

## From the Writing Program

This year's summer novel, assigned to incoming first-year students, was Joanne Harris's *Chocolat*. The novel focuses on a provincial French town that has to change radically to accommodate its new residents--Vianne, who opens a chocolate shop, and her daughter Anouk. With many allusions to *The Scarlet Letter*, the novel explores the universal tension we all feel between exercising restraint and expressing desire, and between wanting to belong to a place and wishing to move on.

As the novel's climactic scene occurs during Vianne's chocolate festival, composition classes put on a chocolate festival in September, an assignment in which they researched their favorite chocolates and presented their findings to classmates, along with some delicious samples. There was a communal viewing of the critically acclaimed film of *Chocolat* on September 15 in the Gordon Theater.

The Writing Program plans a research symposium for composition students in April, which will feature panels of select freshmen and community respondents. Plans for 2007 include the production of a brochure for newly admitted students, intended to introduce students to the centrality of writing in their college career.

*The Director of the Writing Program is Holly Blackford: blackfor@camden.*

## Commencement 2006

Seventy-two students received Bachelor's degrees in English during Commencement exercises at the Tweeter Center this May. English was the second most popular major, well behind perennial leader Psychology, which graduated 161 students, but comfortably ahead of Criminal Justice (fifty-one).

Among our department's graduates, eleven graduated with Honors (cumulative average of 3.5 or better), eleven with High Honors (3.75), and eight with Highest Honors (3.9). No English major attempted the challenging departmental honors program.

Two students added a second major to English: Daniel Alessandrini (History) and Jamie O'Connor (Psychology).

For the fourth year, qualifying Camden students were admitted to the New Brunswick chapter of Phi Beta Kappa. Among the fifteen Camden students recognized were English majors Andrew Keller, Beverly Ludwiczak, and Sonia Mixer.

Twenty-one students were awarded the Master's degree in English (same number as last year): five in Creating Writing, four in the Teaching of Writing, and twelve in the traditional Literature track. There were five scholarly theses, in addition to the five theses presented by the creative writers.

## Advising Goes Digital and Departmental

Two important developments over the past several months have brought academic advising at Rutgers-Camden into a new era. During the past year the university purchased a new web-based software program called Degree Navigator, touted as "a flexible degree audit and academic advising system for undergraduate programs." This program is integrated with a student's official transcript, and it audits his or her progress toward completion of general degree requirements and those of whatever major or minor programs he or she has officially declared. It is expected that these web-based audits will gradually replace the worksheets on which we have depended for many years. Pamphlets on Degree Navigator are generally available in campus offices; the program may be found at [camdendn.rutgers.edu](http://camdendn.rutgers.edu); help is available at [help@camden](mailto:help@camden).

Though students can now review their academic progress on line, whenever their record changes, they will still need an advisor to help them choose appropriate classes, resolve academic difficulties, and sort out the inevitable glitches that will attend digital advising in this early phase. During the past summer

the campus administration changed, fundamentally, the structure of

personal advising on campus: it dissolved the Office of Student Affairs and returned responsibility for student advising to the colleges and departments. From now on two assistant deans, Nancy Gulick and Danielle Thurman, will staff a much-reduced Office of Advising, responsible for new students and for students who have not declared a major, as well as for non-routine advising issues. Once students have declared a major, faculty advisors in the departments will handle both general and major requirements for their advisees.

In this new environment your relationship with your departmental advisor will be more important than ever. In addition to the traditional role of discussing courses in the major and assisting students with academic difficulties, your advisor will now conduct official reviews of all your requirements, advise you on courses outside the department, help resolve any problems with transfer credits, and make sure that Degree Navigator reflects your academic record accurately. All officially-declared English majors have now been assigned an advisor, henceforth their primary source of information on all academic matters. If you are unsure who your advisor is or if you would like to change to someone whose temperament, area of interest, or teaching schedule is better suited to your own, please contact the department secretary at your convenience ([deedalee@camden](mailto:deedalee@camden)).

*The Chair of the Department of English is Timothy Martin: [timartin@camden](mailto:timartin@camden).*

# Ex Cathedra

## The Phoenix

The Phoenix is a biannual publication of the Department of English, Rutgers University, Camden NJ 08102;

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Edited by Timothy Martin, Phoenix image by Sonia Krutzke.

# NEWS of Faculty

**Holly Blackford** has published an article on "Margaret Atwood's Novel Parables of Canadian Character" in *AmeriQuests*, and she has a contract from Scarecrow Press to edit and introduce L. M. Montgomery's "*Anne of Green Gables*": *A Children's Classic at 100*. In June, she presented her reader-response work on *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Huckleberry Finn* to the Children's Literature Association in Manhattan Beach, California.

