

400 YEARS OF THE KING JAMES BIBLE

Prof. Hannibal Hamlin

The “King James Only” movement, to which this bumper-sticker testifies, is homegrown in America, and its proponents are the most vehement champions of this particular Bible translation. One North Carolina church hosts an annual Halloween book burning: parishioners consign to the flames all English Bibles in translations other than the King James. This is the radical extreme, but there are many more moderate adherents to the King James, or “Authorized Version” (as it is known in Great Britain). When the New English Bible translation was first published in the 1960s, most of the English political, religious, literary, and cultural establishment rose up in protest; T.S. Eliot led the charge. There are now hundreds of different English Bibles, in translations pitched at every religious denomination and at niche markets: men and women, teen boys and girls, families, African Americans, Latinos, soldiers in the field, even surfers. In the midst of so flooded a market, however, the King James still holds its own. It’s the second most popular e-Bible on Amazon’s Kindle (after the American Standard).

2011 marks the 400th anniversary of the first publication of the King James Bible, and the occasion is being marked by readings, lectures, publications, exhibitions, concerts, and conferences across the English-speaking world. In the United Kingdom the 2011 Trust has been established to coordinate and promote these events. In the United States, the Folger Shakespeare Library is mounting a major exhibition, in cooperation with Oxford’s Bodleian Library, on the history and cultural legacy of the King James Bible. International conferences are being held at Baylor University, Rhodes College, and here at The Ohio State University. Why such a fuss?

For most of the four centuries of its existence, the King James Bible was the dominant Bible in English, the one heard in churches wherever Christians worshipped and English was spoken, the one read at home, the one set to music by composers from George Frederic Handel to Bob Marley, and, of most interest to me, the one quoted, referred to,

and alluded to by poets, playwrights, and novelists. Despite never being officially “authorized,” clergy were directed to use the King James Bible in churches from its release in 1611, and they largely complied. Thus, even anti-establishment writers like John Milton and John Bunyan

read and heard the King James Bible, and it is its language one hears throughout *Paradise Lost* and *Pilgrim’s Progress*. It’s a King James Bible that Robinson Crusoe has with him on his desert island, and the language of this translation that shapes the hymns of Isaac Watts, William Cowper, and Charles Wesley. This is the Bible of Sir Isaac Newton and John Locke, both serious biblical scholars. The work of later poets and novelists is also steeped in the language of the King James Bible: William Blake, William Wordsworth, Charlotte Brontë, Charles Dickens.

The first King James Bible printed in this country was in 1782 in Philadelphia, the only Bible ever printed by Act of Congress. Thereafter, King James Bibles came to be printed in America in vast quantities. The American Bible Society alone produced a million Bibles a year by the 1860s, all of them in the King James translation. This was the Bible of Cotton Mather and Jonathan Edwards, of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, both of whom were sworn into office with King James Bibles. Like Blake before him, Walt Whitman derived his prose-poetic line from the style of the Old Testament prophets, in the King James Version. Emily Dickinson’s short lyrics are thick with biblical allusions and take their verse and stanza forms from Protestant hymns. Herman Melville’s *Moby Dick* is biblically drenched. Literary allusions to and adaptations of the Bible can be both orthodox and heretical, pious and outrageous. Radically unorthodox Christians Blake, Whitman, Dickinson, and (*Cont. p. 2*)



Literary Locations students Ben Wright and Phoebe Tracey explore Tintern Abbey.

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THE OLD WORDS WE LOSE OR CARRY

Kathleen Blackburn, MFA candidate

I was born into a family where all children received, for their first birthday, a King James Bible, white leather bound, with our names engraved in gold upon it—though where mine is now I don't know. Laid aside throughout the years for versions of the bible that were more like we talk now. Versions that were meant, as I was taught while sitting in a Sunday school classroom with the prize for having memorized the week's Bible verse—a stale cookie—in hand, to make the inexorable paradoxes accessible. To blaze its tales unforgettably, as though they had just happened, or could happen at any moment in our time.

