



# The Canon

The Newsletter of the Plymouth State University English Department  
Fall 2006  
Volume 1, Issue 1

## Alumni Reception a Success!

Julia Chesley

The first English Department Alumni Reception was held on Friday, September 29. Held in Frost Commons, the event gave current students and faculty the opportunity to catch up with recent graduates and meet professionals in their fields while enjoying food and beverages.

Many students were paired up with Plymouth State University graduates who hold degrees in their option, allowing the students to discuss career opportunities and learn about the reality of their chosen professions.

Some of these professionals included writers, professors, and high school teachers.

Dr. Liz Ahl, the new

department chair, delivered a short speech and started off the highlight of the night: the Open Mic.

Several recent PSU graduates read original works covering a vast array of topics.

Participants included Ryan McLellan, who read

a poem about the struggles of teaching, and Robby Binette, a favorite from past Poets and Writers Open Mics.

Alumni interested in attending or helping to plan a reception for Fall 2008 should contact Liz Ahl at (603) 535-2595 or eahl@plymouth.edu.



## From the Chair **Dr. Elizabeth Ahl**

Greetings from Ellen Reed House, and welcome to the first issue of *The Canon*, a newsletter for current students and alumni of the PSU English Department. This newsletter was born out of conversations among faculty, alumni, and students who wanted a way to keep in touch, learn about what current and former Plymouth State English majors are up to, and keep abreast of English depart-

ment news. Let us know what you'd like to see in this newsletter.

This is my first year as chair of a vibrant department in the midst of exciting curricular change. We are in the second year of implementing a new major, with core courses such as "Identity and Difference in American Literature," "Studies in English," and an upper level critical theory course. We now offer advanced writing courses

in prose, poetry, and technical communication, and practicum students continue to make meaningful contributions to *The Clock* and *Centripetal*.

Our majors are studying in places like Ireland and Australia. Alumni are pursuing graduate studies, working as technical writers, teaching, working in Web design, and making films, among other things. Faculty members are actively writing, publishing,

researching, and developing new courses for our students.

A lot of great things are happening; we hope that fostering connections among current students, faculty, and alumni, via this newsletter and events like our Fall Reception for new majors and our Alumni Weekend Reception, will contribute to this energy and take us in exciting new directions.

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# An English Major Goes Abroad!

Nate Bieniek

Everyone who goes abroad without really *needing* to has their own list of reasons for traveling. I was not different. The first reason was because Australia was one of those semi-exotic places I always wanted to experience. The second was thinking that if I could realize an opportunity this exciting, I shouldn't waste my chance. The third reason (which was quite possibly the deciding factor) was that Australia is hot—blissfully, brilliantly, blessedly *hot*.

Everyone involved in the study abroad experience will expound upon the great soul- and mind-enriching goodness that is involved in immersing yourself in a foreign country. I didn't really believe my life would be that much affected—still, that was usually why I told people I was going.

But the truth is, it's all true. That is, traveling really can do us a world of good. It's a shock to go somewhere new, and much like jumping into a cold pool, you'll either find yourself struggling to get used to your new environment and enjoying the exhilarating experience, or begin clambering for a quick exit.

On the whole, Australia was not a terribly shocking host country. They are a very Western culture and have many of the same corporate food and manufacturing chains that exist in other Western countries. They speak a version of English, and they're a fairly young country, lacking many of the entrenched traditions found in

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other parts of the world.

There are differences though. The sports are different; the vast majority of the population lives on the coasts; Australia is still a Commonwealth that recognizes the sovereignty of the Queen of England; and the famous "no worries" attitude has a great effect on their society and economy.

They still enjoy an almost univer-

sal 9 to 5 work week. If you find yourself in need of an item that you can't find at a pub or restaurant after five or six o'clock, you'll almost certainly have to wait until the next day for the stores to open again.

