



Works Cited

English Department Newsletter

Majors, Minors Embrace Global Education

"Oh, to be in England/Now that April's there," wrote Robert Browning in "Home-Thoughts from Abroad." The Victorian poet and sage was living in Italy at the time. While studying last fall in the Eternal City, Kathleen Davidson, English/Psychology '07, found her thoughts returning frequently to Scranton and time spent in McDade. "Although a million miles away, I'm still strongly connected to the classes I've taken in the English department," she wrote from Rome. "I recently had the opportunity to visit the Keats and Shelley museum and see the very apartment where Keats lived and died. Just down the street is a plaque that notes the place where James Joyce lived when he came here. Across the street is the café where Mark Twain sat with other innocents abroad, reading American newspapers and writing letters to family and friends at home."

As with other English and Theatre majors and minors who have elected to spend a semester or more pursuing their education in a global setting, Davidson's experience, no less than Browning's poem, underscores a common, if curious, phe-

nomenon: in addition to promoting one's awareness of the new and different, travel intensifies one's appreciation for the old and familiar. "I've come to realize I

wouldn't appreciate this time in Rome had I not built a foundation at Scranton as an English major," she explained. "You think about all the reading, the writing of papers, the memorizing of seemingly pointless biographical facts, and you say to yourself, I'd rather be at Oscar's. But to stand over Keats' and Shelley's graves and to re-read "Adonais" was a very special moment for me. Rome wouldn't be the experience it is if it weren't for my education at Scranton."

English major James Rowe, '08, is spending the current academic year studying at Trinity College Dublin.

"This place puts the *studying* in study abroad," he notes. While demanding, the experience is also exhilarating. Then too, he reports, "there are plenty of things to get up to in Dublin," his phrasing suggestive of an acculturation well underway. He also values the opportunity to do some surfing on the west coast and the occasional weekend get-aways to the Conti-

(Continued on page 6)

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Kathleen Davidson

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Spring 2007

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James Rowe

Congratulations!

Ronan Kathleen Whittaker, daughter of Jenny and Stephen **Whittaker**, professor, was born on 26 March 2007. Baby and parents are doing well. The Department was well represented this semester with Provost Faculty Enhancement Awards. Bonnie **Markowski**, adjunct professor, has been awarded the Part-Time Faculty Award for Excellence in Teaching. Rich **Larsen**, Theatre Program Director, received the award for Excellence Integrating Sustainability in the Curriculum. Jones **DeRitter**, Department Chair, was awarded for Excellence in University Service and Leadership. Sara **Sutter**, Philosophy/English minor '07, has won second place in the 6th annual Mulberry Poets & Writers Assn. Regional Poetry Contest.



Notes from the Chair

Helicopter Child

If she seems a little distracted these days, it's because she is heading off to college in the fall, and she worries that her parents may not be able to manage on their own. For the past eighteen years, she's done everything she could do to make them into caring, thinking adults, and on the whole, she's been pleased with her handiwork. They've learned pretty much everything she has tried to teach them, and they've accomplished some things and earned the respect and affection of their peers and mentors. Somewhere along the way, they even seem to have developed some talents, some practical skills, and some ethical principles that might be useful to them in the next phase of their lives. That's the hope, anyway. She knows she can't take full credit for everything they have become, and that her ability to protect them from Whatever Comes Next is actually pretty limited. She also knows that she

probably has done more than anyone else to make them into who and what they are at this point in their lives. Sometimes that just adds to her exasperation, but on most days, it gives her a feeling of pride. It's exciting, and maybe a little nerve-wracking, to speculate about where they might be five years from now and what they might be doing, and how those changes might alter their relationship to her. (The 'nerve-wracking' part shows up when she thinks about the bad things that could happen. Will they be strong enough to deal with adversity? Will they be resourceful enough to adjust to new situations and keep moving forward? Will they ever learn to pick up after themselves?) Ah well. Eventually, she thinks, you have to let them go. Then she starts the whole thing over again.