Yet it is the crease running down the middle of the white leather cover, separating the words "Holy" and "Bible" that I remember; the early pages meant to record the births, marriages and deaths that would define my life; words that I had never heard spoken but that rang like music. Their very existence invited curiosity, the pleasure of fossils. It was my first encounter with language as artifact, something that placed me in time by transcending it: a nearly four hundred year old text that marked my birth, would long outlive me, and yet belonged to me, as it had to others, for centuries before. What markings did I leave? Which passages underlined with the No.2 pencil? I recall the thick dark ink, the yellow residue of the trimmed pages. How easily it fell open. I wrote my name and birthdate, large and awkward, on the first line of the record for births. I intended to keep it as one keeps a ring handed down through the generations.

There is a bookstore not far from where I live now that was



Literary Locations students at St. Paul's Cathedral.

clearly once a church. A modest white building with an arched chapel roof set back from the road. The entrance is a single door that used to lead to the sanctuary. Above it, a small bell tower where no bell hangs. It advertises discount books, used, overstocked.

No one greeted me when I walked in. Where pews once sat there were dark wooden shelves stacked with books. Above them hung handwritten signs and the loamy smell of old wood and yellowed paper. At the back of the sanctuary drooped the sign for bibles. I stood below it, hoping to find a King James bible used, the old floor groaning under my feet. Still no one came out from the back, where the Sunday school classes were once held. There were only four King James bibles arranged in a row, identical in their size and red binding. I took up each one and sifted through (*Cont. p. 3*)

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(*Cont. from p. 1*) Melville were as drawn to the Bible's stories, characters, and language as more conventionally Christian writers like Harriet Beecher Stowe, Alfred Tennyson, and Matthew Arnold. Although major new English translations began to be available in the late nineteenth century, most twentieth-century writers continued to draw on the language of the King James in their work. The titles of Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*, William Faulkner's *Absalom, Absalom!*, and John Steinbeck's *East of Eden* are all taken from verses in the King James Bible. The King James Version has been especially influential in the African-American literary tradition: in music from spirituals to Blues to Gospel and R&B, in political oratory from Frederick Douglass to Martin Luther King to Barack Obama, and in poets and novelists from Phillis Wheatley to James Weldon Johnson to Lucille Clifton, from Charles Chesnutt and James Baldwin to Toni Morrison and Edward P. Jones.

For me, this is the best reason for reading and studying the King James Bible. It's been the most important book in the English-speaking world for four centuries, shaping our language in fundamental ways, and much of English and American (and Canadian, and West Indian, and Anglo-African, and Australian) literature makes less sense without it. In *Moby Dick*, for instance, the narrator Ishmael, a wanderer and outcast like his biblical namesake, begins his epilogue with a line from the Book of Job: "And I only am escaped alone to tell thee." The verse seems appropriate, since Ishmael is the sole survivor of his ship, but the careful reader

should also remember that Job contains an important reference to the whale, Leviathan, which God can draw up with a hook. The novel's last line refers to the Rachel, the ship that rescues Ishmael, searching "after her missing children." A reader needs to know the Bible to hear the allusion to "Rachel weeping for her children," the prophet Jeremiah's metaphor for the suffering of Jews in exile after the Babylonian conquest, reinterpreted in the Gospel of Matthew (Matt. 2:18) as a prophecy of the slaughter of innocent children in Bethlehem by Herod. The first readers of *Moby Dick*, published in 1851, might also have remembered that the image of Rachel weeping for her children appeared on the titlepage of the New Testament in one of the most celebrated American King James Bibles, Harpers' Illuminated Bible, published in installments in the 1840s. Anyone who loves literature in English from Milton to Morrison needs to know the King James Bible, and 2011 offers lots of opportunities to brush up or enrich your knowledge of the book and its legacy. The Ohio State conference, "The King James Bible and its Cultural Afterlife" (<http://kingjamesbible.osu.edu/>), will be held May 5-7, and will feature literary scholars from around the world as well as the Pulitzer Prize winning novelist, Edward P. Jones. Many of the conference speakers, including several Ohio State faculty, are also featured in Hannibal Hamlin and Norman W. Jones, eds., *The King James Bible after Four Hundred Years: Literary, Linguistic, and Cultural Influences*, a collection just published by Cambridge University Press.