Living for four months in Australia was one of the most fun and exciting times I've experienced in my life. I camped out on the second largest sand island in the world. Near my school I went swimming on a regular basis in aquamarine water where dolphins swam in among my friends and me. I went sailing and snorkeling for three days near the Great Barrier Reef. I went parasailing. I bet at horse races and went to beautiful restaurants. I enjoyed an incredibly vibrant night life and took advantage of the lower drinking age to go on a wine tour. I hiked through the bush and went on an Aboriginal Walk About.

Basically, I did more in four months in Australia than I did in three years at Plymouth. It's worth it, and even though the experience ends more quickly than you may desire, it can be just the beginning of a new lifestyle and zest for life.

## A Medievalist In Our Midst

Dr. Karolyn Kinane is the newest addition to the English department faculty here at Plymouth State University. Her focus is on Medieval and Renaissance literature.

Dr. Kinane received her B.A. in English from SUNY New Paltz, and her Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota. While at Minnesota she taught a wide range of courses for the English Department and served as the administrative assistant for the Center for Medieval Studies.

At Minnesota she was awarded the Frederick Klaeber Fellowship, the Ruth Drake Dissertation Fellowship, a PEO Scholar Award, a Graduate Research Partnership Award, and the Samuel Holt Monk Prize for best student publication.

She then went on to work at Wabash College, a private, all-male liberal arts school in Indiana. There she

taught courses ranging from Graduate and Professional Writing to the History of the English Language, to Medievalism and the Lord of the Rings.

Her research interests include medieval saints and demons, Arthurian legend, and pedagogy. She is currently working on two articles about the 2004 film *King Arthur*. She says that the "interdisciplinarity and the mystery" of Medieval studies continually intrigue her.

Dr. Kinane believes that caring and passionate faculty profoundly influenced her intellectual life as a student, and that it is important to work with colleagues who express the same devotion to their crafts.



She says this is what drew her to PSU in the first place. She feels that bright, engaged professors attract similar students, something she has found to be true here.

In her spare time Karolyn does yoga, hikes, writes, and scours New England for good food.

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# Get Involved! Clubs in the English Department

## MESA

Meghan Plumpton

Mentoring Enhances Student Achievement (MESA) is an organization founded by and focused on students. The organization's main goal is to help new students network in the English department and become comfortable with those that will be guiding them throughout their university experience. There are possibilities for all English majors and minors to network outside of the educational system at the Fall Social, which happens at the beginning of each fall semester.

Our next event will be a reading and writing night in late October or early November. This night helps new students meet those who have been a part of the system for some time. Older students are given the opportunity to help new students choose classes and work on their writing and reading skills. If you are interested in joining, please contact the MESA advisor, Joe Mealey at [j\\_mealey@plymouth.edu](mailto:j_mealey@plymouth.edu) or the student coordinator, Meghan Plumpton at [mtplumpton@plymouth.edu](mailto:mtplumpton@plymouth.edu).

## Sigma Tau Delta

Meghan Plumpton

Sigma Tau Delta is the International English Honor Society. We hold fundraisers and community builders throughout the year. Last year for the first time, we sent two of our members to the Sigma Tau Delta Conference in Portland, Ore., one of whom actually presented. This year we are hoping to send at least four of our members to this year's conference in Pittsburg, Pa., and would love to have as many members accepted to present as possible.

To become a part of the honor society, English majors must uphold a 3.0 GPA in their major classes and must also have been a declared English major for three semesters. A one-page letter of intent (explaining why you want to be a member of Sigma Tau Delta) must be submitted to either the Sigma Tau Delta advisor Ann McClellan at [akmclellan@plymouth.edu](mailto:akmclellan@plymouth.edu) or the society president, Meghan Plumpton at [mtplumpton@plymouth.edu](mailto:mtplumpton@plymouth.edu) no later than November 1.

Current Sigma Tau Delta members who wish to submit a proposal for the annual conference must do so no later than November 30.

