

THE FREESTONE

Colorado State University Department of English / Spring 2005

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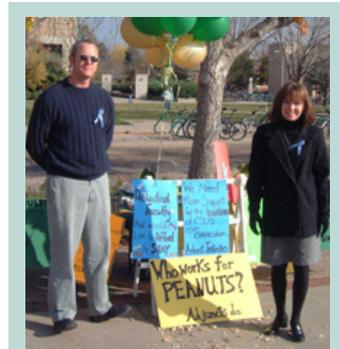
Adjunct Instructors: Working Towards Equity

by Kerri Mitchell

This year, adjunct instructors in the English department are working to raise awareness about the inequities they face. Currently, 35 adjuncts teach 66 percent of the department's core courses. With the exception of graduate teaching assistants (GTAs), adjuncts teach all sections of COCC150: College Composition. Adjuncts also teach 75 percent of all CO300 composition courses and 64 percent of all E100- and E200-level courses.

So who are adjuncts, and how do they differ from tenured and tenure-track faculty? Adjuncts are scholars and writers committed to higher education. All adjuncts in the English department have advanced degrees. Many adjuncts have similar qualifications to tenured professors, including doctoral degrees and publications. But unlike tenured and tenure-track faculty, who serve on committees and spend significant time publishing their work, adjuncts are hired primarily to teach. In essence, the teaching that adjuncts do makes it possible for other faculty to pursue their work outside the classroom.

Since adjuncts teach so many introductory courses, they are sometimes described



Adjunct Instructors Rally
for Campus Equity

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CSU Writing Project to be Recognized in Report to Congress

by Jaime R. Wood

In 2003, twenty teachers from around the Front Range came to the CSU campus for the inaugural CSU Writing Project (CSUWP) Summer Institute. Cindy O'Donnell-Allen, assistant professor in the English department, started this Writing Project site. After participating in the Oklahoma Writing Project over two decades ago, she was determined to bring the Writing Project to our campus. We came together as strangers from different schools, subject areas, and grade levels, but all of us had one thing in common: writing. We spent four weeks learning how to become better writers and teachers of writing. We started each morning by scratching out thoughts in our writers' notebooks and ended every afternoon with the "author's chair," a reading where each of us shared our most confident pieces. In between, we learned from each other. We each gave a teaching demonstration to show our best writing practice in the classroom, and we met in writing groups several days a week to workshop our writing. By the end, we had at least 20 new teaching ideas as well as an anthology of our poetry, fiction, and nonfiction to use in our classrooms. But that wasn't the end of it. We went back to our schools as writers and teacher-leaders ready to share what we had learned at the CSUWP.

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Department Creates Teaching Award for GTAs

by Marcus Pickett



Renee Rallo and Bonnie Emerick

Somebody's been recognizing that many CSU teachers are underappreciated—and they've started doing something about it. This year, the Composition Committee created the Stephen Reid Award for Excellence in Teaching to recognize the best of an already accomplished Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) group.

The award is open to second- and third-year GTAs, who must apply for the award and demonstrate an exemplary affinity and track record for the craft of teaching. These applications are then considered and judged by the Composition Committee.

In the award's inaugural year, Renee Rallo won the first-place prize, and Bonnie Emerick received honorable mention. Rallo actively sought out a computer classroom in which to conduct her composition class and then tailored her syllabus to take advantage of the unique environment. Specifically, she found the computer classroom was beneficial in getting her students to write more often. She also solicited advice from lecturers and faculty and, finding their input to be helpful, incorporated it into her teaching style.

Emerick's application for the award was based on her current section of Introduction to Creative Writing and almost three years of teaching College Composition. She said she worked diligently on her application and emphasized what she called an "ethics of care," envisioning herself as a trusted academic mentor who

makes a concerted effort to maintain contact with, and give attention to, her students.

Part of the Composition Committee's intention with this award is to augment the Professional Internship in English program. Hoping to give GTAs the best possible opportunities in teaching when they graduate from CSU, the committee recognizes the potential benefit for the winner, who can include the award on his or her C.V.

While the number of applications were fewer than the committee had hoped for, this number is expected to grow as the award becomes more visible and established.

Other master's and doctorate programs, both at CSU and other universities, have been implementing similar award programs. Likely—and optimistically—these programs are an effect of the increasing awareness that adjuncts and teaching assistants are being taken for granted. Stephen Reid, CSU English professor for 35 years, calls the adjuncts and teaching assistants, who handle the majority of the teaching workload, "overlooked, overworked, and underpaid." Reid expressed a desire to find the funds for a similar adjunct teaching award.

The award carries with it a \$200 prize, which Prentice Hall, Inc. has agreed to fund for at least the first five years. An anonymous donor has also funded a \$100 prize for one honorable mention.

While this teaching award is certainly not meant to be a cure-all for recognizing the hard work and countless hours that GTAs give, it can be seen as an important piece of the equation. Hopefully, the concern that the Composition Committee has shown with the creation of this award will filter through the English department—and perhaps continue the trend throughout the larger academic community—of addressing the unique and challenging situation of these teachers.

An Interview with Professor John Calderazzo, Author of *Rising Fire: Volcanoes and Our Inner Lives*

by Brice Particelli

In his book *Rising Fire: Volcanoes and Our Inner Lives*, John Calderazzo travels to Italy's Mount Etna; Hawaii's Kilauea; Paricutin, Mexico; the Caribbean island Montserrat; and California's Mount Shasta. Calderazzo weaves stories of lives and cultures into the book that also discusses geology and history to create what Donna Seaman from the American Library Association calls "an eloquent journey through the fantastic world of volcanoes and volcano lore."

I spoke to Dr. Calderazzo in March 2005 about his book and his writing experiences.

Freestone: Tell me about one of the oddest things you've seen people do as a result of being around volcanoes.

Calderazzo: Well, on the serious side—even the tragic side—one of the strangest things was to learn how in the last 10 or 15 years archeologists have discovered that there are the graves of children who have been sacrificed to the volcano gods on virtually every single peak of the Andes above twenty thousand feet. And there are a couple dozen of those peaks. That's been a very startling discovery.

On the lighter side, [one of the oddest things] was to watch videos of certain scientists who tried to approach volcanoes. There was the one French volcanologist, who had a dog with him, and fashioned a gas mask for the dog to wear, long enough to fit the dog's snout. I saw films of that (*laughs*). Or humans who would wear these steel...not exactly helmets...they went over their shoulders with pointy tops to protect them from these volcanic bombs (which were lava, liquid rock), so that when it hit them it would just slide off. To see videos of them walking up to an eruption was pretty amazing.

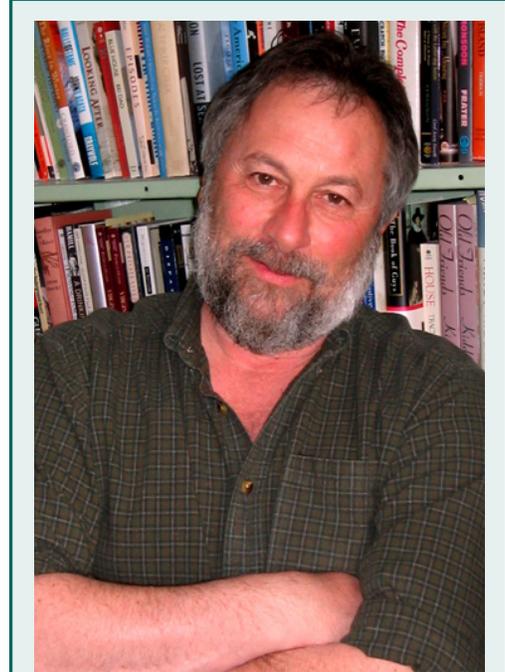
Throughout your book you mix science, history and personal narrative. Tell me how you see the interaction between teaching about a place or subject and leading people through it.

My interest as a writer is in telling things as a story, as a narrative, rather than the analysis or the 1-2-3. If I wanted to do it the other way, I might be more the conventional scholar, not a literary writer. To me that means telling things through story or a series of stories. And that's what jingles my bells. Now, that's easier to think about than it is to do. I have these very long chapters in the book and some of them took me quite a long time to figure out how to do—the correct (or an effective) mix of science, background information, handling characters that I meet along the way, and mixing it in with my own stories. So each chapter presented a fairly large challenge as to how I might structure it.

You've said that the book came from your children's book, *101 Questions About Volcanoes*. Was there one moment that made you start to think about it as a longer book?

Well, when compiling that kids' book, you have to learn about 10 times the amount of things than you have to put down. Like you have to do with any book. Along the way, a number of questions came to me that I'd like to explain further for an adult audience: Things having to do with how cultures handle volcanoes that suddenly appear in their midst, how people's ideas of religion or mythology change when a volcano erupts or when it doesn't. Those are the kinds of things you can touch on only very lightly in a kids' book and I wanted to bring my full, adult, fully-formed mind to that and also mix it in with things I had been thinking about—the natural world, the way people interact

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John Calderazzo

The MFA Existence: An Experiment in Dialogue

by Molly Reid and Michelle Schmidt

Editors' Note: What follows is a nonfiction dialogue written by first-year fiction writer Reid (FW) and first-year poet Schmidt (PW). Outside the box is a conversation among the authors, other MFAs, companions, and strangers. The authors' tragicomic tone is indicative of the frequently ironic and self-deprecatory ways in which these writers interact. Inside the box, the authors reflect on the ways in which they approach creative writing.

