



Works Cited

Department of English & Theatre Newsletter

***Esprit*, Scranton's Review of Arts & Letters, 50 Years Young!**

Volume 2, Issue 1

Spring 2008

Devoted to celebrating the literary and artistic talents of Scranton students, *Esprit* began publication in 1958 at the direction of the late Rev. J.J. Quinn, S. J. On the golden anniversary of its founding, current editor-in-chief Jon Sondej, a member of the Honors Program with a double major in English and Latin, says, "Continuing to put out a student magazine of the highest quality is the best way to honor the tradition of the journal that Father Quinn launched in the mid-twentieth century. It's what we try to do with every issue of *Esprit*, spring and fall."

Published twice a year, the review sponsors free public readings by contributors at the conclusion of each semester. At these well-attended events monetary prizes are awarded to outstanding contributors of poetry, prose, and photography, as judged by credentialed external evaluators. In the half century since its founding, *Esprit* has published stories, poems, essays, visual art and photography by hundreds of Scranton undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, and solicited guest contributors including, in a celebrated instance, novelist and short story writer Flannery O'Connor, a friend of Father Quinn.

A presence in the English department for many years, Quinn served as faculty moderator of the journal for a decade. Sondej lauds current moderator Stephen Whittaker, professor, for his dedication to

"finding and cultivating new artistic and editorial talent." Whittaker has served in the position since 1990. Past moderators include the late Frank Jordan, associate professor of English, as well as Edward Warner, Linda Ledford-Miller, and John Meredith Hill and Carl Schaffer, professors of Communications, Foreign Languages, and English respectively.

"*Esprit* was J. J. Quinn in 1960 when I arrived on campus," remembers Paul Fahey, a former editor-in-chief. Chair of the physics department, Fahey has also served the university as Dean of CAS. "Father Quinn was the heart and soul. I and my fellow students were mostly legs, arms, and, above all, fingers. He recruited me as a freshman for the magazine—as a typist." Adds Fahey, "When I was editor there was this kid who submitted some very good art work. His name was Walter Bobbie, the Tony-nominated writer and director/choreographer/actor on Broadway."

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Jonathan Sondej, 2007-2008 Editor-in-Chief, directs the *Esprit* student staff.

Congratulations!

John **McInerney**, professor, has been elected Recording Secretary of the International Shaw Society. He will retire as a full-time faculty member at the end of this term after forty-two years of distinguished service to the department and the university. Joe **Kraus** has been promoted to associate professor. Susan **Mendez**, assistant professor, has been elected to the Faculty Senate. Courtney **Coccia** is a new member of the department's stellar work/study crew. Bill **Loehfelm**, English Minor '91, has won the Amazon Breakthrough Novel Award (\$25,000) for *Fresh Kills*, to be published by Penguin in August. 📖



Notes from the Chair

Not-so-Frequently Asked Questions

In which it is proved, once again, that the web has almost all the answers.

Do I dare disturb the universe? T. S. Eliot, "*The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*," 1917.

According to *Wikipedia*, chaos theory is a mathematical term for the study of iterative non-linear systems in which arbitrarily small variations in initial conditions become magnified over time. For example, chaos theory suggests that even an apparently inconsequential act by a morose but generally harmless individual may have serious, perhaps even disastrous, consequences at some predictable point in the future. At the same time, because *inaction* in this context is virtually impossible, we could also argue that no matter what one chooses either to do or not to do, one cannot possibly *not* disturb the universe. So go ahead. Or don't. Would you like a piece of fruit while you're thinking about it?

And what were thou, and earth, and stars, and sea, / If to the human mind's imaginings / Silence and solitude were vacancy? Percy B. Shelley, "*Mont Blanc*," 1817.

According to a columnist at Family Education.com, a website sponsored by a textbook manufacturer, anyone who wishes to improve his or her imagination should begin by "visualiz[ing] a snowy mountain peak and hold[ing] it in your imagination until the image fizzles out." Perhaps, Mr. Shelley, your mountain fizzled out, and was therefore unable to respond to your query. On the other hand, the home page for the San Diego Natural History Museum indicates that "bears are remarkable creatures, *both* in imagination *and* in reality" (my italics). Since fizzling is apparently not an issue in this latter instance, perhaps you should direct your question to a bear.

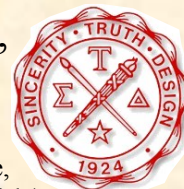
Are you going to let your emotional life be run by *Time Magazine*? Allen Ginsberg, "*America*," 1956.

