

P ~~en & Ink~~ Pixels Notes from the NDSU Department of English

Greetings from the Chair

My three-year term as chair comes to an end June 30th and Dr. Gary Totten will take over the position July 1st. Gary has been with the department since 2004 and is very well-prepared to take on this role: he was Graduate Director in the department for three years, he was Faculty Senate President in 2011-12, and Interim Head of Criminal Justice / Political Science last year.

Launching and sustaining the newsletter has been one of the rewarding achievements of my three years. Tina Young has done an outstanding job of writing and gathering stories, designing the document, and then getting it out to all of you. The faculty and students have given us stellar material to work with: publications, presentations, and awards, as this issue makes amply clear. The alumni have been increasingly generous in

sharing their stories and I hope that component of the newsletter continues to grow. I will be reaching out to alumni the next two years, especially those in the Fargo-Moorhead area, as I have been awarded a Bush Foundation Fellowship to re-establish an informal English Language Learning program in the city. I'll be looking for volunteer literacy sponsors who want to share their time and expertise in exchange for an opportunity to see the world through the unique perspective of international students and scholars who come to NDSU, as well as refugees from around the world who come to our community.

Thanks for reading the newsletter, contributing to its success, and supporting the English department at NDSU.

Kevin Brooks
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Student Spotlight

David Lemke

David Lemke graduated with his MA in Literature. His thesis, *Utopia, Desire, and Exigence: Re-theorizing Utopia as Rhetorical Action* was defended March 22, 2013 and sought to redefine Utopia as a literary genre. Specifically, Lemke argues that Utopias and utopian literature should be read as socially situated actions that are interpreted through an exigence composed of the rhetorical and socio-political situation from which an author writes and from which a critic reads. He argues that by reading Utopias as actions the inherent subjectivity in literary studies can be redirected in a more positive direction. Instead of arguing about the positive or negative aspects of a utopian work's content, critics can focus on the effect such texts have in critiquing and reimagining society. Lemke read Margaret Atwood's *Oryx and Crake* against the business practices and advertising of Monsanto Company to suggest ways in which this system of analysis could be more beneficial for utopian studies and leftist literary criticism. Lemke is hoping to spend his summer working in Italy.



Karen Sorensen

Karen Sorensen earned her PhD in Rhetoric, Writing, and Culture. She completed her defense in April on her dissertation, "Carl Sagan's *Cosmos*: The Rhetorical Construction of Popular Science Mythology." Using the rhetorical concepts of *kairos*, *ethos*, *aethos*, and *mythos* her dissertation explores the intersection of science with popular culture and builds a new framework for rhetorically analyzing popular science programming. Following graduation Sorensen will be the Director of the Writing Program at Montana Tech at the University of Montana in Butte.



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A Fond Farewell Dr. Robert O'Connor



Dr. Robert O'Connor has been a Professor of English at NDSU for 28 years, and while his term witnessed personal highs and lows, it's difficult to feature Dr. Bob—as he's fondly referred to by students—without discussing his favorite subjects: science fiction literature, British Romantic poetry, and his love of birds.

His fascination with science fiction began when he was just seven and read Paul French's *Lucky Star* about a rocket pilot. It turns out French was actually Isaac Asimov. He eventually moved on to reading Robert Heinlein and continued to be influenced by his own strong interest in science and in fiction. As a college sophomore O'Connor was a biology major taking a lot of literature classes on the side. When the realization struck that "I could stay awake reading a novel, but not an organic chemistry book, literature it was!" Bob also sheepishly admits part of his switch to literature came from being "clumsy in lab work—I mistakenly hooked up a Bunsen

burner to the water spigot and soaked the lab instructor."

His regard for British Romantic Literature derives from his father's college books; Bob felt an instant affinity to lyric poems with a bit of melancholy. While reading Keats' poetry and letters, he said, "Here was a person I feel I'd like to have known." He read Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and forlornly admits, "*Gulliver's Travels* was the first book I was sad to finish, I liked it so much." His affinity for this subject spills into the classroom and over to the students. Former student Anthony Ellertson writes, "The secret behind Bob O'Connor's great teaching ability is that he combines both a vast knowledge of his field with a gentle enthusiasm that pulls his students in and keeps them interested. In spending any time with him you see how much he loves what he teaches and how much he wants to impart that same love to his students."