Scene I: The Crown Pub. February 20. Sunday evening.

PW: "Did you hear?" Leans in.

"What?" Eyebrows knit.

"Hunter Thompson killed himself tonight. Shot himself in the head." Outside a dog barks. I fold my hands. There's a man scratching his beard, talking French philosophy in the corner.

FW: "Did he leave a note?" It's everyone's question. Did the writer write? Did he leave us something to talk about over our beers, something to speculate about, dissect, deconstruct?

"He wrote novels, right?"

"Do you know any details?"

PW: "There's only been one press conference." I take a drag off my cigarette.

"His son found him. He did it in his house. His wife wasn't home."

"I need to know: where did you get this information?" Somewhere someone coughs.

"ABC dot com. It's mostly internet sources right now. It happened very recently."

"A great mind."

We all shift our weight from one foot to the other.

FW: "He supposedly had one of the best roofs in Colorado or something." It is sometimes the exchange of meaningless details that connect us.

• • • • •

PW: "We're all really good at

Authors' Commentary

Reid: If we simply record what we see and hear, are we creating, or is 'creative writing' essentially a splicing—everything's been said and done; creating a good story is angling the already-existing. Is poetry the obliteration of that?

Schmidt: The obliteration of the "angling of the already-existing?" Every art seeks to brew new the old stew. I would say our goals are cut from the same cake but the flavors are different. Historically, movements in writing have been influenced by and, in turn, influenced other forms of art.

Reid: Charles Baxter says that poets are the ones at the party wreaking havoc, hands flinging wildly about, shouting, dancing, drinking, while the fiction writers remain on the periphery observing it all...and then, at the party's closing, are the ones to clean up the detritus.

Schmidt: Detritus? What does it really mean? It's been so overused. Make it more reflective. Poets are concerned with: What do words mean? Fiction writers: What do character relationships mean?

Reid: Make "detritus" more reflective? The word choice here is perfect: "The remains of something that has been destroyed." Fiction writers aren't concerned with what words mean? You put a bunch of interesting words on a page and say you're creating meaning. The intersection of escape and catharsis is what makes art.

Schmidt: Just because you put a bunch of interesting *characters* on the page doesn't mean you're creating meaning. Distance yourself through art only to connect with others—irony? Art is ironic in its process. Fiction takes words for granted. Poets—

Reid: Poets molest words, use them in

lying to ourselves."

Every good story starts with a death, whether it's revealed at the beginning or otherwise.

FW: I should have been a poet.

PW: "Half an hour on a poem...a poem after a famous poem. I didn't even know it was famous. It's shit. I'm embarrassed. I hate it. *Hate* it. It's an awful rendition."

FW: A death enshrouded in feigned obscurity. A death planned. A death punctured by fame... "If I spent half an hour on a story, I'd be shot." A death. It's perfect.

FW: There are no metaphors for death.

"You have peanut shell slivers down your pants."

PW: Yes, I almost ate them.

"Too drunk to continue? Never. Another shot of Jim Beam, please. Cheers to death. Who needed an excuse to drink tonight? Me. You. To drink. To write. Why do it? Life is futile? Find a couch."

Scene II: New night, different bar— OK, it's The Vault:

FW: "I wrote a story about two sisters after the same guy. A love triangle. I didn't even try to pass it off as something else."

PW: "I think I have consumption. What is consumption?" Corsets. Fainting couches. I need some fiction relief.

FW: “Where are the poets?”

Poetry hiatus.

“Yes, indeed, where are the poets?”

There should be some sort of description of setting or exposition here.

“This is what people imagine we do. Gathered around a fire on large, black leather couches.”

“But they imagine us with books.”

“And berets.”

“Little do they know we’re your garden-variety alcoholic.”



PW: “This is what writers do.”

“Spending a lot of time as an art student, you know, you break everything down into its little compartments, categories, if you will,” and I will, “You learn about how to read all the nuances.”

“Yes, we are programmed to read left to right, top to bottom.”

“If we can disrupt that, subvert that, we’ve done our job as artists.”

FW: “How do you subvert that as a writer?”

ways they were not intended. And how is art ironic in its process? You’re using a symbolic representation of emotion in order to convey it? You think you’re conveying emotion, but instead only create confusion. Wordsworth said, “Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings; it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquility.” Somewhat ironic, writing about something while no longer “directly” experiencing it?

Schmidt: Recording dialogue is a tight-rope balance—a wading between observation and response, engagement in the situation and on the page. I don’t believe in a state of tranquility—to remember an experience can be more disconcerting than being in the moment of experience.

Reid: Okay, but you need to be outside the experience in order to reflect. This dialogue, for instance.

Schmidt: Poets and fiction writers have a symbiotic relationship.

Reid: Poetic prose, prose poetry. The hedonistic explosion, and then... structure. Order. Logic. Poetry without the Apollonian is too obscure. Fiction without the Dionysian is flat and predictable. There is beauty in cohesion and truth in synthesis.

Schmidt: Could I have said it better myself? Only in a poem...

“With metaphoric left to right, top to bottom.”

“Well, it’s easier to do that with poetry.”

“Isn’t that the main objective of poetry? Disrupting the machine?”

“Hunter Thompson. Has everyone just forgotten?”

“You just get bored. So freaking bored.”

“How can you have a greater change than suicide?”

“I played Frisbee on the lawn of Monticello.”



PW: “This is what we do, we’re writers.” Nobody knew what to say. “The MFA story. No one knows what to say when it doesn’t fit.”

“You don’t know me.”

“This is a load of horse manure.”

“I really love the title.”

“Yes of course. The truth: it really messed me up.”

“Isn’t this what writers need?”



In Her Own Words: A Conversation with Sherri Mandell

by David Fleischer



Sherri Mandell

Koby Mandell was 13 and his friend Yoseph Ish-Ran was 14 in May of 2001 when they decided to skip school and go explore the wadi near their homes in Tekoa, Israel. Their day of fun and rule-breaking ended brutally when they were kidnapped and murdered by Palestinian terrorists...This is the impetus for Mandell’s poignant narrative about coming through grief to acceptance. *The Blessing of a Broken Heart* (Toby Press 2003), winner of the National Jewish Book Award, is Mandell’s chronicle of the pain, loss, love, and finally beauty that can come through such a tragedy as the loss of a son. Told with excising honesty and with clarity of voice, this navigation of the grieving process becomes immediately relevant to anyone who has suffered a personal tragedy, and through its poetic prose

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Stephanie Besser: A Graduate Student's Best Friend

by Kimberly Srock



Stephanie Besser

Let's face it: English graduate students sometimes need a little help staying on task. But that's not *our* fault; we're busy, and there are too many GS forms to fill out! That's why we have people like Stephanie Besser. If you are a graduate student or are thinking about becoming one, Stephanie Besser is a smiling face you'll want to get to know.

Stephanie joined the English department office staff this fall as the go-to person for prospective and current graduate students. Stephanie previously worked for the department of music, theatre and dance where part of her job was handling graduate files, but, as she says, "the number of students applying were miniscule compared to the numbers we see in the English department." She is grateful that everyone has been so "welcoming and patient" and is now a pro at handling inquiries into the graduate programs, maintaining graduate student files, and helping graduate students with their paperwork.

To those already enrolled in or entering a graduate program in the English department, Stephanie offers this golden bit of advice: Read your e-mails! "So many valuable pieces of information are available to [graduate students] daily and are passed over because they are not paying attention to the small stuff," she explains. Stephanie communicates quite a bit via e-mail, sending notices to all applicants informing them of the status of their files and sending important deadline reminders to currently enrolled students.

Stephanie also invites graduate students to stop by. "I don't see the graduate students very much because they are so busy, but I would welcome them to come in and say hello before it is time to fill out their GS6 forms." So, if you haven't stopped in yet, hit the third floor of Eddy, take five steps into the department office, and make an about-left. There you'll find Stephanie Besser.

- Reaching Out With Words: Literacy Work
- in the Department
- by Morgan Reitmeyer

"We believe that Colorado State University belongs to the people and thus outreach is one of our major areas of focus. We're not just in Fort Collins—we're in living rooms, kitchens, businesses, schools and organizations across the state, nation and world."

~Colorado State University Outreach Statement

Before I was even accepted in the Rhetoric and Composition department here at CSU, Mike Palmquist shuffled me into Tobi Jacobi's office. As Mike and I had been chatting about my post-undergraduate experiences, it was revealed that I was familiar with service learning and that I had limited experience with developing community and university partnerships. Tobi had a project I could help with, Mike told me, if I was able to start school that spring. Being able to take my knowledge out of the 'ivory tower' has always been a priority for me, and I was excited by the prospect of a department that shared my interest. A month later, I began working on the Community Literacy Collective (CLC).

In the spring of 2004 Tobi Jacobi, Lisa Langstraat, Sarah Sloane, Heidi Scott, Maureen Datillo, and I began talking about what our department was doing to meet this portion of the CSU mission. While there

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New Poetry Hire: The Department's Process

by Shiela Bushanam

When Mary Crow retired in 2003 and Laura Mullen left the creative writing program last year, the MFA poetry program was put largely in the hands of newly-appointed poetry professor Matthew Cooperman. With Bill Tremblay on transitional retirement, the MFA poetry program was placed in a precarious position that demanded swift and decisive action on the part of the English department. Finding a new poetry professor became the top hiring priority of the 2005 academic year.

