



EDEN

English Department Electronic Newsletter



"A good book on your shelf is a friend that turns its back on you and remains a friend." - Unknown

February 2011

Announcements

- ◆ Michigan has a new website, Intern in Michigan, that helps match undergraduate students, graduate students, or recent NMU graduates with employers and industries across the state. The website can be found at <http://interninmichigan.com>.
- ◆ The deadline for the 2011 Lois and Willard Cohodas prize essay contest is March 11. The contest promotes awareness of human rights and encourages tolerance and understanding. For more information, visit www.nmu.edu/english or see page 4.
- ◆ English MA Students: Writing a thesis is just one of three options the department offers to fulfill the MA's capstone project requirement. The other two options include internships and a portfolio development project. Students who plan to write a thesis, and plan to graduate in May 2012, should submit a proposal as soon as possible. Proposals should be submitted to the English office. If you have any questions about drafting a proposal, contact Jen Howard (jenhowar@nmu.edu) or Diane Sautter (dsautter@nmu.edu).
- ◆ David Boe will teach EN 495/595: Second Language Acquisition during the second Summer 2011 session (June 27– Aug 6), which will provide an advanced survey of theory and research related to adult language learning. The course is suitable for future teachers and will be a requirement for NMU's new graduate-level TESOL Certificate Program.

TABLE OF CONTENTS	
Announcements.....	1
Accomplishments.....	1-2
Student Department Awards.....	3
Cohodas Prize Guidelines.....	4

Accomplishments



Last fall semester, students in a woman's studies course at Swansea University in Wales, UK, read and wrote essays about work by **Beverly Matherne**. She was one of eight writers whose work was the subject of the course, which also covered work by Edna St. Vincent Millay and Maria Mazziotti Gillan, titled, "The Other Half of the Sky: Eight Women Writers." Welsh poet Peter Thabit Jones taught the course said he chose writers whose "work I know I will love and will inspire and resonate with students." A poem by Matherne has also been translated into Korean. It appears in bilingual format (English and Korean) in the current issue of *Korean Expatriate Literature*, published in Los Angeles.



Two graduate students published essays on literary and cultural theory this December in the noted cultural studies journal, *Politics & Culture* (www.politicsandculture.org/issue/2010-issues-3-4). **Elizabeth Faucett** wrote on the post-9/11 novel (the subject of her thesis) and **Luke Thominet** explored debates about the war in Iraq as these unfolded from 2003-2010. Thominet's essay was favorably referenced in the same issue of the journal by well-known literary/cultural theorist, Michael Berube, of Penn State. Faucett and Thominet were the only two graduate students selected for this honor, among more than a dozen professors.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Alison Spaude, who received her MA in 2009, is now working as a Mentor Coordinator with Ashland County Health and Human Services.



John Smolens's earlier novels, *Cold, Fire Point*, *The Invisible World*, *Angel's Head*, and *Winter by Degrees* are now available from Amazon as e-books. His most recent novel, *The Anarchist*, is available as an e-book and in paperback from Three Rivers Press/Random House. His new novel, *The Schoolmaster's Daughter*, will be published in hardback and as an e-book in September by Pegasus Books.



Graduate student and teaching assistant, **Cameron Mahoney**, will present his paper, "Cry the Beloved Contradiction: Paton's Colonial Legacy," February 25th at the 20th Annual British Commonwealth and Postcolonial Studies Conference in Savannah. He will also serve as chair of the panel on South African literature during the conference. Mahoney was also awarded a Future Faculty Fellowship this semester.

Candra Gill, who received her MA in Fall 2002, was accepted into a graduate program in Tailored MSI in the School of Information at the University of Michigan.

Undergraduate student, **Alyssa Bersine**, has had her flash fiction story, "Ghost, but Not the One with Patrick Swayze," published in *Bartleby Snopes*.



Marek Haltof published two book reviews in the recent issue of *The Polish Review* on M.B.B. Biskupski's *Hollywood's War with Poland 1939-1945* and Daria Mazur's *Waszynski's The Dybuk*. *The Polish Review* is a peer-reviews quarterly published by the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America. Haltof has just joined its editorial board. He also serves on the editorial board of *Studies in Eastern European Cinema*. Also, in November 2010, Haltof presented a paper on "Polish-Jewish Romances and the Holocaust in Contemporary Polish Cinema" at the Film and History Conference in Milwaukee.



James McCommons' non-fiction book, *Waiting on a Train*, is going into a third printing. In February, he will also teach sessions on freelance magazine writing and service journalism at two American Collegiate Press conventions: "Best of the Midwest" in Minneapolis and the ACP National Convention in Los Angeles. McCommons was also recently accepted as a member of the Society of Environmental Journalists.



David Boe gave a conference presentation entitled, "Rousseau's Essay and the 'First Word,'" at the annual meeting of the Linguistic Society of America in Pittsburgh in January. He also recently participated in the Noquemanon half-marathon cross country ski race.

Undergraduate, **Debra Reynolds**, has had her "This I Believe" essay published on the NPR website. View the article at <http://thisibelieve.org/essay/87511/>

Undergraduate, **Melissa Seelye**, has had her grant proposal for the European Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies Conference approved by the Faculty Grants Committee. Her proposal was ranked 1st out of 14 proposals submitted.



