

## English Scholars Tread Lightly into a Sustainable Future

Humanities and English scholars at ASU have joined campus scientists and researchers currently engaged in innovative and unique interdisciplinary explorations of humankind's relationship to the environment. The ASU Institute for Humanities Research chose "The Humanities and Sustainability" as the theme for its 2007-2008 fellowship, anticipating that ASU and Visiting Fellows might "expand the usual understanding of sustainability as a technological challenge to encompass the long-term thinking, sense of history, attention to language and human creativity . . . necessary to create and critique notions of sustainable communities and societies."



**Sustainability, n.**

Of, relating to, or designating forms of human economic activity and culture that do not lead to environmental degradation, esp. avoiding the long-term depletion of natural resources.

—Oxford English Dictionary, 2002

In a similar effort to reconsider the term "sustainability," which he fears has become a "trendy buzzword for economic development," Dan Shilling, ASU English alumnus (PhD 1987), Community Faculty Associate, and director of the Salt River Project's Arizona Heritage Project, is now offering an English course in "The Literature of Sustainability." Shilling is the recipient of numerous accolades, including the ASU Founders' Day Alumni Achievement Award for his innovative approaches to popularizing the humanities, promoting an ethical framework for guiding human interactions. He sees literature as an important medium revealing how our conceptions of sustainability must be rooted in a sense of ethical commitment. He believes, "given the distinctive natural and cultural environment in which ASU finds itself, we can use literature to give us a better sense of belonging," which is important because "it fosters commitment. . . one

of the first steps toward sustainable practice." By presenting a range of ecocritical theory, nonfiction, fiction, and poetry, Shilling's course introduces students to the multi-faceted complexities that encompass humans' experience of place. He hopes his students will "walk away from the course with a sense that our social and environmental problems rarely exist on a horizontal, one-dimensional, linear axis." Furthermore, Shilling suggests, addressing society's problems in a meaningful manner requires that "we keep the core of sustainability front and center, and that core is grounded in humankind's relationship to the environment." Shilling explores similar ideas further in his book, *Civic Tourism: The Poetry and Politics of Place*, due out this summer.

Additionally, in its eleventh year, the Western States Rhetoric and Literacy Conference (WSRLC) returns to ASU October 25-27, 2007. Assistant Professor and conference director Peter Goggin, in response to a growing interest "in teaching and studying rhetorics of sustainability, ecomposition, and environmental literacy," selected "Sustainability" as the conference theme. He hopes the gathering will provide a productive space for scholars who, as of yet, have had no organized community in which to explore their role in the movement. Goggin, like Shilling, believes the humanities can play an active role in discussions of sustainability, traditionally considered the domain of the sciences. "As English scholars, . . . our various areas of expertise shape the ways we understand how human knowledge is constructed and disseminated. Our participation in discussions on sustainability and sustainable development will bring awareness of this into the mix." This year's WSRLC keynote speaker is Tarla Peterson, Professor of Communication and Rhetoric, Boone and Crockett Chair, Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Texas A&M University. A special session on "Cowboy Poetry and Sustainability" will be hosted by ASU's Jim Blasingame. As always, there is no conference registration fee and all are welcome to participate in the burgeoning discussion of the humanities' role in helping society to envision a sustainable future.

—Kathleen Hicks

## The Chair's Corner

The Department of English continues to “define itself” through excellence, accomplishment, and possibility. This newsletter closes a banner year of faculty and student recognitions in research, creative activity, teaching, and service. Beth Tobin and Sharon Crowley received prestigious awards for their recent book projects, Mark Lussier and O M Brack hosted major conferences at ASU, and graduate and undergraduate students received Fulbright research awards for study in Korea and Indonesia. MFA alumni secured NEA fellowships, and both Laura Tohe and Alberto Ríos were acknowledged for their substantive contributions as public intellectuals in Arizona. Poems by creative writing faculty and alumni guided travelers through winter desert landscapes in *Arizona Highways* (December 2006), and Ayanna Thompson presented her work on colorblind casting during Davidson College’s Royal Shakespeare Company Residency Symposium.

