



Works Cited

Department of English & Theatre

Volume 3, Issue 3
Spring 2014

Grads Enjoy Careers, Salute Dept.

Reporting and celebrating the many successes of current students in the Department of English & Theatre as well as our many fine alums has been the primary mission of *Works Cited* since its launch in 2003. With feature articles and updating provided by the “Close Reading” column, *Works Cited* seeks to document dozens of academic and occupational success stories in each issue.

We recently checked in with a handful of former students--bright young people who took various combinations of ENLT, THTR and WRTG classes --to find out how they're faring in the so-called real world. The answer, as you will see, is “Just fine, thank you!”

Brendan Curry, English/Philosophy '01 and former editor of *Esprit*, is a senior editor for W.W. Norton, among the nation's leading book publishers headquartered in Manhattan. One of Brendan's recent books spent weeks on the *NY Times* bestseller list.

“My English and Writing classes and time with *Esprit* taught me how words work,” he says. “Curricular and co-curricular activities deepened my understanding of historical contexts and the long view. Obviously my time in McDade benefitted my career, but I don't think that's why the English major matters,” he says.

“It matters because it enriches the life of the mind, sharpens critical faculties that are universally applicable, and encourages empathy for other people. Hiring managers want alert and adaptive grads they can groom for the tasks at hand, whatever they are, and not pre-trained drones.” Brendan recently spent a month on paternity leave with his baby daughter Claire while his wife Julie McCarroll returned to work.

Living in Denver, Ashley Teatum, English / Communications / Honors '09, and her partner Steve McConnell run a writing / editing / marketing strategy company —Guiding Type—

...the community of young scholars and artists at Scranton is a special one deserving of wider recognition.

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Congratulations!

As AY 13-14 comes to a close, Jody **DeRitter**, professor, concludes his long tenure as department chair and colleague Rebecca **Beal**, professor, takes the helm. Long-time director of our Academic Theatre Program, Rich **Larsen**, professor, also steps aside as colleague Hank **Willenbrink**, assistant professor, takes the reins. As the new AY gets underway, Teresa **Grettano**, assistant professor and director of First-Year Writing, begins a three-year term on the Faculty Senate. Congratulations and thanks to all of these department colleagues for their service. 📖



Notes from the Chair

The Real World Curriculum Map for the True English Major

Course >>	Advanced Writing Electives	Introductory-level Literature	300-level Literature (Theory Intensive)	Senior Seminar	2 or 3 Decades of Genuinely Independent Study.
V Learning Objective V					
Knowing how to correct other people's grammar.	X				
Knowing when to correct other people's grammar.				X	
Knowing how to read well.	X	X	X	X	X
Knowing when to correct other people's misreadings.				X	X
Knowing how to write well.	X	X	X	X	X
Knowing what to charge for the service of improving someone else's writing.				X	X
Figuring out a thing or two about the big picture—you know, art, life, culture, that kind of stuff.	X		X	X	X
Knowing what's worth reading.	X	X	X	X	X
And why.					X

— Jody DeRitter

Popular URS Guest Returns

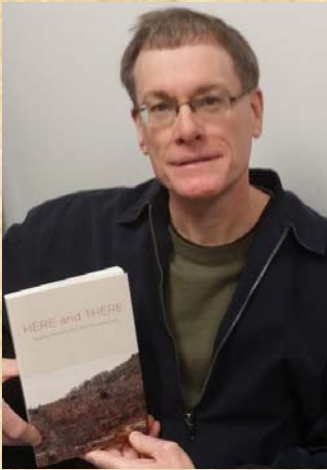
On Wednesday, April 9, essayist and fiction writer Seth Sawyers made a return visit to campus as guest of the University Reading Series. He gave a spirited and well-received public reading of new work in the evening and met with students in Joe Kraus's creative nonfiction workshop. Sawyers has an MFA from Old Dominion University and was a Tennessee Williams Scholar in Fiction at the 2013 Sewanee Writers' Conference. He teaches at the University of Maryland Baltimore County and is an editor at *Baltimore Review*. 📖



Works Cited is going on hiatus. Thanks to all students, alums, faculty and staff for making possible the twenty-three issues of our department newsletter. Special thanks to Lynn Scramuzza.

