



Works Cited

English Department Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 7

Spring 2006

Grads Pursue New Challenges, Successes

As another spring rolls round, this year's corps of graduating English and Theatre majors as well as several grads of recent years are busy mapping routes to new worlds of study and employment. Precisely where they will end up come this autumn remains uncertain for some, based on an informal and very small sampling of grads conducted by *Works Cited*. "I'm going to be teaching high school English somewhere," reports Zack Monahan, English Ed. '05. "I recently sent out applications to thirty-two school districts, and will begin interviewing in May and June," says the twenty-two year old Monahan, recent recipient of the P.C. Somerville Award for Future Teachers from Sigma Tau Delta, the national English honorary. "I had some inspiring teachers in high school, and I want to be in a position to return the favor and share my enthusiasm for literature with young people."

Rebecca Martin, English '05, and past editor of *Esprit*, intends to begin graduate study in an English PhD program somewhere in the East. "So far I have offers from Lehigh, Bucknell and the New School, but I'm still waiting to hear back from Penn State, Boston College, and Villanova." Likewise, David Fine, Philosophy '04 and English '05, is waiting to hear about final offers from several schools. "Although my love of English hasn't waned," he reports, "I've decided to pursue a PhD in philosophy, and I've been accepted into programs at SUNY Stony



Zach Monahan

Judith Hicks

Jeff Trainor

Brook and The New School, but am waiting to hear from other schools as well." Judith Hicks, English Ed. '05, is sticking with English, she says. "I've been offered a 'full ride' in the PhD program at the University of California at Santa Barbara, and I intend to pursue my interests in 20th century British literature, narrative theory, and poetry," she says. "I grew up in southern California, and it will be interesting to return to the Coast after some years in the East."

Jeff Trainor, Theatre '06, looks to the Midwest as the preferred locale for his postgraduate education. A prominent four-year participant in the University Players with much time logged both on stage and behind the scenes, Trainor will pursue an MFA in Acting at Roosevelt University's Chicago College of the Performing Arts. The three-year program provides professional conservatory training in theatre, music, and music education, and Trainor says the school's big

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Congratulations!

Rich Larsen, associate professor and Director of Theatre, has been awarded tenure. Michael O'Steen, assistant professor, has been awarded tenure and promotion. Joe Kraus, visiting assistant professor, has accepted a tenure-track position in the department, as has Susan Mendez, a recent PhD from UC-Riverside. Colleen McEntee, Accounting '06 and stellar four-year work/study assistant in the department, has taken a position as accountant in the Financial Services Practice of PriceWaterhouseCoopers in Philadelphia. 📖



Notes from the Chair

A Sermon Made of SPAM

(Consisting entirely of subject lines from unsolicited e-mails I have received in the past six weeks.)

Are you faith-based, deritterj1? Full of health? Then don't click. Don't be inadequate any more! Be your own boss. Huge news shows promise! Get paid to take surveys, get Costa Rican land, get \$500 in free gas for your opinion! Pull up in a Porsche, deritterj1. Someone special is poised to enter deritterj1's life.

Giancarlo says hello, you are cleared to spree, deritterj1! Cheap meds, promising drug candidates selected for conference presentations, any med for your girl to be happy! Fast! Effective! Amazing! Enough said! Guaranteed approval. They laughed when I said I was giving this away.

Would \$1500 help make your day? In 24 hours you could be much richer. Smack them down with \$1500, deritterj1. Refurnish your whole place on us, deritterj1. Get the complete backyard makeover of your dreams! Look sweet in complimentary Levis 501s, deritterj1. Your partner will worship you for it.

Should I whisper this, deritterj1? Don't invest before you read. Make art your life, deritterj1. Meet your match in your area. Keep your treasured daughter safe. Why let people know about your intimate life? Earn your degree any time, fight your cholesterol naturally! Friend, get started for nothing! Work on your schedule, deritterj1.

