

Columbia University

English Department Update

an annual alumni newsletter

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NICHOLAS DAMES TO BE NEW DEPARTMENT CHAIR

This spring Executive Vice President Nicholas Dirks, following the unanimous recommendation of the faculty of English and Comparative Literature, named Professor Nicholas Dames, Theodore Kahan Professor in the Humanities, as the next department chair. He follows Jean E. Howard, George Delacorte Professor in the Humanities, who finishes her term on June 30. A specialist in the nineteenth-century novel, Dames has interests in novel theory, the history of reading, and the aesthetics of prose fiction from the seventeenth century to the present. He is author of *Amnesiac Selves: Nostalgia, Forgetting, and British fiction, 1810-1870*, which was awarded the Sonya Rudikoff Prize by the Northeast Victorian Studies Association, and of *The Physiology of the Novel: Reading, Neural Science, and the Forms of Victorian Fiction*. A famed teacher, Professor Dames was awarded Columbia's Presidential Teaching Award in 2005, and in 2008 he received a Gerry Lenfest Distinguished Faculty Award. His current book is a history of the chapter, from

ancient prose fiction and manuscript Bibles to the modern novel.

Of his new appointment, Professor Dames says: "I'm thrilled to become chair at this time in the department's history. We have managed, in straitened economic times, to expand and strengthen our faculty; we've become committed to open, productive intellectual debate about important decisions, and we are, by every available metric, one of the country's top literature departments."

"There is work to be done in the next few years, of course. I anticipate our looking hard at how we structure our undergraduate major and course offerings and thinking about what we want literary study to be at this point in time. We have ambitious plans to improve our communications efforts and our

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MARIANNE HIRSCH TO HEAD MLA



The Department of English and Comparative Literature is honored to announce that one of its members, Professor Marianne Hirsch, has been elected to lead the Modern Language Association of America, the flagship professional organization for those who teach English, European, and other modern literatures from around the world. Elected by the membership as Second Vice President in 2011, Hirsch becomes First Vice President in January of 2012 and President in January of 2013. She and the other members of the Executive Council have fiduciary and administrative responsibility for the Association. Of her new position Professor Hirsch says: "As Vice President and President of the MLA of America I look forward to working with my colleagues in language and literature to protect and foster the critical capacities of the humanities in local and global contexts. At this moment of retrenchment and attack, when language departments are being cut and budgets trimmed, professional organizations like the MLA can serve as political advocates and as catalysts mobilizing support for the humanities as the cornerstone of a liberal arts education." Previously Professor Hirsch had served on the Executive Council of the MLA (1992-95) and as editor of *PMLA*, the scholarly journal of the Association (2003-06).

At Columbia, Professor Hirsch is the William Peterfield Trent Professor of English and Comparative Literature and teaches courses in twentieth-century comparative literature, cultural memory, visual culture, Holocaust studies, and feminism. Her major recent publications include, with Leo Spitzer, *Ghosts of Home: The Afterlife of Czerowitz in Jewish Memory and History* (2010) and, as single author, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative, and Postmemory* (1997), *The Familial Gaze* (ed. 1999), *Time and the Literary* (co.ed. 2002), *Teaching the Representation of the Holocaust* (co.ed. 2004), and *Grace Paley Writing the World* (co.ed. 2009). Her book *The Generation of Postmemory: Gender and Visuality After the Holocaust* and her co-edited book, *Rites of Return*, are forthcoming in 2011.

COMMENTS

Any questions or comments should be addressed (with the subject heading "NEWSLETTER") to Nicholas Dames, incoming Chair of English & Comparative Literature, at nd122@columbia.edu or to Iris Zhang, Newsletter Coordinator, at ibz2101@columbia.edu.

NOTED IRISH WRITER COLM TOIBIN JOINS THE DEPARTMENT

Colm Toibin, the Prize-winning novelist, short story writer, essayist, and critic, will join the Department of English and Comparative Literature as a Mellon Professor in the Humanities in January of 2012. He will teach two courses each spring for the indefinite future. In 2012 these will be an undergraduate class in Irish Prose and a graduate seminar on *The Hidden Hero and the Secret Self: The Male Protagonist and Images of Masculinity in Fiction*. Toibin will strengthen the department's offerings in fields as diverse as Irish literature, comparative modern fiction, and the essay.