In a famous 1995 cover story now archived in a number of places on the web, a reporter for *Time* introduced to the popular consciousness the concept of the "Emotional Quotient," or EQ. "If," wrote the reporter, "there is a cornerstone to emotional intelligence on which most other emotional skills depend, it is a sense of self-awareness, of being smart about what we feel. A person whose day starts badly at home may be grouchy all day at work without quite knowing why. A person who feels that the best minds of his generation have been destroyed by madness, starving hysterical naked, dragging themselves through the negro streets at dawn looking for an angry fix, may move to San Francisco, join the counterculture, and publish at odd intervals an unpublishable private literature that goes 1400 miles an hour. These things happen." Actually, the reporter didn't say all that. But he should have.

If you have questions regarding either the mysteries of the universe or the English & Theatre programs at the University of Scranton, please e-mail the author at deritterj1@scranton.edu.

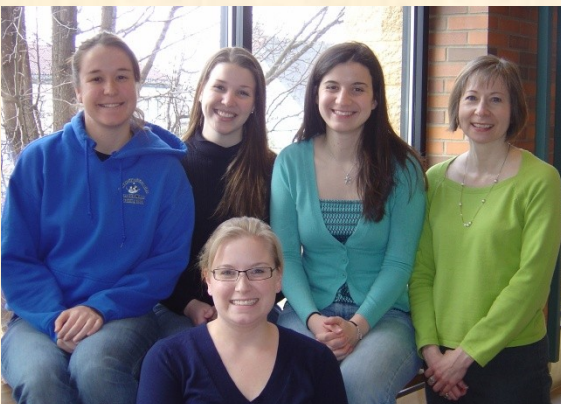
— Jody DeRitter

Sigma Tau Delta Chapter Shines At Nat'l Meet in March, Inducts New Members in April



The department's Mu Omicron chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, the national English honorary, once again garnered high visibility and regard at the annual convention, held this past March in Louisville, KY. Invited critical and creative work by five chapter members, Ashley Teatum, English/Communications '09, Carolyne King, English/T/RS '08, Kristin Manley, English '08, Megan LoBue, English '08, and Pauline Palko, English '10, was presented at well-attended paper sessions. Co-moderator Rebecca Beal, professor, was invited to lead a workshop session on successful chapter development.

Teatum's paper examined "Malory's Depiction of Sir Gareth as a Static Character," King presented a paper on "Making Room in a Little Tub of Guts: The Fertility of Death in Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*," Manley focused on "The Second Sight of Darl Bundren in *As I Lay Dying*," LoBue's paper looked to "Tommie as a Prefiguration in Stephen Crane's *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets*," Pauline Palko read from a collection of poems titled "An Ample Cup."

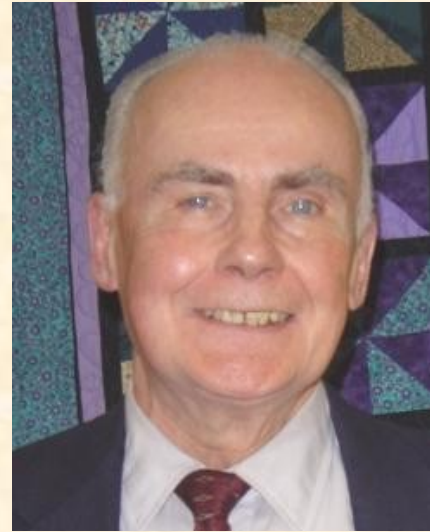


Clockwise from left: Carolyne King, Kristin Manley, Ashley Teatum, Pauline Palko, and Megan LoBue.

On Sunday, April 11, the chapter bolstered its prospects for continuing success and sustained recognition on the national level by welcoming nine new members at the annual Induction Brunch, held this year in Brennan Hall 509. Current chapter co-presidents Caitlyn Lyons and Kristen Manley congratulated the inductees on their achievements as scholars and writers and urged them to maintain Mu Omicron's tradition of critical and creative engagement with literature in all its forms. 📖

Eulogy for Frank Jordan

The Department of English & Theatre mourns the recent loss of its dear friend and colleague, Frank Jordan. A graduate of the university with a PhD from St. Louis University, Frank inspired decades of students with his love of literature and served the department with distinction as an active member and a four-term chair. What follows is a transcript of remarks delivered by his colleague of forty-two years during the funeral service at the Church of St. Gregory in Clarks Green, PA.