The hiring process for the tenure-track poetry position began in October when the Modern Language Association (MLA) Job list, the clearing house for all the academic jobs in modern languages, was first published. Our opening was one of nearly 150 creative writing jobs advertised; the department received applications—approximately 96 total—until the deadline in mid-November. Each file included books and dossiers (files including letter of application), C.V.s, letters of recommendation, evidence of teaching excellence, and samples of critical writing. While the faculty divided the reading load, those who would have more interaction with the new professor found it necessary to read them all.

The Creative Writing Committee created a list of about 20 semi-finalists to potentially interview at the MLA convention. This list then went to the Executive Committee,

which cast its vote. The two committees developed a list of 13 candidates to be interviewed at the MLA convention in Philadelphia on December 27 to 30. Three finalists, Julie Carr, Prageeta Sharma, and Sasha Steensen, were invited to visit campus. Each poet's campus visit lasted two days and included interviews, readings, teaching demonstrations, and meetings.

The candidates were diverse in academic backgrounds and poetic approaches. As a graduate student, I was invited to meet and interact with the candidates as they visited over a two-week period. Julie Carr displayed directness, formality, and organization. Prageeta Sharma was personable and open. Sasha Steensen was organized, well prepared, knowledgeable, and she interacted well with the students. Her highly experimental writing style and diverse academic background made her open and approachable to every poet. She seemed to be passionate, dynamic, and flexible in her teaching and writing.

After three intensive weeks, the Creative Writing Committee met to discuss the candidates. The Executive Committee weighed in next. The offer would go to Sasha Steensen. She accepted, and most deservedly, she will be our new hire. The creative writing department should prepare for a fresh and energetic spirit to be sweeping through the halls next year. 

An Interview with John Calderazzo

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with the natural world—from my other nature writing and magazine writing. So I wouldn't say one moment, but a buildup of things, where I finally thought: this is what I want to write for a while.

And then, of course, that also means that I have to travel to really wonderful places.

Which isn't too bad.

Which is just one of the drags of being a writer (*laughs*).

So really it was just selfishness, you wanted to travel and it seemed like a good way to do it.

Right. Do I write to travel or do I travel to write?

Okay, one more question. Did you write about any places that aren't included in the book? Are there any places you would have liked to go to but didn't get the chance?

Well, there were sections that I cut out because it made the story smoother and quicker. But there definitely were places that I wanted to go to, but I ran out of time and energy. I wanted to go to Indonesia for example. There are a lot of great rituals there, and, of course, it's very beautiful and tropical. But that just didn't happen. I sure wanted to. And as we always say in the trade, maybe that's the next book or the next project. 

CSU Alumnus Travels with Teachers in China

by Tim Thomas

As Bill Murray declaims in *Stripes*, Americans are mutts whose ancestors were kicked out of every decent country in Europe. Americans have been Americans for not quite 300 years; the Chinese have been Chinese for over 3,000 years. Ninety-five percent of the 1.3 billion Chinese are Han, the largest ethnic group in Asia. Perhaps nowhere are the differences more clear than in our languages. English, especially American English, is a relatively recent development, a motley brew of borrowings, including everything from ancient Celtic and Latin, Germanic Saxon, Norman French and other Romance languages, to Native American and newly-invented technical terms, all based on 26 letters and a few more sounds. Although spoken Chinese has at least as many dialects as English, written Chinese is basically unchanged from the time of the first emperor, based on thousands of ideographic symbols. English language teaching is a growth industry in China. One school administrator in Shijishuang in central China bemoaned the lack of qualified or willing English language instructors, having hired two English-speaking Nigerians the year before. As he put it, “a starving man doesn’t care what the food tastes like.”

In July 2004, I was a part of a 24-day study tour of China sponsored by the National Consortium for Teaching About Asia, funded by the Freeman Foundation. The sixteen teachers from Colorado—I teach at Poudre High School—Utah, Nebraska, Wisconsin and Iowa taught all grade levels in geography, the humanities, and social studies. In 24 days, we traveled by plane, train, and bus from Beijing to Xian, Kunming, Dali and Lijang in Yunnan province in western China near the Tibetan border and on to the coastal cities of Xiamen, Shanghai, and Hong Kong, as well as points in between. We were accompanied by three faculty, a Chinese tour guide and, in each city, a local guide. In Beijing we stayed at a guest dormitory on the campus of Beijing University and attended lectures on calligraphy, Chinese philosophy, and aesthetics. We also saw all the Beijing sights—a performance of Peking Opera, the Summer Palace, the Temple of Heaven, the Forbidden City, Mao’s mausoleum in Tiananmen Square, and the Badaling section of the Great Wall. Other highlights

included a visit to the first Emperor of China’s tomb, guarded by his thousands of terra cotta warriors, the tens of thousands of Buddhas carved into the living rock of the Longmen caves, a stop at the Shaolin Temple—birthplace of both the martial arts and Ch’an Buddhism—refurbished and reopened Buddhist temples in the recently renamed Shangri-La County (the inspiration for James Hilton’s 1930s novel *Lost Horizon*) in Yunnan province, and the entire city of Shanghai.

Although much of the time we were on the tourist trail, this was primarily an educational tour. We didn’t shop; we looked for cultural artifacts. There

were daily lectures, activities, and meetings with local and government officials, school visits and museum tours. The Freeman Foundation, funded by AIG, the world’s largest insurance corporation, believes that the future will be largely influenced by Asia, and the best way to spread information about Asia is to train teachers by sending them on study tours to China, Japan, India, and Korea.

On several of our school visits, we were actively recruited to apply as teachers of English. A prestigious

foreign language school in Shijihuang offered a state-of-the-art teaching environment, apartment, food allowance and a \$2,000 yearly salary, not much by American standards, but quite generous for China. Most children speak at least some English, as it is a mandatory subject in schools up to the eighth grade, as is Mandarin. Westerners are still a rarity outside of the big cities like Beijing and Shanghai, so we were often greeted by children shouting, “hello, hello.” Some of them asked in English to have their pictures taken with us, and all of them giggled when we answered their “hellos” with “ni hao,” Chinese for hello.

There are hundreds of millions of Chinese school children learning English, and perhaps 40,000 Americans of all ages learning Mandarin. As more and more news reports and analysts agree, if the 20th century was the American century, the 21st belongs to China. After firsthand observation and subsequent study, I agree. The world we live in is becoming smaller and more complicated—the more we know about how to understand our trading and cultural partners, the better chance we have of successfully navigating and managing our futures. 



The Author During His Travels

CSU Artist/Writer Collaborative

by Andrea Martens

From a visual artist's perspective, I think the artist/writer collaborative at CSU this year has been a mutually beneficial endeavor. Working with creative writers, mostly poetry graduate students, has been a productive and dynamic experience. Visual art, poetry, music, and dance are within the group's potential for collaborative projects, and the open dialogue and discussions that occur around our projects hold extreme potential. Perhaps one of the most important parts of the group is not necessarily the finished projects but the new friendships and expanded horizons. In addition, the collaboration provides a unique and valuable opportunity to work outside our individual areas of focus, to talk and think about new subjects, to combine ideas, and to work through a shared process. The ultimate goal is a show in a public space, incorporating the collective works from everyone involved in the collaborative. It is clear to me that the creative spirit is alive and well in this inspired group. 



Artists and Writers Unite

Reaching Out With Words

[continued from page 6]

are many community projects and service-learning classes spearheaded by professors and students in the department, we began to discuss what form a more organized outreach could take for our small collective. What would meeting the mission's challenge mean to us, a discipline that focuses on the applied understanding of literacy, and what would it mean to our community?

In order to answer this question, we looked in a variety of places: We researched how English departments throughout the country represent their community partnerships online and conducted site visits to university programs and community literacy centers in Berkeley, CA and Philadelphia, PA. We examined how our CSU Writing Center might expand to include more community outreach and shared our research interests and data about Fort Collins and Denver literacy programs. Throughout this process, we encountered many unique concepts of what it means for a university writing program to interact on equal footing with a community. We are forced to ask how we listen to the needs of a community, and enter it not as an authority, or a body of experts, but as a partner in growth.

While we are still constructing a vision of what the CLC could be, we have continued making relationships in our area. Towards the end of the 2004 spring semester, we re-awakened the Literacy Network of Larimer County, a group that had once helped nonprofits better communicate about literacy issues.

This relationship has continued and has been vastly beneficial to our understanding of the challenges that our community faces with literacy.

In fall 2004, Tobi and I presented our work with the CLC at the Watson Conference, held every other year at the University of Louisville. This conference helped us to network with other universities around the country who are working with literacy issues. As we've struggled to define a niche for the CLC, we have realized that we need to first recognize the literacy outreach and research currently happening across our department. The CLC is now ready to grow into the Center for Literacy Research and Outreach, a clearinghouse for many of the wonderful literacy programs that our department has already developed (e.g. Poetry through Literacy, Kids @ Work, Writing Center outreach, Book Clubs, and ESL classes). Also, the Center will be well-positioned to support faculty and graduate student research, some of which is already occurring as we facilitate writing workshops and restorative justice circles and explore community literacy practices through our membership in the Literacy Network.

