

ENGLISH *Matters*

The BGSU English Department Newsletter

Spring 2015

Write from the Chair ...

Dr. Lawrence Coates

This was a year of transition in the English Department. The many changes included saying farewell to our two long-serving secretaries, Mary Jo Smith and Jessica Wade, who are enjoying a well-earned retirement. We also saw Associate Chair and Undergraduate Coordinator, Phil Dickinson, leave his post upon receiving a fellowship from the Institute for the Study of Culture and Society. And we saw Kris Blair, Chair of English for nine years, step down from her position to return to her roles as scholar, editor, and full-time faculty member.

We are also saying farewell to two faculty members of long service: Rona Klein, who has been teaching Children's Literature for the English Department for many years, and Ellen Berry, who began in the English Department and has most recently been serving as the Director of the Institute for the Study of Culture and Society.

However, along with the farewells, we also have welcomed new staff to our offices in East Hall. Jeanne Berry has come aboard as Graduate Secretary and also has taken on many responsibilities for the undergraduate program. Teri Sass is our new Secretary to the Chair. Brad Felver is working as Undergraduate Coordinator. And I became chair of the department as of the first of July.

And one more important transition is underway. After some years of separation, the General Studies Writing program will be merging back into the English Department. The synergies offered by this merger will allow the department to take some new and very exciting initiatives.

I am continually impressed with the accomplishments of the faculty, staff, students, and alumni of the English Department. In the past year, we've seen books and articles published, conferences organized on campus, scholarships earned, and excellent teaching provided. At the end of my first year, I feel honored to serve the department as chair.

A YEAR OF
TRANSITION IN
THE ENGLISH
DEPARTMENT



The English Department bid a fond farewell to Mary Jo Smith and Jessica Wade this past year. They waved goodbye to East Hall on November 26, 2014, with flowers and smiles, but we weren't quite through with them. We had a fine party to honor them both on December 5 at the Stone Ridge Country Club, and many friends past and present were on hand, including Joanne Lohr, Mary McGowan, and Wally and Diane Pretzer. Allan Emery outdid himself by composing two poems. And we asked them to stand and receive the applause they well deserved. We wish them all the best on their new travels and adventures.

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Mary Jo Smith and Jessica Wade say farewell...

Farewells. . .

Rona Klein

The English Department wishes to say a fond farewell to Rona Klein, the department's specialist in Children's Literature. Rona graduated with her MA in English from BGSU in 1979 and has been teaching here for thirty-eight years. Though her undergraduate degree was in Scandinavian Studies from the University of Wisconsin, she early on felt an attraction to Children's Literature, and during her graduate studies here she related how she often arranged with her professors to let her write her seminar papers on some topic in Children's Lit, no matter the subject. Her accomplishments in the classroom have been recognized by seven nominations for the Master Teacher Award, and by being named Professor of the Year by the Interfraternity Council in 2001.

Rona has given many presentations within her field, most recently at the Local Authors Fair at Wood County Public Library. And she has been engaged with the community in other ways, including various service learning activities with local primary and secondary schools. She also played an important role in the Women's Studies program at Bowling Green State University, serving as the Undergraduate Coordinator for five years, on the steering committee for fifteen years, and on many other committees throughout the years.

We will miss Rona, and we wish her well on her retirement.



Ellen Berry

Ellen has been serving most recently as Director of the Institute for the Study of Culture and Society, but she originally came to the university as a member of the English Department in 1986. In her twenty-eight-year career at BGSU, Ellen has published two books and has a third book forthcoming, and she has placed nearly forty peer-reviewed articles and reviews. She has also edited or co-edited six scholarly collections, had served as editor of two scholarly journals: *Gender*, and *Rhizomes*. She has been the recipient of a Fulbright Fellowship and served as a Senior Fulbright Scholar at Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic.

Ellen was Director of Women Studies from 1992 to 1997, and was co-chair of the English Department from 1997 to 1999. And her work as a teacher and mentor is evident in the fact that she has chaired fifty dissertation committees and forty-one MA theses, and served as a member of many more.