—Jody DeRitter



Sigma Tau Delta Chapter Wins Top National Honor

Rebecca Beal, professor, and Joe Kraus, assistant professor, who serve as moderator and acting moderator, respectively, of our Mu Omicron chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, the national English honorary, were informed recently that Scranton has received the 2007 Outstanding Chapter Award. Scranton is one of only two chapters in the nation to receive the award this year. "It's wonderful recognition of the creative efforts of our chapter members, our chapter officers in particular, and the participating interest of a variety of faculty members," says Kraus. "It's especially gratifying to receive this recognition on top of the recent awards our chapter and its members have garnered," Beal explains. "Only a year ago at the national convention in Portland, Mu Omicron enjoyed special recognition on the 25th anniversary of our founding. Additionally,




Pauline Palko, Andrew Prinzivalli and Carolyn King accept the Sigma Tau Delta 2007 Outstanding Chapter Award.

a number of our members presented invited papers and won scholarship awards for graduate study. Now we learn that we're one of two chapters in the nation to be recognized in a very competitive environment."

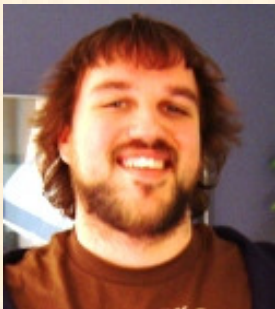


Sigma Tau Delta 2006-2007 Officers. From left to right: Andrew Prinzivalli, Mike Sotak, Joe Kraus (acting moderator), Caitlin Lyons, Kristin Manley, Marissa Healy and Eileen Patterson.

The Scranton chapter received a monetary award of \$350 as well as travel reimbursement funds for members attending this year's convention in Pittsburgh in late March. The official letter of commendation from Sigma Tau Delta national headquarters noted that Scranton's application for the award "demonstrated a number of exciting projects, special events, and fundraising opportunities that would be helpful as models for other chapters." Scranton is one of more than 600 chapters at colleges and universities across the nation and abroad. Last year Mu Omicron sponsored the launch of a sister chapter of Sigma Tau Delta at Yaounde University in Cameroon in recognition of and support for the University's commitment to global education. This year's chapter officers are Caitlin Lyons and Kristin Manley (co-president), Eileen Patterson (vice president), Mike Sotak (treasurer), Marissa Healy (conference coordinator) and Andrew Prinzivalli (public relations and historian). 

INTERVIEW

Two weeks before his death, Steven Ranton agreed to this interview and looked forward to its appearance in Works Cited. Now, in good faith but sorrowful circumstance, we publish Steve's remarks with fond memories of his large talent and dedication, good humor and generous spirit.
The Editor



March 21, 2007

Steven Ranton. Theatre '07, has been engaged in the Theatre program's activities since his arrival on campus as a freshman. He has acted in the Players' productions of *Our Country's Good*, *Dead Man Walking*, *Madmen and Specialists*, *Strange Snow*, *Blithe Spirit*, *The Crucible*, *Caucasian Chalk Circle*,

***Ladies of the Camellias* and *Urinetown*. He has also written and directed *Do You Mind?* for the 2007 New Playwright's Festival and acted in Chris Marsili's *Alone With Darkness*. Ranton has also worked as properties master for *Some Enchanted Evening* and stage manager for *Greater Tuna* and *The House of Bernarda Alba*. He served as light board operator for the Players' recent production of *On The Verge*.**

WC: *Have you always been interested in theatre?*

Ranton: I started acting in 8th grade in a 10-minute play I wrote and directed.

WC: *What was it about?*

Ranton: The Colossus of Rhodes. Our class was broken up into seven groups, and each group was asked to write and perform a play about one of the Seven Wonders of the World. Our performance went over pretty well. The play was informative and earned some laughs as well.

WC: *Do you see yourself primarily as an actor, a director, or a writer? Or all three?*

Ranton: At this point, an actor, although I'm interested in all aspects of theatre production and performance. Acting is my number one love, but I like directing because of that whole leadership position thing. I like writing too. Like a lot of people I've tried my hand at song lyrics and poems. I wrote a play in high school, but it wasn't good. It wasn't until this year, my senior year at Scranton, that I've thought seriously about writing. I tried to make a serious effort with "Do You Mind?" I found The New Playwright's Festival experience to be a positive, instructive, experience, the writing and the directing challenges, I mean. But acting has been the main thing so far.

WC: *What kind of acting, or roles, do you prefer?*

Ranton: Before coming to Scranton, I'd only done musicals. The Players' production of *Our Country's Good* gave me my first dramatic role. I loved it. Well, you should know that I've done some professional wrestling too, about fifty shows before coming here. So I suppose that's a kind of acting.