When I walked into Tobi's office a year ago, I wondered if I had been lucky enough to stumble into a department of academics who truly care about creating partnerships with the community. As the CLC—and now the Center for Literacy Research and Outreach—grows, changes, evolves, shifts, and finds its niche, my question is continually answered. 



Cultivating tossedgreens

by Elise Zimmerman

Covered head to toe in paint, Rich Hamilton makes his way to the main plaza on the CSU campus. Striking a pose in his bare feet in front of the Lory Student Center, he raises a thin leather-bound journal while the crowd slowly stops moving around him. He's calm at first, with a meditative look in his eyes; then he bursts open, wildly reciting, "The jaaaaaaaaaaaaazzy

BEE!" The crowd freezes and stares at the watercolor madman in front of them, his eyes on fire now. "The ja-a-a-a-a-aaaaazzzzy beeeeeeatzzzz!" He gets louder and louder. "What is this guy doing?" question some. Some clap, some laugh, others just write off Rich as a lunatic.

What this supposed madman is doing is called "performance poetry," the blurring of the boundary between the page and the stage. The genre—which is, according to poet Rainer Maria Rilke, "off the page!"—is not entirely new to CSU. Our own Professor Bill Tremblay, for example, is known for his imitations of Jack Kerouac.

Certain people prefer their books and pages, reading to themselves from the quiet of an overstuffed armchair, while others find this practice incredibly tedious, fingernail-ripping labor. But what poets do when performing their work (or the work of someone else) is to give physical embodiment to the words written on the page in front of them. It is a form of acting; the poets, as performers, can choose to take as many risks as they think their piece merits. Brave? Maybe. Hard? Sometimes. A rush? You bet.

Enter tossedgreens, an undergraduate poetry workshop with roots in performance-based work, birthed in May of 2004 primarily by Hamilton and fellow poets Adena McGibben and Jason Adams. Aimed at getting people in both the CSU and Fort Collins literary communities engaged in the process of writing, tossedgreens is the only performance-based poetry group on campus.

The group provides an alternative way of looking at the written and spoken word. When most people read the word poem, they think rule, or form, or old. Seeking to blow all of these stereotypes completely out of the water, tossedgreens has crafted a charter stating, "[tossedgreens] is a celebration of creative ingenuity where what is said not only holds weight, but is saturated in the trials and tribulations of daily life." Hamilton adds that tossedgreens is a group "dedicated to raising awareness for experimental or innovative work—performative or not—and naturally has to consider the cross-stitch and intersection of race, class, and gender in America. When considering poets for our reading series, we try to keep in mind the emerging hybrid voice and biography of many artists whose art reflects a messy slosh of life experience."

While both McGibben and Hamilton are moving forward in their educational careers, tossedgreens seeks continuation. The group has finally achieved campus-based status and has received both a diversity grant and a grant from Associated Students of Colorado State University (ASCSU), furthering its foothold in the literary community. The local literary journal *Matter* has also given inspiration to the group, as all of tossedgreen's founders desire to see the project in the form of an audio online journal at some point in the future.

tossedgreens has a new home now, moving out of members' living rooms and into the Museum of Contemporary Art of downtown Fort Collins, where people gather for workshops with themes like "Disembedding Poetry" and "Reading Hands." These workshops are experimental and hands-on (not just reading and critiquing), busting open genres and interpreting abstract images. The point is to keep it fresh, to keep it burning. CSU's Curfman Gallery is tossedgreens' other home, where renowned poets such as D. Blair and Akilah Oliver have spoken.

When asked, "Why tossedgreens?" Hamilton replies, "It is a service to the students to have this type of cutting-edge reading series here...and workshop for that matter." He, like other members of the group, is on fire for words, so try not to be too surprised if you see a physical embodiment of that fire performing on the plaza next time you walk through campus.



Poets and Founders, from Left to Right:
Rich Hamilton, Adena McGibben,
and Jason Adams

For more information about tossedgreens, e-mail tossedgreens@hotmail.com.

com.

Reflecting on E210

by Judea Franck

Last week, I taught my students to dance—which might sound ordinary if I were teaching in a dance studio. Yet, I’ve been charged this semester as a third-year Master of Fine Arts (MFA) candidate with the task of teaching E210: Introduction to Creative Writing. I asked for volunteers and two students stood up in front of the class, clutching their What if? collections to their chests, swaying to the awkward music of dialogue being read out loud by the class. The point of the exercise was to visually demonstrate the ways in which dialogue works to connect and disconnect characters in any given scene in a short story. Asking students to physically plot this movement, while reading from a passage in “White Angel” by Michael Cunningham, proved an interesting and dynamic way to teach students about how dialogue operates in a story. This dance lesson also illustrates one of the greater challenges of teaching craft.

As a creative writing teacher and creative writing student, I think one of the most common questions I’m asked is, “How do you teach someone to write creatively? Isn’t that a contradiction in terms?” Just last week, while responding to my students’ poetry exercises, a stranger on the

airplane beside me cast out this sentiment. I told him two things. First, creative writers have tools at their disposal which allow them to create the seamless dream of a story or an unforgettable image in a poem. E210 is a course that introduces students to these ideas of creative writing, helping them collect tools for their creative writing tool bag, so to speak. We spend a great deal of time unpacking published stories and poems, closely examining the elements of craft that published writers have used to create their work. Defining these elements also teaches students a jargon, a common lexicon which we writers have developed for our art.

I’ve also encouraged my students to see these published stories and poems as guides, inspirations, and answers to their own creative work. They are always completing exercises that speak in response to published stories and poems. I try to present as many kinds of literary work as possible in the hopes that students will attach to an author’s work and run with that author as a mentor until they have found their own voice. Yet it is a slippery slope for us teachers of craft to navigate. There are no hard and fast rules for creating poetry and fiction. There are only guidelines that I can describe and encourage my students toward. I never imagined that I would ask students to “dance” in my class, but suddenly it seemed the most obvious way to illustrate the movement inherent in dialogue.

The second thing I told that stranger sitting next to me on the airplane was that far too many people need permission to write. It might sound foolish or crazy, but I didn’t start writing stories until I was told that I could during my introduction to writing fiction course as an undergraduate at the University of New Hampshire. E210 is the kind of course that encourages students toward the risk and work of creative writing. Flannery O’Connor said, “Anyone who has survived childhood has enough material to write for the rest of his or her life.” I told my students that that is what they would be drawing on: not the fact that the characters and voices in their poems or stories are themselves, but rather that to write is to believe that you have something valuable and important to say to the world. During this semester, at the very minimum, poems and stories are my students’ means to say it.

Writing is hard and lonely and sometimes painful, and we writers have to remember what we’re in this for. It is nice to be in a classroom teaching craft because I get the opportunity to encourage students to be engaged with their own writing, to risk that kind of dedication. Most days, I find myself inspired by them, enough to take that risk of writing again and again myself.

Judea Franck

Best Wishes, Departing Faculty—183 Total Years at CSU!

Martin Bucco

by David Redus

“P rofessor Martin Bucco is not available this semester.” This sentence opens a tiny paragraph posted on a perpetually-closed Eddy office door, typed on a 4-inch square piece of paper using an electric typewriter. After 42 years in the English department, the next page could not wait to be turned. This prolific specialist in American literary realism begins a new journey, blithely composing a conclusion to an influential career. A close colleague, retired professor Dr. John Pratt, said the scholar is known “not only for his excellent teaching and scholarship but also for his incredible wit.” Dr. Pratt remarked that the errant professor displayed a satirical perspective while roasting other educators at their retirement parties. Associates report that Dr. Bucco never had an e-mail address while at CSU; amazingly, his nine books and numerous articles came to life on an electric typewriter.



Jim Garvey

by Erin Bradford



J im Garvey has retired after 40 years as associate professor. Garvey is originally from Chicago and he arrived at CSU at a time when linguistics was undergoing considerable change. He represented the new school of thought in this field.

Garvey leaves a significant legacy in the department and has been described as a superb colleague. He established classes in English Language for Teachers and in Linguistic Semantics, Pragmatics and Discourse. He is also sponsoring the James J. Garvey English Language Scholarships, one each for graduates and undergraduates,

to be awarded this spring and next. He is now establishing an endowment fund so that these scholarships can continue for future generations of students. He is the author, with Gerald P. Delahunty, of *Communication, Language, and Grammar: a Course for Teachers*.

Dr. Garvey is an avid musician. He sang with the Larimer Chorale for many years and played piano from 1988 to 2003 at St. John XXIII Catholic Church in Fort Collins.

Fellow faculty members and friends look forward to his yearly fourth of July party where they can watch the fireworks in City Park from his roof.

Dick Henze

by David Redus

L anguage is, by nature, exclusive; the act of assembling and inscribing collections of symbols to denote particular ideas or people leaves spaces between the words. Those spaces remind us of what is not being stated. A simplistic description of Professor Dick Henze would focus, perhaps, upon his career; he teaches Shakespeare. While an apt and factual statement, the brief time it takes to utter those words reveals their bare and fragmentary content. For 35 years, Henze enjoyed the consequences of what he calls the “series of fortunate accidents” that brought him to CSU. A desire to live west of the Mississippi and a dislike of qualities put forth by other potential employers intersected in Fort Collins, and 8,000 students later, he is at a crossroads where he is looking forward. “I’ve always lived in the future,” the quiet scholar says, a statement that makes this next chapter of life look bright for Henze.