- Jody DeRitter, Chair

SigmaTD Members, Moderator Garner Honors at Nat'l Meet

The university's Mu Omicron chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, the national English honorary, made an exceptionally strong showing at the recent national convention held in Portland, Oregon. During the four day event, 29 March-2 April, English majors and the chapter itself garnered an array of competitive national awards, recognitions, and honors. Zack Monahan, English Ed. '05, won the P.C. Somerville Award for Future Teachers given to active SigmaTD members who will begin their first year of teaching elementary, middle, or high school this coming fall. Monahan will receive a \$1,000 honorarium. Pearl Brilmyer, English/Philosophy '06, was named runner-up for the Elva Bell McLin Senior Scholarship awarded to English majors going on to graduate study. Brilmyer will receive \$500 and if the named winner should not go on to grad school this coming fall Brilmyer will receive \$2000. Judith Hicks, English Ed. '05 was named alternate for the Henry Regnery Endowed Scholarship for graduate study. Again, should the named winner not go on to grad study this fall Hicks will receive the \$2500 scholarship



Off to Portland: the women of Sigma Tau Delta!

stipend.

The chapter officers, president Cheryl Mrazik, English/Philosophy '06, vice-president Pam Kalinowski, English '06, secretary Pearl Brilmyer, and Jan Amann, English/Philosophy '06 attended the conference in the company of faculty moderator and professor, Rebecca Beal. Amann, Brilmyer, and Pam Kalinowski gave invited papers at the national meeting.

Becca Beal. Amann, Brilmyer, and Pam Kalinowski gave invited papers at the national meeting.



"It's a signal honor for a single chapter to be represented in the paper sessions by three young scholar/critics," Beal explains. "To learn at the Saturday evening awards banquet that three of our soon-to-be graduates also won national honors was tremendously exciting for us all. Scranton is one of more than 600 SigmaTD chapters nationwide, and the competitive environment for awards and invited papers is intense." At the awards banquet Beal accepted a special recognition from the national organization on the 25th anniversary of our chapter's formation. "It was a pleasure to accept the award on behalf of the department and the university," she says.

(Continued on page 6)

Players Close Out Ambitious Season with Tony Award Winner

On successive weekends in late March and early April, the University Players concluded their 2005-06 season in the Royal Theatre playing to a packed house with a spirited production of the hit musical, *Urinetown*. Considered an “affectionate parody of the musical comedy genre,” according to Michael O’Steen, assistant professor of Theatre and director and choreographer of the production, the show featured four principles, Amanda Doria, Counseling and Human Services ‘09, as Little Sally, Anthony Mercado, Biology/English ‘09, as Bobby, Shannon Munley, Physical Therapy ‘07, as Hope, and Jeff Trainor, Theatre ‘06, as Lockstock.

“*Urinetown* got its start at the New York Fringe Festival, ran Off-Broadway, then on Broadway in 2001-02, winning three Tony Awards,” O’Steen explains. “We chose *Urinetown* for its funny book and terrific score. It spoofs the Brecht/Weill musical *The Three Penny Opera* as well as *Fiddler on the Roof* and *West Side Story*. In our Players production play-goers will also recognize references to *Evita!* in the revolution scene.”



Everyone has a heart in *Urinetown*—just listen!



Enforcing the law in *Urinetown*.

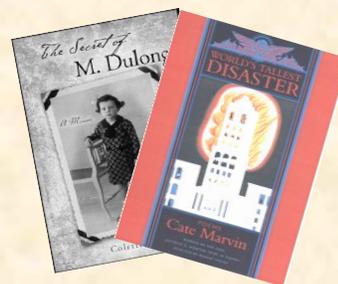
Additional contributors to the success of the show were Esther Zabinski, musical director, Je Tellier, costume designer, and production stage manager Chris McGuinness, English/Theatre Minor ‘06. Rich Larsen, director of Theatre and associate professor, did scenic and lighting design.

“On the serious side of things the musical shines a light on greedy capitalists who live at the expense of the working man and woman, says O’Steen. ”As with much good art, there’s that socially-conscious, politically-engaged dimension to the show, but it’s also a recent, hip Broadway hit.” 📖

URS Welcomes Memoirist, Poet



The University Reading Series is concluding its Spring calendar of free public readings by visiting writers with two events. On Wednesday, April 5th, prize-winning poet and former guest of URS Colette Inez read from her recent memoir, *The Secret of M. Dulong* (UWisconsin 2005), to an attentive audience of students and faculty in the Studio Theatre of the McDade Center. Inez, a former Guggenheim Fellow and NEA Fellow and an adjunct associate professor at Columbia University, also talked with students from Joe Kraus’s WRTG 214 (Creative Nonfiction) and Jay Hill’s WRTG 215 (Poetry Writing) about the craft of writing. “It was great to be able to invite Colette back to Scranton,” said Hill. “I remain in touch with former students who remember her time with us in the late ‘80s. Students enjoy her wit, her candor, her good common sense about the writing life.”



