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English Department Newsletter

Fraustino Voted Teacher of Year by '07 Grads

Dan Fraustino, professor, was voted Teacher of the Year by the University of Scranton's Class of '07 and presented with a plaque commemorating the award on Class Night, May 25th. Instituted by the Faculty Senate in 1996, the award's current recipient, a specialist in 19th

century British literature, was chosen by graduating seniors in a secret ballot. The award is one of three teaching awards bestowed on Scranton faculty each year. Fraustino holds a PhD in Language and English Literature from the State University of New York at Binghamton, is the father of three children, and is a decorated veteran of the U.S.

Army with service in Vietnam. He taught at the University of Maine at Orono for five years before joining the Scranton faculty in 1982.

"This is the most gratifying award of my professional life, more important than any published work or promotion," Fraustino says. "This award tells me that the various aspects of my pedagogy-presentation, organization, content selection, difficulty factor--haven't been too far off the mark. That the students

Congratulations!

themselves voted me this award is what pleases me most, of course, and when I consider the list of past recipients, I'm humbled." Although a Romantic poetry specialist with a dissertation and publication on the work of John Keats, Fraustino has also published articles on

> John Barth, Elizabeth Bowen, D. H. Lawrence, Joseph Conrad, Washington Irving, and others. He has written a textbook on technical writing and presented papers at national and international gatherings.

Connolly, English **'**07, Fraustino's honor "comes as no surprise to me. He was one of the most positive influences

on me during my four years at Scranton." Says Mary Kate Hoffman, Biology '08. "I liked that he was extremely passionate about the Romantic era. He also dispelled the myth that Romantics are 'romantic.' They're actually very realistic but strive for excellence and perfection." David Fryzel, Biochemistry/Philosophy, '08, observes that Fraustino "makes it clear that he cares about his students. He doesn't speak in circles, and because of this he is very easy to understand. His lectures are both and humorous." Adds engaging (Continued on page 8)

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Lynn (Springer) Scramuzza, department secretary, and her husband, Ernie, welcomed Robert Nicholas Scramuzza to the world on June 14, 2007. Baby Bobby is doing just fine. Prudence Wehnert-Skinner joins the department's Theatre program as Technical Director. Cheryl and Michael Friedman, professor, celebrated their daughter Rachael's bat mitzvah this past summer, as well as their 20th wedding anniversary. Shannon Munley, Physical Therapy/Theatre Minor '08, has been awarded a Spring internship with the Performing Arts Physical Therapy clinic providing on-site physical therapy for Broadway companies. She will attend to company members of several current shows, including "Legally Blonde," "Hairspray," and "A Chorus Line," and return to campus in late May to receive her MPT. 🕮



Notes from the Chair

Why You Want To Be an English Major At least I'm willing to lie for my country. —Churchy la Femme

SCRANTON — OCT 26. So, Steve and Jenna and I are sitting in my office for a

change, talking the way we always do, except that each of us gets up every once in a while to look out my window at all the crazies in town for the convention. And Steve is getting all philosophical on us.

"I know I should be out there where those people can see me," he says, "but it's hard. It just seems so inauthentic. Anyway, the network doesn't want me telling anyone what I really think of our viewers."

'OK," I say, "what do you really think?"

"The thing is," he says, "most of them think our show is just about ritualized humiliations of Michael and Dwight, and there's so much more to it. If they knew what *cinema verite* was, if they'd read Marx on worker alienation or Laura Mulvey's essay on 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema,' the experience of watching our show would be so much *richer* for them."

"Uh, Steve, don't you think that's a little pretentious?" We've been friends for almost a year, ever since I ran into him browsing through the recent copies of *Representations* and *Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation* in the university library, and I know he wants me to be honest.

"I guess so. It's just that, well, they don't *read*. I know critical theory is an acquired taste, but maybe they could just read some great literature that focuses on the role of work in human life and its effect on human relationships—I'm just saying, they'd have a better sense of what we're trying to do. *Death of a Salesman. Glengarry Glen Ross. Mason & Dixon.*"

"Mason & Dixon? I *love* that book," Jenna chimes in. "Of course, Pynchon can be pretty obscure. I'm not sure you could get through it without having read some colonial American stuff first, not to mention *Tristram Shandy*. But if you're looking for a great book about work, I think I'd start with *Moby Dick*." *"Tristram Shandy* is *incredibly* funny," says Steve. "Wait—did you say *Moby Dick*?"