Karl Krahnke

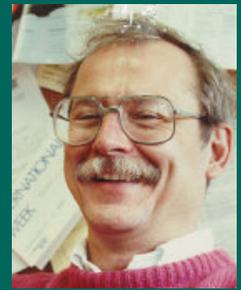
by Erin Bradford

Karl Krahnke's career has taken him in many directions: to earn a bachelor's in English, a master's in linguistics, and a Ph. D. in Iranian Linguistics; to complete a tour with the Peace Corps in Afghanistan; and to research in Iran. Krahnke's path ultimately led to CSU, where he has worked for 22 years.

One of his favorite classes to teach was Development of the English Language, for its capacity to help students understand the origins of English, and its coexistence with other languages, and "because its success was so unlikely and its effects so harmless."

If Krahnke could create his own classes, he says that "one would deal with how language is used, especially by individuals, to establish and maintain identities...sort of a combination of pragmatics, sociolinguistics, and social psychology. Another would be on how language is understood by 'non-professionals' and how that understanding reflects important historical and social insights. It might also be fun to teach a course on how languages really are learned."

Krahnke offers this advice for new professors: "Don't do administration. Don't buy sailboats in Florida. Learn to type."



David Lindstrom

by Erin Bradford



“When I was still an undergraduate I thought that working in a university would be attractive: an atmosphere of conflicting ideas and a belief in sustained argument along with lectures and concert series. I was lucky enough to back into teaching.”

David Lindstrom has worked as professor here for 36 years; he served as assistant chair of the department for 25 years. Lindstrom taught British literature and modern fiction. Lindstrom's favorite classes include Introduction to Poetry, sophomore surveys of English Literature, 18th-Century English Fiction, and Jane Austen, "for the chance to read almost everything by the first great female English novelist."

"Teaching is so dynamic that each class differs from the others and, thus, the ironies, say, of Swift or Fielding or Austen play out differently from year to year. The experience has been wonderfully sustaining."

Lindstrom and his wife, Peggy, who recently retired as the Director of Intensive English, have two sons and two grandchildren, all living in Denver. Lindstrom has been singing for many years. Presently, he sings tenor in the Larimer Chorale.

Ward Swinson

by David Redus



Ward Swinson began his career at CSU in 1969. That fall, nine other newly-hired English professors became colleagues, friends, and allies. A former resident of Chicago, Swinson had never owned or driven a car; as his colleagues tired of taxiing the transplanted urbanite around town, they taught him to drive. When asked to consider the implications of his upcoming retirement, the professor said he will miss his colleagues a great deal.

Swinson is looking forward to

retirement, though he has not made any concrete plans. "I will miss many students, and the energy of contact with them," he said. The professor considers passing along a love of literature—particularly the works of Joyce, Proust, and Nabokov—a substantial contribution. To English department faculty just beginning at CSU, he would advise valuing the kinds of things that have made the department a pleasant, wonderful place to work: camaraderie, esprit de corps, and, even though it is time-consuming, the committee system.

Adjunct Instructors

[continued from cover]



Raising Awareness on the Plaza

as the lifeblood of the university. As the editorial staff at the *Rocky Mountain Collegian* recently wrote, “Simply put, the university cannot survive without adjuncts.” And yet, for budgetary purposes, CSU considers its adjuncts “temporary” employees. As such, adjuncts must reapply for their positions each year and usually aren’t told until weeks (or sometimes days) before the semester begins whether they have jobs and what classes they will teach.

In addition to their lack of job security, adjuncts feel they are paid an inadequate salary—less than one-third of what the average tenured faculty member at CSU makes. For the past six years, adjuncts in the English department who have taught full-time have made \$24,000 a year, with no cost-of-living increases (despite rising health care and housing costs). This is \$2,000 less than what the average worker with only a high school degree earned in 1998 (according to the U.S. Department of Labor).

Adjuncts believe it’s time for the university to address their situation. Last October, during Campus Equity Week, a group of adjuncts from the English and

foreign language departments organized to inform students, faculty, and administrators about their situation.

Students responded immediately, and several of their letters appeared in the *Rocky Mountain Collegian*. One student wrote, “I was shocked to discover how poorly the adjuncts in the English department are treated...I, for one, have considered teaching as a career; however, with the despicable way teachers are treated...I will certainly never enter this field.” Other students included comments on their course evaluations praising their adjunct instructors for their hard work and pleading with the university to recognize these individuals’ accomplishments.

Students weren’t the only ones who reacted to this issue. Faculty members across campus also showed interest. They talked with adjuncts (who were on the plaza distributing information) and agreed that the system was highly exploitive. Faculty in the English department showed their support by wearing blue ribbons and informing their students about the issue.

The efforts put forth during Equity Week also gained the attention of some university administrators. The former provost, Peter Nicholls, agreed to address the adjuncts’ concerns. In October, Nicholls and Heather Hardy, dean of Liberal Arts, met with adjuncts to hear their request for pay raises and greater job security. Nicholls claimed he was previously unaware of the adjuncts’ unfortunate situation and agreed that raising the pay per section from \$3,000 to \$3,500 was necessary. He vowed to work toward this long-term goal. However, as Sue Doe, a spokesperson for the adjuncts, explained, “Thirty-five hundred dollars should not be viewed as a long-term goal but as

the baseline salary that adjuncts should be granted now. If adjuncts had received the same cost-of-living increases awarded to other faculty over the past six years, they would already be making the desired \$3,500.”

Nicholls agreed but firmly insisted that the university’s budget would not allow for such increases at this time.

While adjuncts acknowledge the trouble with requesting pay raises during a time of fiscal uncertainty, they are skeptical of the administration’s arguments. Those who have taught in the English department for over 15 years claim that university administrators have always insisted there was nothing left in the budget for adjuncts. Other adjuncts have pointed out how well top administrators are doing during this time of budget anxiety. Public records show that Larry Penley, president of CSU, currently makes nearly 16 times what a full-time adjunct instructor makes. Records also show that last year, Dean Hardy received a 9.83 percent salary increase. It’s difficult for adjuncts to accept the university’s claims of limited budget allowances when so many administrators continue to enjoy salary increases.

Some things are improving. Changes have recently been made to ensure that adjuncts are given earlier notification of their employment. There has also been a slight wage increase, raising the pay per section from \$3,000 to \$3,150. Adjuncts say they are appreciative of these gains and of Nicholls’ desire to improve their working conditions. Unfortunately, now that Nicholls is leaving CSU, adjunct instructors are uncertain of what the future holds.

Adjuncts’ current efforts involve reaching out to faculty in other departments to increase their support base. They are also

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Todd Mitchell's Literary Secrets Exposed

by Renee Rallo



Todd Mitchell

If you've seen Todd Mitchell's E238: 20th-Century Fiction or CO300: Writing Arguments students crowd around him before class starts, sharing ideas and swapping stories, you can tell that his students feed off of his enthusiasm for the coursework. If you've seen Todd in the Lory Student Center plaza raising awareness of adjunct faculty working conditions for Campus Equity week, you can see his commitment to his colleagues and his passion for activism. If you've seen Todd at one of the many Minions fiction/non-fiction/poetry readings around Fort Collins, you can tell that he is a talented, witty writer who devotes a lot of time to his craft.

Harder to guess from his appearances or activities, however, is what Todd describes as his secret literary passion. With a guilty smile, he confesses: "I love young adult fiction."

While he was in CSU's MFA program writing adult fiction, Todd secretly moonlighted as a young-adult fiction reader and writer. Though he was able to keep these writing projects hidden, in part because he "felt it wouldn't be considered serious work," he won't be able to keep this secret for long, not now that Scholastic accepted his manuscript for a young adult fiction novel, *Traitor King*, scheduled to come out in the fall of 2006. This story of a brother and sister's quest to unearth a bizarre family secret originated as a fantasy exploration of heritage, especially the life of a child struggling to fit into his family. Todd is currently finishing up another young adult novel, a "creepy, dark book," which he describes as "*Catcher in the Rye* meets *The Matrix*."

Over the past four years, while working as an English department adjunct, Todd wrote three novels before getting to what he calls the "good one." As an instructor, Todd recognizes that being a practicing writer, who writes for four hours every morning, helps him gain insight into his students' struggles with their own writing projects. To demonstrate the idea that "writing is re-writing," he uses his own work as an example to discuss how things change between drafts, "I'll share stories about how I wrote twelve different versions of one story before I found the one that worked or how I wrote twenty pages before I arrived at the first page." As a result, his students come to understand the writing process, knowing that their instructor toils as they do.

Todd enjoys the relatively flexible schedule afforded him as an adjunct, but being a contingent faculty member and working writer has both perks and drawbacks. Being in the classroom provides a "balance" for Todd, keeping him in contact with young writers and fresh ideas. However, the demands of teaching make finding time to write difficult. Though he entertains the idea of going back to high school teaching to "make the big bucks," he recognizes that "the financial limitations of being an adjunct provide excellent motivation to succeed in other areas."

: Adjunct Instructors

: [continued from previous page]

researching labor organizations in higher education and making a push for significant inclusion in CSU's strategic plan. In addition, adjuncts are seeking support on the state level by meeting with representatives like Bob Bacon and Angie Paccione.

One adjunct in the English department stated, "Many of us want to stay at CSU. We like the department and we're dedicated to teaching, but if salaries aren't adjusted to keep up with the rising costs of living, then it's clear we have no future here."