—The Editor

Bill Conlogue's New Book on Northeast Pennsylvania



In early spring Bill Conlogue, BA '86, MA '88, sat over coffee with *Works Cited* to discuss his new book, *Here and There: Reading Pennsylvania's Working Landscapes* (Penn State UP 2013), and to reflect on his time as a student in the (as it was then) Dept. of English.

WC: It's been a while since you were a student here, Bill.

BC: It was the Dept. of English, although the Theatre program and the University Players were an active component. Over the years I've kept in touch with people in English and History and others such as Michael Knies in Weinberg and Darlene Miller-Lanning. Both were very helpful in my research efforts for this book.

WC: It's a book about the working history of the northeast Pennsylvania region. The mining story plays an important part, of course, and you explore in rich detail, sometimes troubling detail, the impact of local industries on the environment, so there's a serious eco-criticism dimension to the study, and also an engaging account of your own family's working history.

BC: I grew up on a dairy farm near Forest City on land that's been in our family for many generations. I wanted to explore that personal and familial story as part of a larger survey of the region's working landscape.

WC: The book is enlivened by many literary references to mining, farming, and small town life in America, not so surprising given your career as a professor of English at Marywood University, and some material you render in an agreeably droll fashion. That scene for instance, where, as a Scranton student on the family farm, you assist a cow in the birth of her calf while you work your way through a Henry James novel.

BC: I feel fortunate I've been able to stay pretty much on my native ground. I defended my Ph.D. dissertation down in College Park, Maryland, in the spring of 1995. A month later I read that Marywood University was looking for a new assistant professor of English.

WC: You've been there ever since and served as chair of the English department from 2001-2007.

BC: And a stint as interim chair.

WC: Your first book, *Working the Garden: American Writers and the Industrialization of Agriculture* (University of North Carolina Press, 2001) was an outgrowth of your dissertation at UMaryland. This new book, in the opinion of some readers, is an especially fine example of narrative scholarship in which the author acknowledges a personal connection to the subject matter and discards the traditional academic claim to "objectivity."

BC: Yeah, well, there's always a personal story in so-called objective academic writing—or so many post-modern scholars have come to admit. It's a question of getting the mix right, isn't it? The traditional research and scholarship protocol blended with a measure of personal connection.

WC: When done well, as in *Here and There*, it can be quite effective. We're a bit biased perhaps, as we like to claim you as one of our own. Any memories of your time with us?

BC: Ages ago, you mean? What I remember most vividly is how we were taught by all of you to read closely, to really slow down and look at the words on the page, how they said things and how, in many instances, they also suggested things unsaid. The practice of "close reading" was the biggest take-away from my time as a student in the department. It's the essential skill and, as we all know, it's a practice that one applies to the non-literary life as a citizen, employee, consumer, voter, etc.

WC: Critical reading, critical thinking . . .

BC: And then we learned, began to learn, the carry-over, the putting of pen to paper.

WC: More coffee? 📖

The Shows Go On



Cheers to the multi-talented cast of The University Players' production of the musical comedy *She Loves Me*.



Visiting guest director Felix Ivanov of Syracuse University rehearses cast members of the recently concluded production of *Junglebook*.

Darwin Day: Evolution of Species?



Janice Voltzow, Marc Seid, Stephen Whittaker, Barry Kuhle, Erica Lasek-Nesselquist, and Michael Carey.

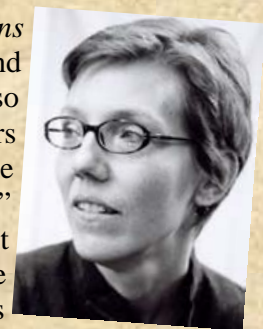
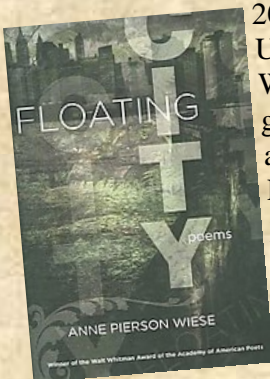
Walt Whitman Prize Poet on Campus

Anne Pierson Wiese, 2006 winner of the Walt Whitman Award from the Academy of American Poets for her collection *Floating City* (LSU Press 2007), was a guest of the University Reading Series on Wednesday, April 30th. A graduate of Amherst College and New York University, Pierson gave a well-attended public reading in the Heritage Room of Weinberg Memorial Library. Pierson also met with students and faculty of the Writing program over dinner and at an informal gathering following the reading.

