

## Regents' Professor Elly van Gelderen: BRIDGING THE ART AND SCIENCE OF LANGUAGE

Perhaps the last place you would expect to encounter a Regents' Professor is the department work room, scanning her own teaching materials for PDFs. After gathering her papers to leave, Elly van Gelderen, a syntactician specializing in grammaticalization, suddenly sets them back down and volunteers to help the next teacher in line, whom she has noticed is staring,



Regents' Professor of English, Elly van Gelderen

bemused, at the daunting assemblage of buttons on the new machine. Van Gelderen's ethos reaches beyond private concerns to many realms. She is not only an endearing colleague, but a prodigious and focused researcher, a groundbreaking scholar, an energetic and engaged teacher, and a remarkable fine artist.

Van Gelderen was born and raised in the Netherlands, where she received her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in English at Utrecht University, before taking her PhD in linguistics at McGill University in Montreal. She taught at several universities in Canada and the Netherlands before coming to ASU in 1995 as an Assistant Professor, where she quickly advanced to Associate Professor (in 1998) and then Professor (in 2002), culminating in her appointment as a Regents' Professor in 2008, a state-wide honor and the

highest faculty award at ASU. She is also now an American citizen.

In a January 2009 PBS Professor Profile, Mariana Bahtchevanova, a senior lecturer in the School of International Letters & Cultures and a former PhD student of van Gelderen, assessed that van Gelderen's "work as a scholar is groundbreaking because it bridges the divide between... two different theoretical frameworks... in two major areas of linguistics... historical linguistics, especially the history of the English language... and theoretical syntax." Van Gelderen says she loves looking at recurring changes in languages, "from Yaqui, a language spoken in Arizona, to Gothic, an old language in Europe." Such changes "matter," she contends, because they "can teach us something about how the child acquires a language," and therefore something about how the mind works. She has also analyzed Chinese, Yiddish, Urdu, additional Native American languages, and various Uralic, Afro-Asiatic, Germanic, and Romance languages.

Van Gelderen has lectured on four continents and published six scholarly books, sixty-five articles and chapters, and fifty reviews and encyclopedia articles. She co-edits two prestigious book series, *Linguistics Today* and *Studies in Language Companion Series*, sits on the editorial board for several journals, and is an officer or advisor for several linguistics organizations.

While the scientific breadth of van Gelderen's linguistic compass may dazzle the uninitiated mind, both students and colleagues bask in her genial personality, and her ability to translate complex ideas and specialized terms with conversational ease. Complementing her stunningly high student teaching evaluations, van Gelderen has received the Graduate Scholars of English Association (GSEA) Mentorship Award in

Linguistics and TESL six times and been nominated for both the Last Lecture Series and ASU Professor of the Year. She has initiated dozens of student internships and chaired more than a hundred PhD, MA/MTESOL, and honors thesis committees. Van Gelderen also serves regularly on both department and university committees, ranging from student grievance to Fulbright selection.

Beyond academia, van Gelderen is an accomplished visual artist, as demonstrated by the array of landscapes, portraits, and animal faces (in pastel, watercolor, acrylic, or oil) featured on her website, [www.public.asu.edu/~gelder/en/elly.htm](http://www.public.asu.edu/~gelder/en/elly.htm). How does a syntactician working in the science of grammaticalization manage to double as a fine artist? Department of English Chair Neal Lester attributes van Gelderen's scholarly achieve-



Elly van Gelderen. 2008. Untitled. Oil on canvas.

ments to a combination of "imagination and careful data analysis." Both her art and her scholarship attest to a lifetime of harmonizing passionate imagination with disciplined practice.

—CORNELIA WELLS  
(the next teacher in line at the copy machine)

## CHAIR'S CORNER

Fall semester has always been for me a time of beginnings—a clean slate, a chance for enacting resolutions, a leap into the new year. Yes, fall has always felt more like New Year to me than January 1 because it falls smack dab in the middle of winter break. And so in this message from my corner, I'll highlight some of what was new this semester, for despite our economic challenges and sacrifices, our Department has pulled together and is moving ahead with vigor to make innovative creative, scholarly, and pedagogical contributions to Arizona State University and far beyond.



Maureen Daly Goggin,  
Interim Chair

Fall welcomed three new faculty: Shirley Rose, Professor in rhetoric and composition and Director of Writing Programs; Caitlin Horrocks, Visiting Writer in creative writing; and Sally Ball, Assistant Professor in creative writing (see pages 5-6 for profiles). We also saw the launch of Project Yao, a free, publicly accessible, permanent database of pre-1920 American literature translations into Chinese. It is a cooperative, bi-national, public scholarship project from ASU, Iowa State University, and Sichuan University. For a more detailed explanation of the Project, visit [yao.eserver.org/faq.php](http://yao.eserver.org/faq.php).

This fall a number of our faculty have gone public: Alberto Ríos was spotlighted on *Writer's Almanac* with Garrison Keillor; Ayanna Thompson was a featured speaker at The Public Theater's new production of *Othello* in New York; Alice Robison appeared on Ontario's PBS show *The Agenda* to discuss digital literacies; and Neal Lester was a guest on the North Carolina Public Radio show *The State of Things*. A different kind of going public is the new book of critical and creative non-fiction essays that was published this year on Simon Ortiz's work titled *Simon J. Ortiz: A Poetic Legacy of Indigenous Continuance* (University of New Mexico Press, 2009).

Also during the fall, our faculty continued to garner awards and recognitions. Jay Boyer's play *A Case Is Never Closed* was named Producer's Choice at the Appalachian New Play Festival. Claudia Sadowski-Smith won the 2009 IHR Transdisciplinary Book Award for her *Border Fictions: Globalization, Empire, and Writing at the Boundaries of the United States* (University of Virginia Press, 2008), and David Hawkes's *The Faust Myth: Religion and the Rise of Representation* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007) won honorable mention for the same award.

Of course there's not space to mention everyone; we are a large, vibrant, and diverse group whose contributions are felt near and far. From my corner, it seems that everyday I'm greeted with good news about the accomplishments of our faculty, students, and staff who make a difference.

