

# Footnotes

## English Department News and Notes

### Sabbaticals, Visitors Give Department Different Look



An unusual number of English faculty members have been and are on sabbatical leaves this year. **Drs. Kent and Mimi Dixon** are on a year-long sabbatical, working on writing projects and enjoying visits to their new grandson Henry. In the fall, **Dr. Incorvati** enjoyed his first sabbatical, which included continued work on projects for Green Wittenberg while traveling and making progress on scholarly work. **Dr. McClelland** was also on sabbatical in the fall; he completed a rough draft of a new novel with elements of both political fiction and science fiction. **Dr. Buckman** is currently on sabbatical and has already done research at the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, DC this semester.

To help out, we have welcomed a trio of visiting instructors, some of whom are not strangers to Wittenberg. **Alison Fisher**, a doctoral candidate from Ohio State University, has taught at Wittenberg before as an adjunct instructor. Fisher's research interests include modernist literature and the tensions between "high-brow" and "middle-brow" fiction. She received her B.A. from the University of Houston. **Shannon Thomas**, also an OSU doctoral candidate, is completing her dissertation on nineteenth-century American women poets (including Emily Dickinson) and periodical verse. Thomas's undergraduate degree comes from Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, Washington. **Melissa Barrett** is a Wittenberg graduate (class of 2005) active in literature and creative writing classes while an undergraduate. She earned her M.F.A. in poetry at Sarah Lawrence College.

Please send news and notes to English Department Assistant Patti Birt, at [pbirt@wittenberg.edu](mailto:pbirt@wittenberg.edu), or mail to Patti Birt, English Department, Wittenberg University, P.O. Box 720, Springfield, OH 45501. This issue of *Footnotes* was edited by **Jesse Steele**.

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### Department to Launch Summer Screenwriting Institute

When **Lauren Schmidt '00**, **Mike Hissrich**, and **Dan Stroeh '01** visited Wittenberg for a colloquium and brief residency in spring 2008, the opportunity for further visits seemed too good to miss. Thus was born the Wittenberg Summer Screenwriting Institute. **Acting Chair Cynthia Richards** worked with **Dr. Elma Lee Moore** and the creative writing faculty, as well as with Schmidt, Hissrich, and Stroeh, to develop a unique summer study opportunity in an intensive course in screenwriting with production considerations in mind. Schmidt is currently a writer-producer on ABC's *Private Practice* and has previously been SWG-nominated for her work on *The West Wing*. Hissrich is an Emmy-winning producer on *ER*, *The West Wing*, and *My Own Worst Enemy*. Stroeh, who won the National Student Playwriting Award as a Wittenberg senior, currently lives in New York, where he is an active playwright and budding screenwriter.

The Institute will run May 18-June 12 and will provide students opportunities to work the way working screenwriters do, from research to drafting to collaborative writing to adapting to production considerations. The Institute will run this summer and continue in the summer of alternating years. For more information about enrolling in this year's Summer Screenwriting Institute, see **Dr. Richards** or **Dr. McClelland** and talk to your advisor.

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## Department Welcomes SAGE Advice

While acting chair of the department in spring 2008, Dr. Cynthia Richards solicited student volunteers for an exciting new opportunity to contribute to the department. With a band of enthusiastic volunteers, SAGE (Student Advisory Group for English) was born. Charter members of the group include Justin Blackwood, Dani Eller, Stephanie Harland, Andrea Ipjian, Nicole Katze, Anna Reilly, Ronnie Ross, Lauren Williams, all Class of 2009, and Pat Deering, Class of 2010.

SAGE was instrumental in suggesting and publicizing last fall's Autumn Inferno (the s'mores were their idea) and are helping the department with presentations for the Office of Admission and with feedback on colloquia and the planning of the senior party. If you have suggestions for activities for English majors and minors, future colloquium topics, or other items related to the department, don't hesitate to contact one of the SAGE members. Elections will be held this semester to select next year's group.