"Sure," she says. "*Moby Dick* is *The Office* of the nineteenth century. Ishmael struggles to understand a complicated workplace, and his co-workers come from different backgrounds and often seem to be working at cross-purposes, and then—"

"Oh, come on," says Steve, his voice rising, "*Moby Dick* is about the romance of the sea, the struggle against Nature, the great mysteries of—"

"You sound just like Michael," says Jenna, "and besides, you didn't let me finish. So, after Ishmael deals more or less successfully with all those wacky co-workers, not to mention the insatiable demands of the work itself, his insane boss wrecks everything." Then she winks at me.

"Michael's just a character," mutters Steve.

Time to change the subject. "So, Jenna," I say, "how's your love life?"

"Oh, God," she laughs. "Just when you think it can't get any worse, somebody fixes you up with a bubble-brained cologne model. Last Saturday, I'm out with this guy, and he has *nothing* to say. I've been reading Elizabeth Bishop again, and this guy has three or four different piercings I can see, so I make a little joke about "The Fish," but all I get in return is this blank stare. So I try to talk about something a little more mainstream, like Morrison or Roth or Woolf, but the guy just sits there until I finally mention Shakespeare, at which point he perks up and says, 'You mean the fishing reel guy?'"

"No! He didn't really—" says Steve.

"True story," she says, and then turns to me, doing that amazing mischievous-twinkle-in-her-eye thing that she does, and says "So—you got any cute English majors around?"

"It's really weird to hear you say that," I reply, "because I was on the phone with Shia LaBeouf yesterday and he asked me *exactly the same thing.*"

-Jody DeRitter

Players Book Passage for Ambitious Season

With travel documents in order, The Players' theatrical season was well-launched with the recent production of "More Fun Than Bowling," a provocative drama set in a small Midwestern town by playwright Stephen Dietz. Lead actors in



Talented cast and crew of "More Fun Than Bowling."

the play which ran on the Royal Theater mainstage in late September included Andrew Calogero, History '10, Erin Simko, English/Communication '08, and Nicole Febbraio, Psychology/Theatre Minor '08. The production was directed by visiting artist Sheila Stasack, and the set and lighting designed by Rich Larsen, associate professor and director of Theatre. Costumes were designed by Caitlin Burke, Theatre '10.

Currently playing on the Royal Theater stage under the direction of Michael O'Steen, associate professor, is "The Grapes of Wrath," adapted by Frank Galati from John Steinbeck's novel, an American epic of enforced migration of Dustbowl victims from Oklahoma to California in the 1930s. The production coincides with

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New Courses Enrich Diversity Offerings

New courses designed and implemented in Fall '07 by professors Susan Méndez and Joe Kraus, ENLT 284.1: Borderlands Writings: Readings in Latino/a Literature and ENLT 284.2: African-American Literature, are meeting with strong student interest, and they promise to enrich the department's literature offerings in the years ahead. "Candid assessment information we've gathered from graduating seniors the past few years indicates that our majors and minors want more offerings in multiethnic literature," explains Jody DeRitter, department chair. "It's a nation-wide hunger, frankly, and we're fortunate to have been able to hire Susan and Joe as they bring much enthusiasm and expertise."

"In terms of the health of the department and university, the Borderlands Writings course increases cultural diversity offerings and addresses post-1950s American literature in particular detail," says Méndez, new to the department in AY06-07 as an assistant professor. "It also supports interdisciplinary study, bolsters the Women's Studies and Latin American Studies concentrations, and forges stronger relationships with those programs and the English department." Méndez took her Ph.D. from the University of California-Riverside.

"As the instructor, what makes this class exciting to me is the chance to reinforce the historical significance of certain segments of the Latino/a community in the U.S. and to introduce the idea of borders and borderlands as critical lenses through which we can examine the topics of nation, culture, and identity. These topics are in the news and on our minds as citizens, and I want students to be able to consider them usefully when they leave the borderlands of my classroom for the wider world."



Joe Kraus and Susan Méndez discuss course texts.

Joe Kraus, also a recent tenure-track hire and assistant professor with a Ph.D. from Northwestern University, echoes Méndez's commitment to multiethnic literature and adds that much of his recent thinking and research attends to African-American writings, Ralph Ellison's Invisible Man in particular. "The African-American course is nicely book-ended by other courses," he says. "Len Gougeon does a fine job of giving shape to the American tradition in his twopart survey, and I hope my class bounces off of that. At the same time my colleague Susan Méndez is getting students to think about the rich multi-ethnic tradition in contemporary literature and with the addition of the Borderlands Writings class the Latino/a tradition in particular. With these courses in view, we can more readily appreciate the importance of our African-American literature, arguably the longest and most influential particular ethnic strain in the American tradition."



Times are hard for the cast members of "The Grapes of Wrath."