In this year's accreditation report, CSU listed three guiding principles for building and sustaining a great university. One of these principles states, "The institution at any one time is no more than the people who constitute it, and so highest priority must be given to recruiting, hiring, compensating, supporting and retaining people." Let's hope the College of Liberal Arts will make this goal a reality.



Since that summer, phenomenal growth has taken place, so much that the CSU site, after only two years, will be featured in the National Writing Project (NWP) Annual Report to Congress in April. This report aids in the continuation of federal funding for the 189 Writing Project institutes established nationwide over the past thirty years. Each year the NWP chooses several promising programs to highlight. The CSU site was chosen because of the level and quality of advancement that has occurred since its inception.

The area that has seen the most growth since 2003 is outreach.

One goal of the Summer Institute, in addition to giving teachers a chance to connect, is to strengthen writing programs across disciplines and grade levels. Since the end of the first Summer Institute, a group of CSU Writing Project teachers has been making this a reality. The group offered professional development in Weld County District 6 (WCD), St. Vrain and Poudre School Districts (PSD). Currently, the CSUWP teachers are forming a curriculum-consulting team that will help shape the elementary writing curriculum for PSD. While most professional development opportunities for teachers include one or two meetings, with very little teacher interaction or follow-up, the CSUWP presentations will be given in a series of five interactive sessions. Teachers will have the chance to apply what they've learned in their classrooms before attending the next session. This is an effective way for teachers to implement new ideas for teaching writing, while still having a support system available. The most exciting aspect of this professional development program is the fact that it is interdisciplinary. Schools participating in the five-session presentations have agreed to include teachers from English, science, social studies and math, which means that students write throughout the school day instead of just in language arts classes.

Another goal of the Writing Project is to help teachers and students see themselves as writers. During the Summer Institute, teachers write and share with each other daily, but sometimes it takes an extra push to encourage participants to publish. Over the past two summers, guest speakers such as Steven Church, a published author and graduate from CSU's MFA Program, and Glenna McReynolds, a romance novelist from Fort Collins, have visited the group. These speakers shared their writing experiences and gave advice about the publication process. Louann

Reid, professor in the English education program and editor of *English Journal*, also visited the Summer Institute to discuss the journal and the different types of professional writing published there.

Last summer, twenty middle-school students were offered a comparable experience for the first time during the Young Writers Workshop. They were visited by young-adult writer Lauren Myracle, another graduate of the MFA Program at CSU, who read from her books and talked about being an author. The Young Writers Workshop is a week-long experience that runs parallel to the Summer Institute so that students and teachers can interact and learn from each other. At the end of the workshop, students held a reading at Barnes & Noble Booksellers. It was a delight to see seventh-, eighth-, and ninth-graders so invested in their own writing.

An ongoing challenge for the CSU Writing Project is to keep participants connected after the Summer Institute is over. Our project has done a wonderful job of creating continuity programs for this purpose. Thanks to our Teacher-as-Writer, Marcia Linley, Writing Project participants have a weekly writing group we can attend in order to share works-in-progress and ask for writing advice. Marcia also organizes writing retreats once a semester. The most recent was a two-day winter retreat in Estes Park. These events provide time for Writing Project participants to focus on the one thing they rarely have time for: their own writing. Bud Hunt, Teacher-as-Researcher, organized a teacher-research group that functions in a similar way. Teachers meet on a regular basis to discuss ongoing research in their classrooms. They started out by asking big questions about their students' writing, and from there, they have worked to change their teaching practice to improve student writing.

The 2005 Summer Institute, June 13-July 8, will welcome twenty new participants to the Writing Project family. The CSU site will also continue to grow by offering two new one-week open sessions called "Discovering the Writer in the Teacher" for those who want to start with a shorter experience before delving into the four-week Institute. CSUWP will also conduct a second summer of the Young Writers Workshop.

We've made tremendous progress in three years. We hope such a motivated program will be well-received by Congress—and, ultimately, other universities and school districts—when they learn about it.



Wales Report

by Matt Martin

Swansea University, where I'm currently studying abroad, sits on the southern coastline of Wales, tucked in a bay on the eastern Gower Peninsula. The campus lies directly on the bay, opposite the Atlantic, with a beach that can be accessed in minutes. Swansea itself is both a small and large town, large enough to meet demands, small enough to charm. Swansea is host most notably to poet and author Dylan Thomas, who wrote about the area in countless, retrogressively flattering pieces that tactfully ignore the town's disagreeable midwinter. These days, Swansea is most recognizable as the site of one of Catherine Zeta Jones' myriad summer houses.

Fortunately though, there's much more to Swansea than secondhand celebrity trivia. The town's view to Mumbles lighthouse along the gentle sweep of the Atlantic itself, the azure twinkling below turquoise cumulus clouds, offers as much midday inspiration and refreshment as a Rocky Mountain cockscomb. In the middle of Swansea's city centre is a great towering castle, fantastically well-preserved and mocking any American concept of historical time. In northern Wales, nothing is pronounceable; there are towns with names like Colwyn Bay, Llandudno, Rhyl, Penmaenmawr, and Llanfairfechan. Every sign in Swansea is written in both Welsh and English; Welsh sounds like an endearing form of coughing. Along the shore of northern Wales are more gorgeous castles, one after the other. I am told that these were put in place originally by the English to keep out the Welsh.

People frequently ask why I chose to study at Swansea, and to that I can only give nebulous murmurs.

Not that any student I've met can answer the big "why" with any assertiveness. Swansea was, for me, chosen for practicalities—school partnership, the superb quality of English programs, knowing the native language beyond formalities. Mainly, it was chosen just to study abroad, now an integral component of a complete American education, as fundamental as that ninth or tenth semester, a motive as earnest



Matt Martin on a Beach in Wales

and valid as anything.

Academically, you may be surprised, as I was, to find that I only have a weekly total of six classes at Swansea. These classes aren't especially taxing either, instead functioning as informational lectures, with minimal student interaction. This is endemic: around Swansea students are expected to earn their education almost entirely on their own, an arrangement both students and professors find palatable. Classes, notes, attendance—these things are largely arbitrary; in their place is an expected standard of independence, the library's subterranean shelves replacing the classroom. Essays—thoughtful, incisive, original essays—are the only assignments. Veteran essay writers see this freedom as a blessing; others find this single representation of skill too pressuring

or too lax. For a generation of incorrigible procrastinators, essays of any size incite bouts of dismissive lethargy. Here, football, club life, and traveling take precedence. Inevitable essay plagiarism is sternly punished.

The students mostly revel in the independence, much happier to play, cheer, and idolize football. Every student seems to have a knack for the game, and playing with them is both impressive and frustrating. Around our communal dining table, the Brits tell me of the intensely variegated regional dialects throughout Britain. We argue over pronunciation of words like "route," "urinal," and "aluminum." They tell me they'll show me British culture, and by this they mean, of course, nightlife and more nightlife.

This is the lifestyle, and it holds the significance of heritage. Wherever I go in Britain—and I have traveled so far to north Wales, Manchester, and Edinburgh—the residents regard me carefully, recognize me as a student, and chuckle away. "We'll show you British culture, mate," they say, chalking their cues. "This is where you get your real education." They send a ball flying into a hole, finalizing their point. Even a group of Scottish schoolteachers I met said the real education is found out of the classroom, with mates.

And for what it's worth, this seems reasonable. Balancing this experiential education of cultural camaraderie with the, ahem, more bookish pursuits, seems to naturally define studying abroad. Luckily, Britain's unforecastable weather allows generously for analysis and revelry. For me, I'm proud to get both educations.



Rhonda Richmond: Mother, Writer, Student

by Tara K. Land



Rhonda Richmond

If you've had a class with Rhonda Richmond, you've probably been struck by her quiet, thoughtful, and direct style of communication. Her soft voice and calm demeanor give her classmates the impression of a humble but discerning intellect. Her writing, according to her peers, is immediate in emotion, powerful in imagery, and often draws on her own life for subject matter. If you've heard of Rhonda's contributions in class, you know that she's a valuable addition to the CSU Communication Development Program.

If you know Rhonda as a mother, you know that she and her husband Robbie have five children—Jazz, Jessy, Angela, Alexander, and Anthony. She focuses on her family and spending time with them: with her husband

it's science fiction; with her daughters it's Tuesday night with the *Gilmore Girls*; as for her two boys, they like to wrestle and her competitive nature always keeps them

in the information technologies field, but then applied for and received a \$50,000 scholarship to attend the University of Denver. She completed her bachelor's in Communication in 2003.

“Her writing, according to her peers, is immediate in emotion and powerful in imagery.”

coming back for more from their tough mom.

If you're aware of Rhonda's writing career, you know of her recently published book of poetry, *Journal by the Bedside*. Released in January 2004, this book explores the poignant experiences she's gone through in her life; she discusses issues such as domestic violence, birth, abandonment, and marriage. She has earned two Editor's Choice Poetry Awards for two of her favorite poems and has been published in three poetry anthologies. She also contributes regularly to the *Weekender*, a quarterly publication from the Women's College at DU.