Let me end with one more example of our new year; we are thrilled by the authorization this semester to conduct ten—yes, ten—2010-2011 professorial searches for every scholarly and creative area in the department. The halls are buzzing with this excitement. Happy New Year. I wish for all that your New Year is the best ever.

—MAUREEN DALY GOGGIN

## OUTREACH

The Department of English's biennial Chaucer Celebration will take place again at the beginning of April. Since we do not know Chaucer's actual birth date, we are commemorating the earliest archival record in 1357 that mentions Geoffrey Chaucer by name: a record of payment to him as page for Elizabeth de Burgh, Countess of Ulster, for new clothes he was to wear during that year's Easter festivities.

Events for the Chaucer Celebration on the Tempe campus are set for Thursday, April 1 and Friday, April 2, 2010, and will include spectacle, music, food, and intellectual nourishment—all of it to celebrate the late medieval period in England and the most important Middle English writer of that era (the "father of English poetry"): Geoffrey Chaucer.

The revelry will begin on the afternoon of April 1 with a production of the well-known drama, the *Wakefield Second Shepherd's Pageant*. This nativity play by the so-called Wakefield Master was composed in the mid- to late-fifteenth century and is one of the most famous plays to survive from the Middle Ages. In its dramatic action of sheep stealing, a feigned birth, mercy shown by the shepherds to the sheep thief, and their witnessing of the nativity of Jesus, the play interweaves a deeply-valued individualism with the theology of the Incarnation. The production will take place outdoors by the Memorial Union with a cast of graduate students and faculty in English. The events of this day will also include a feast of medieval delicacies and the first part of a medieval film festival.

► CHAUCER CELEBRATION  
INFORMATION:  
[english.clas.asu.edu/chaucer](http://english.clas.asu.edu/chaucer)  
[Richard.Newhauser@asu.edu](mailto:Richard.Newhauser@asu.edu)  
480.965.8139

On Friday, April 2, the Chaucer celebration will continue with a roundtable discussion of "Chaucer and Religion," featuring Professor Roger Dahood (University of Arizona) and faculty from ASU's Department of English. The day will conclude with the second part of the film festival.

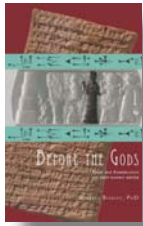
All events are free and open to the public.

—RICHARD NEWHAUSER



Manuscript page  
of The Second  
Shepherd's Play,  
Huntington  
Library MS  
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# NEW PUBLICATIONS



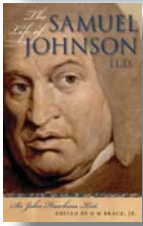
**Roberta Binkley**  
*Before the Gods: There Was Enheduanna, the First-Known Writer.* Noble Knight, 2009.



**Patricia Boyd and Peter N. Goggin**, eds.  
*The Future of Graduate Education in Computers and Writing.* Special Issue of *Computers and Composition* 26:1 (2009).



**Jay Boyer**  
*Empty Stages.* One Act Play Depot, 2009.



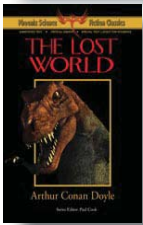
**O M Brack, Jr.**, ed.  
*The Life of Samuel Johnson LL.D.* by Sir John Hawkins, Knt. Univ. of Georgia Press, 2009.



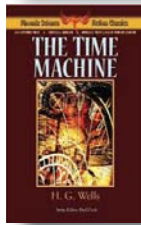
**Paul Cook**  
*The Alejandra Variations.* Reissue. Phoenix Pick, 2009.



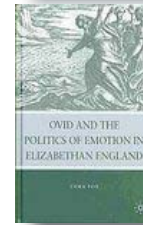
**Paul Cook**, ed. and contr.  
*Frankenstein* by Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley. Phoenix Pick, 2009.



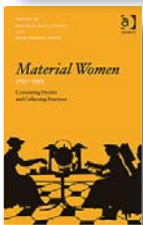
**Paul Cook**, ed. and contr.  
*The Lost World* by Arthur Conan Doyle. Phoenix Pick, 2009.



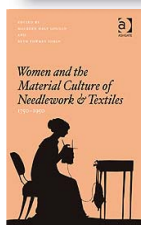
**Paul Cook**, ed. and contr.  
*The Time Machine* by H. G. Wells. Phoenix Pick, 2009.



**Cora Fox**  
*Ovid and the Politics of Emotion in Elizabethan England.* Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.



**Maureen Daly Goggin and Beth Fowkes Tobin** eds.  
*Material Women, 1750-1950: Consuming Desires and Collecting Practices.* London: Ashgate, 2009.



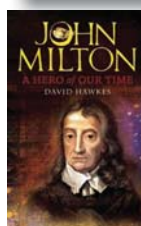
**Maureen Daly Goggin and Beth Fowkes Tobin** eds.  
*Women and the Material Culture of Needlework and Textiles, 1750-1950.* London: Ashgate, 2009.



**Maureen Daly Goggin and Beth Fowkes Tobin** eds.  
*Women and Things, 1750-1950: Gendered Material Strategies.* London: Ashgate, 2009.



**Peter N. Goggin**, ed.  
*Rhetorics, Literacies, and Narratives of Sustainability.* Routledge, 2009.



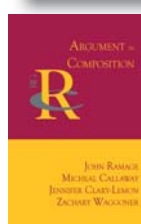
**David Hawkes**  
*John Milton: A Hero of Our Time.* Counterpoint, 2009.



**Cynthia Hogue and Rebecca Ross** eds.  
*When the Water Came: Evacuees of Hurricane Katrina.* Univ. of New Orleans Press, 2010.



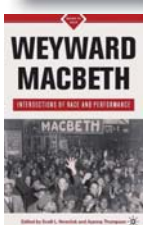
**Paul Kei Matsuda, Bruce Horner, and Min-Zhan Lu**, eds.  
*Cross-Language Relations in Composition.* Southern Illinois Univ. Press, 2010.