WC: *We don't offer professional wrestling classes in our Theatre program, do we?*

Ranton: No (laughter), but I have nothing but good things to say about the program. I have learned so much from Rich Larsen. He's a master when it comes to technical aspects of theatre. He can do things with lights that painters can't do with paintbrushes. Working with him on *On The Verge* was a seminar on lighting technique. As much as I've learned from him, I've learned even more from Michael O'Steen. People sometimes talk about mentors. O'Steen is that man for me. Whatever I do as an actor in future I'll owe to him.

WC: *What has he taught you?*

Ranton: Both he and Rich promote one idea: be professional. Do it right.

WC: *You're intending to graduate in May. What's next?*

Ranton: I'm going to try and do it, be a working actor. I'll move back home for awhile. My folks live near the city. I plan to get a job and audition, audition, audition. Getting a foot in the door in New York is hard, I know, but I'm going to give it my best effort. 📖



*Steve is dressed to impress as Charles Condomine in the Players' Fall 2005 Production of *Blithe Spirit*.*



*Steve surrounded by friends during Intersession 2007 Theatre Course—Acting: Shakespeare Special Topics taught by Guest Shakespeare Specialist Rosie Hay who also served as, guest director for the Players' Spring 2007 production of *Art*.*

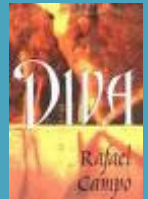
Extreme MAKEOVER



The Literary Work That Changed My Life (maybe, sort of . . .)

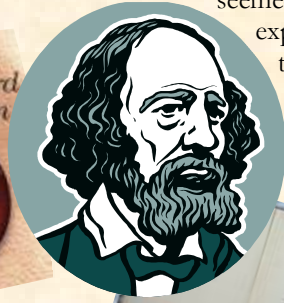


Andrea **Frankenburger**, English/Honors '07— Although I can't say it changed my life, Virginia Woolf's *Moments of Being* has definitely made an impression on me. This collection of autobiographical essays allowed me to gain an intimate view of Woolf's mind that I'd been craving since falling in love with her *A Room of One's Own* and *To The Lighthouse*. In "A Sketch of the Past" she exposes her thoughts on how the process of writing, although it demands an incredible amount of time and horrid labor, affords her the power to discover and gain control over the world around her. Beyond Woolf, I must give credit to Rafael Campo's *Diva*, a collection of poems which introduced me to a physician's shocking but compassionate observations on birth, flesh, homosexuality and the tension of straddling borders. These books have not necessarily transformed me, but they have revealed different ways of looking at life that continue to stick in my mind.



Dan **Fraustino**, professor— I began college as a music major, but I knew music wasn't for me and spent my sophomore year aimlessly wandering among my courses. I then became an English major. Unfortunately (more for my professor than me) I found myself the next semester in an upper-level course in what is probably one of the most difficult courses in the English curriculum: "Victorian Poetry," taught by Dr. Shmiefsky, reputedly the brightest and most heartless professor on the faculty. One late night, struggling in the library with Alfred Lord Tennyson's "The Lotus Eaters," I had my first real literary experience. Everything seemed to light up, my mind functioning on levels I had never

experienced. It was illuminating. I never quite grasped Tennyson that semester, but because of the compelling experience of poetry in ways that may transcend articulate sense, the poem changed my life. I fell in love with an experience and now understood the shape my life must take. In thirty years of full-time teaching I have never once woken up in the morning and asked myself why I'm going to work. But as I look back, I see a very crooked road leading to where I am today, hardly any road at all. It's a mystery to me as I am sure it would be to Dr. Shmiefsky were she to know that her incompetent student from many years ago would earn a Ph.D. in her field and eventually teach it at a reputable university. But it began with Tennyson's poem.



Tennyson





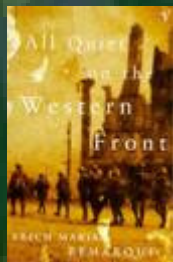
Pauline **Palko**, English '08—Until I read Wilfred Owen's poem "Dulce Et Decorum Est" in high school, war was an abstract concept to me, a faceless event in a history textbook. The Vietnam War ended before I was of an age to take an interest, and even though some of my friends'

families had been affected by Vietnam, programming mainstream, and exposure to the The images of sing in "Dulce Est" shocked me. Questions type of death led

me to read another work, *All Quiet on the Western Front*, by Erich Maria Remarque. Quite naïve at the time I read them, I believe these works still influence my firm belief that war is rarely a necessary evil. I reexamined Owen's poem last summer during Dr. Jordan's Intro to Poetry course; I shuddered again upon reading it, fully aware, this time, that man continues to conspire in his heart to inflict such torture on others.