LITERARY LOCATIONS: TRAVELS IN VENICE AND LONDON

REFLECTIONS: VENICE

Prof. Alan Farmer

In the Spring 2010 quarter, I taught a “Literary Locations” course focused on Venice (English 595), which was followed by a ten-day study abroad trip to the city in June. The course offered students the opportunity to study the history and representation of Venice in English and European literature from the sixteenth to the twentieth century, and to explore both the historical realities and the enduring “Myths of Venice” while in the city itself. We visited the Ghetto and the Rialto, which are central to Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice* (1596) and Ben Jonson’s *Volpone* (1606). We saw where Casanova claimed to have met his lover C.C., in his eighteenth-century memoir, *Story of My Life*. We examined the architectural history of Venice, its gradual transformation from Gothic to Roman Renaissance to Grotesque Renaissance, as is despairingly traced by John Ruskin in *The Stones of Venice*. We wandered the city’s streets, canals, and beaches as the characters do in Thomas Mann’s *Death in Venice* (1912), Patricia Highsmith’s *Those Who Walk Away* (1967), and Jeanette Winterson’s *The Passion* (1987). In addition to these “literary locations,” we visited museums and churches in Venice and in Padua that house masterpieces by Titian, Tintoretto, Carpaccio, and Giorgione; we saw a performance of Verdi’s *La Traviata* at the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista; and we traveled to the nearby islands of Torcello (where we had an amazing lunch of fritto misto), Murano (where we saw a demonstration of Venetian glass-making), and Burano (famous for its brightly painted houses). Through it all, the students were a tremendously fun and interesting group who helped make both the course and the trip an exciting and intellectually rewarding experience.

THE OLD WORDS WE LOSE OR CARRY

(*Cont. from p. 2*) the pages of verse and reference, examining the personal record pages. It was like searching through an old wallet at an antique store hoping to find a faded photograph, some evidence of those other hands that had held it before, evidence of what they had loved. But the pages were unmarked, all of them.

I imagine the store clerk, if she had appeared, would have explained to me how the bookstore does not accept used bibles. How there is no market for such a thing. Or perhaps she would have said that folks don’t give their bibles away, engraved, inked and stained, marked with the passage of time. I would have understood. But no one came, even as I replaced the bibles and made my way back to the door, lifting the latch to leave the place empty.

If I had found one such used bible, what ancient words would have been highlighted? What would they have revealed about the one that selected them? Words from centuries past. Perhaps they entice us precisely because we do not of our own accord say, “That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past” but because the words have found their way to our time. We mark them on such thin and worn pages, and then it is no longer the words but the way we have chosen and carry them that becomes a record of our passing, a variation of ourselves.

Mallory Harper ('10)

For an English major like me who longed to study abroad but had concerns about cost, language barriers, and homesickness, the “Literary Locations: Venice” program was an ideal solution. After taking English 595 (Venetian Literature) during Spring 2010, my classmates and I boarded a flight to Venice, Italy and explored every aspect of the city for the first ten days of summer vacation. It was my first journey overseas, so my excitement was palpable. As our group of thirteen traversed the city on foot and by vaporetto (water bus), we had the opportunity to visit art and history museums and marvel at the masterpieces we had discussed in class. Churches, cafes, and hotels we had read about just a few weeks prior to the trip were now a part of the antiquated scenery that surrounded us. One of the most memorable images from our excursion was the panoramic view of Venice and the surrounding lagoon we experienced from the top of St. Mark’s campanile (bell tower). The late afternoon sun glistened on the surface of the green water and the landscape of the city was truly awe-inspiring. Although it has been months since our return home, I often find my thoughts drifting back to the beauty and mystique of the city on the water: Venice, Italy.