His passion for birding began as a 13-year-old boy's quest for a scout's merit badge. As a youth, O'Connor enjoyed solitary activities like fishing, butterfly collecting, and bird watching. "I became so into birding that I moved away from my father's favorite hobby of fishing. But for a boy, having an interest in birding is a lot like claiming ballet as a hobby." He was so taken by birding he had considered a degree in ornithology while at Cornell, and this continued passion has taken him to 47 states, where he has seen 750 of the 900 possible species; some of his unseen 150 are so rare they've only been seen once or twice in the US. O'Connor's greatest birding experience was on a trip to Attu, Alaska, where he was the first person to ever sight a Lanceolated Warbler. In 2000 he published *Birding the Fargo-Moorhead Area* as a joint effort with the Audubon Society.

Recalling his nearly three decades as a professor at NDSU, O'Connor fondly admits, "Professionally, it's been the most rewarding part of my life. Fargo-Moorhead is the most pleasant place I've lived—the people are friendly and welcoming—and who knew I'd thrive on extremes of weather?!" As he focuses on the next leg of his journey, Bob's visions for retirement include writing poetry, visiting Machu Picchu in Peru, and discovering more birds.

"He created and taught the first Sci-Fi course in the Department. He not only made it a very successful course over many years, but, in a sense, legitimized the study of science fiction and fantasy in the Department and the area."

Bill Cosgrove

Thank you, Dr. Bob O'Connor, for gracing us with 28 years of inspiring service. May the words of William Wordsworth guide your poetic pen to "Fill your paper with the breathings of your heart"—and *may the force be with you!*

"I remember when I discovered that Bob was tracking and counting birds, and I didn't understand what he was really about. Then I started feeding them myself, whereupon I got to see what was really out there. It's a wonderful, exciting and beautiful world. Then he published a book so we all could see the height and depth of his endeavors. Wow. Go Bob, and thanks for the education." Tom Matchie

*About "Attu Thistle:" In 2007, the Japanese constructed a Peace Monument at the site of the Battle of Attu, the westernmost of Alaska's Aleutian Islands. The battle between the US and the Japanese in 1943 was the only land battle between these two countries and the only battle of WWII fought on American soil. The Japanese proceeded in a suicide charge that ended with a tally of over 2800 Japanese dead and 29 captured. The spiky abstract design emulating the sun symbol found on the Japanese flag Bob has termed the *Attu Thistle*.

Attu Thistle*
by Robert O'Connor

These spikes of valor
These bright bayonets of thorn
Shoot bloody light
A pyrotechnic rose
From this frost-nestled
Shrieking womb of war.

Iron radiates
From this hummock's height
Where slow-sung perpetuity
Shrill-hallowed-pale
Sings of our unrelenting rest.

Heroes blest
Unblest
We lie
In white embrace
Rimed all
Undone
Mute now on our moss-green pyre.

Pause here
And grieve
Or grieve not.

We weary silence
On this arctic heath
With wordless curse
Feign death our honor
Years shed our endless grace
But grim for our flesh
Become new leather now
Would court disgrace
Not to be here
In this vast and graceless place.