Toibin is acclaimed on both sides of the Atlantic for his depictions of the processes and perils of artistic creativity and the relationship between creativity and national and sexual identities. His deep understanding of these issues is most tellingly rendered in his 2004 novel, *The Master*, a psychological study of Henry James's later years, and, in particular, the ways in which James managed artistically to transform traumatic encounters with nation and sexuality—the Civil War, the trials of Oscar Wilde, his own disastrous attempt to become a playwright—into an aesthetic of impersonality. *The Master*, which was shortlisted for the Booker Prize, was preceded by a critical study, *Love in a Dark Time: Gay Lives from Wilde to Almodovar* (2002), and has been followed by *All a Novelist Needs: Colm Toibin on Henry James* (2010). His rapidly expanding body of work includes at least six novels, three collections of short stories,

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JUDITH BUTLER NAMED VISITING MELLON PROFESSOR

Judith Butler, the noted critic, philosopher, and feminist theorist, will visit the Department of English and Comparative Literature in spring of 2012 and spring of 2013 as the Wun Tsun Tam Mellon Visiting Professor in the Humanities. She will teach courses in Philosophical Fiction, Comparative Modern Literature, and Critical Theory, including Feminist Theory.

Professor Butler is currently the Maxine Elliot Professor in the Department of Rhetoric and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Berkeley. An active university citizen, at



Berkeley she has been Co-Director of the Critical Theory Program;

Chair of the Department of Rhetoric; and Chair of Women's Studies. She is also world-famous for her critical and philosophical studies which range from her often-cited early book, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, published in 1990 and now translated into at least twenty-five languages including Chinese, Dutch,

and Turkish, to her recent study, *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?* She has published ten books and countless articles and essays and has been honored by fellowships and prizes from institutions around the world. Professor Butler was trained in Philosophy at Yale University, but her impact has been felt in many disciplinary sites including law, literature, politics, and gender and sexuality studies. She has consistently taken up some of the most vexed and pressing issues facing the humanities and social sciences including the performativity of gender, hate speech and censorship,

academic freedom and new challenges to it, the medical treatment of intersex persons, torture and state violence, how one develops an ethics that starts from and acknowledges the limits of the subject's self-knowledge, and the role of social frames, including those provided by the media and by photography, in determining whose lives are recognized as worthy to be grieved.

The recipient of a three-year Andrew Mellon Distinguished Achievement Award in 2009, Butler is currently working on two collaborative research projects: "Why War?" and "Translating Feminisms." Colleagues at Columbia look forward to joining this work. English Department member Marianne Hirsch, currently Director of Columbia's new Center for the Critical Analysis of Social Difference, says that she looks forward to having Butler participate in the Center's working groups as well as in the intellectual life of the English Department. "To the department she brings her groundbreaking work in literary theory. Books like *Giving an Account of One-self*, *Antigone's Claim*, *Precarious Life*, and *Frames of War* all resonate greatly with the interests of faculty and students alike—interests in literature and philosophy, ethics, psychoanalysis, history."

Of the appointment, current chair Jean E. Howard says: "Judith Butler is a world-class intellectual and a deeply ethical person. We are all excited that she will be part of our community during the next few years. Her work is used by many of our students, and she will be a wonderful departmental interlocutor." At the end of her two years as a Visiting Professor, Butler will have the option of remaining permanently at Columbia as a full-time faculty member.

DEPARTMENT INVOLVED IN BOOMING FIELD OF NARRATIVE MEDICINE

Now in its fifteenth year, the Narrative Medicine program at Columbia University has grown from a one-woman project into a program with an extensive array of offerings including a Masters of Science degree through the School of Continuing Education. The founder and director, Rita Charon, started to explore the interdisciplinary aspects of medicine and literature while studying for a Ph.D. with the Columbia English Department. She had already completed a degree from Harvard Medical School. While at Columbia, she met Professor Maura Spiegel, Associate Professor of English at Columbia University and Barnard College, and together they co-edited the *Journal of Literature and Medicine*, marking the beginning stages of an exploration of the intersection between these two fields.

Professor Charon experimented with different ways to bring literature into the medical arena. She organized reading groups and also asked students and practitioners to keep "parallel charts." The standard medical chart contained patient information, but the parallel chart was a place for practitioners' information—their thoughts, responses, and feelings.

The program formally kicked off

in 2000 when it received a grant from the National Endowment for Humanities, which was used to organize a workshop to bring people together to talk about the relationship of literature, medicine, and narrative. The interest the conference garnered was overwhelming. Attendees came from a diverse range of backgrounds, both intellectually and geographically, and the success of the conference led others to experiment with teaching literature in a medical environment and to use the analysis of narrative to help doctors communicate more deeply with their patients and to build trust. With so much interest in evidence, the need for a formal program became obvious to ensure that proper training practices were followed.