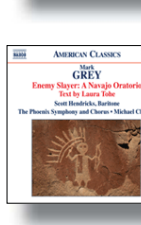
**John Ramage, Micheal Callaway, Jennifer Clary-Lemon, and Zach Waggoner**  
*Argument in Composition.* Parlor, 2009.



**Jewell Parker Rhodes**.  
*Yellow Moon.* Paperback. Washington Square, 2009.



**Ayanna Thompson and Scott L. Newstok**, eds.  
*Weyward Macbeth: Intersections of Race and Performance.* Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.



RECORDING  
**Laura Tohe**, text.  
Music by Mark Grey.  
*Enemy Slayer: A Navajo Oratorio.* S. Hendricks, Phoenix Symphony, M. Christie. Naxos, 2009.



**Elly van Gelderen**, ed.  
*Cyclical Change.* John Benjamins, 2009.

# WORD LOVERS' CORNER

## BRIDGING THE GAP—FROM LITERAL TO SYMBOLIC

Bridges made by nature range from simple, as a log that has fallen over a stream, to dramatic, as the natural sandstone bridges that bring tourists to our Arizona deserts. It is ironic that while in Arizona, these same tourists can see the very “unnatural” *London Bridge*, which between 1831 and 1962 allowed millions of Brits to cross the Thames. But after World War II, when it became obvious that the old stone structure could no longer handle such heavy traffic, the City of London offered to sell the bridge, and Oilman Robert McCulloch, founder of the Arizona city of Lake Havasu near our California border, purchased it for \$2,460,000. He immediately had the bridge declared an antique so as to avoid paying high taxes on his purchase. Still, it cost him seven million dollars to have the bridge dismantled (each piece was numbered for the rebuilding), shipped to Long Beach, California, and then trucked to Arizona where it was reassembled over a channel of Lake Havasu. As an Arizona tourist attraction, it

is second only to the Grand Canyon.

The modern English word *bridge* can be traced back through Middle English *brigge* to Old English *brycg* and to Old High German *brucka* and Old Slavic *brǫvŭno*, which means “beam.” People whose last name includes the word *bridg* probably had ancestors living near or working on a bridge. In the U.S., we also have such place names as *Bridgewater State College* and *Bridgeport*,

*If you destroy a bridge,  
be sure you can swim.*

—African proverb

Connecticut. Another indication of the importance of the word *bridge* is the range of meanings attached to a fairly simple concept. Bridges can be as small as the upper, bony part of your nose or the piece of your eye glasses that sits on it. And thanks to modern dentistry, many of us carry even smaller bridges in our mouths where an artificial tooth has been fastened to the adjoining natural teeth. If you play pool, you might use one hand to form a bridge so as to steady the cue; while if you play the violin, you will appreciate how the bridge on the instrument keeps the strings in the air so they can vibrate. On a ship, the bridge is the raised platform from which the ship is navigated.

Bridges, while sometimes inspiring and beautiful, are nearly always necessary and practical, which is probably why we frequently see them pictured in photographs and paintings and cited in such movie and book titles as James Michener’s *The Bridges at Toko-Ri*, Pierre Boulle’s *The Bridge over the River Kwai*, and more recently in Robert James Waller’s *The Bridges of Madison County*. *The Brooklyn Bridge* was a real bridge long before New Yorkers tried to sell it to naïve visitors, while *The Bridge to Nowhere* was a successful 1986 movie before it became a political slogan against government spending in Alaska.

Young children get one of their first lessons in both the dangers and the rewards of crossing bridges when they play the nursery game of “London Bridge Is Falling Down” or when they hear the folktale about the “Three Billy Goats Gruff,” who have to outwit the fearsome troll living under the bridge in order to cross it. For older children, the book that communicates the most is Katherine Paterson’s 1977 *Bridge to Terabithia*. When Paterson accepted the Newbery Medal, she explained that only gradually did she come to understand that parents cannot construct a bridge for a child, instead, “You become one—you lay yourself across the chasm.” She went on to explain:

It is there in the Simon and Garfunkel song—“Like a bridge over troubled waters / I will lay me down.” The waters to be crossed are not always troubled. The land on the other side of the river may be flowing with joy, not to mention milk and honey. But still the bridge that the child trusts or delights in—and in my case, the book that will take children from where they are to where they might be—needs to be made not from synthetic or inanimate objects but from the stuff of life. And a writer has no life to give but her own.

—ALLEEN AND DON NILSEN



Photos/courtesy Wikimedia Commons

Images top to bottom: 1.) London Bridge, stereopticon card photo from early 1890s. 2.) London Bridge, 1971, being reassembled in the Arizona desert outside Lake Havasu City. 3.) Entrance to London Bridge at Lake Havasu City, Arizona, 2005.

# NEW FACULTY

## CAITLIN HORROCKS :: Creative Writing [Fiction]

Caitlin Horrocks is a poster child. If you pass Horrocks, Visiting Writer for the Department of English, in the hallways of the Language and Literature building and wonder: Don't I know this person?—you probably do. And she seems to be leading a charmed life.

Horrocks earned her MFA in fiction at ASU in May 2007 and launched into an academic career that reads like an MFA student's fantasy novel. Right after graduating, Horrocks was awarded an International Summer Teaching Fellowship by the Virginia C. Piper Center for Creative Writing. Then, while in China teaching creative writing courses to undergraduates at Sichuan University, Horrocks got the phone call letting her know she'd been accepted for the one teaching position for which she'd applied, literally days before leaving the country.

Her appointment as a Visiting Assistant Professor for the Department of Writing at Grand Valley State University in Allendale, Michigan, took Horrocks back to within a two-hour drive of where she had grown up. It also presented her with the opportunity to apply for a tenure-track Assistant Professor position with the GVSU Department the following year which—surprise!—Horrocks competed for successfully, as well. As of 2008, Horrocks has been teaching intermediate and advanced fiction and nonfiction writing courses, independent studies courses in magical realism and Gothic fiction, and Grand Valley State's



capstone courses in genre studies.