Catching Up

Dr. Jean Strandness

It's hardly fitting to write about Dr. Bob

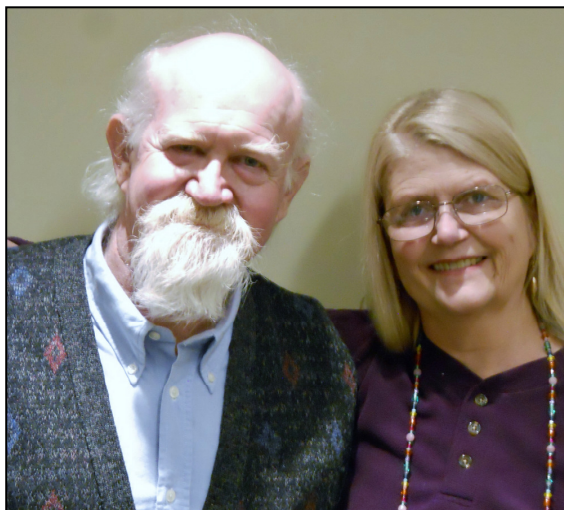
O'Connor and not discuss his beloved wife Dr. Jean Strandness as their lives are irrevocably intertwined. Strandness came to NDSU in 1986, following O'Connor's arrival by one year, but while Bob arrived to a mere Quonset hut and small airstrip, Jean arrived to a brand new Hector International Airport. Coming to NDSU was a good move for Strandness: "I was presented with so many opportunities to evolve both personally and intellectually." In addition to teaching a variety of Medieval, Women's, and Native American literature courses, she served as the Women's Studies Director, President of the University Senate, and as the Tri-College University Provost.



While NDSU was fortunate to acquire these talented and varied scholars, Divine Providence had a surprise in store for the professors. Strandness recalls how shocking it must have been to everyone the department when she and Bob started dating in the Fall of 1998. "It was a surprise to us too!" she exclaimed. "I suddenly got the impulse—it seemed as if Divine Providence were at work—to go to Bob's office and ask him out to dinner. We turned out to be soul mates." Bob and Jean were married at the Hjemkomst Stave Church in April 1999.

Strandness is happy with Bob's decision to retire. "I think his time has come. He *should* be doing creative writing." Her own retirement came radically unplanned, when in 2003 Strandness was struck by clinical, genetic, severe depression which left her "too incapacitated to continue teaching, and I went on disability retirement in 2004." While Strandness admits the depression leaves her emotionally discouraged and physically drained, "What keeps me going is Bob's love, his patience and kindness, and his Irish sense of humor. I once said to him, 'I feel like walking into the Red River right now.' Without missing a beat, he replied, 'You can't; it's frozen over.' I just cracked up laughing over the absurdity of it all."

Before her depression struck, Strandness traveled extensively, and always told her students that "what you learn from traveling in a different culture is like getting another college degree." With her half-Icelandic heritage, Strandness has been to Iceland five times—"a fascinating country." Having a BA and MA major in French literature led her to explore France, also five times. With a Euro rail pass, she once traveled all through Europe and Scandinavia on "\$5 a day." She's been to Mexico and Nigeria. She spent eight months on sabbatical in India where she traveled all over, from the Himalayas to the southern tip. Because she has struggled through these past years, missing the vitality that drove her



earlier travels across the globe, she feels fortunate to have such wonderful memories of her adventures. Strandness encourages people to "Act now! Don't wait to actualize your dreams. Make the effort to travel or fulfill what it is you most desire to do." Perhaps they'll fulfill their joint retirement dream and trek to Machu Picchu in Peru.

For Strandness, time spent in and out of the classroom was incredibly fulfilling. Though her retirement years have been discouraging, she stoically declares, "where others have given in to the Song of the Sirens, I have chosen to survive—day by day." She reads books from her vast library and is working on a memoir of her life. She happily admits that her marriage to Bob has been a gift. Since their marriage, Bob and Jean, along with their bichon frisé, Isa, have lived in a century-old farmhouse on the Red River in Moorhead. Bob loves the backyard along the river, which attracts birds, and they both love the house. Strandness says, "It is so much part of our lives. It's our haven."

And The Award Goes To ~

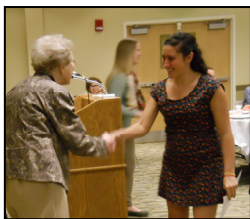
The Department of English honored the annual scholarship award winners and also celebrated Dr. Bob O'Connor's 28 years of service and retirement during the Spring Awards Luncheon. In her address for Dr. O'Connor, Dr. Muriel Brown noted one student's reflection on Dr. O'Connor as "a man of incredible ethics, integrity, and knowledge, a caring instructor who brings subject matter to life and inspires students to enjoy learning." Congratulations Dr. O'Connor on your stellar career! May your love of science fiction and British romantic poetry live on in the hearts and minds of all your students and fellow colleagues.

