

An Interview with the Department's Newest Professor

Emily Rosko

Emily Rosko joined the faculty of the Department of English this year from Cornell University, where she was Visiting Assistant Professor of English. Professor Rosko majored in English and Creative Writing at Purdue University, with a minor in Philosophy. She earned an MFA in Poetry at Cornell University and a PhD in English and Creative Writing at the University of Missouri, Columbia. She has been the recipient of a number of distinguished fellowships—the Jacob K. Javits Fellowship, sponsored by the US Department of Education; the Stegner Fellowship at Stanford University; and the Poetry Foundation's Ruth Lilly Fellowship—as well as a number of honors and national prizes.

Her first book, *Raw Goods Inventory*, was brought out by the University of Iowa in 2006 and won that press's prestigious Iowa Poetry Prize. A collection of essays on the poetic line, *A Broken Thing: Poets on the Line*, which Rosko edited and introduced, will be published this Fall. A second book of poems, *Prop Rockery*, is currently under press consideration. She is at work on a third collection, *Weather Inventions*.

Last year, her first at the College of Charleston, she taught a first year seminar on Shakespeare and film (Shakespeare was her secondary area for her PhD) and

lower- and upper-division workshops in poetry. This summer, she co-led, with Bret Lott, a study abroad experience in Spoleto, Italy, for which she taught a course in ekphrastic poetry. This coming academic year she will be teaching more workshops and an upper-division undergraduate course on lyric poetry, "Poetic Selves: Voice and Identity in the Lyric."

Professor Rosko and I met for coffee at Kudu on Vanderhorst at the end of the spring semester and conversed about teaching and writing, a conversation that continued over email. The following profile/interview captures some of the highlights of the conversation.

-- J. Michael Duvall



JMD: Where were you born? Where did you grow up?

ER: I was born in Lewisburg, PA, which is where I usually say I am from, but my family moved many times when I was growing up. I've also lived in Huntington, WV; Perrysburg, OH; Burlington, IA; and Carmel, IN.

Then, of course, different schools and fellowships took me all over as well: Purdue University (West Lafayette, IN) for my undergraduate education and then Cornell

University in Ithaca, NY for my Masters (MFA). After that, I was a Wallace Stegner Fellow at Stanford and lived there in the San Francisco Bay Area for two years before heading to Columbia, MO for the University of Missouri's doctoral program in creative writing.

JMD: I hear that you taught in Siberia. Can you say a few words about that experience?

ER: Yes. After earning my BA, I traveled to Borovoe, Siberia—a small town outside of the capital city of Novosibirsk—to teach Russian students (ages 8-16) English language speaking skills and poetry writing. It was an exchange program where the teachers (others from the U.S., Canada, Finland, France) learned Russian in return. The teachers paid for this experience—in fact, I used all of the prize money I won from Purdue English Department's annual Literary Awards to fund the trip and fees there. So, I guess this was a sort of volunteer work. I spent about six weeks there.

This was my first time in a foreign country where English was not the primary language. We took the trans-Siberian Railway from Moscow to get there (51 hours on the train!). The time there was eye-opening: frightening, sobering, exhilarating. Exhilarating purely because of the students—the Russian students were so dedicated to poetry and could recite any number of Pushkin, Blok, and Akhmatova poems by heart. Teachers and students stayed in a sanatorium (meaning: “a resort”), yet this was not a glamorous place at all: it was falling apart. The water came out reddish from the faucets; it was so thick with iron (we could not drink it, obviously). The school's administrator took our passports (even though we all had visas and permits to be in the country) and had to submit them to Russian authorities for reasons we never quite understood. Really, there are so many crazy details, I cannot cover

CONTENTS

An Interview with the Department's Newest Professor: Emily Rosko	1
As Things Turned Out: William Keith (“Pete”) Pillow, Jr. ‘69	3
Alumni Notes	4
Fired Up in Ghent: Courtney Davis, ‘01	5
Faculty Notes, 2010-11	17

it all here, but in short, it was a formative experience. I felt so inadequate with what I knew about Russia that I audited a few Russian history courses during my MFA program at Cornell. And, even with all the strange circumstances, it confirmed for me that I loved teaching poetry—it had been, after all, my first teaching experience, at age twenty-two.

JMD: How has the first year at the College been for you?

ER: That's a big question.

JMD: Highlights?

ER: Lots of highlights—certainly traveling to Spoleto, Italy for the creative writing study abroad program was one. Overall, teaching CofC students has been really great: I've been impressed by the quality of the student writers, their preparation, and the way they handle critiquing poems. The students here are the best writers I have encountered in all the places I have taught—Stanford, Missouri, and Cornell, places where the emphasis is elsewhere or on MFA programs. We have an undergraduate body of student writers here that is well-rounded and involved. Students are not just into literature and writing here: they have other talents in art and music.

JMD: You taught a first year seminar on Shakespeare and Film last fall. What are some of the texts you studied?

ER: *Romeo and Juliet*, paired with the Baz Luhrmann's 1996 film starring Claire Danes and Leonardo DiCaprio; *The Taming of the Shrew*, with Elizabeth Taylor



Emily Rosko (front right) with students and Bret Lott (far left) in Spoleto, Italy, May 2011

continued on p. 6

As Things Turned Out

William Keith (“Pete”) Pillow, Jr., ‘69

When I walked across the Cistern to receive my College of Charleston diploma in May 1969, surely I was ready to begin the career I had imagined since 8th grade – high school English teacher and fount of grammar, spelling, reading, and writing wisdom. Little did I realize that work makes its own way.

Only one of my 10 jobs over the next 42 years would involve teaching in a public school classroom, a quick nine months’ dispensing of knowledge harvested in the English department’s literary vineyard. Were the hours spent parsing Keats and Shelley, Dickens and Defoe, Melville, Faulkner and all the rest, a waste? Not really, but that time counted in a different sense than I’d ever imagine.

Like most students of my generation – the early baby boomers born around the end of World War Two – I anticipated a career that would not only be lucrative, but also self-fulfilling. I would never compromise to “get along” or “go along.” I would retire young, with plenty of money. Most of all, people would know that my work mattered.

Career realities cropped up straight away. I discovered that teaching was not lucrative for anybody, and it was not the kind of job that mattered most to me, in par-

ticular. I had worked part-time at Charleston’s daily newspaper during my college years. Strident headlines and pressing deadlines trumped academia’s orderly procession of lesson plans, unit tests, and quarterly report cards.

True, journalism offered scant pay, horrendous hours and a pension plan based on the premise that reporters are not the retiring type. Bylines were the real lure – my name atop a column of print – plus the thrill of being “in the know.” In those days before the internet, I was the information highway.

Reporting is not the world’s oldest profession, but it has to be the most social, chock full of interaction with other folks in groups (news events) or singly (interviews). Reporting places a premium on talking and listening, reading people and situations, making connections, recognizing patterns, exploring relationships and arriving at conclusions not entirely evident.

These social skills flourish even when the reporter is bound by the U.S. Army’s “public affairs” strictures, or sees egregious errors inserted by an aberrant copy editor. Over time, a good reporter cultivates a personal body of knowledge like the Rio Grande – an inch deep but a mile wide. Feeding this factual river is a natural curiosity about



Pete Pillow anchoring the ETV evening news program in Beaufort, SC, circa 1979-80

people, places and things. The reporter's receptors seek answers to six questions at the crux of all news: who? what? when? where? how? and why?

Much of what the reporter finds is best told in boilerplate prose, but occasionally there's a diamond in the dross. There are true stories that put any fiction to shame. There are real people whose words and deeds are branded into memory. There are circumstances nearly beyond comprehension that may, somehow, be explained. It's hard to do such stories, characters, and situations justice – given a short amount of time, limited space and a vocabulary tailored to mass media consumption. But it can be done.

My career since 1969 is living proof that a reporter of adequate ability, possessed with a healthy sense of how to relate to others, can find success working across (in

A Career in Words: Pete's Posts, 1969-2011

1969/70 School Year – High school English teacher, North Charleston, SC
Fall 1970/Spring 1972 – U.S. Army Public Information Office, Ft. Jackson, Columbia, SC
Spring 1972/Summer 1972 – Newspaper reporter, Charleston, SC
Summer 1972/Spring 1973 – Newspaper editor, Cambridge, MD
Spring 1973/Summer 1978 – Newspaper editor and columnist, Beaufort, SC
Summer 1978/Summer 1983 – ETV news director and anchorman, Beaufort, SC
Summer 1983/Fall 1988 – Chamber of Commerce Director, Beaufort, SC
Fall 1988/Spring 1997 – School district public information director, Beaufort, SC
Spring 1997/Spring 2006 – School district public information director, Spartanburg, SC
Spring 2006/Spring 2011 – Public information associate, State Department of Education, Columbia, SC

today's terminology) “multiple platforms.” It matters not whether you're wearing Army green or the editor's eyeshade, pontificating into TV cameras or detailing SAT score trends. The formula is essentially the same – gather information, digest and process it, put it into a user-friendly format, and deliver it to stakeholders (today's terminology, again).