This busy academic year also brought to the department its first Visiting Scholar—Professor of American literature Zhang Caibo from the School of Translation and Interpretation, Shandong University at Weihai, China. This summer, the department will launch its first international exchange with China’s Sichuan University. We continue to explore other exchange possibilities with universities in Tunisia, Canada, Korea, and the United Kingdom. Indeed, the English department joins the larger university in engaging local and global communities—work that remains central to its teaching, research, and service missions.

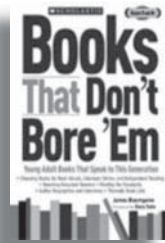
Active participation in other significant conversations further showcases the department’s strengths and diversity. For instance, with support from an Arizona Humanities Council grant, we hosted a February 2007 symposium on the works of poet and performance artist Sapphire, drawing scholars from around the country. More than 100 attendees interacted with the poet in what Sapphire herself describes as a “transformative” moment in her evolution as a writer and human being. She acknowledges: “I feel as though I have been to the altar, it was ‘church’ for me, ‘life in the desert,’ not to be forgotten but used as light in the times to come.” Our colloquium on academic freedom drew a crowd of those concerned about the state of education in Arizona and in the nation. Joe Lockard’s Antislavery Literature Project became the impetus for the cross-college/cross-disciplinary “Slavery and Antislavery Research and Teaching Workshop” that considered slavery and trafficking past and present. The semester closed with the first Beowulf Symposium and a day-long celebration of Shakespeare’s birthday, organized by Heather Maring and Bradley Ryner, respectively.

As we welcome eight new faculty this fall, engage emeritus professors in writing a department history, and support our new Advancement Board in preparing the unit’s first View Book, we invite you to join in the excitement and energy that is this Department of English.

—Neal A. Lester



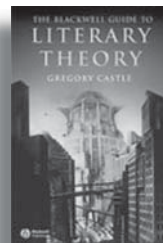
## Faculty Book Publications



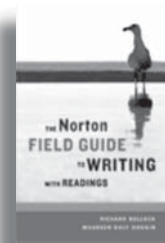
**James Blasingame**  
*Books That Don't Bore 'Em: Young Adult Books That Speak to This Generation.* Scholastic, 2007.



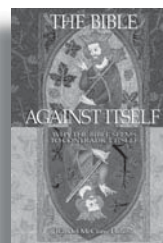
**Jay Boyer**  
*Mechanik E Shabkar Ashbeqaneh I Aram Dar Dah Fasl E Kootah* (Farsi translation of *The Night Mechanic: A Romance Novel in Ten Short Chapters*). Trans. Asadollah Amraee. Iran, 2007.



**Gregory Castle**  
*The Blackwell Guide to Literary Theory.* Blackwell, 2006.



**Maureen Daly Goggin**  
and **Richard Bullock.** *The Norton Field Guide to Writing with Readings.* W.W. Norton, 2006.



**Randel Helms**  
*The Bible Against Itself: Why the Bible Seems to Contradict Itself.* Skeptics Society, 2006.



**Cynthia Hogue**  
*Innovative Women Poets: An Anthology of Contemporary Poetry and Interviews.* University of Iowa Press, 2007.



**Thomas P. Roche**  
*Petrarch in English.* Penguin, 2005.



**Robert S. Sturges**  
*Dialogue and Deviance: Male-Male Desire in the Dialogue Genre (Plato to the Middle Ages, Plato to the Enlightenment, Plato to the Postmodern).* Palgrave MacMillan, 2005.

*Sustaining Legacies* “ I have glimpses of a serene friendship-land, and know the better why brooks murmur and violets grow. —Henry David Thoreau, journal entry, 26 January 1840

### The Swarthouts: Family Matters

Forty-five years. We think family when we hear about forty-five years of financial support, kindness, and caring bestowed upon any person—any group. To put it mildly, the ASU English Department was lucky to be adopted by Glendon, Kathryn, and Miles Swarthout in 1962 as the place



Kathryn Swarthout

to celebrate young writers of fiction and poetry.

English has enjoyed the Swarthouts' generosity for nearly half a century now, and the success of young writers in our department owes a great deal to this singular family. The Swarthout Awards in Writing go to prose writers and poets under the age of twenty-six, just at the onset of their lifetimes of writing.