On Wednesday, May 10, visiting poet Cate Marvin, an assistant professor at CUNY-Staten Island, will read new poems from her forthcoming

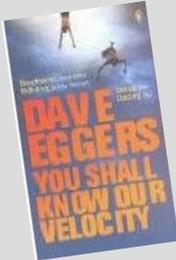
Fragments of the Head of a Queen (Sarabande 2007) as well as work from *World’s Tallest Disaster*, her national prize-winning collection (Sarabande 2000). The reading will begin at 8 pm in the Studio Theatre of the McDade Center, and a brief reception and book-signing will follow. About her work the prize judge and former U.S. Poet Laureate Robert Pinsky wrote, “More inventive than ploddingly narrative, more passionate than merely self-reflexive, these poems don’t feel like they spring from any literal or figurative school, but from the kinds of



got books? Majors & Profs Recommend:

Nate Underland, English / Philosophy '06—

Everything Is Illuminated by Jonathan Safran Foer. Foer writes from varying perspectives a collection of correspondence and narrative in preparation for an imaginary novel. Through this misdirection the novel recounts with surprising humor the trials of a man (named Jonathan Safran Foer) retracing his ancestor's Holocaust experience.



You Shall Know Our Velocity by Dave Eggers. A man named Will travels around the world with a friend in order to somehow purge the memory of their mutual friend recently deceased. By incessantly pushing his own limits, as his name suggests, Will comes to understand himself; he's worth getting to know. Both novels have been out for a couple of years—they're the first novel of each author—but I just got around to them recently. I think they're great.

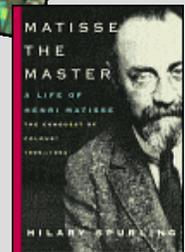
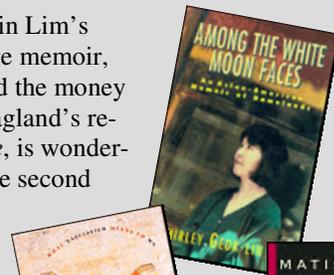
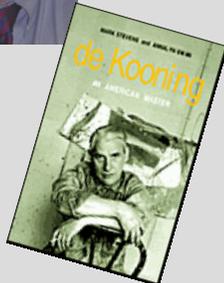


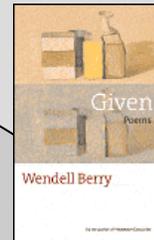
Joe Kraus, assistant professor—Because I'm so interested in families, ethnicity and crime, three or four people have recommended Helene Stapinski's *Five Finger Discount*. The book is Stapinski's memoir of growing up with a largely Polish-American family that has at least four generations of criminals, dopes, and likeable losers. Her voice is interesting and original; she rattles off one calamity after another without pausing for breath, and now I find I can't put it down.



John Meredith Hill, professor—Shirley Geok-lin Lim's *Among The White Moon Faces* is a terrific coming of age memoir, and I intend to assign it in a course next year. Wish I had the money to bring her to campus to meet with students. Tony Hoagland's recent collection of poems, *What Narcissism Means to Me*, is wonderfully attentive and witty. He knows what's going on. The second

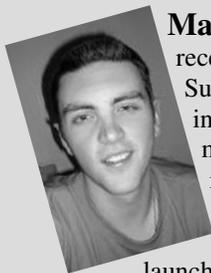
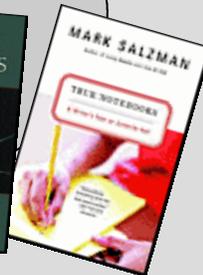
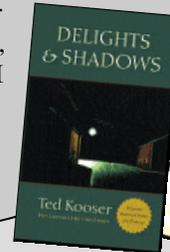
volume of Hilary Spurling's biography, *Matisse the Master: the Conquest of Colour*, corrects any number of misunderstandings and misrepresentations about him, thank goodness. *De Kooning* by Mark Stevens and Annalyn Swan is a fascinating biography richly situated in American social and intellectual history; these two know a heck of a lot and produce as a team very readable prose.