Even when I was employed far afield – as a local Chamber of Commerce director – journalism experience was relevant. Stories of interest to business, industry, and tourism became my stock in trade, delivered to those audiences in magazine articles and ads, brochures, bumper stickers, speeches, seminars, and breakfast meetings, plus operation of a visitors center that peddled postcards, maps, t-shirts, and guided tours.

In my time, reporters' work has become far easier but

continued on p. 8

Alumni Notes

1951-1970

Florence (Wilson) Brady '51 worked for Eastern Airlines for a very brief time after graduation, before resigning and working as a copy editor for radio station WMTA and, a little later, serving as an assistant editor at the Institute of Local Government at Penn State University, where her husband was enrolled as a student. After her husband graduated and took a position teaching and coaching in a nearby school district, Florence began teaching English to seventh, eighth, and ninth graders. She went on to teach in a high school reading effectiveness program, as well. When her family, now including children, relocated to Asheville, NC, she served as a private reading tutor for a second grade student with a learning disability, which opened up the next phase of her career: she earned a certification in teaching

children with learning disabilities, taught first through third graders as a reading resource instructor, and was, in 1984, awarded the first Teacher of the Year Award by the North Carolina Association for Children with Learning Disabilities. She retired in 1987, and now lives in Alabama, where she does volunteer work for the Foley Literacy Council, having served on the board and now teaching adults with reading problems.

Steven Langton Thomas '62, three months after leaving the College, went to Navy OCS and earned his commission as Ensign, USNR in December 1962. In June 1972, he was discharged as Lieutenant, USN. From March 1974 to September 1994, he was employed by the VA in the Columbia Regional Office, retiring as a disability rating specialist. For the next four years, he volunteered as a department service officer

continued on p. 8

Fired Up in Ghent

Courtney Davis '01

I'm not necessarily surprised I ended up in Belgium. I've always had wanderlust, so to be living here in Europe seems somehow expected. How I got here wasn't by the most obvious of paths, though. While I'm a passionate and dedicated person, I'm not necessarily focused--there's no end goal, ultimate desire, or a clear-cut plan imagined. Beyond the vague, common wishes to travel, to be happy, my future has tended towards the undefined.

After graduating CofC in 2001, I moved to London and Wales before backpacking Eastern Europe and fulfilling a childhood dream of being a ski bum. To my parent's relief, I then settled into a more typical existence of apartments, car payments and Monday-to-Friday work schedules. I moved from Vermont to Boston as my career started picking up pace. My path started to become a bit clearer when I met Tom, my husband, at a dive bar in Salem, Massachusetts. Eight months later, he was accepted into a PhD program for stem cell research at the University of Ghent, Belgium. It seemed only natural I join him; a year later, he proposed in Paris and the summer following, we wed at a summer camp in New Hampshire.

At the time we met, I was communication director for a non-profit dedicated to healthy foods such as olive oil and whole grains. I worked with journalists, convincing them to tell our story, all the while secretly wishing I could attend the press trips, as opposed to organizing them. However, I was still happy, working late, traveling often, and eating well.



Courtney, Tom, and their dog, Charlie, in a cabin in Arolla, Switzerland, a destination on a recent road-trip vacation

When we first moved to Ghent, I maintained my position at the company, working remotely for six months, but it wasn't the ideal scenario. Following that, I had a stint at a small communication agency for a few months that fell through when the financial crisis hit. My inability to speak Flemish or French was detrimental to my job hunt, and here in Belgium, everyone is extremely specialized. Students begin learning specific areas of knowledge from the time they are teenagers, which made finding work frustrating and unproductive--if I wanted to be head of PR for a tire company, for instance, I needed

a background not just in media relations but also in automobiles.

That was a low point--losing two jobs in less than two years, being in a foreign country with no real social network, and still not really having any set direction: I felt adrift. With low expectations, I began to pitch stories to local English language magazines and newspapers and slowly, over time, my work began to get published. Now, my company, Fired Up Communication, is in its third year, and my time is split between journalism and copywriting.



A canalside view of the Graslei in Ghent, Belgium

Journalism is even better than I had hoped. I adore it. I was sent to Switzerland to write a travel feature for the *Dallas Morning News*--it is nearly indescribable how proud it makes me feel--not to mention lucky. Recently, I couldn't stop grinning when I had an article about Ghent published

in my all time favorite magazine, *BUST*. To be frank, however, those gigs are few and far between, and getting them takes a shocking amount of time, emailing,



Grace Smelly, #08 (aka Courtney), jams against the Copenhagen Rollin' Heartbreakers

pitching, and emailing some more. Copy-writing, on the other hand, is what pays the bills. I write, review and edit content for a range of companies. From branding pharmaceutical products to proofreading insurance brochures, I love the fact I am getting paid to do what I love. I write for money--so simple and yet so perfect.

In keeping with my unexpected career path, my biggest personal and professional achievement is the one I never saw coming.

I wrote a feature on the sport of roller derby for a national newspaper here in Belgium. I saw a bout in Boston just before moving abroad and fell in love with the hard hitting, powerful women on the track. Instantly, I knew that this was something I had to try. In the article, I asked for people to contact me if they were interested in joining a team, and so began the very first roller derby team in Belgium. Two years later, the Ghent Go-Go Roller Girls is a 60-member league with two home teams and a travel team. Three times a week we train for bouts all over Europe, not that we needed an excuse to go to Paris or Copenhagen!

Running the league feels like heading up a 60-person company. From insurance, membership issues and financials, to venue rentals, PR and bout production, we have various committees and sub-committees to handle the intensive workload associated with derby. Democratically run with league meetings, votes and many, many emails, GGGRG is both a pastime and

a job. Despite never having played, I've found myself relishing the opportunity to bring a concept into a reality. The sport and my teammates have had a profound impact on my happiness.

Tom and I are moving back to the US this winter, now with Charlie, a golden retriever we rescued this year. He deserves a write up all on his own. As we get nearer to our departure date, I'm allowing myself to get excited about seeing my friends and family, plus the random fragments of American life I miss--classic rock on the radio, long car rides, Mexican food. While moving here was tough, leaving will be even harder.

After four years I can't fathom leaving behind the league I helped start, nor the people we've met. I will certainly miss the stunning friends we have made and the memories Tom and I created on this small adventure. Fired Up Communication, however, I am taking with me. I'm grateful I was forced into a situation that made me realize I was capable of doing what I had only wistfully hoped for in the past. From derby to my day job, they're completely unexpected yet wholly satisfying. I've learned it's the unplanned parts of my life that have proved to be the most rewarding. There still is no clear-cut path, just the open road wherever it may take us, and I couldn't be happier.



The Gent Go-Go Roller Girls 2011 All Star team gears up for its bout against Berlin. Photo by Veronique L'heureux

Emily Rosko, continued from p. 2

and Richard Burton's film; *King Henry IV Part I*, with Orson Welles's *Chimes at Midnight*; and a few others.

JMD: What did you like best about the class, if you can choose just one thing?

ER: The students made their own films as a final proj-

ect for the class, which turned out to be a wonderful experience. We had been going to film-making tutorials all semester at the Student Technology Center and the sadly now-closed Center for the Documentary. The students had to make their own Shakespeare adaptation in groups, either remaking a scene from a play or creating a trailer for a film that highlighted their group's aesthetic approach to the original. They also

had to frame a presentation around their film, presenting it to the class as a “pitch,” explaining costume and set design, etc. For me, the highlight of the assignment was allowing students to realize that they’re in control, that I’m there to guide them but not there to tell them to what to do. That’s what I think was the best outcome of the class, that the students realized that they could take on the leadership role and figure out how to accomplish what seemed at first to them an impossible task. The winning film, a trailer entitled “The Shakespeare Puppet Pals Present: MacBeth,” I posted on the course weblog and is available on youtube <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CvMXvy8dhNk>>.

JMD: How did you approach your poetry workshops?