In April 2007, the first prizes in both fiction and poetry were \$2500, second prizes were \$1400, third prizes \$900, and honorable mention awards \$100. The

awards evening this year, Tuesday, April 17, featured readings by first-place winners and our invited guest, poet Richard Katrovas. Over the years, judges have been writers of international renown, from poet Dave Smith to novelist Bret Lott.

When Glendon Swarthout had just completed work on his master's degree in English and wanted to get an academic job, he said, "I needed traveling money and a suit." Then he won the Avery Hopwood Award in Fiction at the University of Michigan—\$800—for a 600-page novel entitled *Orestes*, a manuscript he later burned in Mexico to heat water for his family's shower. That year, when he first really needed money and won it, that summer when he wanted to drive east with his wife and small son Miles, Glendon Swarthout said, "The

prize money did both things—it bought the suit, and I did get a job at the University of Maryland."

It was fifteen years, a war, and two or three manuscripts later when Swarthout made his first big sale to Random House and to Harry Cohn of Columbia Pictures for his novel *They Came to Cordura*. However, his first student literary prize, Swarthout said, was what gave him the encouragement to continue writing throughout those years. "To get money for something you have written makes all the difference."

In 1962, because they "never forgot what that award meant," the Swarthouts established the Glendon and Kathryn Swarthout Awards in Writing at Arizona State University, where Dr. Swarthout was then teaching. Kathryn Swarthout says, "We're still trying to get it right." Each year the prizes grow in value, drawn from interest on their ASU endowment fund.

The Swarthouts' papers and manuscripts are housed in the ASU Hayden Libraries Special Collections. This spring, a display of Swarthout classics, including Miles Swarthout's *Easterns and Westerns* and Kathryn Swarthout's *Whichaway*, will be displayed in the first floor art case of the Language and Literature building.

—Karla Elling



From left: Miles, Kathryn, and Glendon Swarthout.

### Alumna Creates Linguistics Fellowship in Honor of Grandfather

The Department of English has a new award for graduate students in linguistics. The Carl C. Carlie Linguistics Fellowship was established by English Department alumna Joan Berry (MTESL 2005), and her husband Charles, to honor her grandfather, Carl C. Carlie. The monetary gift from Joan and Charles Berry was matched by Ira Fulton as part of the Fulton Challenge. The award amount for 2006 and 2007 is \$500.



Joan Berry, MTESL alumna and fellowship donor.

According to Berry, nothing pleased her grandfather more than helping someone to become a better person. While his heart was big,

he put a premium on excellence and effort.

"In order to promote the attributes valued by my grandfather, this fellowship should go to students who take great pride in their efforts and exhibit intellectual curiosity," says Berry. "Hopefully their work will lead to advancements in the field."

MA student Wende Frost was the recipient of the 2006/07 award. The title of Wende's thesis was "The Editor's Role in Linguistics Fingerprinting." She graduates in May and plans to pursue a PhD and then a career in computational linguistics or natural language processing. The recipient of the 2007/08 award is PhD student John Ryan. John's dissertation discusses children's acquisition of the verb system. Little research has been done on this topic, and Ryan plans to analyze cross-linguistics, longitudinal data.

—Sheila Luna

## Global Engagements

“We must spare no effort to free all of humanity, and above all our children and grandchildren, from the threat of living on a planet irredeemably spoilt by human activities, and whose resources would no longer be sufficient for their needs. —United Nations Millennium Declaration

### India Poised

In January 2007, I traveled with four other MFA students (Darcy Courteau, Max Doty, Michael Green, and Aimee Baker) and Professor Melissa Pritchard to India as Piper International Fellows. Four of us (Max, Michael, Aimee, and I) began our journey in Delhi at Sanskriti Kendra, an artist's retreat, and continued on to Kolkata where we joined Darcy and visited both Jadavpur University and Daywalka Foundation.

How can I sum up such an overwhelming experience? At a recent panel of refugees, one of the Lost Boys from Sudan spoke about hunger for education. After walking hundreds of miles and swimming around alligators to reach camp, he went



A line of pilgrims waiting to enter the Kali Temple in Kolkata, India.

straight to school, scratching answers to quizzes in the sand. He confirmed what I learned in India, that the appetite for knowledge cannot be underestimated in fights against crippling odds.