Literary Locations: Venice
students (l to r) Olga Borodulin,
Carrie Charbonneau, and Alicia
Campbell.



REFLECTIONS: LONDON

Prof. Jennifer Higginbotham

The Winter 2010 Literary Locations class went on an expedition through the towers, domes, theaters, and temples of London, first through reading some of England's most famous writers and then in person over spring break. We arrived on a red-eye flight to a classic London morning full of mist and immediately took a bus tour of the city, driving over Westminster Bridge in a scene deeply reminiscent of Wordsworth's poem describing it. After settling into our hotel, we visited St. Paul's Cathedral, where students had the opportunity to climb the spiral staircase to the top of its famous dome for a breathtaking view of the city. We spent the next day on the South Bank, visiting Shakespeare's reconstructed Globe.

Although the Globe is not open for performances in March, we had the opportunity to take a private tour of the theater and watch part of a rehearsal for a student production of *Midsummer Night's Dream*, giving us a sense how different it would have been to be one of Shakespeare's groundlings watching a play in full daylight rather than a darkened theater. London is so full of amazing literary sites that we spent the next four days in a whirlwind; we paid our respects to Poets' Corner at Westminster Abbey, stood in the house where Keats wrote "Ode to a Nightingale," and shopped some of the same streets as Mrs. Dalloway. We even took some time for a scrumptious afternoon tea with scones and clotted cream at the National Portrait



Literary Locations: London student Casey Knick at Stratford falconry display.



*Dramatic monologue from Beckett by Richard Firth start the spring quarter.
Green at annual department Talent Show*

Gallery. Unfortunately the Sherlock Holmes Museum at 221B Baker Street turned out to be an even campier version of Madam Tussaud's Wax Museum with dolls re-enacting various stories by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, but the students still had a good time taking silly pictures and purchasing deer stalker hats from the gift shop.

After five days in the hustle and bustle of London, we were all ready for a trip to the English countryside, so we took a bus up to Bath, where we spent a day imagining ourselves in one of Jane Austen's novels. In addition to touring the Roman baths that gave the small city its name, we had a chance to taste the waters in the Pump Room. We all agreed that the water, taken from the warm underground spring, tasted like sulfur, but none of us experienced any medical benefits that we could tell.

The next day we took a brief detour over to Wales to view Tintern Abbey, one of the highlights of the trip. We stood in the choir and recited the poem (actually written in the lush green hills above the ruins) before heading up to Stratford-Upon-Avon, where we concluded our trip with a couple of days of Shakespeariana. In addition to spending time at the house where Shakespeare's wife grew up, we also took a trip to his mother's old homestead, a working Tudor farm where we saw a falconry display. In the evenings, we attended Royal Shakespeare Company performances of *Romeo and Juliet* and *King Lear*. We had a bit of a long journey home, since our flight had two layovers, but we arrived back in Columbus just in time for all of us to start the spring quarter.

REFLECTIONS FROM AN ENGLISH MAJOR

Jen Hodapp

As I finish up my fourth and final autumn quarter at Ohio State, it seems like the perfect time to reflect upon my experience here. Of course, Ohio State is huge, but I have discovered that the English department (and even Denney Hall) has become my true home. To some friends, this seems shocking – they can't believe I have actually chosen to take entire classes on Shakespeare and to spend my academic life in a building that can never even seem to find a sensible temperature – but to me, English is the perfect choice. The English Department in 2010 is ever-growing, and the topics it encompasses are fascinating and surprising. I never thought, for example, that I would have the chance to study romantic comedies or 1930s popular culture. However, one newly discovered love for Clark Gable and one gigantic book of pulp fiction later, here I am, studying topics that I had never considered before. Furthermore,

the new minors in Sexuality Studies and Pop Culture use several English courses as part of their curriculums, thereby expanding the breadth of the department even further.