## The Clock

Meghan Plumpton

*The Clock* is the student run weekly newspaper here at Plymouth State University. Covering news, features, arts and entertainment, and sports, *The Clock* focuses on keeping the students informed. You can check out the paper every Friday on newsstands all over campus or pick up a copy right outside of the newspaper office in the HUB.

If you are interested in writing, there are opportunities every week. *The Clock* is constantly looking for writers, whether you have full-time interests or specific concerns one week. If you are interested in voicing your opinions or interests, contact the Editor-in-Chief, Samantha Kenney at [slkenney@plymouth.edu](mailto:slkenney@plymouth.edu).

## Poets and Writers

Ivy Page

PSU Poets and Writers is a student organization designed to cater to the literary community. The mission of the organization is to unify aspiring writers and to give them an outlet through which their creativity can flow.

In addition to publishing *Centripetal*, the premier literary magazine in New Hampshire, biannually, Poets and Writers also holds Open Mics on a monthly basis during the fall and spring semesters. Open Mics are held on the first Tuesday of every month at Mandarin Taste on South Main Street in Plymouth.

## Sylvia K. Burack Award

The Sylvia K. Burack Award is open to students enrolled full-time in a college or university. Submit a 600- to 800-word essay in English on a topic you feel passionate about. The winner receives \$500 and a one-year subscription to *The Writer*. Entries must be postmarked by March 1, 2007. Only one entry per person. Include a cover page with essay title, word count, your name, address, phone number and e-mail address. Contact information must be valid in May 2007. Place only the title (not your name) at the top of each numbered page of the essay itself; entries must be typed, double-spaced, and paper-clipped (not stapled). Send entries to: Sylvia K. Burack Award, *The Writer*, 21027 Crossroads Circle, PO Box 1612, Waukesha, WI 53187-1612.

# Plymouth Past

What our alumni are up to ...

## Nancy Libby '88

Nancy has finished her M.L.I.S. (Master of Library and Information Science) from the University of Rhode Island in N. Kingston, R.I.

## Jeff Bourgeois '95

Jeff is currently living and working in Sorengo, Switzerland, where he has been serving as the director of student programs for Franklin College. Franklin is a four-year American college located along the shores of Lake Lugano in the foothills of the Swiss Alps. He has just completed his first full academic year there.

In mid-September he led a road rally for Franklin students. This road rally consisted of visits to Zurich, the Matterhorn, St. Moritz and other Swiss attractions as part of a three-day event.

## Erik Mauk '96

Erik is living in Texas, where he is a filmmaker and editor. He has written a couple of scripts that he and his coworkers made into short films. Erik also plans to shoot his first narrative feature next year. He went back to school at Southern Illinois University in the fall of 1998 to study filmmaking and has been doing that ever since.

His new found passion is documentaries. He recently shot a feature-length documentary, which is currently being edited, and is now shooting another. As he puts it, "You don't have to manufacture stories, they're already out there—you just have to find them."

## Pam Letourneau Fallon '88

Pam recently moved to Nebraska and is venturing back into the classroom after working in administration for the past 11 years.

## Steve Pink '02

PSU's English Department, in conjunction with PACE, will host a free screening of the award-winning documentary, *The War Tapes*, filmed by New Hampshire National Guard soldiers in Iraq, and featuring PSU English alumnus Steve Pink. Earlier this year, *The War Tapes* won "Best Feature Documentary" at the Tribeca Film Festival in New York City. The film will be shown at 7 p.m. on Wednesday evening, November 1, in Boyd Hall, Room 144. Steve Pink will introduce the film and answer questions about his involvement in the film project.

## Department Snapshot

As of the beginning of the Fall 2006 semester, these are the numbers for the Plymouth State English Department:

### Students:

161 English Majors  
20 English Minors

### For Faculty:

Full-Time Faculty: 14  
Adjunct Faculty: 27



Steve Pink in Iraq.

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# And Present

## What our Faculty are Doing...

### Liz Ahl

At the end of this summer, Liz was able to collaborate as a poet with dancers and musicians. The Terminal Hip Dance Theatre put on a show in Waterville Valley, N.H., blending dance, guitar music and poetry.