With 300 million people in poverty, at first India seemed a losing battle. To an outsider, the whole place appeared haunted by specters of colonialism, the caste system, and the ghostly

breath of pollution. The fires of the homeless eerily lit crowded streets. This is the image of India I was taking in, and would have taken home, were it not for its students.

Recovering from “Delhi belly,” weak and tired, we reached Jadavpur University in Kolkata. Shuffling, looking down, suddenly I was in the classroom. I managed a weak smile. Then a strange thing happened—everyone smiled back. Not lazy smiles from red-eyed youth, but whole smiles, body and spirit. Ravenous smiles that wanted to be there. These creative writing students asked us about everything from how to keep writing a novel, to what to do with embarrassing poems of teen angst. There was genuine curiosity, humility, and new confidence for risk. The same experience was repeated at Daywalka, where we met with marginalized youth.

In Delhi, signs lined the streets: “India Poised.” With beggars beneath them, they were ironic. I picture a taut student, leaning forward with eyes wide, and hope feels possible.

—Tina Hammerton



Aimee Baker (right) and Melissa Pritchard discuss creative writing with an audience of community members at the Oxford Bookstore in New Delhi, India.

### PhD Student to Earn Second Doctorate in Belgium

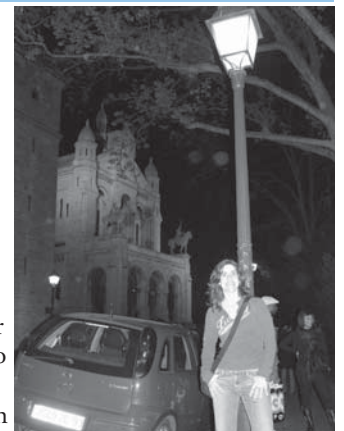
Johanna Wagner, a PhD student in the Literature program, is now participating in a funded research project at the University of Ghent in Belgium. The project, “Judith Butler Revisited” (2005-2009), is part of the Funded Research Projects in the English Department at the University of Ghent, under the direction of Dr. Gert Buelens with co-director Marysa Demoor. Johanna's project stems from her research into the “invert” in modernist novels.

While at the University of Ghent, Wagner is studying the political and the literary-critical potential of Judith Butler's theory of the “I” who is not at one with social and moral norms. Butler argues that the “I” outside of normative

configurations must deliberate these norms and critique their social genesis and meaning. Johanna intends to study Butler's theory(ies) while reading Djuna Barnes's novel *Nightwood* and exploring the tragic heroines in Edith Wharton's *The House of Mirth* (Lily Bart), *The Age of Innocence* (Ellen Olenska), and *Ethan Frome* (Mattie Silver).

Her project seeks to determine the potential and limitations of Butler's (queer) theory for research into women's literature. “Judith Butler Revisited” will give Johanna the opportunity to explore, understand, and contextualize Butler's theory within the larger context of this research project.

—Kirsti Cole Johanna Wagner in front of La Basilique du Sacré Coeur of Montmartre in Paris.



## Instructor Heather Hoyt as Middle East Cyber Mentor

For the past few years, scholars from Egypt, Tunisia, Jordan, Iran, and Kuwait have been contacting Instructor and recent department alumna Heather Hoyt via email. They're seeking her advice and feedback on their research and teaching of Arab American literature and contemporary Arab literature in English. Since Hoyt first offered the spring 2004 special topics class "Arab Women Writers," she has received a steady stream of emails from students and colleagues throughout the United States and around the globe.

According to Hoyt, "There aren't too many of us teaching and researching these texts, so my website with the course link and background information has been a useful resource for fellow scholars." Her course focuses on Arab women writers' literary contributions in English over the last two decades. Since Hoyt's dissertation research included conversations with several authors in the United States and in Arab countries, she has already developed an extensive network of writers and scholars willing to engage in virtual discussions with her classes.