We know that Ellen will remain an active and engaged scholar, and we wish her all the best on her future endeavors.



2014-2015 Student News & Notes: Student Accomplishments

English Department Awards

Congratulations to the winners of this year's English Department scholarships and awards:

Irina Ratsushinskaya Book Award
Jenelle Clausen



Fall 2014

Frank Baldanza Scholarship in English Studies
Alexander Elfreich

Paul D. Emery Book Scholarship
Amy Heider

Gloria S. Swihart English Award
Rebecca Hoevenaar

Lowell P. Leland Book Award
Alicia Wodarski

English Faculty Scholarship
Delaney Miller

Kirk Foster Memorial Fund
Kelsey Lortz

2014 Devine Winner in Poetry
Laura Boulton
Chelsea Kerwin

2014 Devine Winner in Fiction
Elizabeth Breazeale
Laura Walters



Spring 2015

Mae W. Casey Scholarship in Creative Writing
Delaney Miller

English Major Book Award
Olivia Buzzacco

Gloria S. Swihart English Award
Brittany Haynes

Lowell P. Leland Book Award
Victoria Hutchinson

Graduate College Awards

Matt McGuire (*MFA Creative Writing*) received the Outstanding Administrative Assistant Award

Wei Cen (*English: PhD Rhetoric & Writing*) received the Outstanding International Graduate Student Award

April Conway (*English; PhD Rhetoric & Writing*) received 1st place—Outstanding Shanklin Colloquium Paper Presentation

Amy Wrobel Jamieson (*English; PhD Rhetoric & Writing*) received GSS Senate Executive Committee Member of the Year

Nominees:

Pauline Baird (*PhD in Rhetoric & Writing*) nominee for Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award

Tanja Vierrether (*TA for GREAL: MA in Literary and Textual Studies*) nominee for Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award

Suzanne Hodsden (*MFA Creative Writing*) nominee for The Distinguished Thesis Award

Sasha Khalifeh (*MFA Creative Writing*) nominee for Jill Carr Outstanding Graduate Student Award

Laura Walter (*MFA Creative Writing*) nominee for Jill Carr Outstanding Graduate Student Award

2014-2015 Faculty News & Notes: *Faculty Accomplishments*

Kris Blair published work in *Composition Studies* and *The Writing Instructor*, and while on leave has served as a Visiting Scholar in the Digital Media and Composition Program in the Ohio State University English Department. She received the BGSU 2014 Women of Distinction Award from the Division of Student Affairs Center for Leadership and also received the BGSU Faculty Senate Leadership Award for a Chair or Director. She has begun a two-year term as Chair of the CCCCs Consortium of Doctoral Programs in Rhetoric and Composition.

Abby Cloud published her first book of poetry, *Sylph*, on Louisiana State University Press, along with several poems in journals. She also celebrated the 35th anniversary of *Mid-American Review* by printing two issues with special contents and holding a reception for the journal at the AWP conference in April.

Kim Coates has had accepted "Virginia Woolf's Queer Time and Place: Wartime London and a World Aslant" forthcoming in 2015 in an anthology entitled *Queer Bloomsbury*.

Lawrence Coates won the 2015 Miami University Novella Contest for his novella *Camp Olvido*. He also has a novel coming out this year entitled *The Goodbye House*.

Heath Diehl has a book forthcoming, *Wasted: Performing Addiction in America*, along with several articles.

Erin Labbie is editing a journal "cluster" issue on Pain and Trauma in Middle English Literature for *Literature and Medicine* a journal published by Johns Hopkins Press journal.

Piya Lapinski had an article published entitled "The Politics of Judicial Torture in The Two Foscari: Byron and Verdi" in a special issue of *Litteraria Pragensia: Studies in Literature and Culture*. She has an article entitled "From Risorgimento to Fascism: The Politics of 'Parisina'" coming out in a collection entitled "Byron: The Poetry of Politics and the Politics of Poetry"

Wendell Mayo published nine stories in journals this past year, including a locally set fiction called "Doom Town" in *Boulevard Magazine*.