Even as the department is growing, though, its members are becoming closer than ever. Sigma Tau Delta, the new English Honor Society, has offered a wonderful opportunity for English majors to meet, and it has been invaluable in creating a sense of community within the department.

The English Department in 2010 has changed a little, but it is not all that different from the past. Above all else, English is about the stories that make up our culture, and these remain the same; even on a Kindle, Beowulf defeats Grendel, and Hamlet is as indecisive as ever. This is the appeal of English, no matter the time; these are the stories that will stick with us, and I feel so lucky to be able to study the culture of our past, present, and future.

LETTER FROM THE ENGLISH GRADUATE ORGANIZATION

Brad Freeman, EGO Representative

Greetings from the English Graduate Organization (more commonly know as EGO). While I am not convinced that the departmental politics and bureaucratic concerns of the graduate students excite all generations (if any), OSU's English department actually does have some exciting things going on this year, events and concerns that we are proud to be a part of.

As representatives of a diverse department, we make sure that the English graduate student body maintains a vibrant academic discourse through colloquia and town hall meetings. In the fall, we had a colloquium that included three outstanding presenters: Julia Voss discussed race, language, and pedagogy in "Teaching Critical Language Awareness in College Composition Using Sapphire's *Push*;" Ben Ogrodnik explored the body and science fiction in "Horror autotoxicus: The Critique of Corporeal Flexibility in M.T. Anderson's *feed*;" and Meg Reid spoke on the symbolic workings of the railroad in Victorian fiction in "Rent... to its centre: The Railway as Bataillean Monument in Victorian Fiction." These colloquiums maintain a high level of academic rigor and ensure that we stay in conversation with one another as a student body. In a recent town hall meeting, students discussed the value in and purpose of the Introduction to Graduate Study in English, a class that all English graduate students must take during their first term. These discussions help foster channels of communication between the professors and students alike and create a more engaging and democratic department.

In the spring, we have another colloquium planned and hope to offer a grant-writing workshop for the purposes of professionalization. After all, there is a rumor that we are supposed to get a "real job" some day. We also have the opportunity to sponsor an upcoming Multiple Myeloma Opportunities for Research & Education event, "Quest4MMORE" (a charitable fundraising event constituted by an Amazing Race style scavenger hunt). This event allows us to move outside of the department and interact with the community. As I hope you can see, the English graduate student body is engaged in both academic and public activities that make for a more dynamic university and, hopefully, a better city.



Outstanding musical performances from Elizabeth Weiser, Robin Warhol, Leslie Lockett, Hye Su Park, and Lisa Kiser at annual department Talent Show.



FACULTY AWARDS AND HONORS

BOOKS

Frederick Aldama

-*Toward a Cognitive Theory of Narrative Acts*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010. *Multicultural Comics: From Zap to Blue Beetle*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010.

-Guest Editor: "New Horizons: Cognitive and Narrative Approaches to US Ethnic and Postcolonial Film, Animation, Graphic Novel, and the Arts". *Image and Narrative*. Vol. 11, no. 2, 2010.

Henri Cole

-*Pierce the Skin: Selected Poems, 1982-2007*. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 2010
-*Autoritratto con Gatti*. Translated by Massimo Bacigalupo. Parma, Italy: Casa editrice Guanda, 2010.

Marcia Farr, co-edited with Lisya Seloni and Juyoung Song

-*Ethnolinguistic Diversity and Education*. Routledge, 2010.

Jill Galvan

-*The Sympathetic Medium: Feminine Channeling, the Occult, and Communication Technologies*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2010.

Harvey Graff, co-editor with Alison Mackinnon, Bengt Sandin, and Ian Winchester

-*Understanding Literacy in its Historical Contexts: Socio-Cultural History and the Legacy of*

Egil Johansson. Lund, Sweden: Nordic Academic Press, 2009

David Herman, Editor

-*Muriel Spark: Twenty-First-Century Perspectives*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010.