I couldn't in good conscience begin a talk about Frank Jordan, my friend of 42 years, without doing this first. (Take off watch, look at it, and put it down on the podium.) Yes, all of us who worked with Frank at the University of Scranton knew how he *cautioned* people who got up to speak, by letting them know they were "on the clock." Father McShane, for example, wondered if Frank would now be timing what God had to say. It strikes me that putting a stopwatch on speakers was of course an expression of Frank's delightfully irreverent sense of humor, but it also reflects his fundamental outlook on life. He was a full blooded humanist. When he looked at his watch, I believe he did so in a spirit of some famous words: "But at my back I always hear Time's winged chariot hurrying near," from "To His Coy Mistress," an Andrew Marvell poem Frank taught many times. He knew that time was a precious commodity, because it measures out our lives and shapes how we fill them. And like a true humanist, Frank's interests and his achievements spread out in many directions — to sidewalk superintending, and to things he could build with his own hands; to flowers he could grow, and poems he could interrogate and appreciate year after year; to plays and films he could analyze, and to bridge problems he could master.

Most of all, Frank was a humanist in all the ways he approached people. In the last few days, many people have remarked that Frank was an old-fashioned gentleman. What that means, I think, is that he treated everyone, students, colleagues, University presidents, with the courtesy, respect, and consideration he believed every person deserved. Beyond that, he loved his family deeply, and they came to rely on him in so many ways. For example, in the Jordan household, long before there was Google, there was Dad, the walking encyclopedia about everything from driving directions to how appliances worked. They also felt safe in the steady shelter his sound judgment and unwavering support provided. His friends benefitted in the same way. He flattered us by being interested in what we were doing, and when we needed help, he was there to give it, without fuss or noise, but also without fail.

And then there was his wit. Which would flash out suddenly, and set us all laughing, at the moment, and even days later when we recalled it. It was, again, the humor of a humanist, springing from the recognition of the ironies of life and the contradictions in human behavior. Frank could be trusted to point out that the Emperor had no clothes, that the administrator was comically wrong, or that the celebrity was making a fool of himself.

And yet, his humor was not wounding, first because it was also turned on himself, regularly, and second because it revealed an acceptance of, even a delight in, the human condition, with all of the joys, the sorrows, and the nonsense that condition includes.

Acceptance of the human condition, no matter what it confronts us with. Surely that has to be part of the definition of grace. And surely grace is the word for the way Frank dealt with the health problems he faced toward the end of his life. For years, he quietly fitted dialysis treatments into his schedule, using the time they took to read the books he wanted to get to. And after he received the cancer diagnosis, no one heard him rail against his fate, or moan about his pain. He simply continued to do the things he loved to do: enjoy family and friends, read, go to see new films, and play bridge, as long as he could.

I think Frank might be startled, therefore, and perhaps dismissive about the way I want to close my remarks, but I really believe he gave us an excellent example of how to live — and how to die. We'll miss you, Frank, but we could not forget you.

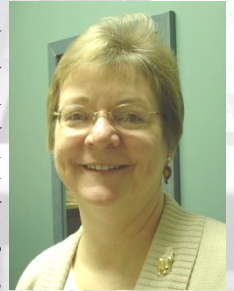
— John McInerney

Coulda, Woulda, Shoulda . . .

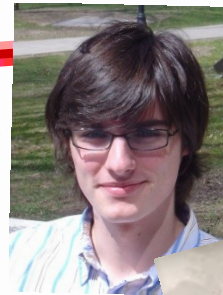
Rebecca Beal, professor—



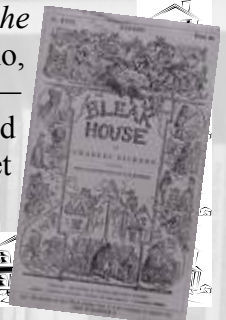
The list of works I've not read is daunting and somewhat depressing, especially as I was trained as a comparatist, and so think I should be reading books in English and in foreign languages. "Of the making of many books there is no end," says Ecclesiastes, and I add, "and of the reading of them." I think of my brother-in-law who keeps lists of books he reads and hears about, and when he goes on a trip takes stacks to burrow through. Okay, true confession time: I've actually bought *Love in the Time of Cholera* and *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. I think about opening them, but so far have not.