Horrocks was invited back to ASU's Creative Writing Program this semester as a Visiting Writer on the strength of these accomplishments as well as an impressive list of publications and awards: Horrocks's collection of short stories, *This Is Not Your City*, is coming out of Sarabande Books in spring 2011; the story, "This Is Not Your City," was anthologized in the *PEN/O. Henry Prize Stories 2009*; in addition to the O. Henry Prize, Horrocks won the 2008 Spokane Prize for Short Fiction, inclusion in the 100 Distinguished Stories of 2007, repeated Pushcart Prize nominations, and several grants and scholarships. Besides China, Horrocks has taught and/or participated in faculty exchanges in Australia, Prague, and Finland.

Horrocks's students this semester include undergraduates completing their fiction capstone course and graduate students studying forms of fiction. The capstone experience Horrocks designed is individually tailored to push students into areas of writing they are not yet comfortable with and to help them "locate themselves in the writing world." She's reveling in the opportunity to work with graduate students this semester and says she always walks out of class feeling "smarter." It's a good bet that her students feel the same.

There are reasons some people become "poster children," and only one of them is good fortune. If they are like Caitlin Horrocks, they've also got loads of talent, wide-ranging experience, and have exhibited incredible dedication to their craft and students. These are the things that have really earned them that spot on the wall.

—JAN KELLY

## SALLY BALL :: Creative Writing [Poetry]

Sally Ball, poet and now Assistant Professor, steps into her new role after several years in the Department of English as a Lecturer. She earned her BA from Williams College in Williamstown, Massachusetts, and her MFA from Warren Wilson College in Asheville, North Carolina. She is the author of *Annus Mirabilis* (Barrow Street, 2005), which was selected by Ellen Bryant Voigt for the Barrow Street Press Poetry Prize. She also has poetry in several top-notch journals, and in 2007 was the Margaret Bridgman Fellow in Poetry at the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference.

Before coming to ASU, Ball worked at Washington University's International Writers' Center in St. Louis, and as managing editor of *Boulevard* magazine. She has also worked in an editorial capacity with Four Way Books, an independent press based in New York City, for the last fourteen years. She is now Associate Director of the press. Talking about the connections she discovers through the press, Ball explained, "I love finding a book, and figuring out what kind of working relationship I might have with the writer. . . . It's an intellectually expansive kind of relationship—I learn a lot, reading and either talking or exchanging letters this way."

At a time when literary publishing has been struggling and

changing in both big New York houses and small independents, Ball is excited to be part of a press that is growing and getting recognition for its authors. Four Way Books is "rising and thriving," she says, and now publishes eight to ten books per year, primarily poetry, and in 2008, the press ventured into publishing works of fiction as well.

At ASU, Sally teaches poetry workshops and courses in modern and contemporary American poetry, and she's the Assistant Director of undergraduate creative writing, working with Director Peter Turchi on strengthening and redefining the undergraduate program. She also offers internships with Four Way Books to students in the MFA Program.

Ball is currently working on two series of interrelated poems, though she prefers not to say too much about them yet. A native of New Jersey, Sally enjoys spending time with her husband, novelist and ASU Professor T. M. McNally, and their three children: Oscar, 7; Celia, 9; and Ted, 12.



—JENNIFER CLIFTON

# NEW FACULTY

SHIRLEY ROSE :: Writing Programs [Director]

The Department of English enthusiastically welcomes Shirley Rose, new Director of Writing Programs. With her most recent position at Purdue University, Rose's impressive credentials and active scholarly and administrative agenda are certain to increase the Writing Programs' visibility both in- and outside the university.

While Rose is interested in all areas of writing programs administration, she particularly enjoys the challenges associated with faculty development, which she believes is an essential element for any successful writing program. She states, "When a writing program gives its faculty the support they need to do their work well and to grow intellectually and professionally, then informed curriculum development consistent with recognized best practices will follow." ASU's Writing Programs, she believes, is in a unique position to serve as an example of excellence that can impact other writing programs nationally. "As the largest university writing program in the country, we have a responsibility to be an exemplar of best practices—particularly regarding the material conditions of our work—if only because our size alone will prompt others to look to us as a model."

One of Rose's inaugural efforts to showcase ASU's student and faculty writing was her orchestration of the first annual celebration



of the National Day on Writing on October 20. Together, Rose and other faculty and staff collected writing samples from dozens of students to contribute to the National Council of Teachers of English National Gallery of Writing. Rose hopes that such events will highlight the importance of writing in general and, as she explains, "how our writing courses contribute to students' preparation for academic, professional, and civic life."

Besides her goals for improving faculty development and enhancing the Writing Programs' reputation, Rose is also involved in a variety of scholarly endeavors. Her most recent work, a co-edited collection of essays entitled *Going Public: The WPA as Advocate for Engagement* (forthcoming 2010) examines the emerging emphasis on public writing in composition, through efforts like community literacy projects and service learning curricula. She is also pursuing her interests in the rhetorical practices of archivists through studying the John T. McCutcheon cartoon collection at Purdue.

Though adjusting to the climate in Arizona posed a bit of a challenge, Rose admits she loves the sunshine and is amazed by our huge metropolis in the desert. She is excited to be at ASU participating in the challenges of achieving sustainable methods for ensuring our community's successful growth in the future and, "evolving to serve an increasingly diverse population with a wide range of physical, social, intellectual, and spiritual needs." She has found the department to be a welcoming home, and she is thankful for the patience and kindness with which she has been met as she settles into her new role.