Having been invited to the first-ever through third-ever international academic conferences on Bob Dylan, **Betsy Bowden** had papers read by proxy at conferences in Caen (France) and Frankfurt (Germany). She did, however, lend her August presence to a conference at Dartmouth. She also attended three conferences on medieval topics and one on Mayan folkways.

**Jill Capuzzo** continues to write for several sections of the *New York Times*. With the reworking of the paper's regional sections, Jill's opportunities have expanded and now include writing for the Styles section, the Real Estate section, and increasingly for the daily Metro news pages.

**Shany Fiske** received a grant from the Rutgers Research Council to study Greek tragedy on the Victorian stage this summer. She presented a paper on "Victorian Medea" at a conference on Medea in Bristol, England in July and a paper on Victorian theater at the North American Victorian Studies Association conference in August. She is happy to report that the new Classical Studies minor, to which she serves as advisor, is off to a great start.

**Chris Fitter** presented a paper on Shakespearean drama at an international conference, "Rediscovering Radicalism," at Goldsmiths College, University of London. The essay was one of those subsequently selected for publication of the proceedings in book format. He has recently completed a one-hundred-page chapter on *As You Like*

*It* in his book "Radical Shakespeare," now nearing completion.

This summer, **Lauren Grodstein** directed a creative writing workshop at the American Academy's annual summer writer's conference in Paris. Her story "Family Vacation" was included in the German anthology *Familien Geschichten* ("Family Stories"), where it was entitled *Familienausflug*, a word she keeps trying valiantly to pronounce. Her young adult novel, *Girls Dinner Club*, was named a New York Public Library Book for the Teen Age, and her novel *Reproduction is the Flaw of Love* was issued as an audiobook in England and the United States.

Ayrina Shiyun Lopez was born on May 19 to Mijeong Park and former Rutgers faculty member **Robert Lopez**.

"I haven't retired; I just gave up teaching," says Professor Emeritus **William Lutz**. Or to put it in more current language, "I have refocused my strategic resources to better utilize my core competencies going forward in a challenging yet rewarding environment." Professor Lutz has consulted with the US Securities and Exchange Commission and the Investment Company Institute, and he has written financial disclosure documents in plain language for Comcast, Xerox, MasterCard, Merrill Lynch, and other corporations. All this has not kept him from indulging in one of his

favorite pastimes, going to the movies in the middle of the day. Don't miss *Army of Shadows*, *The Illusionist*, and *Little Miss Sunshine*.

In June **Timothy Martin** presented a paper on "*Ulysses* and the *Roman à Clef*" at the 20th International James Joyce Symposium in Budapest, and his essay "Matthew Arnold, *Ulysses*, Seriousness" was published in *Joyce's Victorians*, volume nine in the series "Joyce Studies in Italy."

**Lisa Zeidner** is completing the first draft of a screenplay for Focus Features—an adaptation of Lily King's novel *The English Teacher*. She has also sold an option on her own novel, *Alexandra Freed*. In a weird twist, she will be writing a screenplay to move the 1982 story into present times.

## Carol Singley Receives Human Dignity Award

The Department of English is pleased to announce that Carol Singley has received a 2006 Rutgers University Human Dignity Award. Funded by the Office of the President, these awards honor individuals or groups who have demonstrated a commitment to "the value and importance of diversity at Rutgers and in society." Dr. Singley was recognized for her work, in collaboration with five of her students, in developing a multicultural children's literature collection at Robeson library, a project that was funded by the Bildner Family Intercultural Fund.

This is the second Human Dignity Award received in our department in the past three years. In 2004, the department as a whole was recognized for multiculturalism in all its programs. Writing Program Director Holly Blackford presented the department's successful application at that time.

**Matthew Appleton** ('96) is editor of *Some Fantastic*, a quarterly, e-published "critzine" focused on science fiction, fantasy, and horror in literature and film.

An essay written by **Jean Curnow** (M.A.'05) on "Pythagoras, Plato, and the Sound of Music in Edmund Spenser's Marriage Song," has been accepted for publication in the *Journal of Graduate Liberal Studies*.

**Karen Deaver** (M.A.'06) won Best Paper Award for her "Breaking the Back of Words: Slave Literacies in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*," at Rutgers Camden's first English Graduate Student Association conference, "Revisioning the Canon," held in March of 2006.