Sharona Muir's new book, *Invisible Beasts*, appeared on Bellevue Literary Press and received a starred review from *Publisher's Weekly*, a place in *Oprah Magazine's* monthly book feature "Title to Pick Up Now," and a "Top Indie Fiction" selection from *Library Journal*.

Lee Nickoson was the lead special issue editor for an issue of *Feminist Teacher: Campus/Community Partnerships*. She was also first author of "Intervening: The Value of Campus-Community Partnerships." And she co-authored two pieces: "Crossing Divides: Reflections on Writing Practices in Graduate Education and Professionalization" and "Review of Redesigning Composition for Multilingual Realities and Transnational Literate Lives in Digital Times."

Jolie Sheffer published an article entitled "The Optics of Interracial Sexuality in Adrian Tomine's *Shortcomings* and Sherman Alexie's *Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*."

Andrea Riley-Mukavetz published an article entitled "Towards a cultural rhetorics methodology: Making research matter with multi-generational women from the Little Traverse Bay Band" and also helped organize the inaugural Cultural Rhetorics conference with The Cultural Rhetorics Theory Lab.

Theresa Williams published a story, "The Full Eighty-Eight," in *The Sun Magazine*. She has a novel-in-stories coming out from Shebooks, and one of her poems will appear this year in *New Poetry of the Midwest*.

*In the 2014-2015 academic year,
Dr. Erin Labbie was promoted to Full Professor*

Anthony Doerr Wins the Pulitzer Prize



Anthony Doerr, MFA 1999, received the 2015 Pulitzer Prize in Fiction for his novel *All the Light We Cannot See*. The novel, set mainly in Germany and France during the years prior to and

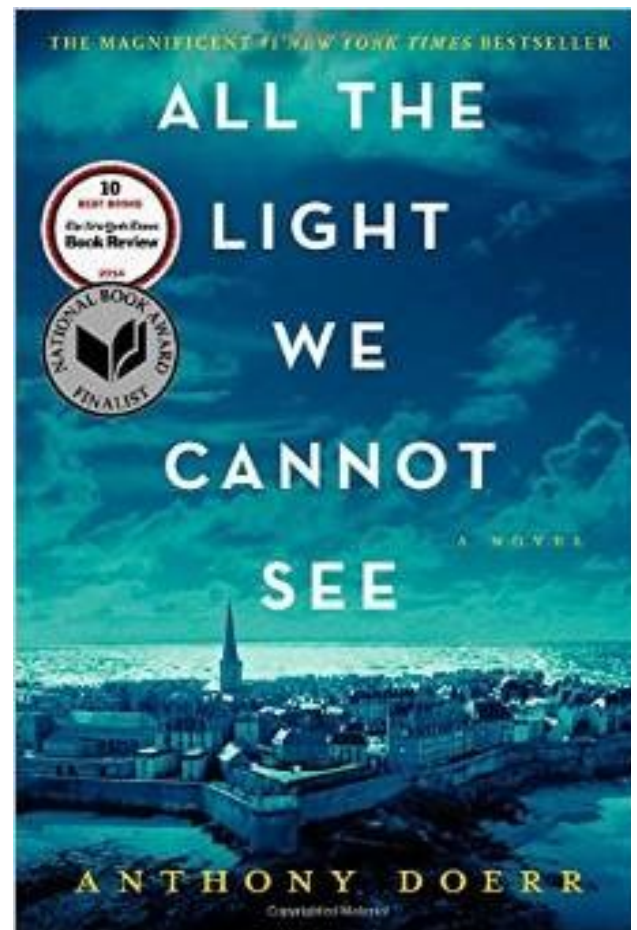
during World War II, follows the lives of a young German boy and a blind French girl as they both struggle to survive the devastation caused by the war. Their paths finally intersect during the siege of Saint-Malo, a walled city on the coast of France, with stunning consequences.