The field of narrative medicine produces a multi-tiered impact on the medical community, the practice of medicine, and more broadly on the level of healthcare provided. First, the program provides help and support for the extreme stress that caregivers experience everyday. As part of the program, graduate

students fulfill a practicum where they run four to six workshops supervised by faculty at different sites, including hospitals, prisons, pre-med classes, and post-baccalaureate pre-med classes. Professor Spiegel also runs writing workshops for the staff of the NYU/ Bellevue Program for Survivors of Torture.

At another level, their work with practitioners helps medical providers to develop the listening skills

"We try to get an angle on what do sick people go through and what do clinical people go through as they try to treat them."

for more in-depth medical care. Professor Spiegel says, "It is important to develop listening skills, to be present and mindful, to recognize the kind of story and what's missing. One of the problems [that we address] is when patients are non-compliant with medications. How to change that dynamic so the patient feels connected to the process is, in our view, really impacted by how physicians interact with patients."

Founder and director Professor Rita Charon points out, "The better I [as a doctor] am at listening, the better I am at my clinical practice. What does clinical practice involve? What am I doing to become a receiver for the patient? If it's a sick person

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CRAWFORD AND ADAMS RECEIVE COVETED LENFEST DISTINGUISHED FACULTY AWARDS

In 2005 Columbia trustee Gerry Lenfest established the Lenfest Distinguished Faculty Awards to "honor exceptional teaching in the Arts and Sciences, recognizing faculty who demonstrate unusual merit across a range of professional activities including scholarship, university citizenship, and professional involvement. The awards place a primary emphasis on the instruction and mentoring of undergraduate and graduate students." Since these awards were created,



faculty in the Department of English and Comparative Literature have won an exceptional number of them, testimony to the

department's longstanding commitment to excellence in both teaching and scholarship. Past departmental winners include Jenny Davidson, Farah Griffin, Robert O'Meally, Nicholas Dames, Sharon Marcus, and Brent Edwards.

In 2009-10 and then again in 2010-11, two more faculty members, Professor Julie Crawford and Professor Rachel Adams, joined the number of those honored by this prestigious award which

comes with a stipend of \$25,000 for each of three successive years. Both Crawford and Adams are noted young scholars and exceptional teachers. Crawford works in early modern English literature, and her first book, *Marvelous Protestantism: Monstrous Births in Post-Reformation England*, learnedly examines the ways in which early modern popular culture participated in religious debates in the decades following the Reformation. Focusing in part on stories dealing with monstrous births such as headless children or infants born with a ruff of skin around their necks, Crawford argues that Protestant preachers and printers used such popular narratives and images to warn their readers and listeners against particular sins. In doing so, they contradicted their own critique of Catholic culture for its investment in images, icons, and the material signs of God's intentions and unconsciously acknowledged that the break between pre- and post-Reformation culture was less absolute than many have imagined.

Crawford's new book, *Women and the Politics of Literary Production in Early Modern England*, which will be completed this summer, demon-

strates Crawford's interest in the centrality of women as cultural actors and agents. Her book situates women writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries firmly inside political and social networks from which it was once assumed they had been excluded. Crawford



argues that coteries were crucial to the development of Protestant politics and alliance in early modern England, whether one is talking about the extended network

around the Sidney family or the radical Protestant circle surrounding the Hoby family in Recusant-dominated Lancashire. In these coteries, she shows, women were valued participants. They were not only writers, but patrons, readers, commentators, and interlocutors with powerful public figures; and they helped to shape the genres in which Protestant polemic was developed and the arguments that it advanced. The study of women's writing in early modern England has sometimes

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UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT ACTIVITIES

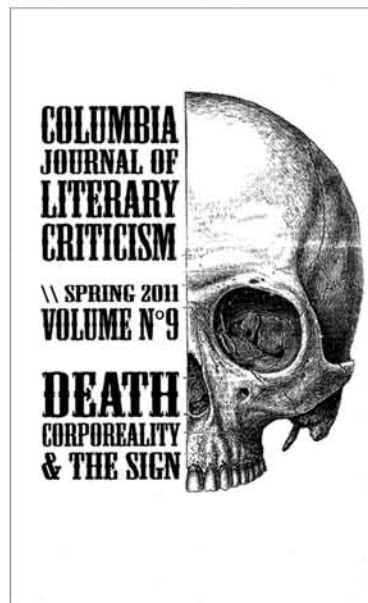
After Hours with Professor James Shapiro