Yet, even if you know Rhonda as a graduate student, mother, and writer, you may still not know that her grandmother raised her along with several foster children. You also probably don't know that Rhonda's college career began in 1992 at Colorado Christian University. But her path to graduation wasn't linear—she dropped out of college and became a mother in 1995. She later began working

Beyond what she has already done and already been, Rhonda has aggressive plans to make her future as robust as her past. While she's currently spending the majority of her time with her family, Rhonda eventually wants to teach literature at the university level and to continue to write. She is working on her next book, a collection of oddity-filled short stories. She is also on revision number eight of a screenplay that she's hoping to have produced in the next few years. Whether you know Rhonda as a student, a mother, or a writer, you're most likely looking forward to discovering what this remarkable woman still has in store for us. If you haven't yet had the pleasure of meeting Rhonda, you've got quite a bit of catching up to do. 

Anticipating something on the horizon
I wait
Not knowing, not understanding
I wait
Hoping that soon it comes
Longing for the surprise to unveil
Persisting that I think I know
And yet,
I wait.

Excerpt from *Journal By the Bedside*, "SEE," page 52

English Major Jessi Rochel Sets Sights High

by Madeleine Smith

An old legend claims that when Captain James Cook first landed on the island of Australia in 1770, he asked the Aborigines about the name of the remarkable kickboxing creatures he saw there. The word they used to answer sounded like “kangaroo,” and Cook assumed it was the name of the animals, while in fact it meant something along the lines of “what the heck are you trying to say to us?” Whether true or false, this story has been mentioned in countless English classes to illustrate the ambiguity of language, the importance of understanding, and other such literary concepts. But the story does not end with a confused old sailor, because over two hundred years later, English major Jessi Kay Rochel made another voyage to the exotic isle. Her ship sailed the waters of the sky, rather than the ocean, but she encountered the very same creatures in a wildlife park, and was reportedly even allowed to feed them.

Born in Minnesota, Jessi began her pioneer life as a mere five-year-old, when her family moved to Colorado and settled in a place that is actually called Roaring Fork Valley. From there she came to CSU, where she currently pursues a degree with a creative writing concentration. She hopes to continue to travel throughout her lifetime. She wants to spend time near mountains as well as oceans, cities, and small towns.

Jessi is a particularly accomplished member of the CSU community. She is part of the Honors Program and is currently a member of the Honors Student Association (HSA). A talented writer, she has had her poetry accepted in the literature publication *A*, and both poetry and fiction accepted by the Honors

literary magazine *Spiritus Mundi*. In addition, she co-writes fiction for the HSA newsletter, and has been involved as an Honors Student Leader. One of her ambitions is to become a novelist.



Jessi Rochel

Jessi’s favorite books include the *Harry Potter* series, as well as *A Bend in the Road* by Nicholas Sparks, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain, and a long list of others. In fact, she is a hopeless bookworm, and therefore another of her aspirations is to own a small bookstore one day, “so I can be surrounded by books at all times.” She balances her academic and literary life with athletics, and has played a number of intramural sports, including inner tube water polo, flag football, and soccer.

Unlike Captain Cook, Jessi is a CSU English student, and is therefore undoubtedly more aware

of the power of language. While Cook’s greatest achievement in literature was getting his name in a few dictionaries for coining “kangaroo,” Jessi has the brains and the ambition to go beyond the mere stumbling over new words and become an influential part of the American literary scene. She may be an editor, critic, author, poet, or even an eccentric bookstore owner, but she is sure to make a meaningful contribution. Her travels and exploration, both geographical and literary, are sure to broaden her horizons and provide inspiration. Sources claim that she even held a koala while she was in Australia. 🐨

For information about how you can benefit the English department, please contact Kim Tobin, College of Liberal Arts Director of Development at 970-491-3846, or by e-mail at Kim.Tobin@colostate.edu.

Writing on the Continental Divide

by Rosa Salazar

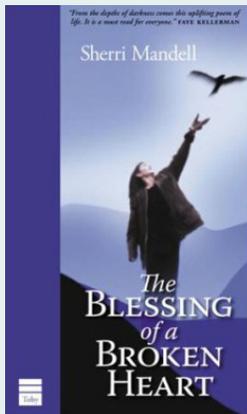
1. writing without naming

on the continental divide no way to tell me. follow the lip. miles shorter. no explaining topo map. maybe pointing, that ridge over there, here it is, this concentric circle. touching it on the map. a recognition of steepness but no complaining about rapid heartbeat, burning muscles. no way to qualify. mountains distinct but unnamed. nothing not connected to the body or the earth. sensation the only language. rabbit prints everywhere, wide double pads of hind legs, delicate prints in front. one set of bobcat tracks, circling back, following. never any blood. creatures besides us writing without words.

2. naming with words

with names. mt. lindsey. uncomphagre. summit peak. we name the dusk between day and darkness. liminal. we are here. you point to the map. tell me how the circles correspond to elevation. we walk in the snow up steep slopes on snowshoes. descend through trees. I sit on a rock and the wind steals my warmth. you ask first then take my picture. we go back a different way. through miles we complain about. toward darkness. sharing that we are tired. wondering about the rabbit. we can see our breath. the air in the cabin is cold. you build a fire. we cover ourselves with blankets. the fire burns out by midnight. 

A Conversation with Sherri Mandell [continued from page 5]



and hard-fought imagery it takes its place as a literary work of high craft and art.

Mandell received her master's in poetry in 1980 from CSU after attending Cornell for her undergraduate degree. She currently lives in Tekoa, Israel with her husband, children, and the spirit of her son Koby.

I spoke to Sherri Mandell in February 2005 about the book, about Koby, and about

the Koby Mandell Foundation.

Freestone: The diary-like aspect of much of the book is intriguing. Were you able to write from the beginning of the grieving process or did you need to wait and get some distance?

Mandell: Koby died in May and I was writing in October. I wrote the chapter about his birthday and the 14 beggars right at the time of his birthday because my friend Shira encouraged me to write to be able to deal with it, and that was only six weeks after he was killed.

How did you make the decision to break the book up into the two sections, "The Cave" and "The Bird's Nest," and within those sections how did you make the choices for chapter arrangement?

The sections are the movement from this total despair

and darkness of the cave into the light, but a lot of the chapters themselves could have been in different orders.

Because of the shifts back and forth in the temporal space?

Yes, well I think it has a main narrative thrust, but a lot of it was out of time. You see, the process is a back and forth movement. It's just not a straight line.

A main thrust of this book chronicles what you call "Signs" and "Wonders" that have appeared to you as early as Koby's birth and then in and throughout your grief. How did the connections of these signs and wonders come about to show this way of navigating in your grieving process?

Well, it all came from writing about it. I started writing to maintain a connection to Koby. Now, writing gives me a path to take with the pain, Koby, and what I've learned. It's a continual process, but see, I felt the story was given to me. Right away at the *Shiva* (Jewish grieving ceremony) I was talking about the signs and connections from Koby's birth and *bris* (circumcision). It was just this really big story that I felt and had to write down because it was so powerful. Then I had to explore it Jewishly, what it all meant, because I was given these clues but I had to research them.

Tell me about the Koby Mandell Foundation.

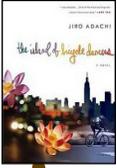
Well, we run Camp Koby and Yoseph, which is for children who have been affected by terror. It's for

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Selected Announcements, Awards, and Publications

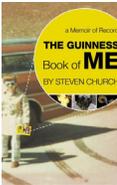
Alumni

Jiro Adachi's (Fiction, 1992) novel *The Island of Bicycle Dancers* (Picador USA) just came out in paperback.



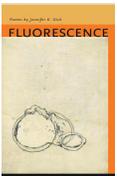
Nicole Backens's (Fiction, 2004) short story "The Disciple of Because," winner of the AWP Intro Journal Awards, appeared in *Shenandoah*.

Steven Church's (Fiction, 2002) *The Guinness Book of Me—A Memoir of Record* is available now from Simon and Schuster. Also, he has accepted a position as a Visiting Assistant Professor of Creative Writing at Roger Williams University.



Jill Darling (Poetry, 2002) will have a poem included in the new Gival Press anthology *Poetic Voices without Borders*. Another long poem will be included in the fall issue of *Factorial*.

Jen Dick (Poetry, 1999) won the 2004 Contemporary Poetry Series Contest from the University of Georgia Press. Her collection *Fluorescence* was published by the University of Georgia Press in 2004. Also, she and



Mark Tursi (Poetry, 1999) have poems forthcoming in *Upstairs at Duroc*.

Evelina Galang (Fiction, 1994) won the 2004 Award for the Novel from the Associated Writing Programs (AWP). Her book *One Tribe* will be published by New Issues Press. She was also one of 10 winners of the prestigious 2004 Myers Outstanding Book Award.

Justin Hocking's (Fiction, 2001) story "Dragon," published originally in *Open City*, was listed on the 2004 *Best American Non-required Reading's* "Notable" list. One of his essays will also be featured in the spring issue of *Many Mountains Moving*.

Jacqueline Lyons's (Poetry, 1999) essay "Too Nice," originally published in the *Chattahoochee Review*, was cited among the Notable Essays in the 2004 *Best American Essays*.

Sandra Meek (Poetry, 1989) has had *Burn*, her second book of poems, published by Elixir Press.

Cara McDonald (MA, 1998) was hired as the new Deputy Editor of *5280*, the Denver city magazine. Cara has worked as a staff writer at *Traverse Magazine* and *Indianapolis*.