ER: In the lower-division class, I find that students come with a mixture of talents and prior training, which I try to negotiate by making the class about writing in lyric forms and modes, everything from the sonnet to the villanelle, from the pastoral to the elegy to the aubade.

JMD: Has any form worked particularly well?

ER: I am really happy about how the pastoral goes over, which is a form that has a kind of “self-knowing” that it is artificial. When you go back to the history [of the form], of course people knew that they were pretending to be the shepherd singing, and the pastoral allows a kind of critical distance: you’re in the country, and you can look back at the city and say things about it, or you’re in the country and you can see that life is not all that perfect—that there’s corruption there, too, or threat of death. It’s been really fun seeing how the students take to that form and use it as a vehicle toward critical or social commentary on their own.

JMD: About things they feel strongly about?

ER: Yes, but it’s not just ranting and raving; it’s artfully done in the end: they start working with the tropes of the country, the shepherd, of time passing away and the sadness that comes with knowing that life was per-

fect back when we were golden and young, but we’re now in the “now,” which isn’t so great. And I think they feel that way right now—that being in school is their golden time, and they see the world out there and everything that’s wrong with it and it scares them. It’s nice to see a heightened awareness of the world and language in their poems when they work in a form.

JMD: How do you come at the upper-division workshop?

ER: In the upper-division poetry workshop this semester, each student is writing her or his own ars poetica, a statement of poetics, after having read many

such statements by poets and reflecting on their own work. Many of the students are seniors and will be moving on, so now’s the time to articulate an ars poetica, in prose and in verse, because, as I tell them, your poems do not speak for themselves. As a poet, you have to be able to say why a poem is a good poem or, perhaps, what you think poetry should do or should not do in the larger context of our historical moment. I’m trying to nudge students away from the notion that a poem is pure happenstance or stream-of-consciousness. Good poems are not that simple. Good poems balance a kind of formal intelligence with their content, and the largest lesson at this advanced level is just this: that the best poems are the result of a fine balance between mindfulness (intention) and mindlessness (“happy accidents”

as the poet A.R. Ammons once called it).

JMD: Can you tell me a little bit about your class on lyric poetry that you are teaching in the fall, “Poetic Selves: Voice and Identity in the Lyric”?

ER: The class will focus in the first half on what lyric poetry is and will include some of the theory and history of the genre. I’ll be trying primarily to negotiate the triangle of the poetic speaker (the “I”), the poetic addressee (the “you”), and the world, which is also “us,” the reader or listener of the poem. The students

continued on p. 10



Pete Pillow, continued from p. 4

much more complicated. I recall when deploying the latest newsroom technology meant switching from manual to electric typewriters. Film was developed and black-and-white prints made in the third-floor darkroom. ETV crews shot stories on videotape, bulky cameras hefted to your shoulder and sighted through a scope. My first wireless telephone came with a battery bag that weighed a couple of pounds.

Information-gathering, formatting, and delivery take less time and effort since the world has moved online and gone digital. Digesting and processing your facts and figures still calls for a modicum of mental exercise. But the toughest challenge in this brave new media landscape is what I like to call “non-professional proliferation.” That is, the burgeoning idea that we are all reporters, photographers, columnists and commentators worthy of attention.

How else to explain Facebook, Twitter and YouTube except as electronic offspring of the “show and tell”

times we had in elementary school? These are not even the worst offenders! At the bottom of each online newspaper or television story, readers are invited to share their comments and to critique opinions expressed by others. Newspapers and TV stations urge the audience to “send us your photos and video” without regard to composition or quality. Reporters must add blogging to their list of job duties, seeking ever more input from news consumers divided and distracted by a drove of misguided media outlets.



A more recent vintage of Pete

I suppose this kind of news egalitarianism may not be the ultimate peril facing the remaining practitioners of my lifelong profession, but it's high time I retired. The hours spent with Keats and Shelley, Dickens and Defoe, Melville, Faulkner and all the rest taught me one indelible lesson--people relate to each other based on a complex mix of emotions, and we live in a here and now that intertwines the present, memories

of the past, and hopes and fears for our future. After 42 years on the job, I can tell you most emphatically that we are not all reporters because each person's story is not everyman's.

Alumni Notes, continued from p. 4

for the DVA, until his own medical problems forced him to cut back on that, although he still lends a hand as a consultant when asked to do so.

He is active in NARFE (National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association) and in his VA regional office retiree group, as well as the High School of Charleston alumni association (Class of 1957). Most of his travel in recent years has been limited to the home 48 with two navy reunion groups.

Jo Anne (Baker) Thompson '63 enjoyed traveling when she was “young and fit” and now enjoys retirement “with family at the beach as much as possible!”

Frances (Wilder) Townsend '64 taught at Summerville High School for 27 years.

William Keith (Pete) Pillow, Jr. '69 has been a high school English teacher, US Army journalist, newspaper editor, ETV news producer/anchor, Chamber of Commerce president and a public information officer for two public school districts in South Carolina. See Pete's feature in this issue, page 3.

1971-1980

Terry (Phillips) Jobe '77 works in the language arts programs with at-risk Title One children at Southwestern Elementary School in Hanover, IN.

1981-1990

Rob Droste '84 reports that he is the parish priest at a lively little Episcopal church in the San Francisco Bay

Area. He received his Master of Divinity degree in 2000 from the Episcopal seminary in Berkeley and last spring received his Doctor of Ministry degree from the Episcopal seminary in Evanston, Illinois. He recently had his first sabbatical, where he studied Eliot's "Four Quartets" as a record of a transformational spiritual experience--a great reconnection with his English Department roots.

Glenn A. Shedd '89 is now in his 20th year practicing law after graduating from College of Charleston in 1989 and the University of Alabama School Of Law in 1991. He has operated a solo practice for the last 19 years, living the life of a small town "street lawyer" and feeling quite fulfilled in doing so. He has a son, Matt, who is serving in the United States Air Force and currently deployed to the Middle East. He also has an 18 year old daughter, Jessica, who graduated from high school in May and is, in the fall, starting an academic career at University of Alabama, Birmingham, which she hopes will lead to a medical degree. In addition, he has a 14 year old daughter, Savannah, and a 9 year old son, Dyllan, who are excellent students and good kids. He says that he "couldn't be happier, and know beyond doubt that [his] BA degree from College of Charleston has had a profound impact on [his] professional and personal success."



Summer Study Abroad in Ireland '11:
Students Atop Joyce Tower, Sandy Cove, Dublin

Mary Katherine (Askins) Schweers '89 has worked at Ashley Hall for 16 years and is currently working as Upper School Director (principal) for grades 7-12. She finished her MAT at The Citadel in 1992. She is married to Dickie Schweers, and their son, Henry Diedrich Schweers IV, will graduate from Porter-Gaud this May and is headed to The Citadel. They also have a daughter, Gloria Morgan Schweers, who is a rising junior at Ashley Hall.

Melissa (Hamby) Ketchum '90 works as Senior Specialist at the American College of Cardiology in Washington, DC.

Mary Pinckney '90, after working as a project management consultant for nearly fifteen years, has recently made a career shift that will take her into the international development field. She chose to work in the country of Pakistan due to its critical strategic importance and has started this shift by working in the commercial sector with an offshore

BPO and systems integration (computing) firm to get some in-country experience.

1991-2000

Hope (Norment) Murphy '91 taught high school English and Teacher Cadets in Charleston County for ten years prior to becoming the Director of Children's Ministries at John Wesley. She has been at John Wesley since 2002. She has been married to Michael Murphy since 1995 and has two sons: Sam, born in 1997, and Andrew, born in 2000. She has also worked as a facilitator and instructor with Darkness to Light in the last five years.

Steven Busch '93 has worked in the real estate industry in Atlanta for nearly 15 years and currently serves as the Managing Broker for a large brokerage firm (100+/- agents) of which he is a Principal/Owner. The brokerage serves the entire Metro Atlanta area in commercial and residential sales and is headquartered at 17th & Peachtree Streets in Midtown.

Magdelyn Anne (Cocke) Caraway '93 is back home in Memphis and working part time. She married an attorney in Memphis--Kirk Caraway--with whom she went to high school. They have two sons: Caleb (6) & Lucas (5). She and Kirk enjoy traveling and most recently spent their 10-year anniversary in the Mayan Riviera in

Mexico. She is a 10-year volunteer member with the Junior League of Memphis and Kirk and she both volunteer with work, church, and their children's school. "Come visit any time you are in Memphis!," she says; "We have Elvis and BBQ!!"