American tradition.

and supports the "Scranton Reads" program which has designated Steinbeck's novel as the communitywide reading focus for the year. An evening of one-act plays set in Japan and Costa Rica respectively, "A Thousand Cranes" by Kathryn Schultz Miller and "Our Mother Who Art on Earth" by Ana Istaru, translated by Linda Ledford-Miller, professor and chair of Scranton's Foreign Languages department, will be offered Dec. 6-9 in the McDade Center. In Spring semester the Players set sail for the coast of Illyria, the setting for Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night, or What You Will" and metro New York and Monaco, the locales for an amusing musical production, "Lucky Stiff," based on "The Man Who Broke The Bank At Monte Carlo" by Michael Butterworth. Evening curtain rises at 8 pm, Sunday matinee at 2 pm. For more information, e-mail: players@scranton.edu or telephone: (570)941-4318.



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REQUIEM

Before You Die (... sorry about that

Jonathan Sondej, English/Latin '08—



- 1. *The Sea-Wolf* Far and away Jack London's best and least-known novel, *The Sea -Wolf* is the tale of gentleman Humphrey Van Weyden's coming to stand on his own legs aboard the sealing schooner *Ghast* under the tyrannical rule of Wolf Larsen, a man who, as megalomaniacal sea captains go, measures in kind from stem to stern with Melville's Ahab and Peter Benchley's Quint.
- 2. *Deadwood* The foul-mouthed but brilliant child of *NYPD Blue* creator David Milch, *Deadwood* explores the birth of communal order from the anarchical chaos of the gold-rushed Dakota territories of 1876, remaining, through each episode of its three seasons, irresistibly couched in language at once cloacal and sublime.

3. A Clockwork Orange - Anthony Burgess' A Clockwork Orange shares the terrible,

visceral appeal of Kubrick's screen-adaptation, but remains the greater artistic achievement by virtue of the singular demand the author places upon the reader, that of learning and absorbing through context the gorgeous and keen-eared slang jargon Nadsat that Burgess, himself a fine musician, has composed for Alex and his band of inveterate villains.

4. *To the White Sea* – Colder in setting and tone than *Deliverance, To the White Sea* is James Dickey's chilling-most, thrilling-most novel. It is the story of Sergeant Muldrow, a World War II airman downed in Japan after the Tokyo fire-raids, who must flee north to escape death, all the while devolving towards animal instinct, each step into the wild purchased at the price of his own humanity.

5. *Cathay* – A book of Ezra Pound's translations of Rihaku and other early Chinese poets, *Cathay* is remarkable for its tenderness and arresting imagist technique. Of particular excellence are "The Song of the Bowmen of Shu" and "Exile's Letter."



Lynn Scramuzza, secretary—

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- 1. Hear The Mozart Requiem. Hear it live or, if you sing, find an opportunity to participate in a performance. The music is powerful and beautiful and moving in a way that defies description.
- 2. Read all five books in the inaccurately titled *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy Trilogy* by Douglas Adams. Consisting of *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, The Restaurant at the End of the Universe, Life, the Universe and Everything, So Long, and Thanks for All the Fish, and Mostly Harmless.* Arthur Dent's adventures are hilarious and mind-bending. (I do not recommend the movie.)
- 3. See *The Court Jester* (1956) starring Danny Kaye. The word play is delightful from start to finish. Something about the vessel with the pestle and the chalice from the palace... Angela Lansbury's performance in the role of ingénue is another plus.
- 4. Read the parable Who Moved My Cheese? by Dr. Spencer Johnson. It's a quick read; a tale (no pun intended) of two mice, Sniff and Scurry, and two humans, Hem and Haw. We experience their struggles and gain some ideas about ways to cope with, and even enjoy change in our lives.

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5. See live theatre because it is an adventure. I am amazed at the number of people who have *never* seen a play or musical. If you don't know where to begin, try seeing a University Players production.

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New Book, New Magazine



A senior department faculty member, Len Gougeon, and a recent English graduate, Dan Brennan, continue their productive ways with recent successes. *Emerson & Eros* (SUNY Press, 2007), a new book by Gougeon, professor and distinguished university fellow, has garnered praise in an

early review by Carl Rollyson of *The New York Sun*. Says Rollyson of Gougeon, "Enter the biographer—or rather the biographical critic—as precise as he is passionate, evincing in his evocation of Emerson's eros a deep feeling of his own that renews the sense of his subject as our contemporary." He adds that Gougeon, a student of Emerson for thirty years, "deftly presents" the story of Emerson's life and conveys the story of Emerson's emotional and spiritual growth "with admirable lucidity." Copies of Gougeon's book are available for purchase in the university bookstore.