Rebecca McGoldrick (Poetry, 2004) had "The Mother Goes Out for Monistat, Dandelions and a Box Fan" published in *Phoebe* and an excerpt from "clover" was published in *Bombay Gin*.

Bonny Barry Sanders (Poetry, 1989) recently had a collection of poems, *Touching Shadows*, published by Val Verde Press.

Oz Spies's (Fiction, 2003) story "The Love of a Strong Man" was selected for *Best American Mystery Stories 2005*, to be released in fall 2005 by Houghton Mifflin.

[continued from previous page]

both religious and secular kids from all over Israel. We have retreats for the mothers and widows where we run workshops and just give them a break from their lives. Also, we're running daily workshops where we examine all this through a certain lens of, like, Kabalistic and Hassidic tradition, and a lot of these workshops are being taught by bereaved mothers and widows. Our goal is to turn people into people who can give from their loss and not into people who close down, because that's the tendency when you've suffered a loss that great, the tendency to shut down, to freeze, and close up. Please check out our website: www.kobymandell.org

Is there anything else you'd like the Alumni and the other readers of the Freestone to know?

(Laughs) Just how much the people there [in the English department] really affected my writing and my ability to write poetically. I brought a lot of what I learned there into this. 

Selected Announcements, Awards, and Publications

Faculty / Department

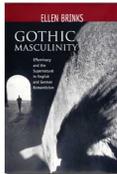
The MFA program is celebrating its 20th anniversary.

Congratulations to the following faculty members who received certificates celebrating their service milestones this year:

- 10 years: Sue Russell, Irene Vernon
- 15 years: Anne Gogela
- 20 years: Marcia Aune, Steven Schwartz
- 25 years: Kate Kiefer, David Mogen, Jon Thiem
- 35 years: Carol Cantrell, David Lindstrom, Ward Swinson.

Leslee Becker published stories in *Epoch* and *Hungry Mountain*, and she had a story accepted by *Antioch Review*.

Ellen Brinks's essay "Feminizing Famine, Imperial Critique: Pandita Ramabai's Famine Essays" appeared in the journal *South Asian Review* as part of a special issue entitled "Colonial Studies, 1880-1947." Her essay "Nobody's Children": Gothic Representation and Traumatic History in The Devil's Backbone" will appear in a special issue of *JAC*. Brinks's book *Gothic Masculinity: Effeminacy and the Supernatural in English and German Romanticism* was published in 2003 by Bucknell University Press.



Marty Bucco's book *Sinclair Lewis as Reader and Critic* has been published by the Mellen Press.

John Calderazzo's essay "Apocalypse Dogs" has been accepted for the anthology *Comeback Wolves: Western Writers Welcome the Wolf Home*, forthcoming from Johnson Books, and co-edited by our very own SueEllen Campbell. Calderazzo also published *Rising Fire: Volcanoes and Our Inner Lives* in 2004 by Lyons Press.



Gerald Callahan's essay "Chimera" was selected for inclusion in *In Fact: The Best of Creative Nonfiction*. His essay "Breath and Shadow" appeared in the fall issue of *Animal Healer's Quarterly*. His essay "The Invisible World" appeared in *Science and Spirit Magazine*. His essay "Einstein's Dreams" will appear in a forthcoming issue of *turnrow*. He has also signed a contract with St. Martin's Press for a book called *Infection: the Uninvited Universe*.



Pam Coke won the award for University Honors Adviser of the Year.

Matthew Cooperman has a new artist's chapbook called *Words About James* forthcoming from Phylum Press. He's had poems accepted by *Volt*, *Free Verse*, *New American Writing*, *Chain*, *Double Room*, *Matter*, and *Square One*. His poem "Howling Wolf" has been included in the forthcoming anthology *Comeback Wolves*.

Pattie Cowell's "Practicing Democracy: Early American Authors in 21st-Century Communities" will be published in *Early American Literature*. This essay on service-learning pedagogy has been selected by the National Campus Compact as a model for their "History, Civics, Service" project.

Mary Crow's poem "Canis Lupus, Family Canidae" will also appear in *Comeback Wolves*. Crow's poem "Pictures We Have Lived" will be reprinted for the special anniversary issue of *The Best of St. Ann's Review*. *Illuminations* will publish her "After Bad News," and *American Poetry Journal* will publish "Twins."

Gerry Delahunty is one of this year's recipients of the Jack E. Cermak Outstanding Adviser Awards. Delahunty's review of Diane Ravitch's *The Language Police* will appear in the May 2005 issue of *English Journal*.

Jenny Goodman received the 2005 College of Liberal Arts Excellence in Teaching Award. Goodman also won a 2005 CSU Alumni Association Best Teacher Award. Her "'Presumption' and 'Unlearning': Reading Muriel Rukeyser's 'The Book of the Dead' as a Woman's American Epic" has been accepted for publication by *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature*. Her article "Revisionary Postwar Heroism in Gwendolyn Brooks's *Annie Allen*" will be published in *Approaches to the Anglo-American Female Epic, 1621-1982*, forthcoming from Ashgate.

Tobi Jacobi co-edited a special issue on prison literacy for *Reflections: A Journal of Writing, Service-Learning, and Community Literacy*. She also won the Service Integration Project's annual Instructional Innovation in Service Learning Award in late spring 2004.

Jen Lamb's poetry manuscript *apeiron* was selected as a finalist for the 2004 Stan and Tom Wich Poetry Prize competition. It was also selected as a semifinalist for the Third Annual Slope Editions Book Prize.

Lisa Langstraat's article "Emotion and Community Rhetorics: Victim Impact Statements as Cultural Pedagogy" will appear in *Rhetorical Agendas: Political, Ethical, Spiritual*, published by Lawrence Erlbaum Press. Her article "Emotional Hegemony, Citizenship and Popular Literacies in Composition Studies: 1955-65" appeared in *Multiple Literacies for the 21st Century*, published by Hampton Press.

Deanna Ludwin's essay "The Prose Poem: A (Mostly) Personal History" will appear in the second issue of *Sentence: A Journal of Prose Poetics*. She will also have two poems, "My Lover's Greatest Fear" and "How I Came to Work at Wheaton's Dairy," published in a special prose poem issue of *Luna*.

Todd Mitchell had *Traitor King*, a young adult novel, accepted for publication by Scholastic.

David Mogen's creative nonfiction essay "Leaving Home" received the Willa Pilla Award given by the Western Literature Association for the wittiest paper delivered at the annual conference.

Mike Palmquist received the Charles Moran Award for Distinguished Contributions to the Field at the Computers and Writing Conference in Hawaii in 2004. Palmquist also received the College of Liberal Arts Distinction in Advancement Award.

Louann Reid has been named the recipient of the Jack E. Cermak Advising Award for Graduate Advising. Reid's chapter "Teaching Grammar in Contexts for Writing" will appear in a book by Fran Claggett, scheduled for publication by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) in June. Reid was also guest co-editor of a special issue of the online journal *English Teaching Practice and Critique*, which is hosted at Waikato University in New Zealand.

Steven Schwartz's short story "Opposite Ends of the World" has been accepted for publication by the *Bellvue Literary Review*. His essay "What We Talk About When We Talk About Negative Attachment" has been accepted by the *North American Review*. His personal essay "The Deep-Blue, Hairy-Legged Great Divide" has been accepted for publication by *Hotel Amerika*.

Sarah Jane Sloane's book *The I Ching for Writers: Finding the Page Inside You* is available, published by New World Library.

Ward Swinson received the Oliver Pennock Award for Distinguished Service for his dedication to the English

department and the College of Liberal Arts.

Paul Trembath published a paper on Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri called "The Bio-Politics of Reading Empire" in the electronic journal *The Anomalist*, operating out of the University of Leeds.

Bill Tremblay won the Colorado Book Award for *Shooting Script: Door of Fire*. Tremblay's poem "Blind Minotaur" will be published in *Chokecherries*.

Laura Van Etten's essay "Safety Planning" will be published in *The Sun*.

James Work's literary mystery *A Title to Murder* was published in October of 2004.

Graduate Students

Association of Writing Programs (AWP) Intro Journals Project Awards:

Fiction: **Katie Arnsteen**, "Circulating Affections"
Creative Nonfiction: **Judea Franck**, "Walking Sex Act"
Poetry: **Bonnie Emerick**, "what we intended before we never again will intend after"; **Jenna McWilliams**, "Yeats at a Rest Stop/Yeats finds his Duende"; **Rosa Salazar**, "Atravesar."

Stephen Reid Award for Excellence in Teaching:
First Place: **Renee Rallo**; Honorable Mention: **Bonnie Emerick**.

Logan Burns's untitled manuscript was selected by the CSU poetry faculty to enter the national Ruth Lilly Fellowship Contest. **Michelle Schmidt's** manuscript "Vitelline Prophecies" was selected as the runner-up.

Bonnie Emerick's poem "If the Ifs Would Have Been Still" will be published in *Square One*.

Chloe Leisure will have two poems published: "Fantangency: Inertia" in *Matter* and "[How] Sick Souls Gather" in *PERMAfrost*.

Jenna McWilliams will have two poems appear in *Copper Nickel*: "Zombie Movie" and "Alternate Ending: Zombie Movie."

Rosa Salazar has had poetry published in *Limestone*, *Matter*, and *Punto de Partida*.

Jaime Wood's manuscript *Living Voices: Multicultural Poetry in the Middle School Classroom* has been accepted for publication by the NCTE.