Tiffany Yvette (Hammond) Christian '93 earned an MEd/EdS in Counselor Education at the University of Florida and an MSW and PhD in Social Work at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Her favorite part about teaching at Appalachian State University is leading a yearly 3-week service learning trip to Uganda Tiffany is married with 4 children.

See Folio for 2010 for a feature on Tiffany's work in Uganda.

Francis M. Hurd '93, is a Master Sergeant in the United States Marine Corps, where he serves as a Communications Chief: "I serve our country in the protection

continued on p. 12

Emily Rosko, continued from p. 7

will experiment in their own writing by using different methods and forms of poetic articulation: from confessional, first-person poetry to persona poetry and for one assignment, I'm planning to ask students to incorporate music or live performance in order to, quite literally, sound out the assumed poetic voice and style.

The genesis of the idea for the course came in my realizing that students seem resistant to the idea that they can tell a lie in a poem. Too many hold fast to the

idea that poems are receptacles of Truth or Authenticity (those big concepts make me feel suspect), when of course so much poetry goes outside of the self, reflecting the self in ways different from a pure recounting of subjective, personal experience. Language itself mediates and changes things: when we write a poem we are already writing in a poetic discourse—a false discourse, a discourse of decorative airs. It's not the same discourse as everyday speech. It's different: heightened because of metaphor and brevity; it's more musical, more fragmented. How wonderful life would be if we regularly spoke in the language of a poem to each other in our daily lives!

JMD: Changing gears, I wonder if you could reflect a bit on your own time as a student and how that has influenced your teaching. When you are in the classroom do you feel like you are “channeling” any of your own teachers?

ER: I think you always carry the good teachers with you and you know when you were a student what really moved you or really helped you.

JMD: Do you recall any particularly influential teachers?

ER: Quite a few.

JMD: One, for instance?

ER: Dino Felluga at Purdue: his course, which covered British romanticism to modernism, was the first

one which taught me how to read a poem closely. He would do these wonderful lectures on the history and the context—everything from art to history to music—but we also had to learn how to write a sonnet in his class, and we had to be able to explain the moves we made in the sonnet, so there was a self-analysis component to the assignment. It was a combination of the critical and the creative: I felt for the first time in control of my language. Choosing what words went where and why helped me out immensely, with both writing essays and writing poetry.



Collecting Rocks along the Shore of Sleeping Bear National Lakeshore, Empire, Michigan

JMD: Turning to your own poetry, knowing where you are today, a published poet, when was it clear to you that you would end up doing this kind of work?

ER: Well, I always knew I wanted to be a writer, without knowing what that meant—how you pay the bills, and that sort of thing. I don't think I was ever bold enough to say to anyone, “I want to be a writer,” but I think I was drawn toward writing because I was always drawn to reading.

JMD: Did you write as a child?

ER: Oh, yes. My first poem I wrote in the 4th grade. We had to write a poem about child abuse: there was a week of child abuse education in my school in Central Pennsylvania. I had no idea what child abuse was about, and I wrote a poem that went something like,

All Children need love,
Not hits, kicks, or shoves.
Smiles instead of frowns,
All children need love.”

I still remember it... It went on to get published in the newspaper. From then on, I was destined to be a poet [laughs].

JMD: Your first book of poems, *Raw Goods Inventory* was quite a success, winning the Iowa Poetry Prize and then the Glasgow Prize for Emerging Poets. You have another collection in circulation right now, a collection you call *Prop Rockery*. Can you say a few things about

that collection—describe it, talk about what your aims for it were, anything about the process of writing it?

ER: *Prop Rockery* originated from multiple interests—geology, Shakespeare’s plays and Early Modern texts, philosophies of rhetoric, genre theory—but the overriding one is an interest in poetic personas and how the voice of a lyric can function as an artificial construct (one that is distinctly different from the poet behind poem). The poems in *Prop Rockery* indulge in a dramatic lyric, in persona and performance. Many of the poems are voiced by an “I” that is not a personal “I,” many are voiced in a “we,” and some poems have two voices, and there are dramatic monologues.

JMD: What is the significance of the title?

ER: *Prop Rockery*, which is stage lingo for the artificial rocks and natural scenery used on stage, foregrounds the idea of artifice that informs the manuscript, whether that involves the construction of voices or the artful, persuasive ways of rhetoric. I love the belief that people had in the Medieval and Early Modern periods that words have real-world efficacy—meaning, words and utterances (curses, blessings, promises, prayers) can make things happen. One’s words had as much effect, perhaps more, as one’s actions. I’m not sure if we really believe this today, but this early modern idea seems to sit very close to the philosopher John Austin’s arguments about speech acts.

I began writing these poems when I was a doctoral student at Missouri, taking seminars on Shakespeare and Early Modern literature and learning more thoroughly about the cultural history of the English Renaissance. Reading the plays (some for the third or fourth time, such as *King Lear* and *Romeo & Juliet*, and other plays for the first time, such as *Titus Andronicus* and *Timon of Athens*), I was utterly captivated by the oddity and pleasure of Shakespeare’s language and the way poetry worked as a trope in the drama. Many of the poems in *Prop Rockery* are titled with a line from a Shakespeare play; his language became the springboard. The voices are inspired by certain Shakespearean characters, but are not limited by them. The voice of the villain, for instance, is one that reappears as a way to bring into poetry those emotions that are, perhaps, considered “unpoetic” (i.e., jealousy, anger, vengefulness). And, too, the villains are the great dissemblers—those who know powers of language and use it to manipulate or persuade others.

The American poet Robert Duncan once wrote, “The poet’s role is not to oppose evil, but to imagine it,” and this also serves as an undercurrent to this book. I wanted my poetic speakers (the villains, the fallen, the marginal) to tap into Duncan’s idea, which is really a larger capacity of the lyric: to break down the boundaries of self and the other. Lyric poetry, I firmly believe (though most good literature and art can do this too), is the place where mutual recognition of self and other, if we allow it, occurs. I wanted in *Prop Rockery* to re-cast these so-called “evil”—certainly imperfect—speakers, these others, into a light that looks back at us uncannily and shows us ourselves.

JMD: What writing projects do you have going on now that *Prop Rockery* is in circulation?

ER: A third collection, tentatively titled *Weather Inventions*, is underway. This project works within the pastoral tradition, and it uses as creative fodder the history of meteorology, from myth to science. The disciplines of poetry and science have a long, intertwining history. They have often been viewed as polar opposites: surface vs. substance, rhetoric vs. reality. These poems take up this division as both problem and possibility.

JMD: Fascinating: can you say a bit more?

ER: The goal is to capture, as much as possible, the forces and processes of weather and nature into a speculative series of interrelated lyrics where the subjective “I” suggestively disappears. I would like these nature poems to be less Metaphysical ornament, less Romantic ego, and more objective: a novel negotiation between scientific objectivity and a long-standing “tradition of wonder” that has viewed scientific and rational thinking as its baleful other.

JMD: I’m looking forward to reading it. Any closing thoughts about how you’re settling in, surprising or cool things about living in Charleston?

ER: It’s funny but being in Charleston, living in the South reminds me a bit of my experience in Siberia. I do not intend for this to sound terrible because really the two places do not compare at all! But, my feelings of adjustment are sharply similar—Charleston is a new experience for me. My knowledge of this city and of the American South is inadequate, I’m finding, and there’s so much I want to learn and understand about the complicated history of this place.

Alumni Notes, continued from p. 9

of our nation and those I care about and for the protection of those who are unable to protect themselves. Truly I consider it an honor to serve all who call the United States of America home.” Francis is currently seeking a on-line graduate program through which to complete graduate work, since deployments tend to rule out traditional classroom-based programs.

Joseph Steven Renau ‘93 is Associate Director of Communications at Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP in New York City.

Melissa (Weeks) Noel ‘93 teaches 9th-grade English at Cleveland High School in Clayton, NC. She earned an MAT in Educational Technology in 2003. Her article, “A Cold Manipulation of Language,” was published in March in the National Council of Teachers of English’s *English Journal* (March 2011).

Allison (Burke)

Thompson ‘94, attended law school at the University of South Carolina and graduated with a Juris Doctorate in 1998. Her areas of practice include civil litigation, construction law, insurance coverage, and some appellate litigation. Her favorite part of practicing law is researching, analyzing and writing motions, briefs, and memoranda of law. She married (a lawyer) in 2001 and has an 8 year old son and a 6 year old daughter. As a parent, she says, one of the most important gifts she has given her children is the love of reading. She also says that her “English Literature degree and the professors that she had at the College have given her so much in both her professional and personal life.”