**Kate Delany** (M.A.'03) has published a poetry chapbook, *Reading Darwin*, available through Poets Corner Press.

**Denise Flynn** ('96) is Director of Development at the Please Touch Museum in Philadelphia.

**Dana Harrison** (M.A.'06) has entered the Ph.D. program in English at Temple University.

**Robin Headley** ('06) was accepted into this past summer's "Approaching Walden" seminar, held at the Walden Woods Project's Thoreau Institute in Lincoln, Massachusetts.

In 2006 **Regina Hewitt** published *Symbolic Interactions: Social Problems and Literary Interventions in the Works of Baillie, Scott, and Landor* with Bucknell University Press. She is Professor of English at the University of South Florida.

**Valencia Jackson** ('97, M.A.'99) has been promoted to Assistant Professor II, with tenure, at Camden County College.

**Michael Kelly** ('02) graduated from the New York College of Osteopathic Medicine in June of 2006. He has begun a five-year residency in general surgery at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine. He plans, eventually, to seek a fellowship in plastic surgery.

**Elizabeth Mannion** (M.A.'02) was awarded a Ph.D. from the School of Drama and Film Studies at Trinity College Dublin this past July. She wrote her dissertation on Irish film and is teaching a course in that subject for us this Fall.

**Susan Muaddi Darraj** ('97,

M.A.'00) has published a collection of short stories, *The Inheritance of Exile*, with the University of Notre Dame Press. In manuscript, the book was a finalist for an AWP Book Award in 2003. The stories are linked, and they feature young Arab American women living in Philadelphia who are caught



between cultures.

**Chinelo Okparanta** (M.A.'06) has accepted a Dean's Fellowship to enter the Ph. D. program in English literature at the University of Iowa. Her fellowship will give her teaching experience and provide full support for four years.

**Carol Plum-Ucci** (M.A.'05) has published her fourth Young Adult novel, *The Night My Sister Went Missing*. The book has been nominated as a Quick Pick for Reluctant Readers by the American Library Association's young adult services division, YALSA. It will be discussed at the ALA's midwinter meeting in January.

**Christine Tittermary** ('99; M.A.'03) is engaged to marry Phillip Sheppard, a senior software engineer at Lockheed Martin in Moorestown, this October.

A story by **Marion Wyce** (M.A.'07), "Loss Prevention," has been selected for performance in the Philadelphia stage series Writing Aloud.

## NEWS OF *Students*

**Elizabeth Kimball** (M.A.'03) has published an essay on "The Propriety of Ruins: Style and the Making of the Urban Nation" in *College English Notes*. She is a Ph.D. candidate in English at Temple University. She and her husband **Mike Landis** ('83) welcomed baby Peter into the world on Christmas Day, 2005.

**Susan Lyndell Pepiak** ('88) has been an elementary school teacher for Haddon Township School District since 1991. She has taught first and second grade, Basic Skills, Reading Recovery, and English Language Learners.

**Bill Major** (M.A.'90) received his Ph.D. in American literature from Indiana University in 1997. He was recently promoted to Associate Professor of English at Hillyer College of the University of Hartford. His articles on American autobiography have appeared in *Arizona Quarterly*, *Journal of Narrative Theory*, *a/b*, and *Mosaic*, among others. He lives quietly, though (as he puts it) not always modestly, with his wife Ginny and two young daughters, Susannah and Ava, in Manchester, Connecticut.

*FitzGerald, continued from page 1*

Professor FitzGerald brings considerable teaching experience to his new position at Rutgers. At Maryland, during graduate school and immediately thereafter, he taught an impressive array of courses, from first-year composition and surveys in World and British literature to special topics in rhetoric. At the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, where he taught full-time from 2004 to 2006, he offered courses in science writing, linguistics, and rhetoric. At Maryland he served as Assistant Director of the Professional Writing Program.

As a teacher of rhetoric, William FitzGerald told the *Phoenix*, he emphasizes learning "by doing," with most of his courses involving some sort of individualized (but often collaborative) multi-stage project that integrates inquiry, reflection, research, and production and requires students to assume the stance of an expert in some academic or professional context. At the same time, he emphasizes the importance of being what he calls a "reflective practitioner," requiring that students account for the choices they make in their written or, increasingly, their multimedia compositions. Virtually all his classes feature some formal presentation of major projects at the semester's end. Here at Rutgers his undergraduate teaching will emphasize rhetoric, including courses involving multimedia and digital forms, and he will make an important contribution to the Teaching of Writing track in our Master's program.