Each year the department gives out over \$10,000 in scholarships and we proudly announce the outstanding scholarship and award recipients for the 2013-14 academic year. We commend these award winners on their dedication toward continuing their own educations and that of others.

Dorothy Tegtmeier and Celena Todora were given English Faculty Awards for academic achievement.

Josie Emers-Tefelmeyer was awarded the Hal and Alice Dickey Memorial Scholarship.

Emily Grenz received the Professor Ralph Engel Scholarship.



The Mart and Lois Vogel Awards for Excellence were given to Angela Lorenz and Jesse Wagner.



The William Cosgrove Scholarship was granted to Linnea Nelson.

Tyler Ringstad received the Marjory Archer Haggart Memorial Scholarship.

Erin Stegman and Jordan Engelke were the undergraduate recipients for the Madeline S. Gittings Scholarship. The Gittings Scholarship for graduate students went to Tatjana Schell.



The Pamela O'Connor Memorial Scholarship was given to Jade Sandbulte for excellence in writing.

Alyssa Miller earned the graduate student Rooney Scholarship.

The Gerald Wilson Hunter and Phyllis Krantz Hunter Scholarship was received by Mariah Torgerson.

Mary Kateri Laughlin was granted the Richard L. Johnson Scholarship as a graduate student of literature.



Front: MK Laughlin, Alyssa Miller, Dorothy Tegtmeier, Linnea Nelson, Jordan Engelke, Tatjana Schell

Back: Gina Kruschek, Steven Hammer, Jesse Wagner, Erin Stegman, Tyler Ringstad



The department's most recent PhD graduate, Karen Sorensen, received the Graduate Teaching Award.

The master's paper award was given to MA student Gina Kruschek for her paper, "Re-Imaging Irish Fatherhood: Film and Fiction Talk Back to the Stereotype of Shitty Dads."



PhD student Steven Hammer earned the PhD graduate paper award for his research on Glitch theory. Hammer was also awarded the Outstanding Graduate Student Research Award for the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences.

Dr. Kelly Sassi received the Mart and Lois Vogel Award for Excellence. The award is an annual stipend given to the teacher in the department who has demonstrated outstanding ability and interest in teaching.

Dr. Elizabeth (Betsy) Birmingham was inducted into the Tapestry of Diverse Talents. Birmingham also received the distinguished Odney Award.



Dr. Linda Helstern was selected by the Office of Multicultural Programs to receive a Green and Golden Globe Diversity Award for her work promoting an open and welcoming campus climate for all areas of diversity.

Dr. Andrew Mara received the Peltier Award for Teaching Innovation.

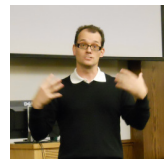


We are proud of the outstanding scholarship and academic achievement the recipients of this year's awards have shown and for their continued success in the 2013-14 academic year.



The Buzz

Dr. Kevin Brooks was the spring Visiting Fellow at UND's Center for Human Rights and Genocide Studies, March 4-6. He screened *African Soul, American Heart*, a documentary he co-wrote and co-produced in 2008, gave a lecture entitled "How To Build a Country from Scratch: Three Examples from South Sudan," and participated in a panel discussion: "The Role of the University in Refugee Resettlement."



Gary Totten, Associate Professor of English, has received the Beinecke Research Award from the Edith Wharton Society. The award supports travel to the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University, to conduct research in the Edith Wharton manuscript collection. Totten's project, "Wharton's Wild West: Undine Spragg, Medora de Mores, and Dakota Divorce Culture," examines the North Dakota contexts of Edith Wharton's novel, *The Custom of the Country* (1913), specifically the ease and availability of divorce in Dakota Territory (Fargo and Sioux Falls being the main divorce capitals before statehood). In the novel, Undine Spragg's journey west from New York City to obtain Dakota residency and then a Reno divorce emphasizes the relationship in Wharton's work between unregulated western US spaces and women's increased cultural freedom.