## Class of 1958 Seeks to Honor Professor Veler

Professor Emeritus of English Richard Veler, who retired in 2000, created excitement about literature in generations of Wittenberg students. He was perhaps especially suited for that task by being a Wittenberg alumnus himself. After graduating in 1958, Veler earned his master's degree at Harvard and his Ph.D. from Ohio State University, where he specialized in American literature. Professor Veler, famous for his class on the American novel and for his "friend"ly regard for students and colleagues alike, taught at Wittenberg from 1965-2000, earning the Alumni Distinguished Teaching Award in 1977, and continues to live in Springfield in retirement.

His classmates in the Wittenberg Class of 1958 have already raised over \$200,000 toward an endowed chair in his honor and continue to seek donations to the project. If you are interested in contributing to the endowment, please contact Rick Stenberg at (937) 327-7460 or by e-mail ([rstenberg@wittenberg.edu](mailto:rstenberg@wittenberg.edu)).

## Sherman Alexie Visit Draws Mixed Reviews

Prominent Native American novelist, poet, and screenwriter Sherman Alexie visited Wittenberg as the Wittenberg Series' literary speaker on November 17. Alexie's afternoon colloquium with the English Department was well-attended and followed a question-and-answer format. His evening Witt Series talk approached stand-up comedy territory, with little mention of his work, focusing more on his views on race and politics, among other things. While many found his remarks humorous and eye-opening, some were disappointed that he talked so little about his work or about writing in general. Alexie's latest novel, *Flight*, was chosen as the Class of 2009's common text because of his inclusion in the Witt Series.

## Barrett '05 Comes "Home" for Reading

Melissa Barrett '05, Visiting Assistant Professor of English, shared some of her new work along with some of the poems from her master's thesis manuscript *The Bloomery* in a colloquium on October 9. Barrett's poetry reading included the first poem that felt "like a real poem" from her undergraduate years as well as polished work from her M.F.A. career and newer work in progress. One of the poems she read was published in the Fall 2008 issue of *Forklift, Ohio*.

## Spring 2009 Colloquium Schedule

**Tuesday, February 17**  
Terence Byrnes, Concordia University, Montreal  
*Inspiration and Craft: A Reading and Discussion*  
Ness Auditorium 4:00-5:30p.m.

**Friday, March 20**  
Maureen Fry, Writing Center Director  
*Readings and Reflections*  
Ness Auditorium 4:00-5:30p.m.

**Tuesday, April 14**  
Anne Mellor, UCLA  
*Embodied Cosmopolitanism and the British Romantic Writer*  
Phi Beta Kappa Lecture  
Bayley Auditorium 7:30p.m.

**Friday, April 24**  
English Department Senior Symposium  
Panels and Schedules TBA

**Tuesday, April 28**  
English Department Literary Awards  
Ness Auditorium 4:00p.m.-5:30p.m.

## Wittenberg English Major Wins Prestigious Fellowship to Cambridge

Joshua Wisebaker '08 won Wittenberg's first-ever Davies-Jackson Fellowship, which provides all expenses for two years of study at St. John's College at the University of Cambridge in England. The fellowship, recognizing a student of outstanding potential who is among the first of his or her family to attend college, and given to graduates of American liberal-arts colleges, is awarded to a candidate chosen from a broad range of liberal-arts disciplines.

The Davies-Jackson Fellowship is typically used for further undergraduate study, but foundation officials were so impressed with Joshua's application and writing sample that they suggested he apply to the master's degree program instead, to which he was accepted. While at Wittenberg, Joshua completed independent research on Renaissance topics with Dr. Buckman. He presented his work at both undergraduate conferences and a professional conference, where it was warmly received.

## Wittenberg English Professors Co-Author Lilly Fellows Grant Proposal; Win Large Grant for the University

Wittenberg was recently awarded a \$12,000 grant from the **Lilly Fellows Program in the Humanities and the Arts** to fund a two-year pilot mentorship program for new faculty. The grant proposal was co-authored by Wittenberg's Lilly Fellows campus representative and Associate Professor of English **Lori Askeland**, and Faculty Development Administrator and Associate Professor of English **Ty Buckman**.