Joe Koivisto, English '09—I don't think I can make it out of college or consider myself educated until I've read Dante's *Inferno*—which I haven't. I'm ashamed to say I haven't read *Hamlet* yet either. Okay, I've read the first 200 pages of Joyce's *Ulysses* with confusion and trepidation. Let's hope the Joyce seminar will help me to make it through the rest. How I've made it this far without reading *Huckleberry Finn* amazes me.

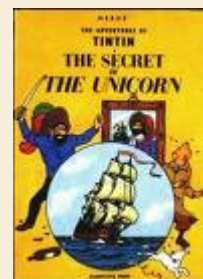
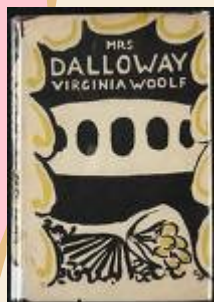


Jody DeRitter, professor—I haven't read a lot of 19th century British novels and some of the ones I did read I didn't read well. When I was studying for the "prose fiction" section of my PhD orals, I had to read four dozen novels in nine weeks and at the end of the process I was absolutely convinced that I had read something called *Vanity Heights of the Durbervilles*, a rollicking—no, wait, an emotionally charged—no, wait, a really glum tale about a plucky heroine who was hilariously amoral—no, wait—well, you get the idea. So there are clearly some things I've read that I haven't really read. But I do regret never having even tried to get through *Bleak House*. I hear it's pretty good.

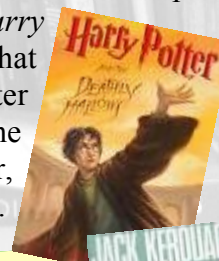


& I May Get To It Some Day!

Megan LoBue, English '08—Mrs. *Dalloway*: I'm embarrassed to admit I've started it a couple of times and never got more than a few pages into it. It's still in a pile of books next to my bed with the bookmark in it, so I haven't given up trying. I think Woolf gets a bad rap sometimes—people know her by her suicide instead of her work. There's little I could say that would do her any justice, but this book is at the top of my To-Read list. *The Adventures of Tintin: Red Rackham's Treasure*: Technically this isn't terribly famous, and it really is more of a comic strip, but I found the first part of this two-part series, *The Secret of the Unicorn*, when I was a kid in some of my grandfather's old stuff. Instead of helping with the garage sale, I sat in the backyard and read the entire book. It has mystery, hidden treasure, and a pirate duel, so *Red Rackham's Treasure* has a lot to live up to. And I still want to know: Do Tintin and Captain Haddock find the treasure? I'm guessing yes, but the suspense is (almost) killing me.



— — — — —
Bonnie Markowski, faculty specialist—Last summer I determined it was time to finally read the tattered, coffee-stained copy of Kerouac's *On The Road* that kept jamming the end table drawer. Unfortunately, J. K. Rowling released *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* last summer, and I needed to know what happened to Harry! So . . . blush, blush . . . I read the entire Harry Potter series in ten weeks instead of the greatest work of the Beat Generation. There it sits, even now, in the drawer, scowling at me each time I reach for a pen. Sorry, Jack. Happy 50th anniversary!



Pru Skinner, New Technical Director, Comes Home


Born in New Jersey, raised in Stroudsburg, and holding a BA from Cedar Crest College in Allentown, Pru Skinner is pleased to be returned to the Keystone state as Technical Director for the Department of English & Theatre. "It's nice for me, my husband, Phil, and our daughter Peyton and son Phillip to be near family again," she explains. "I enjoyed my years on the West Coast and in the Midwest, but I'm happy to be residing in Dunmore and working here at the U."

With an MFA in Technical Direction from CalArts, Skinner enjoys the opportunities and challenges of working in an academic theatre program. "After I took my grad degree, I was lucky enough to go directly to an assistant TD position at Seattle's ACT (A Contemporary Theatre), an outstanding professional company. After two busy years there, I moved on to a three-year stint as TD for Stephens College in Missouri."



Pru (center) directs Jesse Hoppe, Biology '10 and Janelle Caso, Theatre '10 on a set construction project.

Asked which she prefers, the professional or academic theatre environment, she notes the advantages of both. "The professional world is exciting and exacting, but I also enjoy the teaching role and the good humor and high spirits of a college community. I think the academic theatre world may be a better environment for someone trying to have a family life."