Verena Theile, Assistant Professor of English, published *New Formalisms and Literary Theory*. The book examines the political motivations of a return to formalism. The collection challenges the conception of New Formalism as an extension of contextual readings and as a 'mere' return to aesthetic readings. The essays instead encourage reflection upon New Formalism's points of intersection with other theoretical approaches and demand a reinstatement of form as the critic's central focus, form, that is, as it reflects a culture's creative imagination and historicizes itself within and against a politically charged background. Theile authored the introduction and co-edited the volume with Dr. Linda Tredennick (Gonzaga University). The collection was published by Palgrave Macmillan (May 2013).



Department of English senior lecturer **Cindy Nichols** has a piece in *New Formalisms and Literary Theory*. Her essay, "Punk Bodies, Jorie Graham, and the 'The Draft Itself': Notes Toward a Lyric Formalism," examines literary criticism from a poet's perspective, and posits the notion of "text-as-becoming" or "text-as-live-drama" to ongoing discussions of textual boundaries in literary theory.

Bruce Maylath, Professor of English, has published articles on technical communication and translation, including partnerships in which the students in his International Technical Writing course partner with students in six other countries simultaneously. "Current Trends in Translation" appears in the most recent issue of the Denmark-based journal *Communication and Language at Work*. It shows technical communicators and others in industry how translators are using machine translation technologies to speed their work. "Managing Complexity: A Technical Communication/Translation Case Study in Multilateral International Collaboration" appears in the Winter 2013 issue of *Technical Communication Quarterly (TCQ)*. Co-authored with translation and usability testing instructors in Belgium, Denmark, Finland, and France, the article describes innovations in the fall of 2010 resulting in the largest and most complex international learning-by-doing project of its kind: NDSU's International Technical Writing class authored instructions, prepared them for translation, tested them in Fargo, and sent them to Vaasa University in Finland, where students ran their own usability tests with Finnish subjects accustomed to reading procedural texts in English. After revising, the NDSU students sent their texts to classes at University College Ghent in Belgium and the University of Paris—Denis Diderot for translation from English to Dutch and French, respectively.



Natalie Smith Carlson presented at the "Breastfeeding and Feminism Symposium" on March 21st in Chapel Hill, NC about the ways our NDSU campus could become more breastfeeding friendly and in doing so, inspire changes in the surrounding community and its attitudes towards breastfeeding. Smith Carlson also presented at the MnWe Conference, on April 4th in Bloomington, MN, sharing an assignment she developed to help first year writing students understand how past messages about race have influenced their current attitudes. Using memory and sensory detail, research and rhetorical analysis, her students explore their own racial biases and the social context that helped to create them.



Abby Hammes, President of the English Department's Sigma Tau Delta Honors Society, attended the National Convention in Portland, Oregon, March 20-23. Sigma Tau Delta Vice President **Linnea Nelson** read nine poems at the conference. The selections were taken from the two chapbooks she compiled as an undergraduate English student at NDSU, *Two Rooms*—written for Creative Writing Studio I, and *Flight from a Burning Tree*—for Creative Writing Studio II and as part of her Capstone project.

Department of English graduate students **Emily Bartz**, **Davin Wait**, and **David Lemke** presented at the 2013 Native American Literature Symposium at Mystic Lake Casino in Minneapolis, Minnesota from March 21st to the 23rd. They presented as a part of a panel entitled "Building Audience, Building Community" put together by Dr. Linda Helstern. Their papers discussed the delicate relationships between community and leadership through Eric Gansworth's *Smoke Dancing* and Thomas King's radio program *Dead Dog Cafe Comedy Hour*. The panelists received remarks by respondent Dr. Susan Bernardin.



Several NDSU English Department faculty and alumni attended the Conference on College Composition and Communication (4Cs), March 13-16, 2013:

The following personnel presented the 4Cs panel, "Public Scrutiny, Public Response: Rhetorically Arm(oring) Against the War on Women." The *war on women* describes a contemporary moment in which women and their bodies, selves, and choices are increasingly the objects of public scrutiny and discussion. This panel addressed girls' and women's public, rhetorical responses to attempts to scrutinize and control their dress, their bodies, their desires: **Gina Kruschek**, MA, NDSU "Fashioning



Responses: H&M and *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*;" **Becca Hayes**, PhD, Michigan State University (MA NDSU 2011) "Woman...If You Don't Want to Be Harassed, Stay in the Kitchen': Street Harassment and Online Rhetorical Resistance;" **Betsy Birmingham**: Associate Professor, NDSU "Fangirls Hollaback: Identity as Agency in Online Spaces;" **Katie Manthey**: PhD, Michigan State University (MA NDSU 2010) "When the Body You See Is Not Your Own: Rhetoricizing the Fat Female Body as a Space of Agency."