The Lilly Fellows Program funds will allow the continuation of recent innovations Wittenberg has made in welcoming and preparing new faculty for successful teaching careers at the university. More specifically, the pilot program is designed to foster faculty discussion around the University's mission, "especially as it relates to its longstanding blending of the traditional liberal arts and sciences and pre-professional programs, and its evolving relationship, since its founding, with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America."

A call for faculty mentors will go out in the spring and the program will officially begin in August, 2009. Please direct questions about the program or the grant to Ty Buckman, Faculty Development Administrator, who will direct the pilot program.

## Faculty News and Notes

- **Dr. Kent Dixon.**, has had a story accepted for publication in *Freak Lightning*, an upcoming anthology of short shorts. His early work in this form has been cited in a new encyclopedia, *Books and Beyond: The Greenwood Encyclopedia of New American Writing* (4 volumes), edited by Ken Womack.
- **Dixon's** translation of the recently discovered Sappho (2004) poem, will appear in an on-line publication this December, [languageandculture.net](http://languageandculture.net). This is the most complete of Sappho's (now) four surviving poems--worth reading. His translation of Rilke's "The Poet" was published in an earlier issue.
- **Carmiele Wilkerson's** coauthored article with **Shamoon Zamir**, "Du Bois and the New Negro," has been published in *The Cambridge Companion to W.E. B. Du Bois* edited by Shamoon Zamir. Cambridge UP 2008.
- **Dr. Robert Davis's** essay "Sacred Play: Thomas Merton's *Cables to the Ace*," was published in the latest volume of *The Merton Annual*, a book of essays on Thomas Merton's work sponsored by the International Thomas Merton Foundation.
  - On the home front, Dr. Davis is very proud of daughters Emily and Hannah, starting their senior years at Stanford and in high school, respectively, and of his wife Laurie, well into her first year as the Associate Pastor for Spiritual Growth at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Dayton
- **Dr. Cynthia Richards** has published two recent essays:
  - "The Body of Her Work, the Work of Her Body: Accounting for the Life and Death of Mary Wollstonecraft" will appear in the Summer 2009 issue of *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*.
  - "War Hath Determined Us": Teaching the Body in the Context of War" will appear in the 2008 Fall/Winter issue of *Transformations: The Journal of Inclusive Scholarship and Pedagogy*

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## ...More Faculty News and Notes

- **Dr. Incorvati** is spending some of his fall sabbatical doing more research on the novelist, playwright, and anarchist Thomas Holcroft, and he'll give a paper on this writer's early social satire at a conference in Richmond, Virginia, this spring. He's also serving as Program Committee Chair for the 2009 Midwest Conference on British Studies which will be held in Pittsburgh next fall.
  - Closer to home, he continues to serve as the Campus Recycling Coordinator, a role which has allowed him to tap the talents of English Department alum **Sarah Leavens** (who designed the new Green Wittenberg logo) and former English Department tech assistant **A. J. Holloway** (who helped create a website, which can be seen at [www.wittenberg.edu/green](http://www.wittenberg.edu/green)).
- **Jody Rambo**, Poet-in-Residence, has received a prestigious Ohio Arts Council Individual Excellence Award. The award was based on a peer review of a portfolio of poetry submitted by Rambo and carries a generous stipend.
- **Dr. Robin Inboden's** essay, "Damsels, Dulcimers, and Dreams: Elizabeth Barrett's Early Response to Coleridge" appeared in the Summer 2008 edition of the journal *Victorian Poetry*

## Alumni News and Notes

**Abby (Martin) Purdy '01** earned her M.F.A. in Creative Writing from Florida International University and is now living in Dayton with her husband. She teaches part-time at the University of Dayton.

**Becky Barnes '04** left consulting after a year and a half to take up organic farming. The *Columbus Dispatch* ran a story on Honeyrun Farm, which she runs with her sister-in-law.

**Leigh Malach '08** completed the NYU Publishing Institute in summer 2008 and loved both the publishing business and New York City.