Wilfred Owen



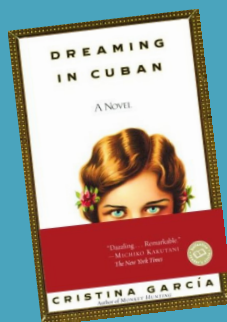
been affected 24/7 news was not yet I had little dirty details. death by gas-Et Decorum and saddened about this

Susan **Mendez**, Assistant Professor—

A literary text that made over my life would have to be *Dreaming in Cuban* by Cristina Garcia. I read this novel for the first time during the summer of 1997, and was overwhelmed by the beautiful and poignant prose that



described the lives of five Cuban and Cuban-American women. The story of how Pilar, the main character, had to negotiate the conflicting political and spiritual allegiances of her family members and deal with the violence that affected herself and the women of her family moved me to rethink my plans for graduate study. I had begun the process of declaring a Renaissance specialization at my Master's institution, but after reading this novel, I thought it might be more meaningful for me and my community if I dedicated my study to Latina/o literature and feminism. Ten years later, here I am: an assistant professor teaching multi-ethnic literature at the University of Scranton.



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Michael **O'Steen**, associate professor—

My passion for creating theatre blossomed in college when I was introduced to the work of the eminent theatre director and critic Harold Clurman. Clurman's work on Broadway includes *Bus Stop*, *A Member of the Wedding* and *Incident at Vichy* to name but a few. He also spent many years as the theatre critic for the *New Republic* and has published countless books on theatre. The book that changed my life forever was *The Fervent Years*. His chronicle of the life and times of the famed Group Theatre in the 1930s is a story of a passion and longing for an "American" theatre. One that could tell compelling "American" stories, change the way

theatre audiences think of our world and how we theatre practitioners think about and make theatre. Clurman's ardor and combustible passion for theatre bubbles up continually in his writing. Harold Clurman, the man, and his writings changed many lives and influenced many. *The Fervent Years* changed mine.



(Continued from page 1)

nent, thanks to inexpensive RyanAir flights. "Whether it's Derrida or *Piers Plowman* under discussion, our presence on the far side of the Atlantic provides a fresh perspective on things and often a more immediate one. At the same time, you get a new take on your own society, its outlooks and behaviors. The entire experience of living and studying abroad has been rewarding beyond my expectations."

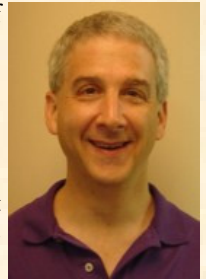
Another recent student in Dublin, Rachel Chibnik, English Ed/Theatre minor '07, says, "I never expected to learn as much as I did during this past summer at the Gaiety School of Acting." Located in Temple Bar in the city center, the school tested Chibnik's stamina with a rigorous daily regimen of classes and seminars, voice lessons, and theatre-themed daytrips and tours. "I studied intensely the works of Beckett, Friel, Synge, and O'Casey. In addition to close readings of their work, we performed a variety of scenes." That mix of experience in the classroom and on the stage made for a demanding but thrilling summer, she explains. "Living and studying in another culture is something you can't begin to get your head around until you've done it. I encourage any one considering a study abroad program to seize the opportunity."

Michael Friedman, professor, says his junior year abroad "was the most influential time of my life. I left the United States an overgrown child and came back an




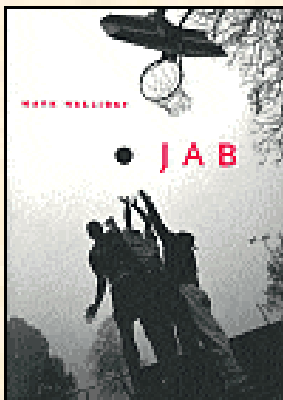
Rachel Chibnik

adult." Enrolled at the University of York, he came into contact with the idea of studying Shakespeare in Performance, his scholarly specialty "I also got my first chance to direct a full-length Shakespeare play. That experience has directed the entire subsequent course of my life." The cultural experiences and the chance to travel were also influential. "Every day seemed like a new adventure, and each feeling I experienced seemed heightened well beyond the norm. I kept a journal of everything I did for nine months; it runs to about 700 pages, and in many ways it's my most prized possession." He strongly endorses the idea of English and Theatre majors and minors studying abroad, but offers one caveat: "One has to work hard to take advantage of the opportunities for learning and personal growth. It's about more than spending every night in the pub."