Andrew Hudgins

-*American Rendering: New and Selected Poems*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2010.

Robert Hughes

-*Ethics, Aesthetics, and the Beyond of Language*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010.

Pranav Jani

-*Decentering Rushdie: Cosmopolitanism and the Indian Novel in English*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2010

Ethan Knapp, Series Editor

-*Interventions: New Studies in Medieval Culture*. Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 2010

(Cont. p. 7)

ALUMNI REFLECTIONS

Dr. Stacy S. Klein

It's cold out, really cold, definitely the season for hunkering down with a good book. And even if work, home, and family often make it difficult to carve out much time for pleasure reading, this season always makes me wistful for the many books I'd like to read and also extraordinarily grateful for the wonderful education in literature that I received at OSU English. I have so many fond memories of my classes in Denney Hall: fascinating lectures about Shakespeare, intense discussions of Jane Austen, and exciting opportunities to practice my writing, be it creative poetry or more academic prose. Whether we were learning about 18thc drama or 20thc fiction, what I most especially remember about OSU English was the incredible caring and commitment of the faculty. In the General Prologue to the *Canterbury Tales*, Chaucer describes the Clerk (a sort of 14thc equivalent of a college professor) as someone who would "gladly . . . lerne and gladly teche." Such a description is just spot-on accurate for the professors at OSU.

I remember one professor, Lisa Kiser, in OSU English who was so dedicated to my progress that she offered to do an independent study over the summer. I had always thought of summer as a time when professors work on their own research, but here was this incredibly kind, smart person offering to help me during time that was supposed to be carved out for her own work. And even when she and her husband went off to visit their family for a week on a beach holiday, she still insisted that I write to her with my ideas about the literary texts that we had been reading and then she'd write back to me with her thoughts – sand-spattered paper and all. It was this kind of intense, one-on-one interaction with faculty who were able to combine a deep commitment to students' learning with their own excellence in research, that helped me to find a balance in my own life and work and thus to reach my own goals. And regardless of the particular kinds of goals that one sets for oneself, learning to read and to think critically about literature is important. It's this sort of training in critical thinking and analysis that helps us all to become stronger, more civic-minded people, people with the ability to make important contributions to our communities, whether in Ohio or farther afield.

It's been over a decade since I finished my graduate work at OSU English, and since I'm now a professor in the English department

at Rutgers – The State University of New Jersey, I thought I'd end my letter by offer a few "professor picks," that might help guide you toward some great reads.

-Ha Jin, *Waiting*: The story of a Chinese army doctor trapped between an arranged marriage and a modern love. A truly different kind of fairy tale for those who enjoy history in a human form. Alan Brennert, *Moloka'i*: A heartbreaking historical novel about a child who contracts leprosy and is taken to live on an actual leper colony that existed in Hawaii in the 1890s. A total tear-jerker – get out the tissues!

-Buchi Emecheta, *The Joys of Motherhood*: Set in Lagos, Nigeria, between the 1930's and the 1960's, this is a deceptively simple story of a single African mother and her struggles to protect her children. Really makes us think about the sacrifices people make for their families.

-Betty Smith, *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*: Originally published in 1943, this coming-of-age story of a poor girl in early 20th c Brooklyn is totally charming. A real oldie but a goodie. You can also rent the movie!

-*Beowulf*: A New Verse Translation by Seamus Heaney: I suppose I'm a bit partial to this one since I teach medieval literature, but Heaney's translation of this classic is incredibly beautiful for all you poets out there and the bilingual edition with facing-page translation makes it possible to read the poem in the original Old English.

I hope that you enjoy some of these books, and I also hope that you've enjoyed my letter. Most of all, I hope that you'll think about making a contribution to help support the incredible work going on in OSU English. Classical historians tell us that Socrates never charged any money for teaching. Apparently, he was a stone mason, and wasn't all that well-off himself, and so would just go around lecturing to Plato and other people who were interested. But times have changed, and OSU English needs contributions to help make it possible for the department to continue its tradition of excellence.