Filling the lecture room to maximum capacity, the popular After Hours talk hosted by the *Columbia Journal of Literary Criticism* drew a large audience, fans both of Shakespeare and of Professor James Shapiro. Larry Miller Professor of English and author of five award-winning books, Professor Shapiro spoke about his latest one, *Contested Will: Who Wrote Shakespeare?* (2010). As Professor Shapiro explains, the phenomenon of reading Shakespeare as autobiographical work is a relatively modern occurrence that did not exist in the playwright's time. That said, there has been (and continues to be) much written on the question of who actually wrote the plays commonly attributed to Shakespeare. Many theories have been advanced as to other possible authorship candidates—Francis Bacon and Edward de Vere among others.

Professor Shapiro's interest in popular appropriations of Shakespeare brings his work into a domain beyond the traditional boundaries of academic scholarship. He is currently working with Hollywood director Roland Emmerich on the upcoming Shakespeare movie, "Anonymous," and in London, he is coaching the Royal Shakespeare Company as a sort of scholar-on-call. "It is very exciting," he says about his career and jokes, "in the great game of rock-paper-scissors, movies beat books," referring to the

upcoming blockbuster. He expects that this movie will catapult Shakespeare even further out of the classroom and into the living room.

As part of the purpose of the CJLC After Hours



event, featured speakers are invited to share thoughts on their field and career. In this vein, Professor Shapiro reflected on his career in academia and observed, half tongue-in-cheek,

"Your first book is really your PhD. When you get to my age, you realize that your best work happens from 40 to 50; after that, you're really coasting on reputation. So I leave it to you guys."

Besides *Contested Will*, Professor Shapiro's published works include *Rival Playwrights: Marlowe, Jonson, Shakespeare* (1991); *Shakespeare and the Jews* (1995); *Oberammergau: The Troubling Story of the World's Most Famous Passion Play* (2000); and *1599: A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare* (2005). He has co-edited the *Columbia Anthology of British Poetry* and served as the associate editor of the *Columbia History of British Poetry*. Professor Shapiro is currently at work on another book, *The Year of Lear: Shakespeare in 1606*.

The CJLC in its Ninth Year

Now in its ninth year, the *Columbia Journal of Literary Criticism* (CJLC) has brought a number of renowned intellectuals to campus, including Stanley Fish, Louis Menand, Slavoj Žižek, Mary Beard, and Tony Grafton. In addition to organizing lectures, the *Journal* also conducts in-depth interviews covering a broad range of topics. Past interviewees include Elaine Scarry, Caroline Levine, and Franco Moretti. These events are in addition to the popular After Hours discussion series, typically held

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THE DEPARTMENT WELCOMES TWO NEW FACULTY MEMBERS

Matthew Hart joined the Department this year after five years of teaching at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign where he was jointly appointed in the English Department and in the Unit for Criticism and Interpretive Theory. He received his Ph.D. at the University of Pennsylvania and specializes in 20th- and 21st-century Anglophone culture, with an emphasis on modernist poetry, contemporary British fiction, political theory, and the visual arts.



His first book, *Nations of Nothing But Poetry: Modernism, Transnationalism, and Synthetic Vernacular Writing*, examines the works of twentieth-century British, Caribbean, and American poets and presents a new theory of the “synthetic vernacular,” which reinterprets modernist writing via the tension between local and transnational forms of expression and belonging. For example, Hart observes that the poetry of Hugh MacDiarmid, although comprised of unquestionably Scottish words, combines them in a way that no Scot naturally would. Thus, while this amalgamation possesses an element of universality, crossing borders of time and geographic locality, Hart argues that MacDiarmid also reaffirms Scottish culture within an English-dominated British state. His poetry is thus “synthetic” on many levels—in that it is not typical Scottish language, rather it was created or man-made, in how it synthesizes or combines words, and finally in how its final product belies a world that has not reconciled the tension between the local and the transnational.

Professor Hart’s current research focuses on extraterritoriality in an increasingly globalized world. His

forthcoming book will study recent British literature, art, and political discourse. This work is a departure from his first book, but will still center on the ways in which the nation-state continues to survive, if not thrive, in a transnational environment. One example of this, Professor Hart points out, can be found in the British Memorial Garden in lower Manhattan. It is in fact the only September 11th memorial dedicated solely to the losses of a particular nationality. Furthermore, the visual detail of the memorial, tracing the outline of the British Isles, is symbolic of stamping or marking a piece of American soil with the image of another nation.