Robin (Porter)

Thompson ‘95 currently teaches 10th grade English and a writer’s workshop at Richmond Hill High School in Richmond Hill, GA, where she has taught for 11 years. Her biggest accomplishment as a teacher, she notes, was winning not only Teacher of the Year for Richmond Hill High School in 2001, but also winning Teacher of the Year for the Bryan County School System in 2002.

Tina Marie Cundari ‘96 is an attorney with Sowell Gray Stepp & Laffitte LLC in Columbia, SC.

Linda Cooper Knight, BA ‘96, MA ‘98 is

Associate Professor of English at the College of the Albemarle in Elizabeth City, NC, a job she loves. “I carry with me many wonderful memories from CofC, and often hear my professors words coming out of my mouth as I pass on these ideas to a new generation. I cannot teach Hemingway or Fitzgerald without referring to my notes from Dr. Larry Carlson’s class. Chaucer requires Dr. Trish Ward’s lectures, and I can still hear the voices of many other professors, including Dr. Joe Kelly, Dr. Caroline Hunt, Dr. Bishop Hunt, and of course, Dr. Nan Morrison and many others as I prepare for my classes. For those who are graduating this year, you will leave College of Charleston with one of the finest educations available. Use it to your advantage.”

Kelly (Collins Rackley) Rackley Snipes

‘96 is Senior Paralegal at Nelson, Mullins, Riley & Scarborough, LLP in Charleston, SC, with whom she has worked since 1997. She works with a number of teams of attorneys in various firm offices, providing Corporate Securities and Transactional Paralegal assistance. She married a 1997 CofC graduate, Matthew Patrick Snipes, and they have two boys, Patrick (6) and Rutledge (17 months). They live on Daniel Island. They enjoy attending CofC basketball games.

Melissa N. (Mehl)

Turner ‘97 teaches 9th grade English in Annapolis, MD. She earned a Masters in the Art of Teaching, Secondary English at Charleston Southern University in 2006. She had a son, Grant, in October 2010 and plans to stay home with him and her daughter for the next school year.

Lee Robinson, BA

‘99, MA ‘06 is a Sales Communications Specialist at Benefitfocus.com.

Cherith (Kintigh) Hope Stoner

‘99 teaches English at Greenwood High School. She earned an MEd in Gifted and Talented Education at Converse College, and is now Gifted and Talented endorsed and Advanced Placement certified for both English Language & Composition as well as English Literature & Composition. She has also applied for National Boards for Professional Teaching Standards in English Language Arts Adolescent/Young Adult and is awaiting results.

Tiffany (Lauderdale) Phillips ‘99 on April 11, 2011 joined the law firm of Quintairos Prieto Wood &



Study Abroad in Spoleto, Italy ‘11: The entry to Santa Maria sopra Minerva -- the church of Santa Maria over Minerva. The columns are from the original building, which was the Temple of Minerva, built in 1st century AD; then the church built over it in the 16th century. -- Bret Lott

Boyer as a partner in the Lexington, KY office. She is a litigator specializing in long term care defense, alternative dispute resolution, and insurance law.

Elise Merritt McPherson

'99 reports that, odd as it sounds for a '99 graduate, since graduation, her sons have graduated from high school, served time in the Army, one in Iraq, and the youngest has married. She now has two very beautiful grandchildren. Her husband has retired, and she started a new career at MUSC, where she works in the HLA laboratory as a Histocompatibility Specialist. The next stop, she says, is her own retirement and, hopefully, lots of travel.

Jill Kristen Plating '99,

after a 10-year career in youth ministry, decided to go back to school to finish what she started at CofC. She will graduate with an MAT in May 2012 in hopes of teaching high school English in Greenville, SC. She is the mother of 2 daughters: Caitlyn, 6, and Emma, 3.

Katie Crawford, MA '00

was recently accepted to the Vermont College of Fine Arts MFA in Writing program, in both fiction and creative nonfiction. She also sold her first novel, a historical adventure/romance set in 1700s South Carolina and in the Cherokee country, to Bell Bridge Books (an imprint of Belle Books). It will be published in trade paperback and ebook format in Fall 2012.

Tara Denton '00 is currently the Learning Subject Matter Expert at Life Cycle Engineering. Her duties involve creating custom and off-the-shelf training products, writing articles, speaking at conferences, and developing trainers. Part of her responsibilities include thought promotion, which she strives to accomplish through a blog, quarterly e-newsletter articles, and video production. See <<http://www.lce.com/impactblog/>>. This year, Tara contributed to a book, *Road Tested Activities*, by Pfeiffer press (May 2011) and hopes to partner with the editor on future books about learning and development.

Tara also remains active in Charleston's theatre scene, working with the



Study Abroad in Spoleto, Italy '11:
A Student Writes at the Villa

League of Theatres (primarily Pure Theatre), and participates in CofC's Shakespeare Project whenever she can.

Adam T. Ellwanger, BA '00, MA '03

is an Assistant Professor of English at the University of Houston - Downtown, where he teaches courses in writing and rhetorical theory. This summer he will be working on a project that connects the discourse of public apology with metanoic rhetoric.

Michael Evan Lacke '00

is an attorney operating his own firm, the Lacke Law Firm, LLC, in Charleston.

Rebecca Ann Mitchell

'00 teaches at Wando HS in Mt. Pleasant. Before that, she taught for one year at a college in Pittsburgh and for two years at a middle school in Las Vegas. She continues to write novels for fun. She's not published, though, she says, "mainly because I write by hand and am the world's slowest typist." Some day, she hopes to move to Ireland and teach.

2001-2010

Courtney Davis '01 lived in Belgium for four years, grew her own branding and copywriting company, Fired Up Communication, and published articles this year with some American outlets, including *BUST* magazine and the *Dallas Morning News*. Additionally, in 2009, she founded a roller derby league, the Gent GO-GO Roller Girls, who just had their first bouting season, playing Stuttgart, Germany and Copenhagen, and has the distinction of being Belgium's first league. Finally, she and her husband recently got a dog from the pound, Charlie, a Golden Retriever mix. See Courtney's feature in this issue, page 5.

Nicole Marie Champagne '02

taught high school English for eight years in Charleston and in the New York City metro area. She also attended the Bread Loaf School of English at

Middlebury College during the summers and completed an MA in English in 2006. As of Spring 2011, she completed an EdM degree in School Leadership at Harvard University. She recently accepted an Assistant Principal position at Franklin High School in Massachusetts and is excited about this new opportunity. She wishes to thank all of her professors at the College of Charleston for their passion, creativity, and devotion. She feels honored to be a CofC graduate.

Natalie (Friton) Staines '02, since graduating has had an extremely fulfilling range of life experiences, from teaching sailing to working as managing editor at a niche trawler international publication, running her own small business and buying--and selling--her first home with her husband, Tim Staines, with whom she lives in Severna Park, MD, in a home they purchased in June 2010. In that same month she merged her small public relations and social media consulting business with a full-service marketing firm where she now serves as an Account Executive but wears many hats to serve their diverse set of clients. She loves her job, her husband and their two dogs, as well as running marathons and triathlons (she has competed in many, including a Half Ironman in 2010). She continues to appreciate the

education and experiences she had while attending CofC and loves talking about the college to any prospective students she encounters.

Kelly (Dennis) Dean '03 went to law school at the University of South Carolina and graduated in 2007. She was admitted to practice law in November of 2007, and moved to Beaufort, SC to work for the law firm Griffith, Sadler & Sharp. She primarily handles insurance defense cases, focusing on personal injury, premises liability, and automobile accidents. She met her husband, Walker, in Beaufort. They married in April of 2010. She is currently training to run a half-marathon in November of 2011 with Team in Training, which raises money to benefit the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

Robin Amy Franco '03 an attorney with an attorney Balch & Bingham LLP, in Birmingham, Alabama, is engaged to Charles Clayton Bromberg, Jr. They will be married in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida on May 28,

2011.

Cindy Lawson Hollis, BA '03, MA '05 teaches Honors English I (freshmen) at Wando High School in Mt. Pleasant, SC. She completed her MAT in Teaching at the Citadel in '07. Last summer, she completed Dr. Michael Livingston's "Writing Short Fiction" graduate class at the Citadel. As a LWP Teacher Consultant, she developed and presented the workshop "Exploring Cultural Literature Through Reflective Writing" at the Lowcountry Writing Project Winter Conference in February 2011. When a class of hers was studying *The Inferno*, one of her classes decided to name her newest cat *Dante* - it works! She continues to volunteer with Charleston County Friends of the Library - watch for "That Big Booksale" in October! She is eternally grateful to

all the wonderful professors she had at CofC - "thank you for stoking the literature fire in me that was originally ignited by my mother."