**Brandy Schillace Watts '00** is working on her dissertation in the doctoral program at Case-Western Reserve University. Her field is eighteenth-century literature, and two of her articles have already been accepted for publication in scholarly journals.

**Eric Shonkwiler '06** has been accepted into the M.F.A. program at University of California-Riverside.

**Drew Heverin '04** taught English in South Korea for two years following graduation, then entered the graduate program in English at the University of Kentucky in 2008.

**Alison Davis '06**, after teaching English in the Czech Republic for two years, entered the master's program in Religion and Literature at the University of Chicago.

**Elizabeth Eshelman '06** is nearing completion of her M.F.A. in Creative Writing at George Mason University near Washington, DC. She and fiancé Nat Moes '04 are planning a fall 2009 wedding.

**Carl Miller '99** is nearing completion of his doctorate in English at the University of Florida where, to the horror of Dr. Inboden, he actually at times cheers for the Gators as well as the Buckeyes.

**Rich Stracke '02** is a lawyer in Chicago, where he continues his pursuit of film omniscience.

**Ted Trautman '07** is still in Kyrgyzstan with the Peace Corps.

**Rebecca Leece '97** completed her M.F.A in fiction at New School University, NY and has taught at CUNY.

**Ethan and Heather (Otley) Moore '02** are the proud parents of Jacob and are enjoying life in Chicago.

**Melissa Niese '07** is completing a master's degree in International Peace and Conflict Resolution at American University in Washington, DC.

**Kathy (Weaver) Boiarski '97**, her husband, and their son Aidan live near Columbus, OH, where Kathy is an editor and proofreader for Nationwide Insurance.

**Corinne Wohlford Taff '97** teaches at Fontbonne University in St. Louis and also publishes free-lance articles and poetry.

**Karen Gerboth '93** is the editor of *Wittenberg Magazine*. She, husband **John Gerboth '93** and their children live in Columbus.

**Tom Haushalter '02** completed his M.F.A. in poetry at Columbia University and now works in publicity at Penguin Group Publishers. He has published poems in *The Greensboro Review* and the *New Orleans Review*, among others.

**Stephanie Ricca '98** completed her master's degree in journalism at Northwestern University's Medill School and is editor-in-chief at Questex Media Group in Cleveland.

## ...More Alumni News and Notes

**Jeremy Glazier '97** is an assistant professor of English at Ohio Dominican University. He has published his poetry in *Verse*, the *Boston Review*, and the *Paris Review*, among others.

**Scott Bistayi '96** is an associate editor with *Forbes* Magazine.

**Josh Keiter '01** is working on his Ph.D. at Binghamton University in upstate New York.

**Aubrey Ludwig '00** teaches AP English at Langley High School in McLean, VA.

**Frank Lasik '04** completed his master's degree in theatre at OSU and is now working on his doctorate at the University of Missouri.

**Meg Richmond '04** is engaged in graduate studies in student development at Old Dominion University.

**Jessica (Fried) Lankford '00** is a lawyer with Jaeckle, Fleischmann & Mugal in Buffalo, NY.

**Jeff Prucher '94** published *Brave New Worlds: The Oxford Dictionary of Science Fiction* in 2007.

**Carin Cozza '00** earned her law degree from Case-Western Reserve School of Law.

**Ellen Seeburger '02** is young adult librarian at the Upper Arlington (OH) Public Library. She also sells handcrafted books and other items in artisan shops and on-line.

**Eve Gerken '94** has earned master's degrees in teaching and in English. She has taught at the Hackley School in Tarrytown, NY and in Hong Kong.

**Elizabeth Bonfield '87** works in Wittenberg's Office of Advancement after a successful career in fundraising for other non-profit organizations.

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The logo for Wittenberg University features the name "wittenberg" in a large, bold, red, lowercase serif font. Below it, the word "UNIVERSITY" is written in a smaller, bold, red, uppercase sans-serif font. The letter "g" in "wittenberg" is stylized with a large, decorative flourish that extends downwards and to the right.