—KATHLEEN HICKS

## FACULTY Retrospective

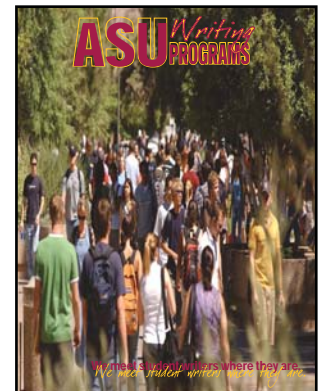
### WRITING PROGRAM DIRECTORS: BUILDING A PROGRAM, BRIDGING THE YEARS

ASU's Department of English has a long tradition of supporting composition as an intellectual enterprise and as an area for scholarly research. In 1935, Department Chair Lionel Stevenson reported "the beginning of years of recorded experiments in how to teach reading and writing to young people." In the 1940s-70s, notable faculty members, including Jerome Archer, Wilfred Ferrell, Louis M. Myers, and Nicholas Salerno published composition textbooks. And in the 1980s and 90s, ASU developed innovative programs such as STRETCH and Indigenous Rhetoric (formerly Rainbow Sections). Since becoming a university in 1959, ASU has seen hundreds of thousands of students pass through writing classes taught by English faculty. As teachers face day-to-day concerns with an ever-growing crop of students, directors are asked to establish continuity in writing programs. Following are excerpts from eight directors' reflections on their attempts at continuity, from nearly forty years of writing program administration (WPA) at ASU.

*While directors of writing at ASU have always provided strong and indispensable leadership, beginning in 1971, the writing program at ASU came under direction of a series of faculty members whose dis-*

*ciplinary home was the burgeoning field of rhetoric and composition—a field focused largely on first-year composition. During the 1970s, Frank D'Angelo was Director of Writing at ASU and a prominent figure in the field of rhetoric and composition—including chair of the Conference on College Composition and Communication, the flagship conference for compositionists, in 1980. He was the first director whose disciplinary expertise was aligned with directing a writing program.*

**FRANK D'ANGELO:** At that time, ASU had 28,000 students. I simply took what was in place and went from there. For the new TAs, we had a three-day orientation period. I invited members of the freshman English committee to give an hour talk on some aspect of teaching composition; for example, one session on invention, another on editing and revising, and so forth. In ENG 101, we taught the forms (some call them "modes") of discourse. In ENG 102, we based the writing on a thematic reader and required



Cover of ASU Writing Programs' 2009 NCTE Gallery submission, articulating a purpose exemplified through decades of leadership: "We meet student writers where they are."

a research paper. I consider my greatest contribution to be getting an area of concentration in rhetoric and composition on the PhD level.

*After D'Angelo stepped down as Director, the writing program saw several temporary directors. Then, in 1986, David Schwalm became the first full-time, tenure-track professor hired specifically to run the writing program, although he had faculty responsibilities, as well. He ushered in a period of growth and development in the writing program that has lasted nearly a quarter century. Since the mid-80s, Writing Programs has become a national model of administrative, programmatic, pedagogical, scholastic, and disciplinary excellence.*



**DAVID SCHWALM:** I served as WPA at ASU from fall of 1986 until spring of 1992. During my term, we worked to build a sense of program and professionalism. We made the First-Year Composition Office the business, support, and social center for the composition program, creating a sense of community and camaraderie among TAs, faculty, and staff. We increased office staff and services for faculty and students. We got into the habit of collecting data and using it for decision making. The writing program assumed primary control over the hiring of TAs. The position of the director became a twelve-month position. I hired Demetria Baker as a student worker. How's that for continuity?

*Over the past 40 years, nine prominent rhetoric and composition scholars have directed the writing program. Their reflections capture the explosive growth of a vibrant composition program, innovations in methodology, and administrative efforts to fairly compensate the faculty responsible for serving so many ASU students.*

**JOHN RAMAGE:** If I were to list favorite things I was involved in that had lasting and important effects at ASU, I could name a half-dozen off the top of my head. But helping get the STRETCH program up and running would be my clear favorite, for two reasons. First, it illustrates the notion that nothing of any note in the way of programmatic change gets done without collaboration. STRETCH was the product of many hands, from those who conceptualized it and got the pilot funded, through those who made the idea work in the classroom, to those who oversaw and carried out its full scale implementation and operation. It took about five years, approximately five different WPAs, and dozens of dedicated teachers to take it from inception to maturity, and every one of those people should feel good.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *ASU's STRETCH Program "stretches" ENG 101 over two semesters, giving more time for those students who may not have a lot of experience at academic, college-level writing. These students do the same readings and writing as all ENG 101 students.*



**KEITH MILLER:** In 1993, when I began my two years as WPA, our writing teachers consisted of TAs and FAs (on one-semester contracts) and a single, long-time Instructor. The previous WPA, John Ramage, had conceived of hiring Lecturers. I chaired the committee that hired the first four Lecturers—Jackie Wheeler, Karen Dwyer, Greg Glau, and Jeanne Dugan—on three-year contracts. In addition, Ramage had run, I think, two sections of STRETCH as a pilot program. With

only that precedent, we implemented the full STRETCH program, and Greg Glau agreed to direct it.



**DUANE ROEN:** I served as Director of Composition (that was the title then) on the Tempe campus at ASU from July 1995 through June 1999. During that time we worked diligently to increase the number of Lecturers and Instructors because those positions offer better salaries and longer contracts than Faculty Associate positions. At about the same time that I began my duties as the writing program administrator on the Tempe campus, the provost authorized funding to expand the length of the pre-semester workshop for first-year teaching associates and teaching assistants in English. It was wonderful to have three weeks to introduce TAs [to] pedagogy and curriculum for ENG 101. TAs also had time to learn more about university resources available to them and their students.

**MAUREEN GOGGIN:** In 1999, I was appointed by then Department Chair, Nancy Gutierrez, to serve as the Director of the Composition Program [and] charged by Dr. Gutierrez with reconfiguring the administrative structure of the Composition Program. The compromise model submitted was a de-centered, committee-driven model that was supposed to redistribute administrative tasks in a more equitable manner. We renamed the area Writing Programs with an "s" to signal the varied writing course offerings beyond first-year composition that are under the purview of the Writing Programs.