Katherine Scott Crawford, MA '04 is teaching as an adjunct English professor in the mountains of Western North Carolina. Her husband and she had their first child, a daughter named Wylie Skye Crawford Dodson, in July 2009. In addition to

becoming a new mom and teaching part-time, she has decided to seek a terminal degree, and has been trying to decide on low residency MFA in Writing programs (happily, she has been accepted to several great schools). Her work (fiction and creative nonfiction) has appeared recently in *Western North Carolina Woman*, *College of Charleston Magazine* ("My Space" section) and *Wilderness House Literary Review*. She was awarded a full scholarship to *The Sun* magazine's recent writing workshops weekend: "Into the Fire: *The Sun* Celebrates Personal Writing." And her first, unpublished novel made it to the Quarter-Finalist round of the 2011 Amazon Breakthrough Novel Contest. She's trying like mad to master the many-faceted role of mother-writer-wife-teacher-friend.

Thea Star Gaillard '04 has a career in SC State Government. Since graduation, she has lost 2 family members to cancer: her sister to Non-Hodgkins lymphoma in 2009, she was 33 years at the time of death, and her grandmother to lung cancer in 2010, she was 72 years at the time of death.



Edgar Allan Poe Cake Presented to Scott Peebles in Spring '11 by its Makers, Students Sydney Gallimore and Lauren Swing

She did some fundraising for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, Relay for Life cancer walks, and public speaking at church on the importance of stroke, heart disease, and caring for the elderly. She is also a proud volunteer for Helping Hands International Missions. She is doing lots of writing--press releases, media advisories, 30 second spots, etc. When time permits, she travels to Black Mountain, Charlotte, Atlanta, and enjoys events at the Blumenthal, Fox & Workshop Theaters, the Colonial Center, Carolina Coliseum, and the Koger Center.

Donna (Longo) Murphy '04 passed the July 2010 South Carolina Bar Examination. In December 2010, her husband, Jason, and she relocated to Northern Virginia. She is awaiting Admission on Motion to the DC Bar and is excited about launching her new career in the law. She hopes to work in a public service capacity, helping secure fair representation and court access for those least able to afford the service.

Jennifer (O'Bryon) Klee, MA '05, after moving back to South Florida from Charleston in 2006, married Charles "Chuck" Klee. They now have two daughters, Elizabeth, age 2 and Sarah Kate, 4 months. She stays at home with the girls, but works part-time from home for the Dictionary Project, a South Carolina-based literacy non-profit.

Meghan Leah Brinson '05 recently moved to Washington DC after the birth of her second son, Teddy. She is excited to begin work on her MA at Georgetown University this fall. She recently published three monster poems in *Copper Nickel* and three Edo/ M theory-inspired poems online at Connotation Press, in the issue guest edited by Anna Journey.

Megan Prewitt Koon, MA '05 currently teaches junior and senior English at St. Joseph's Catholic School in Greenville, SC, where she was honored to be named the South Carolina Independent School Association Upper School Teacher of the Year in 2009. Her husband, a fellow teacher, was runner up in the middle school category during the same year. She sponsors the school book club and recently chartered her school's chapter of the National English Honor Society. She has a beautiful four year old daughter named Marie (who loves to read!) and is currently in the process of submitting her first novel for publication.

Lindsey (DeLoach) Jones, BA '05, MA '08 is pursuing an MFA in Creative Writing, Nonfiction at Seattle Pacific University.

Paige Stuart Gupton '05 after graduating with her

BA in English and BS in Business Administration, continued her education at MUSC, where she earned her Masters in Health Administration. She moved back to her native Virginia, and took a year long Administrative Residency with Riverside Health System. Since then, she has held a couple different positions with their Medical Group (Riverside employs over 450 providers and over 7,000 employees) and is now the Practice Director for the Medicine Line, managing the operations over several physician offices and Hospitalist programs at their five locations. Last year, she purchased her first home, which is almost 100 years old, and she has been renovating and updating it.

Stephen Francis O'Kane '05 has moved back to his home state of Georgia. He has been working for the Catholic Church for nearly four years, writing for their newspaper, which profiles local Catholics and their ministries, and features other local, national, and global Catholic news. He married his love, Jacqui, in June 2008. She is currently in her third year of medical school at the Georgia Campus of the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine. They love to travel and

have been to several countries over the last few years, both for pleasure and also on mission trips with various faith-based groups.

S a r a h Mitchell Schwartz '05 recently relocated to New York City to work for a luxury jewelry and home accessory design company. She is living in a tremendously big

city, but feels right at home amongst fellow CofC alums. She reports using her English Literature education every single day of her life.

Jon Christopher Sealy '05 is still living in Richmond, Va., with his wife, Emily, nee Oye (also class of 2005), who just finished her second year of law school at the University of Richmond. He is still trying to sell that novel, and in the mean time he has had short stories published recently in the *South Dakota Review* (Summer 2010), *The Normal School* (Spring 2011), and *The Sun* (forthcoming in June 2011).

Kristen Amber Gaetke '06 graduated from Case Western Reserve University School of Law in May 2009 and is working as an attorney at the Bostic Law Firm in Charleston, SC.

Ann Christel (Kadala) Harris '06 immediately after college enrolled in graduate school at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill. She received



Kiawah Island, July 4, 2011 - Photo by John Bruns

her Master of Science in Library Science in 2008. During graduate school she studied abroad for a semester in the Czech Republic. She reports that the School of Information and Library Science at UNC is one of the best, and it's a great place for English majors. She has been a middle school librarian (aka Media Coordinator) for 2 years now in Winston Salem, NC. She also has been married for nine months. If any English major wants to know more about being a librarian, she notes, she's happy to answer any questions...and, if anyone hears of any instructional librarian positions opening up at CofC, she would like to know.

Heather R. Klugh '06 having earned her MPH, works as a Project Assistant at the Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine.

Erin Sharpe '06 has been putting her B.A. in English to use as a teacher of 9th and 10th grade English and journalism at Gaston Day School in Gastonia, N.C. She also contributes to Gaston Day's Theatre department as a choreographer for school musicals. Two years ago, she became the adviser to the student newspaper, a position which helped her earn a fellowship to the Reynolds Institute at the University of Nevada at Reno last summer. She's looking forward to completing her Master's thesis at Winthrop University next spring.

Misty A. (Shively) Young '06 married

Christopher Young, '03, and moved to Omaha, NE, where she began working in the insurance field. She decided that she liked the constant challenge and that everyday is very different than the last. After moving to Sterling, VA in the suburbs of Washington DC, she began working as an outside staff adjuster for Travelers Insurance in early 2009. She left Travelers in December of 2010 and became self employed as an independent adjuster in Jan. 2011. She has enjoyed the fact that she works for herself, does not sit behind a desk all day, and that she has a large amount of flexibility. She occasionally deploys to assist in areas that have been struck by catastrophe, most recently to Charlotte, NC. Her husband and she have one boy who is 3 1/2 years old and an au pair from Germany.

Ian Thomas Cook '07 is an Account Executive with US Bank and just bought a house in Forest Acres.

Michael Thomas Cooper '07 graduated this

May from the University of South Carolina School of Law.

Robert Jackson Martin '07 works as an attorney with King & Spalding in Atlanta.

Alexander Lang Middleton '07 is pursuing an MA in Industrial and Organizational Psychology and Human Resource Management at Appalachian State.

Erin L. Workman '07 graduated from the University of Maine in May with a Master of Arts in English and plans to spend the summer working on applications for PhD programs.

Celeste Star DeVera '08, since graduation, has been teaching both high school Spanish and English. Currently, she is in Santiago, Chile and has been enjoying travelling all around South America.

Jacquelyn Lee Gardner (Jacquelyn

Autumn Gardner) '08

graduated with an MA in English Literature from Western Michigan University (Kalamazoo, MI) in April 2011.

Joseph Alan Hassinger '08

graduated with an MFA in Creative Writing from Hollins, where he recently taught a class called "Flash: Very Short Forms in Literature in Film." His thesis was a collection of short stories entitled "Everybody Happy All the Time."

After graduation he plans to head back to Charleston, where he is getting married this fall.