Professor Hart currently teaches an undergraduate lecture titled “Late Modernism,” which involves readings from the “after-life” of Modernism in the early 20th century, and the introductory Core requirement, “Masterpieces of Western Literature and Philosophy,” popularly known as “Lit Hum,” which he enjoys and finds a refreshing change of pace from his research. He is also preparing to teach a graduate seminar titled “Extraterritorial: Transnational Culture and the Politics of the State,” which will examine the representation of the state in contemporary fiction, the design of public space, fine arts, works of architecture, and photography, including Melanie Friend’s images of immigration detention facilities in England. Professor Hart explains, “Her photographs intentionally don’t show people in them, both reflecting and pointing out the movement of these detainees, who are neither here nor there, but really sort of in limbo. They travel to this country [England], and they often haven’t been convicted of a crime, but are still detained and held in this facility. So this space really becomes a legal and cultural ‘gray area.’”

Cristobal Silva, who is the newest addition to the Department, holds his Ph.D. from New York University and is a key member of the department’s early American

literature faculty. Silva completed his undergraduate studies at the University of California-Berkeley, where he was a double major in English and Mathematics. His quantitative background shaped his interest



in science and medicine.

Professor Silva specializes in colonial and eighteenth-century American literature and culture, transatlantic literature, narrative, and medicine. His forthcoming book, *Miraculous Plagues: An Epidemiology of New England Narrative, 1616-1721*, studies early colonial-era medical writing, sermons, novels, and poems that consider the basic question of why some people get sick while others do not.

Professor Silva explains his approach to epidemiology as “not just as a field of medical science and statistics but as a story about diseases—how they appear and disappear... Epidemiology is a relatively modern medical science that really arose in the late 19th and early 20th century—Louis Pasteur was integral. Today, theology and medicine are separate fields. But early writing blended what are really disparate fields.” Professor Silva’s work crosses borders in many ways and sits at the intersection of scientific and social spheres. “I look at quarantining and protecting borders in medical terms and social terms. The intersection of science and society is where literary criticism comes in,” he says. Professor Silva is currently at work on his next book, *Republic of Medicine: Epidemiology and the Atlantic Slave Trade*, which

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PROFESSOR PAUL STROHM RETIRES

Paul Strohm retired from the Department of English and Comparative Literature at the end of academic year 2009-10. Paul came to Columbia in 2003 from the University of Oxford, where he was the J.R.R. Tolkien Professor of English Language and Literature. Best known for his wide-ranging textual and cultural analyses of medieval and early modern England, Paul was deeply appreciated as well for his contributions to faculty governance, his support for the Writing Program, and his teaching in all levels of the curriculum from Literature Humanities to graduate seminars on topics such as Court Culture, Tudor Drama, and Angry Speech.

Paul’s first book, *Social Chaucer* (1989), conjoined the study of theory, history, and literature to envision in newly historicized terms how Chaucer, his works, and his times were inseparably commingled. Paul went on to publish several more books on the ways in which writings of all kinds speak to their times, not just reflecting on historical conditions but constituting and shaping them. His most recent book, *Politique: Languages of Statecraft between Chaucer and Shakespeare* (2005) originated as the Conway Lectures in Medieval Studies at the University of Notre Dame.

Although retiring from regular teaching, Paul continues as Professor Emeritus at Columbia University as well as Senior Research Fellow of St. Anne’s College, Oxford and Discretionary Member of the Oxford Faculty of Language and Literature. With several publications in press or promised, Paul has an eventful transatlantic retirement in view. The Department wishes him the very best and hopes to see much of him in the future.



ENGLISH STAFF MEMBER DONATES FAMILY PAPERS TO COLUMBIA LIBRARY

The Rare Book & Manuscript Library is delighted to announce that the papers of noted American composer Ulysses S. Kay (1917-1995) are being processed this summer through the Library's graduate student internship program. Kay, who studied with Otto Luening at Columbia, was a prolific and important composer of contemporary symphonic, chamber, and choral music. He also wrote five operas, the most substantial and last of which, *Jubilee* (1976) and *Frederick Douglass* (1991), were based on themes from African-American history.