Dan Brennan, English/Philosophy '07, has launched The Antenna, a review of the arts. The Antenna Ant

initial issue of the *secondary* in the current October issue is journal appeared in May and the current October issue is available for download at www.prunejuice.net/antenna. "I wanted to introduce the community at large to the emerging arts scene in Scranton," he explains. "Ultimately I would like to see The *Antenna* become an organization with a capacity to employ up and coming artists who can use the publication as a stepping stone to continue to make and sell their art to the community." Hard copies of the magazine are free and readily available at Northern Light Espresso Bar, Embassy Vinyl, Test Pattern, The Bog, and many other local establishments. Brennan, a veteran of the U.S. Air Force with service as a crew chief for F-16s, is also working as an assistant editor for another publication, *Local Flair*.

URS Brings Veteran Writers, Editors to Campus

The University Reading Series, now in its twenty-fifth year of bringing distinguished writers to campus to give free public readings and to meet with writing students and faculty in the department, launched the season on September 12 with a well-attended reading by Kim Dana Kupperman and Dustin Beall Smith in the Heritage Room of Weinberg Memorial Library. Kupperman is managing editor of *The Gettysburg Review* and a widelypublished nonfiction writer. Smith is the author of the forthcoming *Key Grip, A Memoir of Endless Consequences*, and a member of the writing program faculty at Gettysburg College.

The visiting writers also met with students in Joe Kraus's WRTG 314, the advanced nonfiction workshop. "Their time on campus provided a terrific opportunity for our students to get practical advice about writing from two seasoned professionals as well as 'insider' information about the editing and publishing process from an editor at one of America's finest literary journals, "Kraus noted.



Spring 2007 University Reading Series visiting poet, Mark Halliday, discusses the writing process.



Jefferson Mays (Henry Higgins) and Claire Danes star in "Pygmalion," Roundabout Theatre Company's revival of the George Bernard Shaw classic at American Airlines Theatre. (Newsday / Ari Mintz)

Sigma Tau Delta Happenings

Sigma Tau Delta is sponsoring "Movie Night" again this year & the first screening was "Singin' in the Rain," hosted by Michael O'Steen, associate professor, on 20 September. SigmaTD president Caitlin Lyons says



upcoming movies are in the works, with details to be announced on email and flyers.

"Bus to Broadway," also sponsored by SigmaTD, gets rolling on Saturday, November 17, with a trip to The Cloisters, a branch of the Metropolitan Museum of Art devoted to the art and architecture of medieval Europe. After a self-guided tour of approximately two hours, it's south to midtown and a matinee performance of Shaw's "Pygmalion" presented by the Roundabout Theatre Company at the American Airlines Theatre. The trip should be of special interest to students planning to take Beal's "The Age of Chaucer" or McInerney's "Comedies of G.B. Shaw" in Spring.



Toni Glover working with Beth Sindaco.

Faculty Specialists, New University Hires, Welcomed

Faculty Specialist Bonnie Markowski and Beth Sindaco "join" the department in a new University employment designation. Two of several Faculty Specialists hired this academic year at the University, Markowski and Sindaco have served the department as adjunct professors of Composition for many years. In their new positions, they will teach three sections of composition per semester and enjoy salary upgrades, medical benefits, and eligibility for reappointment, according to director of Composition Toni Glover.

"Bonnie and Beth are dedicated instructors with outstanding records, and we're delighted the university has created this new position of Faculty Specialist as it insures a strong measure of instructional competency and continuity," Glover says. "Composition is a universitywide requirement the English department is called upon to service, year-in and year-out. It's a demanding responsibility for the department as our faculty have a great many programmatic responsibilities. The Faculty Specialist designation is an effort to address instructional demands in a responsible manner and to acknowledge the contributions of the adjunct professoriate."

"I'm happy to have been selected for the position," says Beth Sindaco, who in addition to credentials and experience as a composition specialist is an attorney-atlaw. As a young law clerk, Sindaco observed the writing challenges faced by many lawyers and law students and decided to enhance her own writing skills and to develop instructional techniques to aid others.

Bonnie Markowski, who began college as a journalism major, realized the "error of her ways," she says, during a seminar on the novels of Toni Morrison in which she was asked to "teach" a class. "That did it for me. I knew I wanted to be in the classroom on a full-time basis. As a Faculty Specialist I hope to make a significant contribution to an already Bonnie Markowski



outstanding English department."