Former graduate student, **Elizabeth Crachiolo**, has been offered a fellowship for the Ph.D. program in Pittsburgh and was also chosen as one Early Modern fellow at UC Davis to receive funding for up to six years.

Former student, **Elizabeth Raisanen**, will have her first peer-reviews article published in *European Romantic Review* in April. The article is on a play by Romantic-era playwright, Mary Russell Mitford. She is also working on her dissertation, as a Ph.D. candidate at UCLA, "Literary Gestations: Giving Birth to Writing, 1720-1830."

Outstanding Student Awards

The Outstanding Student Awards for English were selected at the department meeting on Wednesday, January 19. Congratulations to the winners and the nominees for the 2010-11 academic year:

Outstanding MFA Student– **Krista Mann**

MFA Nominees– **Joe Janca** and **Jason Shrontz**

Outstanding MA Student– **Thomas Rich**

MA Nominees– **Emily Aho, Erin Colgrove, Elizabeth Faucett, Tim Johnston, Erica Mead, Amanda Paulus, and Rebecca Tavernini.**

Outstanding Undergraduate Senior– **Lynn Fay**

Undergraduate Nominees– **Amelia Brubaker, Tyler Dunn, Amy Helminen, Daniel Lawrence, Matthew Mallum, Stacy Milbourn, Keith Rebec, Courtney Schofield, Linda Sirois, Douglas Straka, Katie Twardzik, Jacqueline Wright, and Trista Zdroik.**

About the winners:



Krista Mann was the recipient of an Excellence in Education Grant and was invited to present at the pedagogy forum at the Associated Writers' Program Conference in Washington D.C., 2011. Her fiction has been published by *Paper Street Press* and *Passages North*. She has volunteered as an assistant editor at *Passages North*, served as a judge for NMU's Vandezande Fiction Prize, has been Vice President of the Graduate Student Association and was Co-Chair of the Graduate Professional Development Conference at NMU, funded by a Wildcat Innovation Grant. She is currently completing work on her MFA thesis, a short story collection.



Thomas Rich has been a finalist for the NMU Legler Poetry Award twice and was the 2009 VandeZande Fiction Award winner. He is a Writing Center Graduate Assistant and helped to secure a Wildcat Innovation Fund Grant. He is President of Sigma Tau Delta, and has helped bring distinguished authors to Marquette. He also volunteers at a homeless shelter, teaches writing, and has presented at academic conferences. Rich plans to enter Coast Guard Officer Candidate School after completing his MA.

Lynn Fay is a widely-published writer, whose stories have appeared in several literary reviews, such as *Switchgrass*, *Alaska Quarterly Review*, *Massachusetts Review*, and *Washington Square*. She has also had essays published in *Exceptional Parent*, *Country Accents*, and *The Detroit News*. She lives in Newberry, MI with her son, and travelled to NMU each day for class before graduating this past December.



Cohodas Essay Contest Guidelines

The Lois and Willard Cohodas prize was established by Rabbi Samuel and Lynn Stahl and Nancy and Paul Oberman, in honor of the 65th wedding anniversary of their parents, Lois and Willard Cohodas. The goal of the competition is to provoke serious thought about enhancing religious, racial and cultural understanding, ameliorating hatred and racism, promoting awareness of the Holocaust, and advocating respect for human rights around the world today.

The awards are as follows: \$500 for first place, \$250 for second, and \$100 for third. The contest is open to all NMU undergraduates and the deadline for entry is March 11, 2011.

This is a prose non-fiction contest. Entries should be 1,500 to 2,000 words. The judges look for well-written, well-developed, deeply thoughtful essays. Winning essays will have a strong, ethically informed thesis. This year's topics are:

- ◆ What allows genocide to occur (historically) and how can we prevent it (now and in the future)?
- ◆ What can students do to combat prejudice?
- ◆ Who do you know who has stood up heroically against injustice?
- ◆ What experience have you had with racial or ethnic bigotry?
- ◆ What is religion's role in either promoting mutual respect among people of different faiths/viewpoints or fomenting discord and intolerance (or both)?
- ◆ How should we comprehend, both understand and seek to respond to terrorism— including acts of suicide— mass murder directed against free societies?
- ◆ Why is civility (maintaining decency and dignity in our communal undertakings) important, especially in times of crisis? Why is incivility (excessive fractiousness and forwardness in public life) a danger to society?
- ◆ We use the same germ, "genocide," to describe various instances of mass-murder and other forms of gross human rights abuse aimed at destroying peoples. And yet every case is significantly different as well as importantly similar. Compare two or more examples of genocide, to show both what matters about each and what can be learned, in particular, by contrasting them.
- ◆ What role has "conspiracy theory" played in justifying political violence, historically, and where do we see it reappearing today?
- ◆ How do, not only stereotypes in general, but very specific caricatures, images, myths, and legends that are widely circulated contribute to the demonizing of particular groups of people? And with what results? Analyze both historical and contemporary examples, with attention both to what is similar and different about each instant of demonization.

The entry form and specific guidelines can be found at <http://webb.nmu.edu/Departments/English/SiteSections/Students/LiteraryPrize.shtml>