Sarah Elizabeth

"Sarabeth" Rudd '08 finds that her first year of law school at Liberty University has been quite a challenge, but loves it. One thing she greatly enjoyed was the 1L Moot Court Tournament in which she advanced to the quarter finals. So far, she enjoys courtroom litigation and is looking forward to taking Appellate Advocacy next fall to further hone her oral argument and legal writing skills.

Braden Tennesen Trainor '08 is stationed at Camp Pendleton, California. He lives in San Marcos, north of San Diego. with his wife and daughter, Monica, who is 9 years old. He commands a platoon of 52 Marines who provide airbase ground defense, mounted security and law enforcement support to a Marine Wing Support Squadron. He is also the antiterrorism officer for the 25 Area at Camp



Summer Study Abroad in Ireland '11: Driving away from Queen Maeve's Palace, Cruachan Ai (pronounced sort of like "crockin' eye"), a real "Love Among the Ruins" landscape, the grass covering the ancient city, though there's not even the turret of tower left, just the bumps on the landscape. - Joe Kelly

Pendleton, providing risk assessment, implementation of random measures, and mitigation of security threats. He is also pursuing an MA in Criminal Justice.

Audra (Hammons) Turkus '08 recently completed a Master's of Arts in Teaching, Secondary English at the Citadel and will be teaching 6th, 7th, and 8th grade English at Littleton Academy Charter School in Littleton, Colorado starting this Fall.

Joseph David Eugene Bowling '09 completed an MA in English at Winthrop University and has been accepted into the CUNY, Graduate Center PhD in English program and will be moving to New York City this August. He published an article in a peer-reviewed e-journal, *Reconstruction: Studies in Contemporary Culture*, entitled, "Making over Myth: The Rhetorical Use of Puritan Conversion Narratives in Kitchen Nightmares." He also attended the Renaissance Society of America annual international conference in Montreal, Quebec, where he presented a conference paper adapted from the second chapter of his thesis on John Milton. The paper examined the relationship between Milton, Ramus, and Francis Bacon.

Elizabeth Ashley (Browder) Geary '09 is pursuing an MAT in Elementary Education at the College of Charleston.

Mary Emma Gray "Emmy" Hart '09 is currently attending the University of Rochester's Accelerated Nursing Program, a 12 month program that she will complete in December. She will be an RN with a BS in nursing.

Eleanor Pleasants "Ellie" Smealie '09 is working for PBS in the Washington DC area. She is currently working on a digital education project that provides online teaching and learning resources, including games, videos, lesson plans, audio files, and images for teachers and students grades Pre-K-13+.

Christopher Daniel Willoughby '09 currently lives in New Orleans and is in the first year of his MA and PhD in history at Tulane. He is focusing on antebellum Southern history and the Atlantic World. He has one project that is almost ready to send out to a journal about the experience of LGBTQ people in the Black Freedom Struggle, and this summer, he will start doing research for his thesis,

which is tentatively titled "The Operations of the Enslaved Body: Race and Medicine in the Old South."

Seth Alan Woodley '09 is pursuing an MDiv in Christian Ministry at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Isabelle Ayers-Rigsby '10 since graduating from CofC has travelled to England, France, Holland, and Germany. She has also just finished her first year of law school. Her summer internship will be in Brisbane, Australia with Amnesty International.

Eric Zachary Baylin '10 is pursuing his JD at the University of Baltimore School of Law.

Jose Roberto Gonzalez '10 is pursuing his JD at the Charleston School of Law.

Timothy Bruce Havens '10 has completed his first year of law school at the Charleston School of Law.

Jenna F. Lyles '10 is working with five other awesome CofC grads to establish a nonprofit in Charleston that is focused on empowering girls ages 9-16 through music education, Girls Rock Charleston, and for which she serves as Director of Development/Founding Organizer.

Cassandra "Cassie" Mandel '10 is moving back North this summer to attend the 2011 NYU Summer Publishing Institute, where she will gain invaluable experience in book, magazine, and digital publishing, positioning her for a career in the constantly evolving book publishing industry.

Rachel Anne Reinke '10 moved to Los Angeles, California, in August 2010 to begin working for the national nonprofit service organization City Year Los Angeles. There, she was a third grade classroom assistant, tutor, and mentor, and helped run an after-school program at an elementary school in South Central LA--a challenging and incredibly rewarding opportunity. She will be moving to Tempe, Arizona, this fall to pursue a Ph.D. program in Women's and Gender at Arizona State University's School of Social Transformation.

Amelia Ann "Mimi" Watson '10 is currently in graduate school, pursuing her Master of Arts in Teaching (Early Childhood Education) at Converse College in Spartanburg, SC.

Faculty Notes, 2010-2011

Elizabeth Baker developed and taught a new English 190 special topics course, "Detective Fiction," in the fall. Along with Marie Fitzwilliam and Dennis Williams, she also put together a panel presentation entitled "Evolving Student Needs: Meaningful Assessment in the Freshman Writing Classroom" for the National Council of Teachers of English Annual Convention in November.

John Bruns was on sabbatical during the 2010-2011

academic year, working on a project dealing with the films of Alfred Hitchcock tentatively titled *People, Places and Things: the Hitchcock Landscape*. He spent much of his time tracking down and watching everything Hitchcock directed, including 53 feature films, 20 television episodes, as well as many other bits and pieces. If you want an idea of what to expect from his latest work, you might ask him to let you read an essay-length version of a chapter entitled "Hitchcock's Newspaper: a Thing in the Crowd."

When he was not getting lost in Hitchcockiana, John spent time revising and expanding a paper he delivered at Society for

Cinema and Media Studies in 2010 on Joel and Ethan Coen's *No Country for Old Men*. The essay will appear in the Winter issue of *Film Criticism*. John has also begun preliminary work on another research project, this one dealing with the films of Steven Spielberg. In March of 2011, John co-organized a panel entitled "Misremembered Film" at the annual Society for Cinema and Media Studies conference, for which he presented a paper entitled "The Error of Supplement: Writing on Film."

Tim Carens in late March attended a conference in Banff, Alberta organized by the Victorian Studies Association of Western Canada. The paper he presented discussed metaphors of African disease and decay used by Victorian writers and social critics such as Charles Dickens to describe urban poverty. His essay on George Meredith's *Diana of the Crossways*, which reads the novel as a contribution to the intense political debate about Irish Home Rule in the 1880s, is forthcoming in the next edition of the *Victorians Institute Journal*.

In addition to his scholarly work, he has been spending increasing time and energy on fly-fishing in western North Carolina. He recently earned the distinction of catching the smallest brook trout ever brought to net in that state.

Bonnie Devet served as a proposal reviewer for the International Writing Center Association Conference in Baltimore (November); presented a paper, "A Tale of Two UK Writing Centres," at the International Writing Center Association (IWCA) Conference, Baltimore (November); published "Redefining the Writing Center with EcoComposition" in *Composition Forum* Winter (23) 2011: <http://compositionforum.com/issue/23/> and "A Tale of Two UK Writing Centres" in the *Writing Lab Newsletter* (March/April 2011): 10-13. She also published "A Writing Lab in the Shadow of the Eiffel Tower" in *Southern Discourse* (Fall 2010): 13-14. Her article, "The Day I Met Bruce Lee" was reprinted in *Contemporary Literature* by Pearson, alongside essays by David Sedaris, Alice Walker, and Jamica Kincaid.

Mike Duvall earned tenure and promotion to Associate Professor; in May delivered a paper at the annual American Literature Association conference in Boston, "A Scarlet Empire: The Novel of Socialism at the Turn of the 20th Century"; and among other things, compiled and edited another issue of this august publication.

Julia Eichelberger enjoyed teaching a senior seminar on Charleston writers. Her students did some fascinating archival research, tracking down the people, events, and customs that had been portrayed in the texts they studied. Scott Peeples gave a guest lecture on Poe's sojourn in the Lowcountry and all the stories Charlestonians have told themselves about it, and three creative writers visited the class to discuss their

interpretations of Charleston-- Josephine Humphreys, Bret Lott, and C of C alum Martha Peeples Attisano; the class also enjoyed Charleston fiction by another alum and former member of the department, Charlie Geer. The class's last assignment was to write a creative essay, story, or poem portraying a story or point of view based on their own experience in the city. She hopes to be teaching this course again as a regular class.

Julia was honored to receive the College's Distinguished Service Award and the Distinguished Advising Award in April.

