

ENGLISH *Matters*

Spring 2010

The BGSU English Department Newsletter

Write from the Chair ... Dr. Kristine Blair

2010 marks BGSU's Centennial, and thus we were delighted when five of our alumni were named to the Top 100 list of accomplished graduates. These five are Mark Berman (BA, 1974; MFA, 1976), Founder of CompliGlobe Ltd; Anthony Doerr (MFA, 1999) an award-winning fiction writer; Carolyn Forché (MFA, 1975), Lannan Chair in Poetry at Georgetown; Betty Montgomery, former Ohio Auditor and Attorney General (BA, 1970); and Arnold Rampersad (BA, 1967; MA, 1968), Professor Emeritus from Stanford and a McArthur Fellowship recipient. As this year's edition of *English Matters* documents, the department is continuing to create a cohort of distinguished alumni, including Eric Greene (BFA, 2007), whose work as an English instructor in South Korea teaching students in grades K-8 is a wonderful example of the types of careers and lives our students are successfully pursuing. Such a spirit of engagement extends to our faculty as well, notably Dr. Sue Carter Wood who is currently participating in the Exchange Program with Xi'an International Studies University in China and to the research of colleagues such as Dr. Sheri Wells-Jensen and emeritus faculty Dr. Charles Crow, who just published the book *History of the Gothic: American Gothic*.

I hope you'll enjoy reading about the creative and scholarly accomplishments of both our faculty and our students and send along your own updates that we can feature in a future edition of *English Matters*. And for more updates about life in the English Department, do check out our blog at <http://bgsuenglish.wordpress.com> and become a fan of the English Department through our page on Facebook.

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XISU & BGSU:

Thirty Years of Shared Community

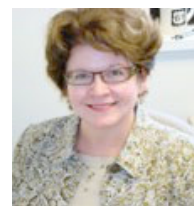
There are many ways to describe relationships that last: rare, dynamic, constant. The relationship between Xi'an International Studies University in China (XISU) and Bowling Green State University has lasted nearly three decades. It all began in 1979 when XISU began offering courses to international students. Among the first participants in the international exchange were Les Barber and Wally Pretzer, and the BG English department has been actively participating ever since.

According to Dr. Tim Pogacar, coordinator for the program, longevity is rare for such a unique relationship like the Xi'an Exchange between these two universities. In an interview, Pogacar observed that most bilateral programs are connected to specific individuals or departments. Pogacar remarked that the relationship between XISU and BGSU has survived administrative changes in departments and programs. This is due, in part, to the fact that there are persons in different departments at both universities that help keep the program operating. Similarly, there are also persons outside of the university who help to support the Xi'an Exchange. Among the many faculty from the English department who remain supportive and actively interested in the Xi'an Exchange are Emeritus English faculty Wally Pretzer, Les Barber, Tom Wymer, and Charles Crow, along with Bill Coggin. The interest and support of multiple departments at both BGSU and XISU as well as the community of persons beyond our BGSU campus who stay involved have not just kept the program alive, says Pogacar, but are what make the program special.

This year, the BG English department's Dr. Sue Carter Wood, Rhetoric and Writing, is in Xi'an as part of the exchange. On our BGSU campus, hosted by the English Department, visiting XISU scholar Yongke Chen is working in the College of Education and conducting his ongoing research.

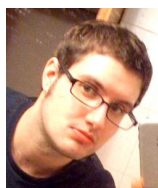


Yongke Chen



Dr. Sue Carter Wood

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Where They Are Now: Alumni (PROFILE)

Eric Greene has a global perspective. A graduate of BGSU, Greene completed a BFA in English in 2007 with a minor in marketing. Greene worked in the United States in customer service but decided to seek out adventure and take a job on the other side of the world: teaching in Korea.

Greene has been teaching for just over a year in Korea. In addition, he takes time to travel and has been to Japan. Greene teaches learners in grades K through 8 and teaches reading, writing, speaking, discussion, and phonics. He has also taught science and history. Once Greene returns to Ohio in May of 2010, he will have taught for 19 months in Korea. Greene did not expect to go through the kinds of culture shock he experienced when he first moved overseas. In fact, he advises new teachers traveling to teach overseas to prepare for a difficult and challenging first couple of weeks. Greene also worried that he wasn't fully prepared to be a teacher. However, Greene admits that once he got settled "the first six months or so every day was a magical adventure." Greene explains that working with young learners is rewarding. He says that kids have a lot of wisdom.