Highlights of the collection include a large number of Kay's scores in manuscript, a substantial collection of press cuttings relating to performances of Kay's works and those of his colleagues, diaries from his student years, and notes for speeches on numerous topics. His correspondence includes letters from William Grant Still and from his wife Barbara Kay during her periods of imprisonment on death row in

the notorious Parchman Prison as a Freedom Rider Civil Rights activist.



The Library is very grateful to Virginia Kay and her family for donating these important papers and scores to the Columbia University Libraries. Virginia is pictured here presenting flowers to the noted Russian composer, Dimitri Shostakovich on his visit to the USA in 1959, following her father's visit to the USSR. The picture was published in the *Amsterdam News* and *The New York Times*. Stay tuned for further announcements of an exhibition and concerts from the collection to come.

PROFESSOR NICHOLAS DAMES (continued from page 1)

public profile in various ways. But most importantly, we have to continue to work on maintaining, even enhancing, our faculty strength and our attention to how we educate undergraduates and doctoral students alike. These are dangerous times in the humanities; if departments cannot continue effectively to articulate why they matter—why in our case, the study of literature matters for lives and cultures—they risk becoming marginal to higher education. Our national reputation, and the privilege of being in New York City, give us the responsibility to take the lead in making the argument for what literary study is and can be. “

Outgoing Chair Jean Howard gives Professor Dames her warmest endorsement. “Nick is going to be great in this job. He’s a wonderful scholar with a clear sense of the high standards that make a department great, and he has a vision for the future. He is also fair-minded and has the requisite tenacity to see things through to their conclusion. That may, in fact, be the modern department chair’s most essential virtue. We are lucky he will be taking up this position.”

COLM TOIBIN (continued from page 1)

one play, several travel books, and the edited collection, *The Penguin Book of Irish Fiction*.

Colm Toibin’s numerous awards include The Irish Times First Fiction Award for *The South*, published in 1990; the Encore Award for *The Heather Blazing* in 1992; the Ferro-Grumley Prize for *The Story of the Night* in 1996; the Dublin IMPAC Prize, the Prix du Meilleur Livre, and the LA Times Novel of the Year awards for *The Master*; the Costa Novel of the Year Award for *Brooklyn* in 2009; and the Edge Hill Prize for *Mothers and Sons* in 2006.

Toibin has received honorary doctorates from the University of Ulster and from University College Dublin. He has twice been Stein Visiting Writer at Stanford University and also a visiting writer at the Michener Center at the University of Texas at Austin. Currently he is Leonard Milberg Lecturer in Irish Letters at Princeton University and a regular contributor to such

journals as *The London Review of Books* and *The New York Review of Books*.

TWO NEW MEMBERS

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traces the movement of pathogens in the 18th century Atlantic world and how Western medicine was influenced by African medicine. For example, the first practice of inoculation in the U.S., in 1721, was adopted from African medical practices.

Professor Silva comes to the Department after seven years of teaching at Florida State University and at Texas Tech University, where he received multiple teaching awards. He currently teaches an undergraduate seminar titled “Colonial American Landscapes” and also the “Lit Hum” Core course, which he says, was one of the many draws of teaching here at Columbia University, as was New York City. Although Professor Silva is a veteran New Yorker from his NYU days, he finds that “it is a different city” now that he is living here with his family.

THE CJLC IN ITS NINTH YEAR

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six to seven times throughout the year, and an annual faculty panel discussion bringing professors from the Department to share their thoughts on current methodologies, practices, and approaches to literary criticism.

With all these events, it is no wonder that it has taken two very busy editors to run the CJLC this year. Seniors Anna Feuer and Justin Vlasits joined the publication in their sophomore year and worked in different capacities respectively as Managing and Production Editors. They love what they do and have recently published the Journal’s ninth issue.

Since its beginning in 2003, the CJLC has established a strong roster of notable alumni. Past editors have graduated and found positions in publishing with solid representation in academia as well. Ms. Feuer has recently been awarded the Marshall Scholarship and will be pursuing a Masters degree in History and English at Oxford University. Justin Vlasits will be studying for a PhD in Ancient Philosophy.

It is perhaps a bit of a stretch to attribute these successful careers to the CJLC experience alone. But as Justin explains, “The real point of the Journal is the five to six big papers that we publish and the rigorous editorial process that happens over the course of more than six months.” Each paper is reviewed by more than three or four staff members and additionally guided by devoted faculty advisors Prof. Nicholas Dames and Prof. Jenny Davidson. Anna says, “Although I have never written for the Journal, I’ve learned a lot about writing—how to be more concise, how to fill in the gaps in an argument. This experience has helped me to become a better writer.” Justin adds, “Plus, you get to learn about random stuff too, like Japanese film theory.”