Liz was also honored to be able to collaborate with Jonathan Santore (chair, Department of Music, Theatre and Dance) on a piece for the PSU 9/11 Memorial Concert, conducted by PSU Professor of Music Dan Perkins.

### Scott Coykendall

Last summer, Scott finished a consulting project for a software company in Kansas City. The company is launching a new multimedia training initiative called *Punch! University* designed to actively teach their customers how to apply their new products.

Scott took part in a "summit" in which he worked with product managers and documentation specialists. They developed goals, standards, templates, and methodologies for devising and delivering this content as well as negotiating a work-flow process.

### Robin DeRosa

Robin's first book, *Assimilation and Subversion in Earlier American Literature* was published this summer by Cambridge Scholars Press (U.K.). She also has a chapter in *American Indian Rhetorics of Survivance* (ed. Stromberg, University of Pittsburgh Press).

She recently presented at Harvard University ("Back to Salem: Samantha, Sabrina, and the Mock Trial") and at Northeast Modern Language Association ("The Price of Research: Science and History in Acceptable Risk").

She also regularly facilitates book discussions at local libraries (including Plymouth and Laconia) and give talks on Salem history at various New Hampshire historical societies as part of the New Hampshire Humanities Council.

### Bonnie Epstein

Bonnie received the Outstanding Educator award from OCTA (the Oregon-California Trails Association), given "in recognition of valuable contributions for making a concerted effort in education and preservation of the historic emigrant trails." The group cited her work in teaching about trail history to East coast students and raising student interest in the subject matter.

She also spent two weeks in Ireland and England immersed in Irish Gothic and Thomas Hardy at an international conference.

### Arthur Fried

Art has been appointed Faculty Fellow, working with ITS and the Frost School on online education issues.

### Ann McClellan

Ann organized a panel and presented a paper on the Booker Prize for the annual North East Conference on British Studies at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst in November 2005.

She published an article entitled "Dialect, Gender, and Colonialism in The Real Charlotte" in *Etudes Irlandaises*, an international journal on Irish Studies in spring 2006.

She also obtained a grant from the Whiting Foundation for a research trip to England this past summer. There she worked at the British Library and the women's colleges at Oxford and Cambridge Universities. The research done there is directly related to her book manuscript on fictional representations of women academics.

While in England, Ann also presented on Virginia Woolf at "The Edwardians," an international conference at the University of Hatfield.

She is currently working on drafting a book proposal to send out to university presses.

### Joe Monninger

Joe won a New Hampshire Arts Council Fellowship for 2007. His latest book, *Two Ton, One Night, One Fight: Tony Galento v. Joe Louis*, will be published this November, and a young adult novel, *Baby*, is forthcoming. His article on surfing, "Catch a Wave," appeared in the *Boston Globe* Travel Section; it featured three Plymouth State surfers.

### Meg Petersen

Meg published the poem "Cold War Relic" in *Entelechy International: A Journal of Contemporary Ideas* in Fall 2006. Her poems "Rendezvous" and "My Debt to the Moon" appeared in *\*Regrets Only\** (Pear Tree Press), also during Fall 2006. She will be presenting "Writing for Your Teaching Life" at NCTE Nashville in November.

### Paul Rogalus

*Pigeon Wars*, a one-act monologue by Paul Rogalus, was the Audience Award Winner at the SAS PlayFEST put on by the Atlantis Playmakers in Lowell, Mass., in July 2006.

### Lynn Rudmin-Chong

Lynn is currently chair of the Belknap County Democrats, a position which also places her on the NH-Dems State Executive Committee as well. She is also town chair of the Sanbornton Democrats, and a Winnisquam Regional School District School Board member.

In addition to all of her political work, Lynn is the moderator and organizer of a weekly area writing group called "People of Words."