Dr. Amy Rupiper Taggart presented in the Computer Connection strand of the 4Cs conference. Her presentation was titled "Playlist Compositions for Multimodal and Genre Sophistication," featuring pedagogical methods and online resources for composing music playlists, the goals of which are genre awareness, genre analysis, and genre critique.

Graduate students, **Alyson Guthrie**, **Jade Sandbulte** and **Tatjana Schell**, presented a panel titled "Cross-Cultural Communication: Pedagogical Implications for a Diverse Campus" at the 4Cs. Guthrie presented on "Bridging the Gap: Collaborating First-Year Writing and ELL Students." Sandbulte's paper was titled "Cultural Bias: How Writing Preferences Evolve Over Time," while Schell's focused on the "Challenges of Teaching College Composition as a Non-Native Speaking Instructor." This panel strove to shed light on issues connected to contrastive rhetoric and cross-cultural communication, while also encouraging educators to meet ELL needs rather than dismissing, or failing to effectively adapt to them.

Dr. Kelly Sassi received a Mentor Travel Grant to meet with Dr. Anne Ruggles Gere during the 4Cs conference. They met for two hours each day to work on a book contracted with Heinemann tentatively titled, *Writing on Demand with Common Core Standards*. Being at 4Cs allowed Sassi to meet with the English education Special Interest Group and attend several sessions on writing assessment and common core which will help with the book.



The Center for Writers' assistant director, **Enrico Sassi**, and English doctoral students **MK Laughlin** and **Matt Warner** presented a panel titled, "A Writing Center Targets Writing in the STEM Disciplines" at the 4Cs. Sassi outlined NDSU's pilot program for bringing writers from the sciences into the CFW as writing consultants and discussed the importance of graduate writing consultants who have disciplinary knowledge. Laughlin discussed her research on training generalist writing consultants to work with scientific papers and presented a novel training module. Warner described how he integrated a CFW writing fellow into *ENGL 324: Writing in the Sciences* and explored how computational thinking can enhance the teaching and learning of writing in academic disciplines.



In April, PhD student **Heather Steinmann** participated in two panels at the Western Social Science Association 55th annual conference in Denver in the New Zealand and Australia Studies section. The first is a panel called "New Zealand as Text," and her paper is called "Teaching Keri Hulme's *The Bone People*: Experience as Self-Instruction." The second is as an invited reviewer in a round table book discussion featuring David Hackett Fischer's *Fairness and Freedom: A History of Two Open Societies, New Zealand and the United States*.

Department of English graduate students **Tatjana Schell**, **Steven Hammer**, **Massimo Verzella**, and **Alyssa Miller** presented at the 2013 Minnesota and Wisconsin Colleges and Universities English and Writing Conference at Normandale Community College in Bloomington, Minnesota on April 4, 2013. They presented as a part of a panel entitled "Culturally Situated Practices in the Composition Classroom" put together by Dr. Kelly Sassi. Their papers explored the role of culture in American Indian rhetorics, the pedagogy of non-native English instructors, Glitch Art, Transatlantic writing collaboration, and Middle Ages letter writing.