PROFESSOR CRAWFORD AND PROFESSOR ADAMS *(continued from page 3)*

been a duty-driven and dreary affair in which women were presented as beleaguered defenders of their sex whose lives and cultural productions were largely confined to a domestic arena. Crawford, by contrast, argues that while women faced some material constraints attendant on their gender, they nonetheless found ways to play important public roles in the cultural and religious struggles of their time.

As a teacher, Crawford has developed a large and enthusiastic student following for her courses in Shakespeare, Milton, early modern women's writing, the Renaissance marvelous, pre-modern sexuality, and a number of other seminars and lectures at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. She has served as Director of Undergraduate Studies at the Institute for Research on Women and Gender, as a longstanding member of the Undergraduate Committee in the Department of English & Comparative Literature, and next year, as Director of that important committee. At the same time she has served on an impressive number of graduate oral examination and dissertation committees. As one awed graduate student commented: "she teaches graduate students to be scholars." Blessed with an infectious enthusiasm for the scholarly life, Crawford is a magnificent teacher in the best traditions of the Department.

Crawford's colleague, Rachel Adams, is equally talented. Already a recognized leader in the field of American literature and culture, she published *Sideshow U.S.A.: Freaks and the American Cultural Imagination* in 2001. This book both reveals and critically explores the centrality of the freak show in American cultural life as well as its symbolic role in revealing the

contradictions of a nation that radically affirms equality as it produces and maintains inequalities resulting from unexamined assumptions about "the normal" and its value. Among other cultural productions, her book examines actual freak shows, as well as films such as Tod Browning's 1930s *Freaks*, novels by Toni Morrison and Carson McCullers, and photography by Diane Arbus. Extravagantly praised as a "virtuoso critical performance," *Sideshow U.S.A.*'s jargon-free and lucid prose style has

made it an unusually widely-read critical study. Adams followed up on that first book with a quite different second project, *Continental Divides: Remapping the Cultures of North America*, in 2009. This book looks beyond the boundaries of the nation to explore interconnections between the cultures of Mexico, the U.S. and

Canada as apparent in those writers who manifest what Adams calls "a continental consciousness." For her this category not only includes a writer like Jack Kerouac who was born in Canada, lived in New England, and visited extensively in Mexico, but also many indigenous people whose "tribal internationalism" exists outside any national paradigms of belonging. In the book she writes about two border-crossing Native American novelists, Leslie Silko and Thomas King, as well as about North American crime narratives that defy national borders, about the vibrant Latino culture emergent in Canada, and about the beatnik-like counterculture in Mexico, La Onda, which rejected the folkloric indigeneity of official Mexican culture in favor of a complex dialogue with U.S. modernity.

An outstanding teacher, Professor Adams' teaching takes many forms. Besides a number of core courses in American literature such as "Contemporary Fiction," "Post-1945 American Literature," and "American Modernism," she has recently created some extremely popular classes in "Disability in American Literature and Culture" and "Food and American Life." For her teaching she has been honored by the Phillip and Ruth Hettelman Award from General Studies in recognition of her outstanding work as a teacher of undergraduates, and in 2009 she was the first recipient of the Liberal Studies MA Faculty Appreciation Award given to a faculty member who is an outstanding teacher and especially supportive of MA students in the Liberal Studies Program. An institution builder, Adams has been a crucial faculty member in the American Studies program, serving as Associate Director for five years,

An institution builder, Adams has been a crucial faculty member in the American Studies program

and in 1999 she helped to found the Disability Studies University Seminar. At the moment she is working with other faculty to establish an undergraduate concentration in Disability Studies. She is also working on two new books, one on the representation of cognitive disability in American culture and the other on the role of food in the American cultural imagination.

There are reasons that the Columbia Department of English and Comparative Literature is ranked among the top five programs in the nation. Professors Crawford and Adams are two of them. We have a faculty noted both for its groundbreaking scholarship, and for its ability to translate that scholarship into classes and programs of extraordinary interest to our students.

NARRATIVE MEDICINE *(continued from page 2)*

telling me how they feel, I can't get away with a list of questions. So it becomes a very different relationship between doctor and patient as listener and receiver. We try to get an angle on what do sick people go through and what do clinical people go through as they try to treat them."