Thanks to these national and international contacts, Hoyt has contributed to panels at major conferences, such as the December 2005 MLA convention in Philadelphia, and the first Radius of Arab American Writers, Inc. (RAWI) gathering in spring 2005. She has been an active member of RAWI for a couple of years, and her online profile has also been a good resource for those who wish to learn more about the field. The editor of a new collection of scholarly essays on the Arab novel in

English has invited Hoyt to contribute and also to present her work at the 2007 second international RAWI conference.

In addition, Hoyt reviews texts with Arab and Muslim subjects for the *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, which she admits, "keeps me current on new works for young readers." Syracuse University Press has invited her to review several manuscripts on Arab American subjects; some of the authors are prominent figures in the field. The SUP editor for the Arab American and Middle East series has invited her to submit her own manuscript, so Hoyt's dissertation has future book potential.

Hoyt says about this wave of interest in her work, "One of the most rewarding aspects of my cyber mentoring, research, and teaching has been the interaction with students and colleagues. My network continues to grow, as do my friendships with the amazing writers, scholars, and students interested in Arab and Arab American literatures." —Neal A. Lester and Heather Hoyt



Heather Hoyt during a recent trip to Jordan.

## English Department Well Represented by Fulbright Scholars

Two young scholars are bringing further distinction to the ASU Department of English by their recent Fulbright awards. Elizabeth Dreeland, English alumna, and Kari Jordan-Diller, PhD candidate in linguistics, are packing and unpacking, respectively, for and from their time abroad.

Elizabeth Dreeland (BA 2005) discovered her passion for travel when she first visited Hungary and Romania the summer after her ASU freshman year. March 18, the ASU graduate traveled to Uruguay as a Fulbright scholar. An Arizona native, Dreeland picked ASU to triple major in History, English Literature, and Spanish, and to earn certificates in Latin American Studies and International Education. As captain of the Salle Diablo Fencing Club's women's foil team, Dreeland has competed around the country, individually and in the West Coast Collegiate League. After graduating in December 2005, she worked as an Associate Research Analyst for ThinkAZ, a nonprofit, non-partisan think-tank examining Arizona public policy. While there, she focused on immigration, water resources, and propositions. In Uruguay, she will teach English while researching and volunteering but also hopes to fence whenever she can. When she returns to the United States, Dreeland plans to study international relations in graduate school.



Elizabeth Dreeland

Kari Jordan-Diller, whose research focuses on the socio-linguistic aspects of multilingual education, recently returned to ASU after ten months in Phae Klang, Thailand's largest Prai community. A minority language society, Phae Klang was ideal

for her research. Formed by the Thai government thirty-five years ago in response to border conflicts with Laos, Phae Klang is a consolidation of five Prai villages, wrested from their mountainous homes and relocated in a single valley community that Jordan-Diller calls a "quasi-collective" of about 800 people. According to Jordan-Diller, members of Phae Klang, having already endured much oppression, are acutely aware of their minority status, perpetuated by hegemonic language practices in Prai schools. Classes are taught solely in Thai by Thai teachers whose feelings of cultural superiority frequently affect their teaching. Needless to say, students traditionally fail to do well in the current system. Jordan-Diller also notes that although members of the community recognize that their language and culture are threatened and they would like to preserve them, they feel discouraged about doing so. Jordan-Diller's research aims to help by developing curricula that will better serve the needs of the community by negotiating the two cultures. Such curricula will incorporate some (as much as is legally sanctioned) instruction in Prai.



Kari Jordan-Diller

Having grown up in Phae Klang, Jordan-Diller speaks both Prai and Thai, and not incidentally, she specifically designed her Fulbright grant proposal to return there, where her parents still live. Upon completion of her dissertation, Kari plans to return to Phae Klang to implement her curricula and to continue this important work.

—Judy Holiday and Steven Accardi

## Engagement at Home

In the end, our society will be defined not only by what we create, but by what we refuse to destroy. —John C. Sawhill

### The Prison Library and Education Project: Extending our Reach

The English Department has been involved in at least two prison outreach programs recently. In 2004, Elizabeth McNeil (Assistant Director, Undergraduate Studies) initiated a library donation project for the Douglas Prison with the help of undergraduate interns Lynn Gutman and Matthew Parker. Since 2005, Elizabeth, Professor Elly van Gelderen, and Kristen LaRue (Program Coordinator) have collected and delivered texts to the Marana Prison, as well as sent selected donations to a women's prison in Tennessee. Thus far, we've donated about 7,100 texts (books, textbooks, CDs, audio cassettes, and magazines) at \$30,000 Fair Market Value. In 2007, we continue to deliver texts to Marana, and this month we took our first truckload to the GEO Central Arizona Correctional Facility in Florence, where we are also currently developing a creative writing and literature course of study for a new inmate population.