# Advising Notes For Spring 2007

## Special Topics Courses Offered:

**CRN 30631 EN-3570.01**

### **Topics in Film: Gangster Films**

Since the beginning of the sound era, and even before, American filmmakers have favored the gangster genre to explore a variety of dramatic topics, including violence, the will to power, greed, loyalty, and masculinity. In more recent decades, interest in the gangster film has spread abroad, first to France, then to a number of other nations and cultures. In this topics course we will look at a variety of gangster films from the U.S. and from countries such as France, Great Britain, and China. Among the works viewed will be Little Caesar; Scarface; Godfather I; Le Samourai; Lock, Stock, and Smoking Barrels; and episodes of the Sopranos.

**Offered: TR 2 – 3:15 p.m. and T 6:30 – 9 p.m. in Memorial 103 with Arthur M. Fried**

**CRN 30594 EN-2350.01**

### **Decades: The Twenties**

Introductory course. The Jazz Age. The Roaring Twenties. The “lost generation” of Hemingway and Fitzgerald. The Harlem Renaissance. These are the terms by which the American 1920s are remembered, and they indicate a period of profound growth and change in literary and cultural history. Through readings and in-class discussions, we will consider the many facets of 1920s culture, exploring such topics as popular reading tastes and literary quality, the innovations of Modernism, racial and gender representations, and the cultural politics of the Jazz Age.

**Offered: MWF 1:25 – 2:15 p.m. in Rounds 203 with Joseph Mealey**

**CRN 30604 EN-3750.01**

### **Topics in Literature: The “Real” World**

This course will explore the nature of “reality” as it is represented in various forms of recent American texts, such as novels, plays, poetry, short stories, film, interactive and hypertext fiction, visual art, video games, and television shows. Topics covered will include: American Realism, verisimilitude, magical realism, modern and post-modern landscapes, the simulacrum, authenticity, apophenia and pareidolia, reality TV, virtual reality, and metafiction.

**Offered: M 5:30 – 8 p.m. in Rounds 203 with Robin DeRosa**

## **Still Need A “Group A” Literature Class?**

*Make sure you sign up for Medieval Literature!*

CRN 30620 • EN-2150.01 • TR 11 a.m.– 12:15 p.m.

Taught by our newest faculty member, Karolyn Kinane

## Linguistics Courses for Students Prior to 2006-2007

If you still need to fulfill a linguistics course requirement, the names have changed a little. To find out the name of your requirement, just find your option and your catalog year.

### Literature Option

**01/02 through 04/05:**

You aren't required to have a linguistics class

**05/06:**

LL2000 Intro to Language and Linguistics

### Teacher's Certification

**01/02 through 03/04:**

LL3100 History and Structure of English Language

LL3815 Intro to English Linguistics

**04/05 through 05/06:**

LL2000 Intro to Language and Linguistics

LL3815 Intro to English Linguistics

### Writing Option

**01/02 through 03/04:**

LL2000 Intro to Language and Linguistics

**04/05:**

LL2000 Intro to Language and Linguistics OR

EN3130 Non-Fiction Workshop

**05/06:**

LL2000 Intro to Language and Linguistics

### Contract and Film Option

**03/04 through 04/05:**

You aren't required to have a linguistics class

**05/06:**

LL2000 Intro to Language and Linguistics

# November 2006

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		October 30 Spring 2007 Class Registration Begins	1 The War Tapes, 8 p.m., Boyd Hall 144 (PSU ALUMNUS!)	2	3 Midnight Deadline for Poets & Writers Centripetal Submis- sions!	4
5	6	7 7p.m. Open Mic at The Mandarin Taste	8	9 Spring 2007 Class Registration Ends	10 Veteran's Day (no classes)	11
12	13	14	15 7 p.m. <i>Make a Buzz at the Beehive</i> at the Karl Drerup Gallery	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
— No University Classes —						
26	27	28	29	30		

# December 2006

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7 Sigma Tau Delta Inductions	8	9
10	11	12 Centripetal Launch Party, Mandarin Taste, 7:p.m.	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
————— Finals Week —————						
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

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