As he looks ahead, Greene notes that graduate study is a definite option. Greene may consider returning to teaching in Korea. While weighing out the possibilities, Greene has advice for undergraduates: do the work, get good grades, and savor the experience. He adds that it is important to "study something that interests you." Greene observes that it was the passion and interest of BG professors like Bill Albertini that influenced him the most. That kind of interest and passion inspired Greene to find a profession that would be fun and meaningful. By studying something of interest, Greene suggests, you can make sense of your life. Greene may be far away, but his advice hits close to home.



Where They Are Now: Graduate Student (PROFILE)

Callista Buchen doesn't really see things in terms of either-or: she sees opportunities for both-and. Instead of choosing between a graduate degree in *either* Literature or Creative Writing, Buchen picked *both*. She loved living and attending school in Oregon because the scenery included mountains, ocean, *and* desert. Buchen likes prose poetry because she is "interested in the idea of genre crossing; taking the best of multiple genres and making something new."

Callista Buchen is finishing her second year of an MFA in Creative Writing with an emphasis in Poetry at Bowling Green. After obtaining a BS in English from the University of

Wisconsin at Stevens Point, Buchen went on to complete a MA in Literature from the University of Oregon in Eugene. Among many of Buchen's credits here at BGSU, her poem "Ode to Competitive Scrabble Players" will be found in the pages of the Summer 2010 issue of *Gargoyle*.

Buchen gives credit to her undergraduate teachers for inspiring her to pursue graduate work. Buchen believes that it was the encouragement from those teachers that helped motivate her to apply to graduate programs. The toughest part was choosing between Literature and Creative Writing. That is when Buchen decided to do *both*. As she looks ahead to applying to doctoral programs, Buchen is considering programs in Creative Writing as well as in Rhetoric and Composition. Buchen says she feels strongly about composition; that composition is important to the world.

Her advice to others pursuing graduate work? "Persistence," she says. Buchen shares that persistence is the best piece of advice someone gave to her. She explains that she first thought graduate school was about knowing things but believes graduate school is actually about determination and effort. "It's more about being committed to your ideas and your interests," she suggests, "than it is about a knowledge base." Buchen suggests that being committed to your field and your work is one way to be successful *and* happy. Shouldn't we have *both*?



Where They Are Now: Faculty (PROFILE)

What is it like to create a new language? Just ask Dr. Sheri Wells-Jensen. Creating a language is one of her many current projects. She is also working on a database that stores a sample of a person's voice as well as working on research in the teaching and reading of Braille as well as working on grant-funded language-preservation project. And that's not all. Actually, Dr. Wells-Jensen has kept very busy since beginning her work at Bowling Green in Fall of 2000.

Wells-Jensen's love of language took her from the Midwest to the east coast to places like Ecuador and Puerto Rico. She was inspired by her teachers' love of language and what they could do with language. Wells-Jensen says she "was awed by Spanish-as-second-language teachers." She says those teachers were brilliant, and Wells-Jensen wanted to be just as good. She got her Masters in ESL and spoke Spanish fluently all because of her teachers. Wells-Jensen began to see a connection between art and science, and linguistics would allow her to practice more science with language. While initially Wells-Jensen's interests were physics and astronomy, linguistics became important because of the important work that it covers: literacy, cognitive processes, language death, and so much more. Of linguistics, Wells-Jensen says, "Its human and immediate and very techie."

Dr. Wells-Jensen is on leave this year, but you will see her in East Hall. She has many projects, and due to her passionate engagement in her field of study, Wells-Jensen is likely to

Wells-Jensen, continued from page 2

become involved in many more. The stories of the projects are as equally interesting as the projects themselves—some projects result from new acquaintances at the Language Creation Society, or from an interest in a language that has barely 38 native speakers alive in the world, or from an interest in the lack of Braille literacy, or from a desire to create a way for people to access the sound of the human voice. Wells-Jensen is working on so many projects, and she is delighted to share the stories.



Where They Are Now:

Emeritus Faculty (PROFILE)

Dr. Charles L. Crow is a lifelong learner: he is motivated to teach and to learn for both personal and professional reasons, and his commitment to learning extends into retirement. Dr. Crow taught at Bowling Green from 1968 to 1998, then returned for three years of post-retirement teaching after a year's Fulbright Senior Lectureship in the Czech Republic. He also taught in Austria twice in the 1980s as part of a sister university exchange with the University of Salzburg, and more recently journeyed twice to the Xi'an Foreign Languages University for work on an editorial project. After seven years in the Maryland suburbs of Washington, DC, he now lives in California with Cynthia, his wife of 44 years, near his children and grandchildren. He says that some of his favorite memories are from his teaching experiences at Bowling Green. Dr. Crow has particularly enjoyed watching some of his own BGSU students step into professional roles as authors and editors of books, and within organizations like the Western Literature Association.