Rebecca Beal, professor—

Just now I've finished *The Hallowed Hunt* by Lois Bujold, and am in the middle of *Flu: The Story of the Great Influenza Pandemic* by Gina Kolata, and *Given: Poems* by Wendell Berry. Read Kim Addonizio, Ted Kooser (*Delights and Shadows*) and Mark Salzman (*True Notebooks*) in preparation for attending the Sigma Tau Delta national convention, where they were featured speakers. As I find time I browse in *TLS*, *The New Yorker*, *Cooking Light*, *Texas Monthly*, and the Bible (Psalms most important here).



Matt Lucas, English '06—A few works I have been musing over recently:

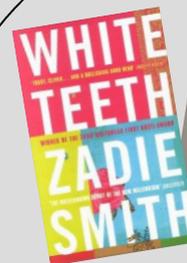
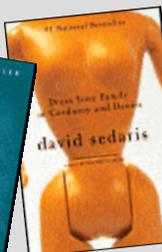
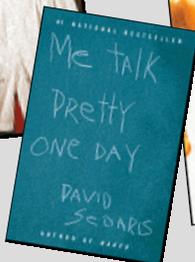
The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle by Haruki Murakami. Such an imaginative and surreal novel that I find myself lost and intrigued by the blend of mystery and philosophy within its modern Japanese landscape. The poetry of Thomas Lux, currently his *The Street of Clocks*. Arthur Bradford's quirky tales in his collection, *Dogwalker*. Also I am eagerly awaiting my first issue of *A Public Space*, the new literary magazine launched by the former editor of *The Paris Review*.



John Z. Monahan, English Ed. '05—Recently



I've been reading a lot of David Sedaris. Sedaris is a memoirist who writes brief, autobiographical sketches about many different moments in his life. He is also a regular on National Public Radio. His collections include *Barrel Fever*, *Naked*, *Me Talk Pretty One Day*, and *Dress Your Family in Corduroy and Denim*. Sedaris is able to maintain a balance of sly, sardonic wit and genuine empathy for the human condition.



Pearl Brilmyer, English / Philosophy '06—

Zadie Smith's *White Teeth*, which I couldn't recommend more highly for someone interested in an unusual perspective on the usual "contemporary culture." A pile of strange characters comprise a string of families strangely intertwined in present-day London.

Grads Pursue New Challenges, Successes

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Jeff Trainor as Cyrano in *Ladies of the Camellias*.

city locale provides additional opportunities for the aspiring actor. “Lots of small theatrical companies as well as several big ones in Chicago,” Jeff says, “and when I went out there to audition I began to realize just how exciting it would be to study in one of the world’s great cities.” Nate Underland, English ’06, having spent his junior year in Blackfriars Hall at Oxford, will begin his graduate education closer to home, he reports. “I’ll be at the University of Maryland come this fall, beginning an MA program in English language and literature and cheering on the men and women in Maryland’s basketball programs. I have no fears about the future, but there’s good reason to ‘Fear The Turtle.’”

Pearl Brilmyer, English/Philosophy ’06, secretary of the department’s Sigma TD chapter, and runner-up for the Elva Bell McLin Senior Scholarship awarded by the national honorary, must make a decision about whether her postgraduate education begins on this side of the Atlantic or in England. “I’ve been accepted into an MA program in continental philosophy at Warwick University, and I’m really interested. However, I’ll also been offered a ‘full ride’ in the PhD program in Comparative Literature at the University of Texas-Austin,” she explains. “It’s probably going to end up being one or the other, although I’m trying to see if I can attempt both, England first, then Texas. I enjoyed my junior year in England and would love to go back, but both my parents went to UT-Austin and would like to see me there, so right now I’m betwixt and between and singing the transatlantic blues, I guess, but happily, happily!” 📖

SigmaTD Members, Moderator Garner Honors at Nat’l Meet

(Continued from page 2)

To highlight the quarter-century history of the university’s SigmaTD chapter, Cheryl Mrazik developed a colorful and detailed exhibit about chapter activities for display during the national meetings. “I wanted people to see all the things we’re doing: the film series, our efforts to help the Gardner School re-launch a literary magazine, the annual induction brunch activities, and so on. My tri-fold poster presentation also included issues of *Works Cited* that feature stories on SigmaTD,” she reports.