From one OSU alum to another, I am sending all best wishes and also a heartfelt request that you take a few minutes to check out the OSU English department website, see what faculty and students in the department are up to these days, and give back just a little bit to the place that gave us all so much.

UPCOMING EVENTS

EVERY ALUMNUS HAS A LITERACY STORY... PLEASE TELL US YOURS

English Department alumni can come into Denney 324 (the Digital Media Project) from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm M-Th, March 28-June 9, 2011 to record a literacy narrative in either video or audio formats. For recording appointments on Fridays, alumni can contact Cynthia L. Selfe (selfe.2@osu.edu)

SIXTH ANNUAL EMERITI LECTURE

"A View from the Dark Side"

Emeritus Professor of English David O. Frantz
4:00-5:30p, April 27, 2011
311 Denney Hall

"WHAT CAN I DO WITH AN ENGLISH MAJOR?"

English Alumni panelists Sean Cooper, Marchelle Moore, Shantay Piazza, and Jim Ryan speak to current English majors about career possibilities: April 27, 6:00-7:30p in 311 Denney.

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Friends and Alumni/ae of the Department of English

2011 marks forty years since I received my PhD at the University of Nottingham (England.) That thought is more than enough to give me pause. My BA in English had been almost exclusively a training in what the University of Cambridge called Practical Criticism (very similar to what in the US was known as New Criticism.) We read texts very closely, with little concern for who wrote them, or when, and with very little consciousness of social, political and gender implications. It was, in some ways, a very naïve time (“Never such innocence again,” as the poet Philip Larkin put it in “MCMXIV”.)

In the years shortly after that, some of the thinking that had inspired student riots in Paris and the U.S. spread across both the English Channel and the Atlantic, changing the way that literary critics read texts – almost certainly forever. Marxist theory was undertaken with new seriousness in consort with waves of other brands of theory – structuralism, reader-response theory, feminism (Phases 1, 2, 3 and counting), narratology, post-structuralism, postcolonial theory, cultural materialism, New Historicism, queer theory and myriad others. Not only did the ways that we read change, but also the nature of the texts that we chose to focus on. The canon that seemed to have a God-given right to appear on all syllabi began to change. We discovered that women (yes, women) wrote books, and some of them were quite good ones. And so did people who had had little education or privilege. And people of colour. And whereas once there were only poems, plays and novels in the canon (and some of my own older professors were not even too sure about newfangled, popular works like novels), now we began to read diaries, journals, ephemera – and even things that weren’t written at all, like pictures and movies.

It was quite a daunting time to be a literature professor, with “literature” considered a dangerously elitist word, suggesting that some writing is more important than others. Things have settled down somewhat over the last couple of decades – the waves of new theory seemed finally to peter out. But the wider contexts within which the study of literature existed were also changing decisively. The printed book, one of the key levers of Western civilisation for 500 years, is beginning to find itself marginalised in a world dominated by film, video, TV, popular culture, computers – and those of us who teach it have to keep on thinking about why it matters and how we should convey that to a generation of students for whom the reading of books printed in ink on paper is neither as central to their lives as it was to some of us forty years ago, nor self-evidently a fun and valuable thing to do.

Happily we have at Ohio State a department that contains a very robust faculty, stretching from Medievalists, who teach texts that originated in manuscript, before there even were printed books to people doing ground-breaking work in Digital Media Studies, staying abreast of the digital revolution itself and the new ways it makes us think about “texts” and their place in our lives. Our range of talent, expertise, and focus creates the continuing great strength of this department, allowing us to encompass such a range of cultural history, and equipping us better than most to keep thinking the questions: what should we be teaching when we teach “English” and how can we make it relevant to each successive generation of our students?

The question is not just “academic.” I wonder what your experience of “English” was like at OSU? Will you join in conversation about it? We shortly intend to have a Facebook page where you can share your thoughts on that with us and with each other. We hope to hear from you soon.