Bill FitzGerald has many reasons to be interested in teaching at Rutgers Camden and in returning to Philadelphia. He was attracted to Rutgers, in part, because of its combination of modest size and academic quality. "Few public universities," he says, "have such a strong liberal arts curriculum on a manageable, even intimate, scale while at the same time offering significant opportunities for research. I had a strong sense when visiting the campus this last winter that this combination would bring out the best in me." He grew up in the city and its northern suburbs, and attended Haverford College (where he majored in Mathematics), so returning to the area is "like being reacquainted with an old friend. We've both changed quite a bit—mostly for the better, I'd say." He looks forward to discovering new things and sharing old pleasures with his wife Emilia and daughter Magdalena (now two and a half). He and Emilia are happiest, he says, "experiencing the world through Magdalena's eyes, chiefly at the local playground." The FitzGeralds have settled in Ardmore, just west of the city.

## Retirement of Joanna Myers

Professor Joanna Shaw Myers, a visiting part-time lecturer here at Rutgers since 1998, has retired from teaching. A graduate of Newnham College, Cambridge University, she earned her Ph.D. at the University of Pennsylvania while raising seven children and teaching full-time at Chestnut Hill College. She was Professor and Chairperson of English at Chestnut Hill College until her retirement in 1997. She and her husband Walter live in Chestnut Hill. They have ten grandchildren. English, on average, will be spoken with less color around the department this fall; wit will be less dry.

## Billy Collins Highlights Spring Writers' Conference

The 20th annual Spring Writers' Conference, scheduled for March 31, 2007, promises to be a special one. It will feature former United States Poet Laureate Billy Collins, the author of seven volumes of poems, most recently *The Trouble with Poetry*. If you are not on our mailing list to receive notification about the free readings at our Spring and Summer Writers' Conferences, please send an email to Lisa Zeidner: [zeidner@camden.rutgers.edu](mailto:zeidner@camden.rutgers.edu).

## Awards and Prizes: Spring 2006

*English Department Prize*—to the outstanding English major graduating from Camden College of Arts and Sciences

**Linda Proctor**

*English Department Award*—to the outstanding English major graduating from University College

**Aida Galarza**

*Betty Harris Jones English Department Award*—to a graduating senior English major likely to make significant contributions in future teaching and scholarship

**Sherry Chmielinski**

*Ralph Bergen Allen Prize*—to the composition student who, in the opinion of those who teach the courses, has demonstrated excellence in composition

**Neal Robbins**, for "Changing the Composition of Man," written for Melissa Smith

*Miriam Thomas Chaplin Endowed Scholarship*—to full-time undergraduate students majoring in English with a strong grade-point average

**Emily McCambridge, David Solomon**

*John C. Wentz Memorial Prize*—to the student submitting the best paper in an upper-division English course during the previous calendar year

**Amanda Mita**, "Recovering Commonwealth: A Call for the Return to Ancient Ways," written for Chris Fitter

*Gloria H. Moffatt Scholarship*—to a full-time undergraduate English major who has demonstrated a commitment to public or community service

**Mary Clare Chezik**

*Rutgers University-Camden Alumni Association Writing Award*—to a student who has demonstrated significant achievement in creative writing

**David Solomon**

*James L. Sanderson Graduate Award*—to the student submitting the best paper in a graduate English course during the previous calendar year

**Carl Lindgren**, "Paradise Lost But Not Regained: Destructive History in 'The Bear,'" written for Chris Fitter

*Lansbury Prize for Academic Excellence*—named in memory of Dr. Coral Lansbury, the first dean of the Graduate School at Camden, this award recognizes outstanding performance by a graduate student

**Chinelo Okparanta**

*The Dr. Louis Forman Humanities Award*—to an undergraduate student in University College who has demonstrated outstanding ability in the Humanities

**Barry Jost**

## Graduate Program Welcomes New Teaching Assistants

The Graduate Program announces the appointment of five new teaching assistants, who join Nadia Kotula, Carl Lindgren, Michael Miller, and Danielle Magnusson as the core instructional staff in our Writing Program.

**Elizabeth Allen** has a B.S. in Business Administration from Bowling Green University. She has taught writing in Costa Rica and California. She is also certified as an elementary teacher in New Jersey in both English and Spanish.

**Nicholas Delo** has an M.F.A. in Creative Writing from the University of Iowa. He taught computer skills for two years at the Laboratory Institute of Merchandising in Manhattan.

**Malikah Goss** has completed a year of our M.A. program. She has a degree in screenwriting from the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, and she has taught at Camden County College.

**Candice Kaup** entered the graduate program this past Spring. Her B.A. is from NYU and she has taught in NYU's tutoring program.