Michael Friedman

Although unable to spend his junior year abroad, Jay Hill, professor, did two years of service as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Micronesia upon completing his undergraduate degree. "That was my first international experience, and although I wasn't a student in a formal sense I did a lot of reading by kerosene lantern light. Melville, Stevenson, Conrad and others helped me to think about my own circumstance in the Pacific and to engage with broader issues and ideas having to do with colonialism and neo-colonialism. That overseas experience was really the beginning of adult life for me. Consequently, I'm happily on board with the University's commitment to global ed. Yes, I sometimes moan about losing good students for a semester or two, but I agree with our students' enthusiastic response to the experience. For all sorts of reasons, it's a good thing." 




URS Brings Rome Prize Winner to Campus

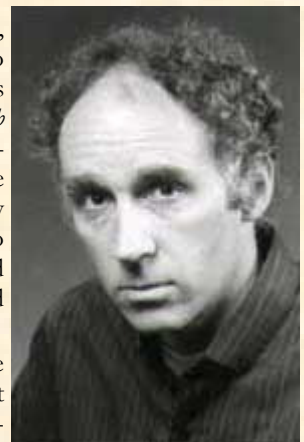
Mark Halliday, poet and winner of the Rome Prize from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, will be a guest of the University Reading Series on Thursday, April 26. He will give a free public reading of recent work in the Studio Theatre of the McDade Center for Literary and Performing Arts. He will also meet with students in Jay

Hill's WRTG 216, Poetry Writing I, for an informal Q & A that afternoon. Interested students and faculty are welcome to sit in.

"He's one of our wittiest poets," says Hill. "He can make us laugh, at ourselves no less than at others, as can

Dean Young, Barbara Hamby, Tony Hoagland. He can also summon an elegiac voice. His most recent book, *Jab* (UChicago2002), is an impressive collection. I admire the tonal range. I've seen some new poems in the journals that do wonderful things with sound and sense. I hope he'll read several of those for us."

Halliday teaches in the graduate writing program at Ohio University and has published three other collections of poems and a critical study of Wallace Stevens. 



CLOSE READING



Zack **Monahan**, English Ed. '05, will begin study for an MA in English at SUNY-Binghamton in the Fall. He teaches English at Abington Heights High School. Michael **Friedman**, professor, served as dramaturg for Joan Robbins' production of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* at Ohio Northern University. The work entailed, among

other things, several trips to Ada, Ohio, during the past calendar year to participate in production meetings and work one-on-one with student actors. The show, set in the "British Invasion" music scene of the '60s, ran at the Freed Center for the Performing Arts from Feb. 7-11, 2007, to a large and enthusiastic house. Robbins is a former director of the Theatre program at Scranton. Joseph **Kott**, English Ed. '06, a grad student at Union College in New York, is writing an MA thesis on Shakespeare's comic leading ladies. Len **Gougeon**, professor, has a forthcoming essay titled "Emerson and the Re-Invention of Democracy: A Lesson for the Twenty-First Century" in a collection titled *New Morning: Emerson in the Twenty-First Century*, published by Vanderbilt University Press. He also received a grant from the University Research Committee that will allow



him to spend a week in the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., researching his on-going project on New England, Old England, and the Civil War. Joe **Kraus**, assistant professor, presented a paper titled "When Manhood Itself is Invisible: Self, Corporate Self, and the Gangster in Ellison's *Invisible*

Man" as the annual MELUS (Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States) conference at Fresno State University, California in late March. Brianna **Noll**, English/Honors '05, has won second place in the annual *Literal/Latte* poetry contest. *Literal/Latte* is a New York-based journal published on the Web. Noll has received a monetary award and her winning poems, "Dear Claims Adjuster" and "A Poem for Our Issues," are posted on the journal's website. Noll is in her second year of the MFA in poetry program at Florida State University. Ron **Spalletta**, English '04, is completing his first year of the MFA in poetry



program at Emerson College in Boston. Elizabeth **Gordon**, adjunct professor, has a nonfiction book, *Walk with Us*, forthcoming from Crandall, Dostie & Douglass Books in Fall '07. Her poem "Your Season" will appear in the next issue of *Friends Journal*. Michael **O'Steen**, associate professor, directs the Players' production

of *Bus Stop* on the stage of the Royal Theatre in late April. Lighting director is Pam **Kalinowski**, English '06. Rachel **Miller**, Theatre '04, is costume designer. Je **Tellier**, Technical Director, designed the set. Members of the university's Mu Omicron chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, the national English honorary, made invited presentations at the annual SigmaTD convention, held this year in Pittsburgh in late



(Continued on page 8)

Department Events

Esprit reading, free and open to the public, Thursday, May 10, at 8:00 p.m. in the Studio Theatre.