Now in their third year of active insights for the department, the Advisory Board was asked to give feedback on the electronic portfolios of 20

Members were impressed with the capstone projects: they could see that these projects involved substantial research, synthesis of information, and provided a strong integrative capstone experience for the students. They could also see growth in student writing and thinking through the core courses: Literary Analysis and Introduction to Writing Studies, typically taken during year 1 or 2, Writing in the Humanities and Social Sciences often taken as a junior, and Capstone, taken during students' final year. The electronic portfolios themselves created some navigation challenges, and members were a little surprised to see very few projects or assignments about canonical works of literature. The Advisory Board Members saw a lot of good writing, but encouraged the department to keep pushing hard on traditional skills and essay elements like strong thesis statements, effective and meaningful use of secondary sources, and tighter, more concise writing. Student portfolios can be found at: <http://englishndsu.wordpress.com>

2013 Advisory Board Members

- Stephen Wilson, formerly Blue Cross/Blue Shield
- Kendra Faiman O'Brien, FBS Data Systems
- Bob Schlomann, Microsoft Corporation
- Dr. Allan Ashworth, NDSU Geosciences
- Bill Thomas, Prairie Public Radio
- Laura Christensen, Davies High School

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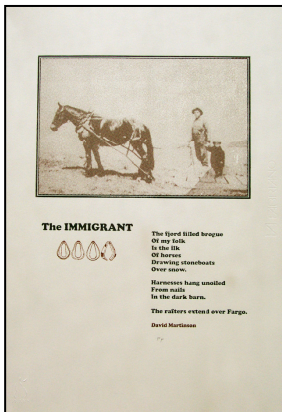
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Laura Christensen, Davies High School
Dr. Clay Jenkinson, Independent Scholar
Frannie Nelson, Solberg, Stewart, Miller Law
Dr. Mitzi Brunsdale, Mayville State University

The department's return to Minard Hall is right around the corner. By the end of June, the NDSU Department of English will have taken up residence in the new digs in the south third floor wing of Minard Hall. This will be the final newsletter distributed from Morrill Hall, and as of July 1, 2013 the English office will be found in 318 Minard Hall. We look forward to seeing you there!





In March 2010, Stephen Frech read poetry on campus, worked with print making students on a broadside, and was featured at a public event celebrating the broadside work of David Martinson. Given the success of the 2010 events, Frech returned to NDSU, March 18 and 19, 2013. Frech's visit included the Second David Martinson Broadside Memorial along with the broadside printing workshop which was ongoing both days in NDSU Renaissance Hall. This year, the broadside



production featured the late David Martinson's poem, "The Immigrant." Frech is associate professor of English at Millikin University. He has published three award winning volumes of poetry and his fourth poetic volume, *A Palace of Strangers Is No City*, was published by Cervená Barva Press in 2011. Frech is founder and editor of Oneiros Press, publisher of limited edition, letterpress poetry broadsides.

On April 5 and 6, the first meeting of Undergraduates Inc. took place on the NDSU campus in conjunction with the 10th Annual Red River Graduate Student Conference (RRGSC). More than 40 students, both graduate and undergraduate, from 12 different universities participated in this year's proceedings and over 70 people attended Dr. Kirk St. Amant's keynote luncheon address. Thanks to the generous support of NDSU's departments of English, History, Philosophy, Religious Studies, and the Dean of the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social



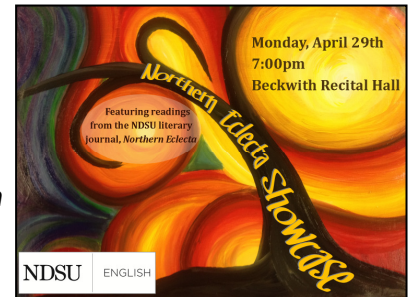
Sciences, presentations by graduate students Bethany Berard of the University of Winnipeg, MK Laughlin of North Dakota State University, and undergraduate student Imelda Wistey of Iowa State University were recognized with awards.



NDSU Professor of Practice Clifford Canku celebrated the launch of his new book *Dakota Prisoner of War Letters: Dakota Kaskapi Okicize Wowapi*. These haunting documents present a history that has long been unrecognized in this country, in the words of the Dakota people who lived it. This book is a precious resource for Dakota people learning about the

travails their ancestors faced, is an important primary source of documents for historians, and is a vital tool for Dakota language learners and linguists. The book signing event took place in late April at Zandbroz Books of Fargo.

Each spring, students enrolled in NDSU's English Literary Publication classes produce a volume of the literary journal, *Northern Eclecta*. The publication features original works by NDSU and secondary school students in the form of fiction, non-fiction, art, photography and poetry. The *Northern Eclecta* Reading Showcase held in Beckwith Recital Hall this past April highlighted authored readings from previous editions and the forthcoming *Northern Eclecta 7*.