This summer she has been working on a book of letters by Eudora Welty, all related to the subject of gardening. She has been researching, transcribing, selecting, and analyzing these letters since 2009, with the help of several student research assistants (Rachel Reinke, Maggie McMennamin, Will Murray, and Crystal Frost). This summer, Crystal and she were awarded a SURF grant that has enabled them to work together, and they have spent a lot of time talking about Welty's life and work, doing research for footnotes, and checking the accuracy of the transcriptions (this requires one of them to look at the

transcription while the other reads the photocopied letter out loud, including punctuation: "What has happened to your camellia question mark" or "I had the most wonderful dream dash it was about an iris dash"). Welty's letters are beautiful, funny, moving, and inspiring. She's hoping to do justice to them in this book, which will be published by University Press of Mississippi.

Susan Farrell completed her book, *Critical Companion to Tim O'Brien: A Literary Reference to His Life and Work*, which will be published in September, 2011.

She also presented a paper on Kurt Vonnegut at the American Literature Association, and she continues to direct the M.A. Program in English.

Conseula Francis was awarded the College's Distinguished Teaching Award; her book, *Conversations*



Dr. Bonnie Devet (right), with Graduate Student Lindsay Bower at the International Writing Centers Association Conference in Baltimore, November 2010



No, You're Not Seeing Double: Julia Eichelberger Presented the Distinguished Service (left) and Distinguished Advising Awards for 2010-11 by Provost George Hynd



with *Octavia Butler*, was nominated for a Locus Award (a significant honor in the world of science fiction); and she was cited as a source on a wikipedia article about feminist science fiction author Joanna Russ. Sadly, she still hasn't convinced her children that the original Star Wars is the best movie ever.

Simon Lewis had a busy and productive sabbatical, coordinating the College's commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the Civil War and doing some research, including spending a couple of weeks in a variety of South African libraries and archives, which should result in the publication of two articles on Olive Schreiner's work in light of her reading of Ralph Waldo Emerson and WEB Du Bois, respectively. The South African trip included a hike to Olive Schreiner's tomb on top of Buffelskop.

From March 3-5th, 2011, the CLAW program hosted the "Civil War--Global Conflict" conference, featuring stellar line-up of Civil War scholars including James McPherson. Simon's "Letter from the USA" on the "first shot" commemoration on April 12th appeared in the *Guardian Weekly* at the end of April (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/apr/26/letter-american-civil-war-lewis>).

Simon's new book, with the super-catchy title of *British and African Literature in Transnational Context*, came out from the University Press of Florida in May.

Scott Peeples and student Lauren Swing (BA '11) presented a paper on female agency in mid-nineteenth-century urban crime novels at the American Literature Association conference in Boston in May. Earlier this year, Peeples presented a paper on early American dramatist Royall Tyler at the Society of Early Americanists conference in Philadelphia and gave a talk on Poe biography at the Washington County, VA, Big Read.

Alison Piepmeier spent her fall sabbatical researching feminist disability studies, with an emphasis on memoirs written by parents of children with disabilities. The article resulting from this research, "Saints, Sages, and Victims: Endorsement of and Resistance to Cultural Stereotypes in Memoirs by Parents of Children with Disabilities," will be published in the journal *Disability Studies Quarterly*. She presented this research at the National Women's Studies Association conference in November. In addition, during the academic year she gave two invited lectures on zines by girls and women, one at Georgia College and State University and one at the Carnegie Library in Pittsburgh.

Emily Rosko's *A Broken Thing: Poets on the Line*, a book of seventy original essays by contemporary poets, co-edited and introduced with Anton Vander Zee, will be published by the University of Iowa Press in October 2011. This book was the topic of a panel that Rosko organized and chaired at the 2011 Associated Writing Programs Conference. A short pedagogical essay, "The Complaint," appeared in *Poets on Teaching: A Sourcebook* (Ed. Joshua Marie Wilkinson, U. Iowa Press 2010). Individual poems are forthcoming in *The Beloit Poetry Journal* and *The Laurel Review*. Over the summer, Rosko enjoyed teaching an ekphrastic poetry course to a talented group of CofC students in the creative writing Spoleto, Italy study abroad program, and, escaping the Charleston heat, she worked on her third poetry manuscript and collected rocks along the Sleeping Bear National Lakeshore up north in Empire, Michigan.

William Russell continues work on his book project on notions of the critic in early modern England, an excerpt of which was published last fall in *Renaissance Papers* as "Experto Crede: Stephen Gosson and the Experience of the Critic." He spent the summer researching and writing about the relationship between literary criticism and satire and, more specifically, the infamous sixteenth-century pamphlet war between Gabriel Harvey and Thomas Nashe. Best of all, in April, he and his wife, Lauren, welcomed their second child, Leo.

Myra Seaman celebrated a very successful first year of publication in May 2011 of the journal she co-edits, *postmedieval: a journal of medieval cultural studies*. She and her co-editor are now preparing to speed up production as they shift to quarterly production next year. She presented papers at four conferences: one focused on things and times Chaucerian in Siena, Italy, where she fell in love with a country she had not visited since undergraduate school; the usual gathering of thousands of medievalists (very few of whom were in costume, believe it or not) in May in Kalamazoo, MI; the third, a smaller conference at George Washington University's Medieval and Early Modern Studies Institute, where she first tried out some ideas that are at the core of a class she'll be teaching in Fall 2011, "Making Matter Matter in Premodern England"; and the fourth, the first ever conference of the BABEL Working Group, of which she is a co-founder and treasurer, in Austin. She ran her first marathon in March and, to no one's surprise but her own, immediately set about training for another in October.

This past year, **Catherine Thomas**, Dr. T., has been winding up one research project and embarking on another.



Conseula Francis Presented by Provost George Hynd the Distinguished Teaching Award for 2010-11



Simon Lewsi at the tomb of Olive Schreiner, atop of Buffelskop in the Eastern Cape of South Africa, November 2010

She completed the article, “Toxic Encounters,” a survey of scholarship on early modern poisoning, as well as “(Un)sexing Lady Macbeth,” an analysis of Lady Macbeth’s representation in modern graphic novels and manga. While on sabbatical in the spring of 2011, she received a grant from the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, DC to work there for a month on her new project, “Shakespeare and the Graphic Arts.” This summer, Dr. T and her partner went to England--for her, to dig into some archival research, for him, to explore London. Other than getting stuck in an elevator one night, it was a successful week. Later in that trip, while on holiday in Edinburgh, Scotland, they got engaged on Arthur’s Seat. And there was much rejoicing. Dr. T. looks forward to teaching again this fall and to working with her friend and colleague at UNC-Greensboro, Dr. Jennifer Feather, on a co-edited collection on violent masculinity.



Myra Seaman (front) enjoys a meal with Renee Lee Gardner (MA ‘07, left) and Jax Lee Gardner ‘08 at their home in Kalamazoo, MI.

Anton Vander Zee published a two articles this year: “Whitman, Lately” in *AGNI*, and “Milton’s Mary: Suspending Song in the Nativity Ode” in *Modern Philology*. He also published a review essay in *AGNI Online* covering the recent work of the contemporary poet Mary Ann Samyn. In Fall 2011, The University of Iowa Press will publish *A Broken Thing: Poets on the Line*--a collection of 70 micro-essays by contemporary poets that he edited and introduced with

Emily Rosko. In addition to teaching academic writing both through the Honors College and the English Department, Professor Vander Zee was excited by the opportunity to develop two new courses this past year: “Writing the ‘American’ Self: Autobiography from the Founding to Facebook” and “Transnational Poetry: Walt Whitman in America and Beyond.”

Trish Ward recently returned from London, where she took history major Marca Hoyle to work on ninth-century manuscripts in the British Library. Marca and she were awarded Summer Undergraduate Research Funding (SURF) to take the research trip. They will be presenting their findings at the Southeastern Medieval Association’s annual conference in Atlanta in

October. Other than that, she did the occasional Harry Potter lecture, taught Chaucer and Old English, and is in the middle of her fourth and next-to-last year as department chair.

Chris Warnick presented a paper on 1960s-era College of Charleston literary magazines at the Conference on College Composition and Communication in Atlanta. His essay “Texts to Be Worked On and Worked With: Encouraging Students to See Their Writing as Theoretical,” was published in *Teaching with Student Texts: Essays Toward an Informed Practice* (2010). He also published “Beyond the Budget: Sustainability and Writing Studios,” along with M.A. graduates Emily Cooney and Samuel Lackey, in the *Journal of Basic Writing*.

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