Sigma Tau Delta 2007 Induction and Brunch will take place on Sunday, May 6, from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm in the Zandarski Room of The Estate. Applications for membership are now being accepted.

The New Director's Workshop is scheduled for May 3-5 at 8:00 pm in the Studio Theatre.

April

There are puddles.

If a person wanted to
he could spend an hour

picking up litter,
raking, mowing
tufts of grass.

A white cloud hangs high
in the sky down
the third base

foul line. One boy arrives
& then another &
another & another.

— John Meredith Hill

April was published in 2006 in Vol. 23 / No. 1 of *Elysian Fields Quarterly*, *The Baseball Review*™.

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TRADITION

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Lynn Springer

March. Pauline **Palko**, English '08 and secretary for the University's Office of Fellowship Programs & Health Professions Advising, read a nonfiction piece titled "Four Days in the South of France, *C'est Bon!*," inspired by a recent trip to that region and by conversation with writer Colette Inez, a guest of the University Reading Series in '05-'06. Carolyne **King**, English/Theology/Honors '08, gave a paper titled "Boy Meets Girl: The Merging of Male and Female Perspectives in Willa Cather's *My Antonia*." Andrew **Prinzivalli**, English '08, also made a presentation titled "Why I Read a Forgotten Author: Recovering Robert Hugh Benson." John **McInerney**, professor, presented a paper on George Bernard Shaw at the Comparative Drama



Conference in Marina Del Ray, CA, in late March. Patrick **O'Kernick**, English/Philosophy '08, and Sara **Sutter**, Philosophy/English minor '07, were poetry contest Finalists in the 47th annual Literary Festival sponsored by Hollins University in VA. Their poems were selected for commendation from among hundreds of submissions from undergraduates at American colleges and universities. Sutter's poem "Rumination" won second prize in the 6th annual Mulberry Poets &


Writers Assn regional poetry contest. She will receive a monetary award and be invited to read at the AFA Gallery in Scranton in late April. Jeff **Trainor**, Theatre '06, an MFA student in theatre at Roosevelt University's Chicago College of the Performing Arts, is a non-speaking acting intern in a production of *Troilus and Cressida* at the



Chicago Shakespeare Theatre. John Meredith **Hill**, professor, has a poem, "Vacation Bible School," in the Spring '07 issue of *Dogwood*. Judith **Hicks**, English Ed. '05, is a first year graduate student at UCSanta Barbara where she's been very busy. Her recent presentations include: "The Henryspeak": Mapping the Idioms of Trauma in *Native Speaker* by Chang- Rae Lee, at the MELUS conference at Fresno State in March; "Some murie



thyng of adventures': A Boethian Reading of Patience in Chaucer's *Clerk's Tale*," at the Medieval Assn. of the Pacific, at UCLA, also in March; "Unforeseen' Results: A Tragedy of Amateur Soldiery in 'Guests of the Nation' by Frank O'Connor" at the Louisville Conference on Literature & Culture Since 1900, ULouisville, in February; "Tracing 'the natural touch': Nature, Preternaturalness and Denatured Humankind in *Macbeth*," at the Early Modern Center Brown Bag Series, UC Santa Barbara, in February. Hicks' "Losing Neverland: the Homes that Colonized Women Imagine from Homer's Calypso to Rhys' Antoinette," was published in the 2007 *Proceedings* of, and presented at, the Hawaii International Conference on Arts & Humanities, in Honolulu in January. She presented a version of this paper at the Consortium for Literature, Theory and Culture at UCSB in November 2006. She also read two poems, "Bear-baiting" and "Penelope's Reply to Ulysses," at the HICAH conference.

Rich **Larsen**, associate professor and director of Theatre, has also been busy on sabbatical. In the past few months he has designed lighting for *Julius Caesar* and scenery for *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* for the theatre program at Oklahoma State University.. In March he attended the annual USITT (Institute for Theatre Technology) conference in Phoenix and visited the Materials Lab in the School of Architecture at UT-Austin. 



Sean **Meehan**, English/Theatre minor '97, has a lot to say in the recent Domino's Pizza commercial seen on national television..