Dr. Crow says he may not be done with teaching, and is considering a second Fulbright lectureship. He is not done with writing either. Since retiring, he has edited a collection of essays on American regional literatures and authored a study of Maxine Hong Kingston. His new book, *History of the Gothic: American Gothic*, was released on September 15, 2009. The book is part of a series from the University of Wales Press that includes four books dedicated to Gothic Literary Studies.

Dr. Crow's interest in gothic literature grew out of attention to some of his favorite authors who were the subjects of his dissertation. Crow noticed that some writers known as realists, such as Mark Twain and William Dean Howells, also wrote about the supernatural. Crow's natural curiosity for patterns in writing led him to observe elements "that didn't seem to graph onto the materialistic notions of realism." Thus his gothic literary studies grew by natural evolution from his interests in teaching and research.

As Dr. Crow reflects on his own work, he remembers change as a constant: from the turmoil of the 1960s, to teaching during the 9/11 attacks. He is proud to recall the department becoming more diverse over time. He suggests that instructors and students alike should participate in the Xi'an Exchange because of the positive opportunities the program offers. Traveling the world to learn and to teach is part of Dr. Crow's practice of lifelong learning, and something he is willing to share with students and colleagues.

XISU & BGSU: Thirty Years... continued from page 1

As part of the preparation for his work here in America, Yongke Chen took courses in College Student Development, Teaching Language Arts, and Comparative Education. The teaching and learning experience here is challenging, he says, but worth it. His current research and scholarship focus on Education, such as History of American Education and Educational Research and Methods, and he is interested in approaches to improving education back home in China. Yongke has been encouraged by the friendship and cooperation of the partnership between XISU and BGSU. He feels at home and has gotten much "inspiration and support from both the English Department and Education Department of BGSU."

Dr. Carter Wood knew of the Xi'an Exchange Program and was interested in participating but only just had an opportunity to apply this year. She is teaching a lecture-style course, which is new and a challenge. Dr. Carter Wood usually teaches smaller classes that do not get beyond thirty-five students, but is now teaching as many as 300 students. Fortunately, she says, she teaches in a newly renovated classroom with Internet and a projector, so she is able to organize her lectures as PowerPoint presentations, and she will also be able to use images and other online materials. Her greatest reward is working with her students and, more specifically, providing opportunities for learners to "play" with language using new vocabulary in activities and in discussion. Dr. Carter Wood encourages other teachers to participate in the program.

There are many ways to get involved with the Xi'an Exchange. Check out the program information at the GREAL office on the BGSU campus. The generosity and support for the program has provided funding opportunities, too, such as the Pretzer International Fund for students. Interest, participation, and support both on- and off-campus have made the program a success and a unique collaboration between BGSU and XISU.

2009-10 Faculty News & Notes

Here are just a few accomplishments that are representative of the breadth and diversity of talent and interests here in East Hall. As you will see, the Department's faculty has had a very busy year! This is only a partial list, so please visit our department blog for more recent updates.

Bill Albertini (Literature) published "The Geographies of Contagion" in *Rhizomes: Cultural Studies in Emerging Knowledge* 19 (Summer 2009), and his review "Epidemic Stories," a review of Priscilla Wald's *Contagious: Cultures, Carriers, and the Outbreak Narrative* appears in *Contemporary Literature* 50.2 (Summer 2009).

Kris Blair (Rhetoric & Writing) received the 2009 Graduate Student Senate Outstanding Contributor to Graduate Education Award and has edited the collection *Webbing Cyberfeminist Practice: Communities, Pedagogies, and Social Action*, Hampton Press, 2009. She also contributed the book chapter "Writing as Process and Online Education: Matching Pedagogy with Delivery" to the MLA collection *Teaching Literature and Language Online*, and co-authored "The Electronic Landscape of Journal Editing: Computers and Composition as a Scholarly Collective" for *MLA Profession 2009*.

Michael Czyzniejewski's (Creative Writing) book *Elephants in Our Bedroom: Stories* has been published by Dzanc Books; he is also the recipient of the 2010 Literature Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Jude Edminster (Scientific & Technical Communication) presented "From Manuscript to Digital: Remediating the Geology Field Notebook" at the Council of Programs in Technical and Scientific Communication, August 2009. She also presented "Integrating an International (Global and Local) Language Emphasis in Your Technical and Scientific Communication Program OR How to Save Your Graduate Courses When the Administration Axes Your Graduate Program" at the Language for Scientific Purpose Conference, August 2009.