“It’s a pleasure to come upon Pierson’s work in

Southwest Review, *Hopkins Review*, *Hudson Review*, and other journals, and I’m glad so many of our English majors and Writing minors got the chance to hear Anne read,” said Jay Hill. “We didn’t offer a poetry writing course this semester, but we always have a number of student poets on campus who enjoy rubbing shoulders with visiting poets.”

Hill pointed out that the Whitman prize is the nation’s most prestigious award for a first book of poems. “We were able to hear Pierson read some poems certain to be in her next collection,” he added. “It’s always exciting to have access to new work by our guest artists.” 📖



Grads Enjoy (Continued from page 1)

from their laptops. (They can be reached at info@guidingtype.com.) Ashley also holds down a position as a public relations staffer with ZoZo Group, a Denver-based agency providing public information services for the Colorado Dept. of Transportation and a number of private construction companies.

According to Ashley, the writing and editing skills acquired in ENLT and WRTG classes, while serving as an editor of *The Aquinas*, *Esprit*, and *The Windhover* and working with the University Players “come into play every day in all kinds of ways. With ZoZo,” she reports, “I’m busy interviewing people, writing quickly and accurately, making deadlines, and analyzing complex construction schedules and interpreting them for a lay audience.” She says she misses the folks in McDade “immensely,” but loves her new life in Denver.

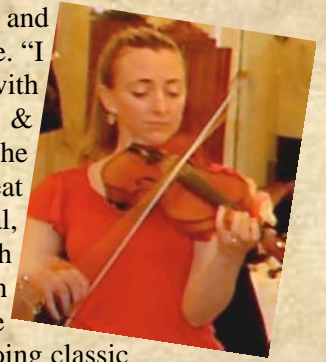
Evan O’Donnell, English ’03, echoes Ashley’s sentiments. “I have nothing but great memories of Scranton and time spent in English classes was a big part of that,” he says. Evan attests to the value of his major in sustaining his success as a copywriter for Launch International, a sales and marketing agency in Doylestown, PA.

“The critical thinking and analysis skills I developed in my literature and creative writing classes have directly benefitted my career. I draw upon them every day as I strive to create content that is both compelling from a messaging standpoint and precise in its language.” He and his wife Briana are expecting their first child in August.

Like Evan, Liz Kennedy, English ’93, has put writing skills honed in ENLT and WRTG classes to good use in New York City. Says Liz, “I have to thank Jay Hill for New York. He mentioned in class that everyone should live at least one year in the city. I’ve been here since 1997. I live in Queens and work these days as a copywriter. For “Madmen” fanatics I’ll mention that I recently had a two-city road trip where a client conducted research with a one-way mirror. It reminded me of the Peggy Olsen “Basket of Kisses” episode.”



Much of Liz’s communique was devoted to her musical career, a distinguished avocation that Scranton classmates and professors recall with pleasure. “I do traditional Irish fiddle with the Washington Square Harp & Shamrock Orchestra,” she explains. “We’ve played great venues: St. Patrick’s Cathedral, Symphony Space, the Irish Arts Center, even the Irish consulate in Manhattan.” She also mentions a current gig doing classic country and ‘70s folk music with an accomplished guitarist who lives nearby. “Oh, and I’m married to Jonathan Bradley,” she adds, “who works for Carnegie Hall, so we see shows there. Recently I saw Iggy Pop and Philip Glass on the same stage for the Tibet House benefit concert.”



Writes Judith Paltin (formerly Hicks), English ’05, “I’ll join the Department of English at the University of British Columbia as an assistant professor in Modernism this summer.” Judith took her M.A. and Ph.D from UC-Santa Barbara. Her dissertation focused on crowds and other forms of collective affiliation as portrayed in works of literary modernism. “I never would have considered graduate education but for the department’s support and patient mentoring,” she says.

“I took every class I could from Drs. Whittaker, DeRitter, and Friedman, and from Jay Hill, and was privileged to carry out undergraduate research for Dr. Gougeon which resulted in my first national conference presentation. While at Scranton I published my first academic piece which I co-wrote with Dr. Glover.”