As to the challenges of being a technical director, Skinner acknowledges the satisfactions of organizing an efficient and safe shop and developing student skills in building good sets. "In a strictly personal sense, I have to say my greatest pleasure as a builder is when I'm welding. I'm happy with all the tools of my trade, of course. As a college freshman I planned to major in history until my best friend took me over to the theatre department and taught me how to use a drill. That was it for me—and she's still my best friend." 

Esprit

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Primarily a showcase for undergraduate talent, the magazine has published work by Ellen Casey, professor of English and director of the Honors Program, and retired professor of philosophy John McGinley. Fahey and Frank Homer, professor of history and director of Law School Placement, penned essays for the journal as Scranton undergraduates.


"Many *Esprit* contributors, editors-in-chief, and editorial staff members have gone on to take graduate degrees in literary or visual arts programs and to enjoy subsequent careers as educators, writers, photographers, and artists," Sondej notes.

"Others have become editors for book and magazine publishers or journalists or media professionals for regional, national, and international organizations in the public and private sectors."

Still others have pursued non-literary interests in medicine, the law, and the sciences, as was the case with Fahey and his predecessor as editor, Charles Keffer. "Charlie was also a physics major," says Fahey, "and the fastest and most accurate two-finger typist ever seen in the Lackawanna Valley. After teaching here for some years, he went on to become Provost of the College of St. Thomas in Minnesota."

"*Esprit* encourages participation and contributions from any and all students," Sondej says. "It's a co-curricular activity of the Department of English &

Theatre, but it's not about or for English majors or minors in any exclusive or privileged sense. It's about interest and dedication and talent." His greatest pleasure, he explains, has been the chance "to work with a group of very able student writers and artists in an environment that provides encouragement and develops acumen."

Fifty years after its founding, *Esprit* continues to be a significant player in the life of the university. "Thanks to the contributors and the staff," Sondej sums up, "it remains as it began—a spirited publication by and of young talent." 



Esprit covers through the years.

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Music by Stephen Flaherty
Directed by Michael O'Steen

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The poster for the Players production of *Lucky Stiff*, designed by Valarie Lopardo, Sociology '08. Direction by Michael O'Steen, associate professor of Theatre, set, lighting, and costume design by Rich Larsen, associate professor and director of Theatre. Principals include Michael Flynn, Theatre '10, Jason Brubaker, Criminal Justice '09, Mandy Doria, Counseling/Spanish '09, Eileen Patterson, English/Philosophy '08, and Samantha Morales, History/Theatre '11. Assistant director was Heather Lucas, English/Theatre '09.

CLOSE READING



Brendan Curry, English/Philosophy '01, an associate editor at W.W. Norton in Manhattan, is busy acquiring non-fiction; he edited Joe Stiglitz and Linda Bilmes's *The Three Trillion Dollar War*, out in March. **Victoria Beck**, English '07, is a Technical Editor for Netstar-1, a government contractor to military health systems in the

Department of Defense in Washington, D.C. **Eileen Patterson**, English/Philosophy '08, has auditioned for and been accepted into the American Music & Dramatic Academy in Manhattan for intensive study of musical theatre performance. **Dan MacGuill**, Philosophy '07 and past editor of *Esprit*, had a story, "The Knife," in the 2 December 2007 *Sunday Tribune*, a national Irish newspaper, as part of the paper's New Irish Writing series. **Nick Hale**, English '07, does substitute teaching in the Keller Independent School District in Keller, TX. **Len Gougeon**, professor, has been awarded a grant from the University Research Committee that will allow him to spend a week in Washington, D.C. in August where he will continue work at the Library of Congress on his latest project, "New England, Old England, and the Civil War." In July he will make a presentation on "Emersonian Reform & the Rise of Liberal Democracy" at the Annual Gathering of the Thoreau Society in Concord, MA. In February Gougeon participated in a roundtable discussion in Collegiate Hall on "Preparing Students for Active Citizenship" organized by Sondra Myers, the University's senior fellow for international civic & cultural projects. Also participating were **Stephen Whittaker**, professor, and **Joe Kraus**, associate professor. Kraus presented a paper entitled "Cooler than Cool: Towards a Critical Definition through 'We Real Cool'" at the annual MELUS (Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States) conference in Columbus, OH in late March. **Pam Kalinowski**, Theatre '06, is a member of the lighting department at Signature Theatre in Washington, D.C. **Christine Luschas**, English/Philosophy '08, has been awarded a full scholarship to Duquesne University Law School. **Jeff Trainor**, Theatre



(Continued on page 8)



Mimi Schwartz, guest of the University Reading Series and the Weinberg Jewish Studies Program and author of the recently published books *Good Neighbors*, *Bad Times* and *Thoughts from a Queen-sized Bed*, met with students in Joe Kraus's Advanced Nonfiction workshop, WRTG 314. She gave a public reading from her work later that same day in early April.