**David Solomon** is the first student to be offered a teaching assistantship through the Rutgers Camden dual-degree program. He plans to pursue an M.F.A. after receiving the M.A. here at Rutgers.

## March 2007: Study Tour to South Africa

A highlight of our Spring schedule will be a course in South African Literature, taught by Tyler Hoffman. The syllabus will focus on work of the last thirty or forty years and feature some of the most accomplished writers in the English language, including two Nobel Prize winners, Nadine Gordimer and J. M. Coetzee. South African literature takes account of the remarkable history of the country, which, as a result of European colonization and forced enslavement, includes British, Dutch, and Southeast Asian peoples, in addition to native Africans. The syllabus will also include several films of the post-apartheid era, including *Tsotsi* and *Red Dust*.



The course lasts eight weeks and culminates in a trip during Spring Break, where students will experience first-hand some of the places they have read about, visit world-class wineries, read on the beach by the Indian Ocean, and go on safari in Kruger National Park. The group will also tour several museums, meet with practicing writers, and go to a play or two in Johannesburg.

## Gleaner

As advisor to the *Gleaner*, Jill Capuzzo worked with the incoming editors over the summer in their plans for changes at the paper. Incoming Editor-in-Chief Ryan Sylvester plans to upgrade the paper's graphics and redesign the front page. He will also bring back the music pages, add more critics, and restore the commentary pages, with help from former commentary editor Tom Keiser. The *Gleaner* offers students a new venue for their writing and gets their names into print. The department faculty and the *Gleaner* staff encourage students to join the paper and submit articles for publication.

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# The Phoenix

NEWSLETTER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH—RUTGERS UNIVERSITY CAMDEN

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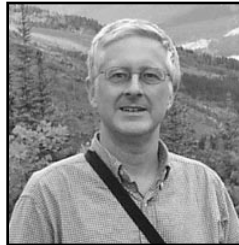
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## The Department of English Welcomes William FitzGerald



Assistant Professor  
William FitzGerald

After conducting a national search, the department is pleased to announce the appointment of William FitzGerald as Assistant Professor of English, effective this Fall. Professor FitzGerald's main areas of scholarly interest are rhetoric and the teaching of composition. He received his bachelor's degree from Haverford College and his Ph.D. from the University of Maryland in 2002. He is a native Philadelphian.

At Maryland, Professor FitzGerald wrote his dissertation on "Speakable Reverence: Human Language and the Scene of Prayer," a study of the fundamentally rhetorical character of prayer as "language addressed to socially significant non-human audiences." He also did graduate work in linguistics, literary theory, and composition theory. He has presented numerous papers at meetings of such important scholarly organizations as the Rhetoric Society of America, the Conference on College Composition and Communication, and the Council of Writing Program Administrators, and he has articles forthcoming both on the subject of his dissertation and in composition studies.

*FitzGerald, continued on page 5*

## M. F. A. in the Works

The Department of English is working with the university administration to establish a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing here, beginning, in all likelihood, with the 2008-09 academic year. The M.F.A. represents the terminal degree in the creative arts, analogous to the J.D. in law and the Ph.D. in the various academic disciplines. This new program would require forty-two credits and offer concentrations in three genres: poetry, fiction, and non-fiction prose. The initiative is consistent with Dean Margaret Marsh's ambitious plans to extend graduate study beyond the Master's level in selected disciplines and in interdisciplinary subjects within Arts and Sciences. A Ph.D. in Childhood Studies, the first of its kind in the United States, will debut here in the Fall of 2007.

The M.F.A. at Rutgers-Camden is designed to capitalize on the department's strong faculty in Creative Writing as well as on its well-established and distinctive Spring and Summer Writers' Conferences. Lisa Zeidner, J.T. Barbarese, and Lauren Grodstein will serve as mainstays of the program, with help from a full-time faculty member with a national reputation selected on a yearly basis, as well as from visiting writers offering special courses each year. An annual series of readings will bring additional talent to campus.

The core of the curriculum will be six writing workshops (including a two-semester thesis workshop), supplemented by "craft" classes, courses in literature, and perhaps two electives. Graduates of the program will emerge with book-length manuscripts to bring to the marketplace, a degree that will enable them to teach on the university level, and considerable familiarity with the world of publishing.

With the approval of the dean, the department's proposal has been forwarded to New Brunswick, and an outside consultant has presented his findings. We hope for final approval by the end of the current academic year.

*The Director of graduate studies in English is Tyler Hoffman: [thoffman@camden.rutgers.edu](mailto:thoffman@camden.rutgers.edu).*

Visit our website: <http://english.camden.rutgers.edu>