Paltin, a *summa cum laude* graduate, insists the community of young scholars and artists at Scranton is a special one deserving of wider recognition. “Opportunities such as serving on *Esprit* and working on innovative stage productions with the University Players knitted us into a richly thinking collaborative, and I remain friends with many of my talented undergraduate cohort.” In the coming months Judith will present papers at the International Joyce Symposium and the British Association of Modernist Studies, and at the MLA convention held in Vancouver in January where, she adds, “I hope to see some of my Scranton professors and a former classmate or two.” 📖



'06 English/Philosophy Grad Becomes Professor at UOregon




S. Pearl Brilmyer, English/Philosophy '06, has accepted a position as assistant professor of English at the University of Oregon. In 2014-2015 Pearl will enjoy a postdoc as a Fellow at the Institute for Cultural Inquiry in Berlin. In Fall 2015 she will relocate to Eugene, OR, to teach courses on nineteenth century literature, science, and philosophy as well as contemporary feminist and queer theory. She holds an M.A. and Ph.D. in comparative literature from the University of Texas, Austin.



UNIVERSITY
OF OREGON

Recalls Rebecca Beal, professor and faculty moderator for our Sigma Tau Delta chapter, "Pearl was a self-motivated student who took a leadership position in our chapter. She worked diligently on behalf of the literary magazine featuring work by students at what was then known as the Campus School. She presented at the Sigma TD national convention and ultimately gained the Senior Scholarship for graduate study awarded by the organization, a signal honor to be sure."

Brilmyer's article, "The Natural History of My Inward Self: Sensing Character in George Eliot's *Impressions of Theophrastus Such*," appeared in the January issue of *PMLA*.

Pearl writes: "My work on George Eliot and scientific epistemology—the subject of my recent *PMLA* article—began at Scranton where I was encouraged to pursue my interests in the intersections of literature and philosophy. In my English classes I learned how to read expansively, critically, and with passion, skills that still drive my work today." 

CLOSE READING



Corinne **Nulton**, Theatre '14, will have her play *14 Symptoms* produced as part of the Game Play Festival at The Brick Theatre (NYC) this summer. Hank **Willenbrink**, assistant professor of Theatre, published an essay, "The Act of Being Saved" Hell House and the Salvific Performative" in *Theatre Journal* in March. *Contemporary Theatre Review* published Hank's essay

"The Geography of Disappearing: Meatyard, Butchertown, and Perspective in Naomi Iizuka's *At The Vanishing Point* in April. Kevin **Rimel**, English '12, reports that he's begun an MA in Writing at St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia. He will focus on professional writing while sustaining his apprenticeship to creative nonfiction begun in courses with Joe **Kraus**. Siobhan **Casey**, English '09, and a graduate of the MFA in Poetry program at Chatham University, has a poem, "One Hundred," in January issue of *Weave*. Sean **Meehan**, English/Theatre minor '97, had a featured role



in a recent HBO adaptation of Larry Kramer's *The Normal Heart*. Samantha **Dzirko**, Theatre '12, continues her Production Manager internship at the Actors Theatre of Louisville while plotting her next move. Eileen **Patterson**, English/Philosophy '08,



starred in a recent national tour production of the musical adaptation of—wait for it—*50 Shades of Grey*. In late February Len **Gougeon**, professor, made a presentation on "Hester Prynne: Adulterer, Artist, and Angel" at the Tunkhannock Public Library in a program sponsored by



the Pennsylvania Humanities Council. In mid-March Len made a presentation on "Democratic Culture and the Civil War" at the Emerson Center in Vero Beach, FL. In early April he presented a paper on "Cultural Warfare: Great Britain and the American Civil War" at the Northeast Modern Language Assn. conference in Harrisburg, and served as a panelist on a WVIA-produced lead-in to the national premiere of Ken Burns' documentary on Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. In December Cillian **Byrne**, Theatre '16, Mike **Kranick**, English '14, Xiomara **Rolon**, Theatre '14, Megan **Lasky**, Communications '16, and Julia **Ekwall**, Theatre '14, starred in the Players' production of *Becky Shaw*. In late February and early March the Players performed the well-known musical comedy *She Loves Me*, directed and choreographed by guest artist Barbara **Hartwig**. Esther **Zabinski** was musical director. The cast included Peter **Alexander**, Nicole **Cobles**, Keri **Irace**, Markis **Blackwell**, James **Pennington**, Holly **Ference**, Brianna **Kelley**, Xiomara **Rolon**, David **Hunisch**, Megan **Lasky**, Mike **Kranick**, Susan **Pickup**, Tre **Larsen**, and Stephanie **Haefle**. James **Skygelski** was stage manager. After a stint as assistant stage manager at Hudson Stages Theatre, Stephanie **O'Brien**, Theatre '10, is touring with an ARTSPower children's theatre company. Michael **Flynn**, Theatre '10, has received a Lackawanna County Arts Council grant to assist with production of the third annual Scranton Shakespeare Festival. Natalee **D'Amore**, English '12, is living in Fuzhou, China, and