Amann’s invited paper was titled “Women’s Sexual Pleasure in Medieval Marriage and *The Merchant’s Tale*.” “Pretty much, it’s about lechery and female

pleasure within Medieval marriage,” she says. “It’s a shortened version of a paper I wrote that looked at the sexual acts presented in several of *The Canterbury Tales* such as the Wife of Bath’s tale famously and the Shipman’s tale also.” Brilmyer spoke on “Christianity and Modern Science in *Middlemarch*: George Eliot’s Nietzschean Critique.” Says Brilmyer, “In the paper I deal with Eliot’s implicit critique of the “will-to-truth” of both Christianity and modern science in her comparison of them made in a manner reminiscent of Nietzsche’s critique—and at about the same time he is doing his.” Kalinowski spoke on “Order and the Oath in *The Clerk’s Tale*.” 📖

Sigma Tau Delta Updates



We have a Film Series! We began last fall with Joe Kraus leading a discussion of *Big Trouble in Little China*. In early March Michael Friedman talked about a recent film version of *A Midwinter’s Tale*, and in early April Rich Larsen led a discussion of *Waiting for Guffman*. Films are screened at 7:30 pm in the International Studies Lounge in St. Thomas Hall. Keep an eye on the Department web site for postings on upcoming films and discussion leaders and plan to attend! One more thing: All faculty and Sigma TD members are welcome to attend the pre-screening dinner with the evening’s discussion leader at a local restaurant, but it’s on your own dime.



SigmaTD chapter president Cheryl Mrazik and secretary Pearl Brilmyer are working with students at the Howard Gardner school to develop a literary magazine.



A book drive is underway to support our new sister chapter at Yaounde University in Cameroon, West Africa. Our former Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence Sarah Anyang-Agbor is faculty moderator there and welcomes donations of books appropriate to an English department library. 📖

Esprit Public Reading, Awards, May 11

On Thursday, May 11, Esprit editor Scott Hess will debut the Spring 2006 issue by hosting a public reading of selections from the University's review of arts and letters. The reading will take place at 8 pm in the Studio Theatre of the McDade Center for Literary and Performing Arts.



Esprit editor,
Scott Hess

"I'm happy with the variety of work displayed in this issue," Hess says, "and hope we have the audience our contributors deserve. That Thursday is the night before the last day of classes, so I'm thinking it's an ideal time for people to take an hour from their busy schedules to hear a few of their creative colleagues read from their work."

To launch the evening's celebration of the arts on our campus, faculty moderator Stephen Whittaker, professor, will present the

The Holy Grail in NYC



For two consecutive Saturdays in March students, faculty, staff, and alumni boarded a bus bound for New York City on a quest for the Holy Grail. Well, something like that...

The sold-out trips gave 90 people the opportunity to see *Spamalot* at the Shubert Theatre. The Tony-Award winning production boasts that it is "A new musical *lovingly* ripped off from the motion picture *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*." For those in attendance familiar with Monty Python, there was no doubt this production had much in common with the movie. This made our theatergoers very happy! Many thanks to the University Players for their contributions which make these trips possible.

Prior to the matinee curtain, trip participants had an opportunity to enjoy the energy of mid-town Manhattan and spend time sight seeing, shopping and dining.

Stay tuned to the Department's events page on the web for information about the next trip! <http://academic.scranton.edu/department/english/>

CLOSE READING

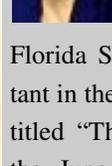


Elizabeth K. **Gordon**, adjunct professor, has a poem, "Discipline," in the March 2006 issue of *Friends Journal, Quaker Thought & Life Today*. Joe **Kraus**, assistant professor, has an essay, "De-Centering