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TRADITION

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Production & Design Manager:
Lynn Scramuzza

CLOSE READING

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'06, is in his second year of the MFA in Theatre program at Roosevelt University in Chicago. He played Neal Cassady in a recent school production of *Visions of Kerouac*, and has also begun intensive training in clowning. Michael **Friedman**, professor, gave a paper, "Shakespeare & the Catholic Revenger: *V for Vendetta*" at the annual Shakespeare Association of America conference in Dallas, TX in March. He has been invited by the Shakespeare Theatre Company in Washington, D.C., to write an essay for their *Guide to the Season's Plays 2008-09*. The essay is titled "Love & Service in *Twelfth Night*." Art **Posocco**, Philosophy '06, is pursuing an MA in Creative Writing at Wilkes University. A poem by Pauline **Palko**, English '10, was a finalist in the annual poetry competition sponsored by Hollins University in Hollins, VA. In February Susan **Mendez**, assistant professor, presented a paper, "The Fire Between Them: Religion & Gentrification in Ernesto Quinonez's *Chango's Fire*" at the "Nuestra America in the US?"



Latino/a Studies Conference at the University of Kansas in Lawrence, KS. John Meredith **Hill**, professor, had a poem, "Blue Spruce," in the themed collection titled *Trees* published by the Butternut Gallery. In late February he gave a public reading of recent work at the grand opening of the university bookstore in the DeNaples Campus Center. Matt **Silva**, Theatre '07, is completing his first year in the MFA Acting program at Villanova University. Rachel **Chibnik**, Education/English, '07, is pursuing an MA in Theatre Ed. at NYU. Kate **Brennan**, English/Theatre '03, is completing her third year in the MFA Acting program at UVA. In October, Rich **Larsen**, associate professor and director of Theatre, gave a presentation, "Seeing Green," at the Lighting Design International conference in Orlando, FL. In March he made a presentation on "Visual Plagiarism" at the USITT annual convention in Houston, TX. Larsen also did the scenic and lighting design for the recent Players' productions of *Twelfth Night* and *Lucky Stiff*.



Directed by Visiting Artist Rosey **Hay** and assisted by Rudy **Caparazo**, the Shakespeare play featured Samantha **Morales**, History/Theatre '11, as Viola and Jason **Mannion**, Biology '10, as Sebastian. Janelle **Caso**, Theatre '10, was stage manager. Je **Tellier**, professor, accompanied by Samantha Beietti and Alicia Yanac, attended the third annual conference of Honors Program students and directors from Jesuit colleges and universities held at Regis University in Denver, CO. The students made a presentation on recent Honors program activities, including the fundraising efforts for Operation Iraqi Children. Six English majors, Marie **Finnegan**, Andrea **Frankenburger**, Ashley **Gonsky**, Carlyne **King**, Andrew **Prinzivalli**, and Jonathan **Sondej**, are completing their senior Honors projects. Finnegan, Gonsky, and Sondej are doing projects in their other majors, communications, biology, and Latin respectively. Frankenburger is writing on narrative strategies in Woolf's depictions of illness, King on a feminist approach to Austen, and Prinzivalli on early 20th century British Catholic authors. Brianna **Noll**, English/Honors '05, has defended her MFA thesis ("The Anti-Muse Speaks") at Florida State University and has been accepted into PhD programs at the University of Nebraska and the University of Illinois at Chicago. Her poem "Five Ways to Arrive" appears in the most recent issue of the *Sonora Review*, a national journal from the University of Arizona. Sean **Meehan**, English/Theatre minor '97, had a featured role in an episode of NBC's "Law & Order" in February. He recently completed a scene in Tony Scott's remake of *The Taking of Pelham 123*, starring John Travolta, Denzel Washington, and James Gandolfini and due for release in 2009. He will also take part in the annual Summer Shakespeare productions in Central Park. Jessica **Lucas**, Theatre '07, is assistant facilities manager for the Scranton Cultural Center. 