The department welcomed Dr. Emily Wicktor, PhD University of Kansas, at her job talk presentation on Victorian pornography in May. The subject for Wicktor's talk, "'Imbued with the science of Venus': Female Fallenness, Sexual Pedagogy, and Victorian Pornography," is based on her doctoral dissertation research which studies how as a heterogeneous genre, Victorian pornography features wide-ranging sexual narratives, including those that directly challenge both real and fictional narratives of fallenness by foregrounding female sexual education and contraception practice. Wicktor is currently a Professor of Practice and director of the NDSU English first-year writing program. She will be joining the department as a tenure-track assistant professor in the fall of 2013.

Alumni in Action

Meagen Essen — Fargo/Grand Forks, ND



I graduated from NDSU in the spring of 2010 with a major in English and minors in Political Science and Spanish. Following graduation from NDSU, I served as a Literacy Aide in the AmeriCorps SEECing Progress Program at an elementary school in West Fargo, ND. During my year of service with the SEECing Progress Program, I helped students improve their reading skills by working through reading interventions with individual students on a daily basis. In the fall of 2011, I started law school at the University of North Dakota School of Law. After finishing my first year of law school, I worked as an extern for Judge Bye of the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals in Fargo. Currently, I am in my second year of law school and am working as a Teaching Assistant for the first year legal writing course and

also as a Program Assistant for the UND Center for Human Rights and Genocide Studies. Additionally, I am a member of the North Dakota Law Review and will serve on the Law Review Board as a Research and Technical Editor for the 2013-14 school year. This summer I will be working at the Vogel Law Firm in Fargo.

Sean Fredricks — Fargo, ND

My undergraduate career at NDSU was quite possibly a perfect college experience. My wife, Sarah, and I met at NDSU, and we now have two great kids; I played Bison Football, an honor that continues as a force in my life; I read and studied novels, plays, and poetry every day; I made many lifelong friends; and I studied under an English Department Faculty filled with great people, some of whom I still consider mentors. After NDSU, I graduated from UND Law School, then practiced in Minneapolis for three years. We moved back to North Dakota in 2004; my wife is a teacher and I practice in West Fargo. My English background provided a competitive advantage in law school and is the foundation for what I do every day in my practice. My classes with Dr. Matchie, Steve Ward, and Dr. Brown trained me to be a thoughtful person and an effective professional. At the time I was studying Melville and Yeats in basement classrooms in Minard and Askanase, I had no notion I was preparing for any type of professional career. In retrospect, I realize our professors demanded original thought, critical analysis, strong writing skills, and the ability to clearly articulate positions or opinions, crucial skills for practicing lawyers. Today we fear a lack of homegrown engineers and scientists will hinder the American struggle to remain competitive on a global scale, a valid concern. But I know from experience we also need more English grads in law, government, and business. My wife and I are grateful for our NDSU experiences, and I am grateful for my English degree. Go Bison!



Frannie Nelson — Fargo, ND



After graduating with my English degree from NDSU I attended law school at Hamline University School of Law in St. Paul, Minnesota. While in law school I found that my English degree was enormously useful because research and writing were some of the core skills needed in order to succeed. From projects with the NDSU English department and Kappa Delta Sorority at NDSU, volunteerism became an important part of my life. During law school, I participated in legal clinics that offered free legal assistance to those in need by helping students in need of an advocate in their schools, women in need of family law legal help, and women involved in domestic violence situations. After graduating in 2012, I returned to Fargo and am currently practicing law with Solberg Stewart Miller. My practice includes the general practice of law with a focus on family law. I am very happy to be back in the area and to be involved with NDSU again.

What's Your Story?

We want to know where your initiative and ingenuity have taken your English degree. Plus, knowing your story can improve the curriculum for future students. Send your updated story to:
Tina.Young@ndsu.edu

For your story, please consider including:

- Your graduation year and emphasis
- Whether you continued for an advanced degree
- Your career choices and opportunities
- Current position, locale, and photo