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working as an English teacher to the talented students of the No. 8 Lyndon Sino Program. Steve **Clark**, English '06, was the 2013 "Best Storyteller in Philadelphia" for performing live, true, five-minute stories without notes or props. He also does slam poetry, was a 2013 finalist in the oldest Philadelphia poetry slam competition, and coaches an inner city high school slam poetry team. Jody **DeRitter**, professor, has an article on "Character" in the Drama section of a new on-line *Encyclopedia of English Literature, 1660-1789*, edited by Gary Day and Jack Lynch, and published by Wiley & Sons.



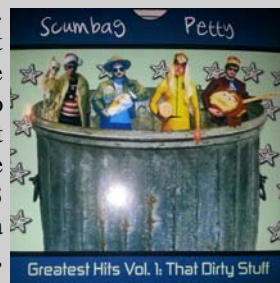
Rosa **Todaro**, English '12, recently checked-in with the department to say she will begin a graduate program in library science at Simmons College in Boston. Tom **Baldwin**, English '13, is happily employed as a Website Specialist for hibu plc, formerly Yell Group, a multinational directories and internet services company headquartered in Reading, England. This spring Joe **Kraus**, associate professor and director of the university's Honors Program, conducted a Schemel Forum on Jewish-American Short Stories. Featured authors included Delmore Schwartz, Bernard Malamud, Philip Roth, Cynthia Ozick,



Allegra Goodman, Nathan Englander and others. In early March Kraus gave a talk on "Assuming the Tradition: Jonathan Lethem, *Dissident Gardens*, and the Jewish-American Writer Circa 2013" at the 28th annual MELUS Conference in Oklahoma City. Matthew **Porto**, English '12, has self-published a chapbook of poems, *Flora and Fauna*, and will be happy to send interested parties a copy. Matt works as a copywriter for Spark 451, a marketing communications company, and says "It pays the bills and keeps me social." In late March Michael **Friedman**, professor, was an invited participant in a StorySlam in Clarks' Summit. He didn't win, but he intends to win next time. In mid-April he presented a paper, "Let me twine/Mine arms about that body': Homoeroticism and Homosexuality in Three Stage Productions of *Coriolanus*" at the annual Shakespeare Assn. of America Conference held this year in St. Louis. Dave **Tomaine**, English/Philosophy '13, and his bar-rock band Scumbag Petty put out a CD *Greatest Hits Vol. 1: That Dirty Stuff* in December. His other band, Cave People, have finished a new album they hope to release soon. Dave recently took a position to script comics for a new comics start-up. He has poems under review at *Barnstorm*, an on-line literary publication from the MFA program in creative writing at the University of New Hampshire. Andrew **Milewski**, a '13 Psychology major with a minor in English, will be working in 2014-15 as a secondary school teacher at the Minerva Bilingual School in Gracias Lempira, Honduras.



In late August Sarah **Evans**, English/Communications Minor '12,



will enter the PhD program in Communication, Rhetoric & Digital Media at North Carolina State University where she was awarded a 20K research stipend to assist a professor in research on gaming theory. John Meredith **Hill**, professor, has a poem, "April," originally published in *Elysian Fields Quarterly*, reprinted in *Heart of the Order*, a baseball-themed anthology published by Persea Books in New York. His poem "Hopeless" appears in the Spring issue of *The Hopkins Review*. Rich **Larsen**, professor, has been invited to serve as an associate editor of *Theatre Design & Technology*. Stephen **Whittaker**, professor, had a review essay "As in a Darkened Mirror: The Christening of Joyce's Craft" on Colin Owens' *Before Daybreak: "After the Race" and the Origins of Joyce's Art* (University Press of Florida 2013) in the Fall 2013 issue of *James Joyce Literary Supplement*. 