**GREG GLAU:** Over the eight years that I directed the Writing Programs, we grew about 40% into one of the largest programs in the country. So, one of the "effects" I helped to coordinate was that huge growth in the number of both students and teachers. That meant I got to work with and help supervise a large number of teachers—usually about 200 each year—and I'd like to think that I helped them understand, and the program itself understand, and some administrators understand, that we were not in the education business or the teaching business, but in the people business.



**PAUL MATSUDA:** Since I directed the Writing Programs on an interim basis for one year, my job was not to make too many drastic changes. My focus was on maintaining the integrity of the program during various institutional changes and a major economic crisis. One of the most important changes I did make, though, was to make the Writing Programs more sensitive to the presence and needs of multilingual writers—both resident and international students. I trust that the ASU Writing Programs will strive to be a leader among writing programs across the nation in initiating these important changes that affect many students who enrich the Writing Programs and ASU with their linguistic and cultural resources.

*In these reflections by former directors, some mentioned programs, others mentioned hiring or policy decisions. Regardless of the contributions they describe, a common theme is that each felt responsible for serving ASU's community—helping teachers teach, helping students learn, and in Greg Glau's words, treating people as we all want to be treated.*

—RYAN SKINNELL

# STUDENT STORIES

## GRADUATE PROGRAM ASCENDS *US NEWS* RANKINGS

The Department of English has dramatically risen in the best graduate schools ranking conducted annually by *US News and World Report*, jumping from 71st to 58th in just one year.

English's climb was due to multiple factors. This past year, while ASU struggled through budget cuts and employee furloughs, the English department was successful in increasing teaching assistant stipends, making our funding packages even more competitive. Our doctoral recruitment now adheres to a full-funding model, consisting of assistantships that are often paired with fellowship awards. More internal funding opportunities have become available in recent years to those finishing their dissertations; these include the Graduate College Dissertation Fellowship, the Graduate College Completion Fellowship, and the Department's own Katharine Turner Dissertation Fellowship. These fellowships include a fully funded year with no teaching, enabling students to concentrate on their dissertations. In addition, ASU's new graduate faculty model allows English students to work closely with prominent scholars in history, law, language, education, art, women's studies, and myriad other departments.

Our students publish their work while still in graduate school and often pres-

ent at local, national, and international conferences. Last year's placement rate was unprecedented, with nearly all of our doctoral students securing positions before graduation at Elmhurst College, Southern Connecticut University, the University of Kentucky, Minnesota State University, Rockford College, Austin Peay State University, Shorter College, Murray State University, Wright State University, Florida International University, Central Arizona

*He who would be a leader  
must be a bridge.*

—Welsh Proverb

College, and Virginia Military Institute.

Students are attracted to English's program in Rhetoric, Composition, and Linguistics because of its illustrious faculty and its curricular flexibility, which makes it possible to pursue individual areas of interest. Faculty research and teach the history of rhetoric, rhetorical theory, African American rhetoric, composition theory, computers and composition, literacy studies, new media studies, video game theory, and writing program administration.

The Linguistics aspect focuses on critical discourse studies and theoretical syntax.

Faculty offer classes in semantics, syntax,

phonology, discourse analysis, pragmatics, historical linguistics, typology, and sociolinguistics.

Within the Literature program, recent student recruitment efforts have focused on two areas of particular strength: race, culture, and empire; and medieval and Renaissance Studies. The Department's investments in the study of Indigenous literatures of North America and in the Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies are also draws for prospective students. Faculty in the cultural studies areas offer courses on Martin Luther King, Jr., Toni Morrison, literature of the barrio, twentieth-century African American drama, folklore, abolitionist and pro-slavery nineteenth-century American literature, the Black Atlantic, and narratives of cultural displacement and migration. Within the field of British cultural studies, students take classes in the visual and verbal culture of empire, as well as in postcolonial literatures of Ireland, India, and South Asia.

The Department of English is proud of its faculty, students, alumni, and emeriti who continue to make advances in their fields and to inspire their communities. Our reputation as a department and a university is built on these accomplishments.

—SHEILA LUNA

## UNDERGRADUATES CONSTRUCTING CONNECTIONS

Undergraduates in the English Club @ ASU are hosting a series of research and creative presentations featuring Department of English faculty. The series, which launched last spring with a St. Patrick's Day talk by Gregory Castle, "Wilde Things: The American Tour of 1882 and the Aesthetics of Irish Modernism," was designed to showcase intellectual diversity within both the Department and the field of English studies, while also providing undergraduates the opportunity to interact with faculty through Q&A discussions following the talks.

Series events this semester included Peter Goggin's "Global Canaries: The Rhetoric of Sustainability in Small Island Communities,"

► ENGLISH CLUB @ ASU CONTACTS  
Alisha.Allston@asu.edu (suggestions)  
Alexandra.Goodspeed@asu.edu (information)

in September, and Karen Adams's "Getting Heard and Listening to Others as a Marginalized Political Candidate" in November. Spring presentations are in the planning stages.

Another event uniting students and faculty during fall 2009 was the undergraduate conference, "Re-Fusing Di-Vision," held No-

vember 13-14. Twenty-eight students delivered research and creative presentations elucidating connections between art and academia, book-smarts and street-smarts, the disciplines and the everyday. Majors represented included English, history, communications, art, and biology and society. Participants benefited from the experience of sharing their work publicly and from preparing their presentations in consultation with faculty mentors.

Faculty talks and academic conferences are just two examples of the English Club's efforts to construct connections, with the goal of enriching university life for undergraduates in English.

—GINGER HANSON



From L: Panelists Alisha Allston, Cyndriel Meimban, and Katie Lehman answer questions at the "Re-fusing Di-Vision" conference session, "Revelatory Power of Image and Text" on November 14.