the Canon: Understanding *Gatsby* as an Ethnic Novel," in *Multiethnic Literature and Canon Debates*, an edited books of essays published by SUNY Press in Spring 2006. Stephen **Whittaker**, professor, gave a paper titled "The Grounds of Joyce's 'Two Gallants'" at the 2006 Miami Joyce Conference in early February 2006. Beth **Sindaco**, adjunct professor and partner in the Sindaco Law Firm of Wilkes-Barre, was one of five national finalists in the annual Small Business Technology Institute "World of Difference" contest for technology-centered development plans. Finalists were chosen from more than 2,300 small business entrants across the U.S. Joseph **Kott**, English Ed. '06, has been accepted into the MAT program at Union College. Richard H. **Passon**, professor, gave a paper titled "Arbuthnot and Swift: Two Versions of the Art of Political Lying" at the annual meeting of the American Society for Eighteenth Century Studies in Montreal in early April. Dayna **Steele**, English '06, received a "Vacation Scheme" placement from the English law firm of Mayer Brown Rowe and Maw for two weeks in April. Placements give prospective employees a first hand look at profes-



sional life in a law firm. Patricia **Lawhon**, adjunct professor, has a biographical entry in *Marquis Who's Who of American Women 2006-07*. Brianna **Noll**, English/Honors '05, a student in the MFA program at Florida State University and teaching assistant in the Dept. of English there, has a poem titled "That's The Thing About Velcro" in the June 2006 issue of *American Poetry Journal*, a national publication. John Meredith **Hill**, professor, has a poem ("April") in the Winter 2006 is-



sional life in a law firm. Patricia **Lawhon**, adjunct professor, has a biographical entry in *Marquis Who's Who of American Women 2006-07*. Brianna **Noll**, English/Honors '05, a student in the MFA program at Florida State University and teaching assistant in the Dept. of English there, has a poem titled "That's The Thing About Velcro" in the June 2006 issue of *American Poetry Journal*, a national publication. John Meredith **Hill**, professor, has a poem ("April") in the Winter 2006 is-

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CLOSE READING

(Continued from page 7)

su of *Elysian Fields Quarterly*, the baseball-themed literary review. The department's nominees for the annual AWP (Associated Writing Program) "INTRO" Awards for student writers were Rebekah **Griggs**, Judith **Hicks**, and Ali **Mailen**. In late autumn '05, Katie **Slattery**, English/Criminal Justice '02, ran the Marine Corps marathon in respectable time and also passed the New York State Bar Exam. A lawyer with the U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security, she reports she is known as "the English major" around her office and pulls a lot of unpaid editing duty. The "Introduction" to the 2006 edition of *The Arden Shakespeare* "Much Ado About Nothing" makes reference to two essays published in the 1990s by Michael **Friedman**, professor. In early March as guest of Sigma Tau Delta's new film series (see related SigmaTD story on p. 6), he led a discussion on Kenneth Branagh's film version of "A Midwinter's Tale." Len **Gougeon**, professor, gave a paper titled "Emerson and the Re-Invention of Democracy" at the Middle-Atlantic American Studies Association Conference in Harrisburg, PA, in late March. This summer he will speak on "Cultural Warfare: Emerson, the British, and Democracy" at a conference on "Transatlanticism in American Literature: Emerson, Hawthorne, Poe" at Oxford University. His article, "Emerson, Religion, and Politics," will appear in *Encyclopedia of Modern Christian Politics*, forthcoming



this year from Greenwood Press. Michael **O'Steen**, assistant professor, directed and choreographed the Players' recent production of the musical "Urinetown." Rich **Larsen**, associate professor and Director of Theatre, designed the set and lighting. He was lighting designer for the University of the Arts Theatre Department's production of "A Bright Room Called Day" in February. He also designed the set for the Players' February production of "The Ladies of the Camellias." Pam **Kalinowski**, English/Theatre Minor '06, was lighting designer for the production. Je **Tellier** was costume designer, Jason **Diller**, Computer Information Systems '07, did sound design, and Heather **Lucas**, English '09, was production stage manager. "The Ladies of the Camellias" was directed by visiting artist Sheila **Stasack**. Kate **Judge**, English '06, was assistant director. Tom **Lawlor**, English '05, is working for HSBC Bank in Dublin in their fund management program. He hopes to move to New Zealand to pursue an interest in art history. Katie **Dooley**, English/Theatre '03, has been accepted into the Library Science program at the University of Pittsburgh. She will specialize in academic libraries. Beth **Gallagher**, Theatre '05, has been accepted into the San Diego State University MFA program in Theatre Design and will begin her three-year course of study in the fall. Sean **Meehan**, English '97, was a featured player this March in the Virginia Stage Company's production of "Of Mice and Men" at the Wells Theatre in Norfolk, Virginia. Sean played the part of Curly. 📖