Even prior to the awarding of the Pulitzer Prize, the novel had received high praise. It received glowing reviews from newspapers across the country, was an Amazon Best Book of the Month for May 2014, a Goodreads Choice Award for Historical Fiction, and a finalist for the National Book Award in the fall. Many reviews especially highlighted Doerr's beautiful prose.

The book was also an outstanding popular success, landing on the bestseller list and remaining there, as of this writing, for fifty-two weeks. A recent *New York Times* article called it "the unexpected breakout fiction best seller of 2014."

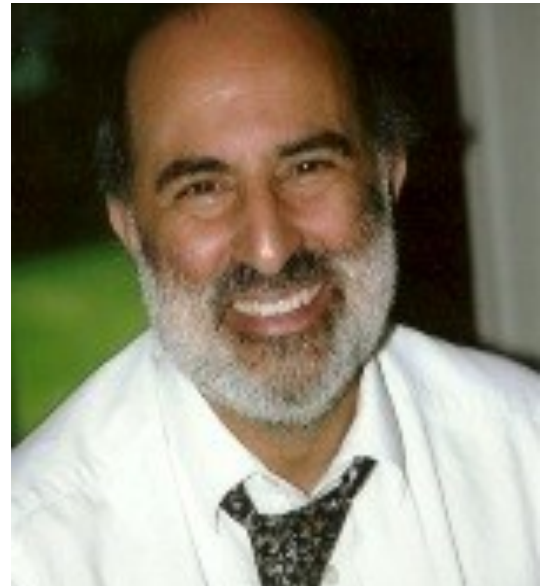
The Pulitzer citation called the book "an imaginative and intricate novel inspired by the horrors of World War II and written in short, elegant chapters that explore human nature and the contradictory power of technology."

The English Department is proud of Tony's accomplishments, and we hope we'll see him back on campus in the not-too-distant future.



In Memoriam

Zalman "Sol" Lachman, passed away on Tuesday, 16 December 2014, 24 Kislev 5775. He was 63 years young. Zalman was a licensed clinical social worker and career counselor as well as a poet and, through his life, writings and work, touched and enhanced the lives of hundreds. He is survived by his wife Zissel Lachman; children Menucha (Yehuda) Bamberger, Rachel (Meir) Dobkin, Pinny Lachman, Tehila Lachman, Max Lachman, Batsheva Lachman and Yitzchok Akiva Lachman; his mother Adeline Lachman (his father was the late Philip Lachman); sisters Janice Lachman, Liz Lachman (Susan Feniger) and Carrie Lachman (David Aronow); Nephews Adam Lenchner and Daniel Lenchner – and many friends. Zalman received his MFA from BGSU (1976). He was graduated from MSU in 1973 and earned his MSW in Social Work from NYU. Zalman was one of America's leading Jewish American poets. His work included countless poems in small press publications. He founded and edited Anti-Ocean Press and published such notable collections as David Shevin's *Camptown Spaces*. He was the editor of *Shir Hadash* magazine. Zalman's book, *We Have Been Such Birds* (Armchair Press, 1978, M Berman ed.), is one of the most unique and special collections of Jewish American poetry. A posthumous collection, tentatively entitled *Blood Oranges*, is in progress by Armchair Press.



Zalman "Sol" Lachman

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English Department Blog: <http://bgsuenglish.wordpress.com/>



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Creative Writing: <http://www.bgsu.edu/creative-writing.htm>

English for Speakers of Other Languages: <http://www.bgsu.edu/arts-and-sciences/english/english-for-speakers-of-other-languages.html>

Literary and Textual Studies: <http://www.bgsu.edu/arts-and-sciences/english/graduate-programs/m-a-in-english.html>

Rhetoric & Writing: <http://www.bgsu.edu/arts-and-sciences/english/graduate-programs/phd-in-rhetoric-and-writing.html>