CLOSE READING

Tim Mayers, English/Philosophy/Honors '88, associate professor of English at Millersville University, is at work on a novel. His (Re)Writing Craft: Composition, Creative Writing, and the Future of English Studies, was published in 2005 by UPitt Press and issued as a paperback in 2007. He's the father of



two children, Connor and Anna. Joseph Kott, English Ed '06, has earned an M.A.T. from Union Graduate College in Schenectady, NY. His thesis was "Madness: Playing Shakespeare's Game of Love--A Look at the Comic Lovers and Shakespeare's Take on Love." He accepted a tenure-track position at Shenendehowa High School in



Clifton Park, NY, and is hard at work. Cheryl Mrazik, English/Philosophy, '06, is pursuing an M.A. in International Development at Pitt after a year of teaching in San Diego. Michael Friedman, professor, has an

article, "'This Fearful Slumber': Some Unacknowledged Sources

of Julie Taynor's Titus," in a book titled Staging Shakespeare: Essays in Honor of Alan C. Dessen, published by UDelaware Press, 2007. In November, Friedman will



give a paper, "Shakespeare and the Gunpowder Plot: V for Vendetta' at the Mid-Atlantic Popular American Culture Association conference in Philadelphia. Jason Del Piano, English Ed. '06, is teaching in Wayne, N.J. Sean Doran, Communications/English Minor '92, is president of Script to Screen, and writes and produces commercials and infomercials in Los Angeles. He is married with two children, Annaliese Rose, and Jillian



Margaret. Michael Connolly, English '07, studies law at Drexel U. He will attend Marine OCS in Quantico, VA., next summer. Nick Hale, English 07, has been accepted into the MA program in secondary ed. at the U. of North Texas. Amie Montemurro, English '05, attends the graduate program in

public policy at Georgetown U. Melissa Whalen Haertsch, English/Philosophy '89, is curating "Trees: A Collaborative Exhibit of Writing & Visual Arts" at the Butternut Gallery in Montrose, PA. The exhibit opens

on Oct. 27. Brianna Noll, English/Honors '05, will present a paper on Frank O'Hara's Rachmaninoff poems at the Hawaii International Conference on Arts and the Humanities in January. She is completing her third year in the MFA program in poetry at Florida State U. J. P. Touhey, English '07,



attends the University of Buffalo law school. John

(Continued on page 8)

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or as an attachment in Word format to:

scramuzzal2@scranton.edu

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CLOSE READING

(Continued from page 7)

Meredith Hill, professor, has a poem featured in the "Trees" exhibit at the Butternut Gallery in Montrose, PA. Matthew Lucas, English '06, is enrolled in Drexel University's accelerated Nursing program. Joe **Kraus**, assistant professor, has a story, "Circle Change," in *The Storyteller*, Vol. 12, Issue 3. Jacki **Kubiak**, Theatre '01, took her M.F.A. in Technical Direction from the University of Arizona in May 2007 and accepted the position of Technical Director for the



Schuster Theatre at Gannon University in Erie, PA. In addition to her primary TD duties Jacki teaches technical and design classes for the Department of Theatre and Communications. Jesse Hoppe, Theatre Minor '08, and Morgan Cerio, Theatre '08, share the Bagdzinski Scholarship this year. Sean Meehan, English/Theatre Minor '97, had a featured role in Israel

Horovitz's "The Widow's Blind Date" at the Gloucester Stage in Gloucester, MA, in



August—September. "Where the *!*!* is Poor Tom?" a play by John **McInerney**, professor, was given a well-attended table reading on 24 October in Brennan Hall. Readers included Colleen **Graff**, adjunct professor, Joe **Kraus**, assistant professor, Michael **O'Steen**, associate professor, and Morgan **Cerio**, Theatre '08, Andrew **Calogero**, History, '10, and Shannon **Munley**, Physical Therapy/Theatre Minor '08. Sara **Sutter**,



Philosophy/English Minor '07, has a poem, "Pricks," in *Ginosko*, a literary journal published in California. Matt **Silva**, Theatre '07, is pursuing an MFA in Theatre at Villanova. Jeff **Trainor**, Theatre '06, is in his second year of the MFA in Theatre program at Roosevelt University in Chicago and working as an intern for the bakespeare Theatre Company.



Chicago Shakespeare Theatre Company. 🕮

Fraustino (Continued from page 1)



Dan clarifies a point or two.

department's commitment to teaching, publishing, and service."

DeRitter, "It's wonderful for Dan and a pleasure to see a member of the department recognized and honored. We're a fortunate department in many respects with two Distinguished University Fellows, several recipients of the Earl Service Award, the current president of the Faculty Senate, and the head of FAC in our midst. Dan's award is another welcome acknowledgment of the

department chair Jody