Richard Dutton, Chair

FACULTY AWARDS AND HONORS

Sandra Macpherson

-Harm's Way: Tragic Responsibility and the Novel Form. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010.

Dorothy Noyes, Editor

-Culture Archives and the State: Between Nationalism, Socialism, and the Global Market. Proceedings of an international conference held May 3-5, 2007, at the Mershon Center for International Security Studies, The Ohio State University, Columbus. OSU Knowledge Bank, 2010.

Doug Ramspeck

-Possum Nocturne. Port Alsworth: NorthShore Press, 2010.

Amy Shuman

-Other People's Stories: Entitlement Claims and the Critique of Empathy. Urbana: University of Illinois Press. (reissued in paperback, 2010)

Elizabeth Weiser, Co-Editor

-Engaging Audience: Writing in an Age of New Literacies. Chicago: National Council of Teachers of English Press (2009).

FACULTY AWARDS

Morris Beja—Lifetime Service Award, from the International James Joyce Foundation, 2010.

Henri Cole-- Sara Teasdale Award in Poetry; National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship in Literature; elected a member of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences; appointed Poetry Editor of *The New Republic* magazine.

Susan H. Delagrang—Kairos 2010 Best Webtext Award

Frank Donoghue—The 2009-2010 Dr. Marlene B. Longenecker English Faculty Leadership and Teaching Award

Alan B. Farmer—College of Arts and Sciences Outstanding Teacher Award 2009-2010, finalist (one of four)

Margaret Goscilo-- Pressey Honors Endowment Faculty Grant

Harvey Graff-- Distinguished Undergraduate Research Mentor, The Ohio State University 2010; Gartner Honors Lecture, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, September 2010

Hannibal Hamlin—National Endowment for the Humanities Chairman's Special Award (\$626,964), Co-author, as Guest Curator, of grant proposal for *Manifold Greatness: The Creation and Afterlife of the King James Bible*, a traveling panel version of the Folger-Bodleian Exhibition of the same name, 2010-2012.

Jennifer Higginbotham—Department of English Undergraduate Professor of the Year
(*Cont. p. 8*)

FACULTY AWARDS AND HONORS

Andrew Hudgins—Ohio Arts Council Governor’s Award for the Arts

Pranav Jani-- Mershon Center for Security Studies Faculty Research grant; Gateway Study Abroad Seed Grant

Ben McCorkle--2010 Michelle Kendrick Award for Outstanding Digital Scholarship

Sandra Macpherson—2010 President’s Salute to Undergraduate Achievement

Koritha Mitchell—Critical Difference for Women professional development grant

Dorothy Noyes—spent August 2010 in residence at Georg-August Universität Göttingen as a fellow of the German Research Foundation’s Interdisciplinary Research Group on Cultural Property

Elizabeth Renker—Department of English Graduate Professor of the Year

Doug Ramspeck [Sutton-Ramspeck]—The 2010 Eric Hoffer Book Award for Poetry, for *Black Tupelo Country* (BkMk Press: University of Missouri-Kansas City); The Sherwin Howard Poetry Award for “Ghost Child” and “After the Storm”

Dickie Selfe—elected to the Executive Committee of the Conference on College on Composition and Communication for 2010-2013

Amy Shuman—guest lecturer at the Folklore Fellows Summer School in Finland, August, 2010.

H. Lewis Ulman-- Ohio State Teaching Enhancement Programs (OSTEP) Faculty and Professional Learning Community on Sustainability Across the Curriculum (2010–2011); Research Enhancement Grant (2010, with Rick Livingston)

Robyn Warhol--Senior Fellowship from the Freiburg Institute for Advanced Study in Freiburg, Germany

M. Elizabeth Weiser-- Investment for Impact Grant from Ohio State Newark; Scholarly Activities Grant, Newark Professional Standards Committee; President’s Salute to Undergraduate Academic Achievement

Andréa Williams—President’s Salute to Undergraduate Academic Achievement

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