## STUDENT *Retrospective*

### BRIDGE TO HIGHER LEARNING: NATIONAL DEFENSE EDUCATION ACT (NDEA) GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS



*Alumnus John Gerlach, who benefited from an NDEA fellowship in the 1960s.*

“I remember first seeing posters for NDEA fellowships on a bulletin board at Columbia University, where I was supposed to be studying film and drama,” writes ASU alumnus John C. Gerlach, PhD 1974, emeritus chair of English at Cleveland State University. “So looking back at 1965, why was getting an education from an English Department a form of National Defense? You’d think the government would be more interested in rocket scientists—it was after all Sputnik which had shocked us into realizing

America had been technologically outdone. But evidently I could help my country by going to a warm, far-way place: Arizona. And money was an issue.”

The Arizona Board of Regents approved a PhD degree in English in 1961, and by the end of 1962 twenty-two graduate students were enrolled in the new program. “Perhaps the most important development” in English graduate studies “was the application for and receipt of federal funding” such as NDEA fellowships, wrote department historian Katharine C. Turner, whose rich, personal legacy still endows faculty and students at ASU. Under Title IV, both graduate students and the English Department received NDEA funds to strengthen new degree programs and projects. In 1964-65, three NDEA fellowships were awarded, with only Richard Arthur completing his PhD and going on to

teach at Biola University. In 1965 the department received four new NDEA fellowships. Three of the four finished their PhD degrees: John Gerlach, Frederick Monteser, and Karla Ruth Payne. Later graduates included Phil Eaton, Paul Jackson, and Mary Bucknor-Smartt (Fadiki Adewummi) from Nigeria.

“Without the NDEA fellowships, I don’t think the PhD program in English would have survived past the early years,” said Emeritus Professor Nicholas Salerno. “We were able to attract and keep the best students from across the nation and internationally.”

“I’d gotten my bachelor’s degree in English at Kenyon College, and I’d decided if there was anything I wanted to do, it was read and teach,” John Gerlach writes. “If you taught, you could keep on reading. Arizona seemed like a good place to start. I took the Greyhound bus to Tempe, Arizona, in September of 1965, a trip that was an education in itself. And Arizona was a pretty strange place, flat as a parking lot (I had gone to high school in Pittsburgh), and the hills were mostly off in the distance. And it was hot. And my trunk from Baltimore didn’t arrive for a month. But it was pretty easy to get started: a young fellow named Nick Salerno helped me get signed up, including putting me in his course. I soon gravitated toward two professors in American Studies—Marvin Fisher and Leo Levy. I realized how much my professors were dedicated to helping us, working with us—not something friends who’d gone to other schools always found.”

“It really started with the NDEA, and now that it’s over, I’m glad the fellowship did make it possible to play with words, and not bombs,” Gerlach concludes. “One of the great pleasures of teaching at Cleveland State has been that most of the best students really don’t know how good they are; they have to be coaxed into realizing what they can do. And helping them is really the best form of National Defense there is.”

—KARLA ELLING

## GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

### CREATIVE WRITERS CONNECT WITH STUDENTS IN SINGAPORE

Along with fellow MFA candidate Arijit Sen, I received a Virginia G. Piper Center for Creative Writing 2009 Summer Teaching Fellowship for work in Singapore. Our host university—the National University of Singapore (NUS)—afforded us all the respect of visiting faculty as we team-taught a six-week introduction to creative writing for students in the school’s University Scholars Programme. Apart from daily teaching responsibilities, highlights of our trip included organizing a public reading of the students’ work and delivering a lecture at the Creative Arts Programme (CAP) Conference.

The two-hour reading was hosted at the NUS Creative Centre for the Arts, which proved a perfect venue as the museum’s Constructed Landscapes Exhibition was a synergistic pairing for the “native voice” theme behind the students’ pieces. During the reception following the reading, many of the student participants and NUS faculty expressed warm thanks to us for our work.

We were also given some public recognition at the CAP Conference. As representatives of ASU’s Department of English and the

Piper Center, Arijit and I met Singapore’s Minister of Education and were introduced to a standing ovation. We presented an interactive, forty-five minute lecture on “Writing Home from Abroad,” which was well-received by the audience.

I worked with incredible students at NUS.

When I wasn’t teaching

I had plenty of time to write. Moreover, I’d never been to that part of the world before. It was a wonderful and eye-opening experience.



*Christian Perticone and Arijit Sen (back row, 3rd and 4th from R) pose with NUS creative writing students. Photo/courtesy Christian Perticone*

—CHRISTIAN PERTICONE

# MCCRAW HELMS AWARD WINNERS

The Randel and Susan McCraw Helms Homecoming Writing Contest was established in the fall of 2007 to celebrate the creative and scholarly writing of undergraduate students within the Department of English at ASU. Awards of \$500

each—presented annually during the Department’s “Come Home to English” celebration—are given to the first-place winners in the categories of poetry, short story/creative nonfiction, and scholarly essay. Following are excerpts from the 2009 winning submissions.

## AT THE VIETNAM MEMORIAL WALL :: [Mindy Murphy—Poetry]

My uncle went to war when he was a teenager,  
long arms dangling from  
the coat-hanger of his shoulders,  
the cold smells of Michigan creek water  
and crushed apple blossoms left behind  
with the Levis he reluctantly traded for camo.

I’ve seen the picture of him,  
joint clenched firmly within a smile  
boyishly shifted off center for the girl  
he was imagining might hold it,  
trembling, between her slim fingers,  
just as he held her image at night,  
curves a little blurred in camp smoke, maybe a mud smear  
where her nose used to be,  
(always blond, always laughing)  
and with that artificial scent of flowers  
missing from her hair.  
He always woke when  
the Lotus perfume became too real.

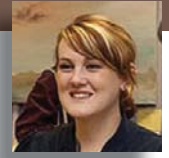
Mainly I remember the monkey,  
shaggy arms wrapped loosely around his neck,  
all the ink in the photograph

bleeding from its eyes.  
He called it JoJo, hoping he might  
get back to where he belonged  
a little sooner.

I don’t know when he got sent home,  
exultant, a little self-conscious about  
the slick black wall and the feral things  
where his eyes had been. He brought  
the monkey with him, screaming  
and pulling all the girls’ braids,  
sparing only my uncle’s brothers from its teeth.