One of the rising stars in the field, Alvan Ikoku, focuses his attention on another aspect of literature and medicine—studying the role of literature in malaria policy in Africa. Mr. Ikoku, like Professor Rita Charon, is the holder of multiple academic distinctions, including Columbia's coveted Presidential Teaching Award in 2010. While an undergraduate, he pursued pre-med studies but wrote his thesis in literature. Shortly before graduation, he was accepted into Harvard Medical School, but deferred his acceptance for three years, while completing two Master's degrees in England, one in the History of Medicine and another in the History of African Literature. True to his dual interests in medicine and in literature, Mr. Ikoku connected with Professor Rita Charon. Columbia University followed naturally for Mr. Ikoku, given his interests in how

literature works in tandem with medicine and given his interests in postcolonial studies, where Columbia has deep strength.

Mr. Ikoku is currently completing a Ph.D. in the English Department and taking up a position at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine as an Assistant Professor of Bioethics and Medical Humanities.

Mr. Ikoku explains, "Bioethics is an area of medicine that intersects with history, philosophy, and law. Therefore, it is important for literature. [We try to answer the question] how does paying attention to texts help us answer ethical questions? [My study focuses on] how the writing of healthcare affects the writing of healthcare policy. [Similarly], how does chart writing affect the practice of medicine. I take my study of literature, and texts, and words to study policy, philosophy, and law."

These pioneers share a vision of the future—one in which patients can receive a better quality of care. Professor Charon says, "[I hope] to make healthcare better and change the face of it, to bring into medicine what's been more and more missing. [I want doctors] to be empathetic! To be open! To listen! To affiliate!"

GRADUATE STUDENT FELLOWSHIPS AND PLACEMENTS

The department is extremely pleased to announce placement results for the last two years. Professors Marianne Hirsch and Sarah Cole did spectacular work as this year's Placement Directors. Listed below are names of those students who got jobs and their places of employment.

2009-2010 PLACEMENT RESULTS

• TENURE-TRACK POSITIONS

Patricia Akhimie	Rutgers University- Newark
Mbongiseni Buthelezi	University of Cape Town
Zayd Dohrn	Northwestern University
Avishek Ganguly	Rhode Island School of Design
Rishi Goyal	University of Arizona Medical School
Adela Ramos	Pacific Lutheran University
Richard So	University of Chicago
Jenelle Troxell	Texas A&M University
Penny Vlagopoulos	Texas A&M International University

• VISITING POSITIONS

Bina Gogineni	Skidmore College
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• POST-DOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS

Karen Emmerich	Princeton University
Derrick Higginbotham	Columbia University, Core Fellowship
Christine Nadir	Wellesley College
Joanna Scutts	Columbia University, Core Fellowship

2010-2011 PLACEMENT RESULTS

• TENURE-TRACK POSITIONS

Musa Gurnis	Washington University
Alvan Ikoku	Albert Einstein College of Medicine
Ondrea Ackerman	Oklahoma State University
Emily Lordi	University of Massachusetts, Amherst

• VISITING POSITIONS

Ruth Lexton	Bates College
Alice Boone	Haverford College
Christine Varnado	SUNY, Buffalo

• ADJUNCT POSITIONS

Nathanael Farrell	Washington University
Mary Kate Hurley	Writing Program, Cooper Union

• FULL-TIME POSITION

Alyssa Meyers	American Museum of Natural History
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NATIONAL FELLOWSHIPS RECEIVED 2010-2011

Minou Arjomand	DAAD Research Grant
Joseph Cermatori	Javits Fellowship
Jessica Fenn	Helen Ann Mins Robbins Fellowship
Kathryn Fore	Javits Fellowship
Royden Jay Kadyschuk	Canada's Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council
Emily Lordi	Frederick Douglass Institute for African and African-American Studies
Sonali Thakkar	Irmgard Coninx Foundation in Berlin

NATIONAL FELLOWSHIPS RECEIVED 2011-2012

Emily Cersonsky	Council for European Studies
Anna E. Clark	Pre-Dissertation Research Fellowship Whiting Fellowship
Jean-Christophe Cloutier	Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) Fellowship
Jang Wook Huh	Honjo Scholarship Award
Jarvis McInnis	2011 Ford Foundation Predoctoral Fellowship
Kathryn Trebuss	Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) Fellowship

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Gifts from alumni and friends enable the department to provide special support for students and faculty.

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You may also write to the incoming Department Chair, Nicholas Dames, at nd122@columbia.edu