Stephannie Gearhart (Literature) contributed the article "'Take My Part': Using Generational Conflict to Teach *King Lear*" to *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Teaching* 16:1 (Spring 2009) and has

also published "'Will in Overplus': A Review of Shakespeare Biographies" in *Quidditas* 30 (2009). She also presented "'Only He Would Have the Temerity to Rewrite Shakespeare': The Role of Adaptation in Douglas Hickox's *Theatre of Blood*" at the Shakespeare Association of America's annual meeting in Washington, D.C. in April 2009, and received a fellowship from the Institute for the Study of Culture and Society, Spring 2010.

Richard Gebhardt (Rhetoric & Writing) contributed a book chapter titled "Scholarship of Engagement: New Name for or Challenge to the Work of Rhetoric" to the collection *The Responsibilities of Rhetoric* (Waveland Press, 2009).

Gary Heba (Scientific & Technical Communication) co-authored a book chapter titled "Go West Young Woman! Hegel's Dialectic and Women's Identities in Western Films" that has been accepted for publication in *The Philosophy of the Western*, University of Kentucky Press.

Erin Labbie (Literature) In addition to a number of new book projects in progress, her most recent work includes a presentation at the International Studies Conference in February 2009 titled "The Shadow of Freedom: Lacan, Causality and the Political" as well as a presentation at the prestigious International Congress on Medieval Studies in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Her invited lectures include the Honored Alumna Lecture at Bucknell University titled "The Devil's Dream: Michel De Certeau, On the Horizon of History" in October 2008.

Piya Lapinski (Literature) received a book contract from Palgrave Macmillan for the collection of essays she is co-editing and also contributing to: *Byron and the Politics of Freedom and Terror*.

Sharona Muir (Creative Writing) was a finalist for the Calvino Prize for *The Book of Telling*.

Lee Nickoson (Rhetoric & Writing) authored the chapter “(Re)Imagining Writing Assessment as a ‘New’ Literacy” in the NCTE collection *Teaching Audience: Theory and Practice*, edited by Brian Fehler, Elizabeth Weiser, and Angela Gonzales, and was an Invited Proposal Reviewer for the 2009 Feminism(s) & Rhetoric(s) Conference. She has also received an advance contract for her co-edited collection on research methods under review at Southern Illinois University Press.

Jolie Sheffer (Literature) contributed the article “‘Citizen Sure Thing’ or ‘Jus’ Foreigner’?: Half-Caste Citizenship and the Family Romance in Onoto Watanna’s Orientalist Fiction” to the *Journal of Asian American Studies*; her article “Recollecting, Repeating, and Walking Through: Immigration, Trauma, and Space in Mary Antin’s *The Promised Land*” will appear in *MELUS, The Journal for the Study of the Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States*.

Larissa Szporluk (Creative Writing) was awarded the Guggenheim Artists Fellowship in Poetry.

Sheri Wells-Jensen (Linguistics) was invited to serve as part of the Jernigan Institute's National Braille Research Collaboration Group and is also serving as an assessment expert for the Institute’s Summer Braille Education, Literacy and Learning Program.

Michael Winkelman’s (Literature) article “John Donne as Thinker & Imaginator: Composing ‘A Jet Ring Sent’” was accepted by *Interdisciplinary Literary Studies* (2010); he also contributed a book review of William Flesch’s *Comeuppance: Costly Signaling, Altruistic Punishment, & Other Biological Components of Fiction* to *Evolutionary Psychology* (www.epjournal.net); finally, his article “Sighs & Tears: Biological Costly Signals & Donne’s ‘Whining Poetry’” has been published in *Philosophy and Literature* (October 2009).

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Kathleen Blake Yancey Visits!

Kellogg W. Hunt Professor of English and Director of the graduate program in Rhetoric and Composition at Florida State University, Kathleen Blake Yancey visited the English Department on February 18 and 19 to meet with graduate students and faculty. Also the keynote speaker for the Teaching and Learning Fair at BGSU, her talk was titled "Learning By Design: The Role of ePortfolios in Fostering Intentional Learning." The English department was honored to welcome Dr. Blake Yancey, past President of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and incoming Editor of College Composition and Communication (CCC).

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

BGSU *Notes...*

BGSU Remembers...

Dr. Kenneth Robb, emeritus faculty member in Literature, who passed away in July of 2009. Ken began his work at BG in 1970 and retired in 1991. During that time, he helped to form the stellar reputation of the English Department and was remembered by faculty, staff, and alumni.

Special Congratulations!

.....to **Dr. Bill Albertini**, who received tenure and was promoted to Associate Professor of English.

.....to **Dr. Heath Diehl (Ph.D. 2000)**, who received the prestigious Master Teacher Award.

.....to **Dr. Lee Nickoson**, who received the 2010 Outstanding Contributor to Graduate Education Award.

.....to **Dr. Vicki Patra**, who received the Faculty Senate Distinguished Service Award.