When they came to take it to a zoo,  
the entire neighborhood raised their bitten arms,  
news stations flashing that off center picture all over Detroit  
so he could keep his animal near him—  
howls and fangs and claws.

He and JoJo would sit together in the living room,  
silent as insects, esoterically watching the women  
in cat-framed glasses and leather vests glide by,  
sniffing the air for a trace of shampoo.



## ADOLESCENT SPEECH: BAD OR BAD? :: [Jessica Cyrell—Scholarly Essay]



Every generation has its inspiration for word invention. In the thirties, it was swing music and the jitterbug culture, and in the fifties it was the beatniks and fast-talking radio DJs. Today, youth finds its muse in hip-hop culture and rap music (Friedman). A 2008 study at Northern Arizona University aimed to find the most frequently used “key words” in adolescent speech today. They identified “key words” as those words used with *unusual* frequency in a particular text. For example, the word *awesome* was selected by the study’s computer-generated search for adolescent “key words” because, although it is used fairly infrequently by adolescent speakers, its use is far more frequent among adolescents than it is among older speakers, who use it practically never. In the study, the word *like* was ranked the highest in terms of its “keyness” (Barbieri 63). *Like* is a unique linguistic construction because, as Elizabeth Mehren notes, it is probably “the first word to be a verb, adjective, adverb and conjunction—all at once,” which possibly explains its frequency, and its reasonably long lifetime, as far as slang goes (“Language and Gender” 393). But professor Patricia Skarda of Smith College does not give it so much credit. Instead, she finds that “‘like’ is an approximation—an unwillingness to say one

thing,” and she places it in a category with two other disdainful expressions that characterize a generation: *you know* and *I mean*. “‘You know’ begs for agreement,” she says, “as if the speaker is terribly unsure of him or herself. ‘I mean’ indicates that the [speaker] does not, in fact, know what he or she means” (“Language and Gender” 394). In this sense, Skarda correlates word choice with intellectual capability and security in one’s identity. However, she does admit that as long as both parties understand, then communication is present, and that is what is most important. Yet the debate between the quality of prescriptive and descriptive language is never-ending. Perhaps the true test of the quality of language invented by adolescents is how long it survives.

### Selected Works Cited

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BIRDS AND THE BEE :: [Ryan Ratliff—Short Fiction]

When I was young an we play with those race tracks  
 With the cars that go round the tracks  
 You pull the trigger on the control, an they go faster  
 An they smell like bad when you play with 'em all day  
 I use to steal my sister's car  
 Mess up the tires an return it in the box to her  
 An I always win the races, but I ain't ashamed of it.

Stealin ain't right but it ain't wrong neither  
 Like when men steal your heart  
 They might not a meant to do it  
 But they can't give it back now  
 Cause it belong to 'em.

I told her, "Just you wait.  
 Someday a man gonna steal your heart  
 Gonna give his to somebody else"  
 She says I'm crazy talkin bout men stealin hearts.

...

John-Honkey a big man of six feet four an muscular  
 Got a tattoo on his arm that says, "Hell No!"  
 He got big ole chops like a hell's angel  
 But he bald as the day he was born  
 Greasy headed too, but I'm not judgin him  
 That John-Honkey he a good boy  
 Not much to look at but bald an brawny an nice.

After he start college, which you know his parents just hated  
 He start sayin things like, "The elasticity of supplied demand  
 React to price all over differential factors."  
 He took some economics an business two semester there  
 Start talkin bout "change in variables divide by percents value"

I never know what he sayin but teachers like him  
 He even got some A's sometime!

...

One time John-Honkey told us he could take most any market by storm  
 Says, "Sometime income got more to do with demand than price"  
 Says he could make a thousand bucks in a week with the right idea  
 But you know he don't care bout no money.

He got a job he like  
 An he work real hard supportin those racist parents  
 But you know he just think his folks as plain as paper  
 With 'em ole ways but he don't like no confrontation.

One time after his dad take him to a racist meetin  
 He come away with a big ole smile on his face  
 An he disappear for a week  
 Came back with a thousand bucks  
 Then he drop outa schools  
 Said it was too dangerous  
 I guess.



Winners of the 2009 McCraw Helms Contest pose with the donors at the awards presentation, October 28. Clockwise from L: Jessica Cyrell, Susan McCraw, Randel Helms, Ryan Ratliff, Mindy Murphy.

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*accents on* **ENGLISH**

NEWSLETTER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AT ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

COMING EVENTS . . .

- “The Politics of Consumption: (Re)presenting  
and (Trans)forming Identities”** February 19-20, 2010  
*ASU Southwest English Graduate Symposium*  
ASU Tempe campus, more information TBA
- A Visit by Mary Gray, Professor, Department of Communication  
and Culture, Indiana University** March 10, 2010  
*Co-sponsored by English and Justice Studies*  
ASU Tempe campus, exact location TBA, 5:00 p.m.
- Lecture by Peterson Zah, former President of the Navajo Nation** March 25, 2010  
*Simon Ortiz and Labriola Center Lecture on Indigenous Land, Culture, and Community*  
Heard Museum (2301 N. Central Ave.) Phoenix, 7:00 p.m.
- “Fatherless Books: Authorship, Attribution and  
Orthodoxy in Later Medieval England”** March 26, 2010  
*Lecture by Vincent Gillespie, J.R.R. Tolkien Professor of English  
Literature and Language, University of Oxford*  
Memorial Union Pima Auditorium (MU 230) ASU Tempe campus, 3:00 p.m.
- Chaucer Celebration 2010** April 1-2, 2010  
*Film festival, performance of The Second Shepherds’ Play,  
and “Chaucer and Religion” roundtable*  
ASU Tempe campus, exact times and locations TBA

*And you, O my Soul, where you stand, / Surrounded, surrounded, in measureless oceans of space,  
Ceaselessly musing, venturing, throwing,—seeking the spheres, to connect them;  
Till the bridge you will need, be form’d—till the ductile anchor hold;  
Till the gossamer thread you fling, catch somewhere, O my Soul.*

—Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*