students will take introductory courses across several "knowledge domains" (arts/humanities, social

science, and science/technology) and an advanced course in one of these areas. Incoming students will also take a second course in math/analytical thinking and a course in the comparative study of cultures. In addition, students entering in Fall 2007 or later will find it easier to complete a dual major or a minor.

DROP US A LINE !

[www.english.neu.edu/
undergraduate_studies/alumni/
drop_us_a_line/](http://www.english.neu.edu/undergraduate_studies/alumni/drop_us_a_line/)

Co-Op Connections

"In recent years, graduates of the English major have been particularly helpful in assisting me in developing new co-op positions for our students."

- Pam Goodale,
Co-Op Coordinator

Greetings from the English Department Cooperative Education program! I want take this opportunity to say hello to all alums, with a special hello to those I've known who have made my job so rewarding, and so much fun!

As I begin my ninth year as a Co-op Coordinator, I'm happy to report that Northeastern continues to offer a robust and heavily utilized Cooperative Education program for English majors, a unique program among American universities. Currently, undergraduates take advantage of co-op opportunities in law firms, publishing companies, film companies, newspapers, non-profit organizations, marketing departments

and educational institutions, just to name a few. Students are working in New York and California, Nepal and Turkey, as well as the Boston area.

In recent years, graduates of the English major have been particularly helpful in assisting me in developing new co-op positions for our students. Positions at Harvard Medical School, Houghton Mifflin, the Citigroup Center for Performing Arts (formerly the Wang Center), and Thomson Educational Publishing were all established with the invaluable assistance of NU English alums.

So- if you or your employer would be interested in Northeastern's co-op program,

please contact me. But please contact me anyway! I would love to hear from you and learn about your journey since your graduation from NU. What have you been doing? What have you learned? How did your education, and/or specifically cooperative education, contribute to your life's path? Enquiring minds want to know- and always appreciate a story!

Pam Goodale



Pam can be reached at (617) 373-3423 or by email at p.goodale@neu.edu.

Writing Program Update

Last year, a group of ninety-seven instructors, consisting of teaching assistants and part-time and full-time writing faculty, taught three hundred and thirty-two sections in the Writing Programs. In part, the growth in faculty is the result of offering students more writing courses, such as first-year writing courses in "Learning Community" clusters; that is, ENG 111: College Writing paired with courses in other disciplines.

Patricia Sullivan, Director of First-Year Writing, developed a sourcebook for first-year students, called *The First-Year Portfolio and Guide*. The P&G serves as an introduction to the teaching of writing at NU and the various policies of the Writing Programs; it includes a mini-grammar, and furnishes a useful

organizing apparatus for the first-year writing portfolio. As does the Advanced Writing in the Disciplines (AWD) *Toolkit*, royalties from the P&G underwrite various Writing Programs initiatives: covering an instructor's (including a TA's) expenses incurred when presenting on a rhetoric or composition topic at a conference; paying instructors a small stipend to attend our kick-off workshop before classes begin; funding a guest speaker series; and underwriting our new Mentoring Program.

Full-time Lecturer Greg Zuch is Director of the Mentoring Program (piloted last year through a College of Arts and Sciences initiative). The program, initially restricted to part-time faculty teaching in the First-Year Writing Program, now

includes teaching assistants and AWD instructors. Our goal is to insure that every instructor, no matter her/his previous experience, receives personal and personalized attention from a master teacher. Once mentored, instructors are then eligible to serve as mentors themselves—a paying position, and a great line on the CV. Of course, such perks are happily incidental; our larger purpose is to build a well-networked community of expert teachers across all ranks.

"Our goal is to insure that every instructor, no matter her/his previous experience, receives personal and personalized attention from a master teacher."

- Kathleen Kelly,
Director of Writing
Programs

Alumni Spotlights

Continued from page 1

In an environment of "sky-rocketing" enrollments, Doug enjoys having had "a lot of freedom to define my work [and] to contribute to big-picture issues, especially curricular change, and a lot of resources to support new ideas. At one of the first faculty events I attended, my dean at the time said to all of us, 'I want you to keep doing what you're doing until you get your hand slapped.' Somewhat to my surprise, nobody's slapped me yet."

The third Northeastern alum at CCC is [Tony Trigilio](#), PhD

1997, who is currently Director of Creative Writing-Poetry and Associate Chair. Tony credits Northeastern with preparing him for "the great difficulty in balancing everything you have to do in an academic career" and remarks on "the speed with which anyone's academic career moves from being the new kid on the block to the person who mentors new faculty. . . . You realize that your academic experience translates into the institutional life of the college as much as it translates into your classroom."

Dear Graduate Alumni:

In each issue of this e-newsletter, I will spotlight a selection of the multifarious activities of our Master's and doctoral alumni and our current graduate students. For a more comprehensive listing of alumni achievements and activities, please visit www.english.neu.edu/graduate_studies/alumni at any time, and please, send your professional news and updates to gradengl@neu.edu (and do let us know of any errors or omissions).

"Professional" does not mean only academic, by the way—we're interested in all of our graduates' careers and activities.

Best,



Laura Green

Associate Professor
and Graduate coordinator

DROP US A LINE !

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graduate_studies/alumni/
drop_us_a_line/](http://www.english.neu.edu/graduate_studies/alumni/drop_us_a_line/)

Graduate Program Alumni Bookshelf, 2006-2007

Kenkl, Pavel, PhD '03, *This Vast Book of Nature: Writing the Landscape of New Hampshire's White Mountains, 1784-1911*. University of Iowa Press, 2006.

Cook, Jennifer, MA '98. *Machine And Metaphor: The Ethics of Language in American Realism*. Routledge, 2006.

Reichert Powell, Douglas. *Critical Regionalism: Connecting Politics and Culture in the American Landscape*. University of North Carolina Press, 2007.

Trigilio, Anthony. *Allen Ginsberg's Buddhist Poetics*. Southern Illinois University Press, 2007.

----- *The Lama's English Lessons*. Three Candles Press, 2006.

English Department Events

- **Politics and the Terrorist Novel**, Nov. 7, 2007 @ Noon

A lecture by Frances C. Blessington, Professor of English, Northeastern University. Location: Barrs Room. This lecture is sponsored by the English Department's Barrs Lecture Series. For more information, call 617-373-3692.

- **Annual Hanson Lecture**, Nov. 29, 2007 @ 3:00 p.m.

A lecture by Charles Simic, the Poet Laureate of the United States. He has been honored with a Wallace Stevens Award, a Pulitzer Prize, two PEN Awards for his work as a translator, and a MacArthur Fellowship. For more information call 617-373-4540.

Event info can be found online: www.english.neu.edu/events

First Annual Northeastern English Department Graduate Conference

This past Spring the English Graduate Student Association (EGSA) organized a one-day conference on the topic of "Textual Spaces." According to doctoral candidate Michele Braun, one of the conference organizers, the conference was "a logical outgrowth of last year's graduate student colloquium, at which we shared work in progress. We wanted a venue in which we could showcase our

work and learn from other students in the department."

Eight graduate students presented papers or participated in a roundtable discussion on interdisciplinarity, and Professor Mary Loeffelholz delivered the keynote address. Some thirty faculty and students attended, and the EGSA is looking forward to hosting a second conference in February, 2008.

Acknowledgements

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