



Reading Matters

The Department of
English

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From (the Edge of) the Chair's Seat

On this rainy Thursday, the headline news is Elaine Showalter's visit tomorrow, Friday, September 14, to receive this year's Truman Capote Award for her book *A Jury of Her Peers: Celebrating American Women Writers from Anne Bradstreet to Annie Proulx*. I doubt that she needs introduction to anyone working in literary studies, given her long and distinguished career as a literary critic, feminist scholar, and past president of the MLA. She will give a talk on literary criticism (enticingly broad topic!) at 4:00 pm on Friday, in the Old Capitol Senate Chambers.

Less splashily, our new dean is settling into his job and has announced that as part of an effort to get to know the College, he will be visiting all of the departments in CLAS over the course of the next year or so. As preparation, we have been asked to supply him with two-page CVs of all of our faculty along with a précis of our mission, needs, and aspirations, all envisioned as a resource he can use when talking to donors. I'll keep you apprised of dates for all of that.

More soggly, the fall reception was almost, but not quite, rained out last Friday. Rumor has it that those faculty and graduate students who dodged squalls, presidential entourages, and home-game football fans enjoyed a convivial end-of-the-week gathering.

Downright damply, there has been a deluge of recent messages from the administration, asking for faculty attention to various matters, the most pressing of which is the attendance report due by September 20. Elizabeth Curl will be chasing down stragglers for the filling in of faculty Personnel Activity Reports, due by September 30. Finally, requests for faculty travel have all come in and, after some numbers crunching, I will soon be able to announce how much departmental funding will be available to support faculty traveling to conferences and archives this year.

Before my attachment to moist adverbs wears thin, let me close by noting that the semester seems to be going swimmingly and that the newly refurbished main office—many thanks to Gayle Sand, Erin Hackathorn, Justin Denman, and other staff for their transformational design skills—is proving a most welcoming portal to the department.

Publications, Presentations and other Faculty Matters

Patricia Foster's essay, "In Transit" is forthcoming in *The Sun*.

"Absurd Imprint: Grove Press and the Canonization of the Theatrical Avant-Garde", an article by **Loren Glass**, received honorable mention for the University of Toronto Press' Modern Drama Award. More information can be found [here](#).

Blaine Greteman's book, *The Poetics and Politics of Youth in Milton's England*, will be published by Cambridge University Press in Spring 2013. On October 26, he will be presenting a paper for the biannual Newberry Milton Seminar at the Newberry Library in Chicago. The paper, "The Beginning of Now: John Milton in the Early Modern Social Network," is the trial run for his new project on historical social networks. Finally, in the current issue of *The New Republic*, Blaine has a book review that fits in well with our department's new strength in all issues related to plagiarism (see **Kevin Kopelson's** new book!): the review is of Dave Tomar's "The Shadow Scholar: How I Made a Living Helping College Kids Cheat."

Jon Wilcox's new essay, "Digging for New Meanings: Uncovering a Postcolonial Beowulf", has been published in *Language Studies: Stretching the Boundaries*, ed. Andrew Littlejohn and Sandhya Rao Mehta (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012): 147-61.

Jennifer Colville's story, "Other Mothers," has been accepted for publication (within the next year) in DIAGRAM. Her story, "Sea Creatures," was selected by Melanie Rae Thon to appear in an online anthology of emerging writers to be published by Connu Press, in January 2013. Over the summer Jennifer launched an online-to-print journal for writing inspired by visual art and visual art inspired by writing. The project, which will also engage the talents of emerging book artists, is up and running at promptpress.com. This fall we are seeking poetry and prose responses to the work of visual artist Wendy Kawabata. Our spring issue will solicit visual responses to a new piece of fiction by Michael Martone.

Graduate Student Matters

Jen Shook has been appointed a PAGE Fellow at Imagining America. She is one of 14 national applicants to be chosen for this yearlong program. More information can be found [here](#).

Alumni Matters

Mark Bruce (PhD 2005), Associate Professor of English at Bethel University, has published *The Anglo-Scottish Border and the Shaping of Identity, 1300-1600* (co-edited with Katherine Terrell), (Palgrave Macmillan 2012).

Jessica DeSpain (PhD 2008) is the editor of "The Wide, Wide World Hypermedia Archive". Click [here](#) for more information about the archive.

Library Matters

A lot is going on in the Main Library, and the renovations currently underway to the building will likely have the biggest impact on your activities here. A few things to keep in mind: 1. the library's South Entrance is closed and so, unfortunately, is the book drop; you may return and check out library materials at the North Desk (at the North Entrance) or at the Information/Reference Desk on the first floor; 2. last Spring, a large number of volumes that had been located on the fourth floor were moved to the second floor due to space restrictions; if you are looking for an item with a call number falling within PS3517 to Z, it can be found in the southwest section of the second floor; 3. the Course Reserves area is now located next to the Information/Reference Desk on the first floor, and staff are on duty there to help locate reserve items.

In other news, Oxford University Press has given the University of Iowa a free trial of [Oxford Scholarly Editions Online](#), a digital library of scholarly and critical editions of works of British literature (currently the collection ends at 1660, but more items will be added to it in large packets chronologically, so that all periods of British literature will eventually be represented). It is a powerful (and expensive) product, and your feedback on it will be extremely useful as its future in the library is considered. Our trial ends October 5. If you have time, please take a few test runs through [Oxford Scholarly Editions Online](#) and write to stephen-sturgeon@uiowa.edu with your comments. Here's a [Guided Tour](#) presentation of the product, as well as a [short video](#) about the overall project.

Obermann Center Matters

UI English students and faculty can join in a National Endowment for the Humanities live-broadcast WATCH PARTY in celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation on September 17 from 12:30-1:30 at the IMU Bijou Theater. Five distinguished Civil War historians will speak before a live student audience at the Smithsonian Museum about the immediate and long-term effects of emancipation. An interactive national conversation, including audience members at the Bijou, will follow. Students can also enter a related NEH writing contest: deadline October 5. Three winners will be invited to receive their prize in Washington DC.

For more information about the event and the contest, please visit <http://emancipation.neh.gov/>. Local hosts include the UI International Writing Program, the Obermann Center for Advanced Studies, and the Office of the Provost.

Watch Party Matters

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Facebook

The English Department is on Facebook! Go to <http://www.facebook.com/IowaEnglish> and “Like” the department.

Other Calendars

[UI Master Calendar](#) | [UI Academic Calendar](#) | [The Writers' Workshop Calendar](#)
[The International Writing Program Calendar](#) | [The Writing University Calendar](#)

Future Issues

The next issue of Reading Matters will be on October 4. Please send submissions for the next issue by 5:00pm on Wednesday, October 3 to [Erin Hackathorn](#).