During 2006, John Birk (Instructor in English) began a successful teaching program and anthology project at the CCA/Central Arizona Detention Center, also in Florence. John brings experts and academics to the prison for monthly lectures, which have been wildly popular among the inmates. In addition, John works in small groups and one-on-one with the men on their writing.



Photo by Gerard LeMoine  
Instructor John Birk (right) with students who contributed to his anthology, both from the state of Washington: Renzi Lumen (left) and Su Feleti (center).

With the help of Kristen LaRue, John published the project's first collection this December. Of a scope unprecedented in American penal education, *Voices from the Desert: An Anthology of Inmate Writings 2006* represents the writing and artwork of more than eighty prisoners. In January, John met with the inmate contributors at the Florence and Eloy/Red Rock facilities for "graduation ceremonies," during which each contributor received a free copy of the book. The ceremonies were quite emotional; few of the inmates had ever published before.



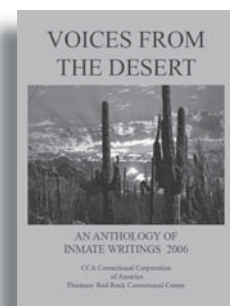
Photo by Gerard LeMoine  
The entrance to CCA/Central Arizona Detention Center, Florence, Arizona.

Of note is the influence of the teaching and anthology project on the prison population. The officers and inmates report that violence has dropped dramatically; education enrollments are at an all-time high; and inmates want to continue and even expand the project. Manuscripts are ready for the second anthology. As John reports, the many inmates eager to become involved give him many ways to go with the textual projects. An anthology of Native American writing, art, and photographs, for example, is forthcoming.

The success of the first volume has also led John to pursue expanding the program to other prisons. He will soon meet with former Arizona Governor Rose Mofford, who likes the anthology so much that she is forwarding a copy to the Arizona Director of Prisons. It is John's hope that this will lead to a state program. The growing contingent of California inmates housed at the Florence and Eloy/Red Rock facilities has also led to John's plans to work with them in the near future, then get a copy of their anthology to another advocate of prison-education reform, California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Now that the lectures and first anthology are off the ground, John is eager to share the program with others at ASU. Educational specialists at both Florence prisons are interested in widening the lecture circuit, and a number of ASU faculty and staff have already volunteered their time.

For more information, or to get involved in any aspect of the project, please contact us: John Birk (John.Birk@asu.edu), Kristen LaRue (Kristen.Larue@asu.edu), Elizabeth McNeil (mcneil@asu.edu), or Elly van Gelderen (ellyvangelder@asu.edu).



—Elizabeth McNeil

## PUSHing Boundaries, PUSHing Art: A Symposium on the Works of Sapphire

On February 27, acclaimed fiction writer and poet Sapphire, on behalf of ASU's Department of English and the Arizona Humanities Council, appeared on campus for a day-long event in her honor. Speaking at "PUSHing Boundaries, PUSHing Art: A Symposium on the Works of Sapphire," Sapphire recognized education as the most influential factor of positive change in a child's life. Literacy—specifically education—is the dominant theme in her first novel, *PUSH*, winner of several awards, including the Book-of-the-Month Club, Stephen Crane Award for First Fiction, the Black Caucus of the American Library Association's First Novelist Award, and the Mind Book of the Year Award. Participants in the symposium focused on ways to introduce Sapphire's work into both the African American literary canon as well as the contemporary classroom. Sixteen panel participants discussed topics ranging from the blues tradition in Sapphire's poetry and prose, the racial pollution of the environment she creates in *PUSH*, to a roundtable discussion of how to teach the author's works.

The day's events culminated in an emotionally powerful reading by Sapphire at the Lyceum Theatre. At the close of her evening reading, Sapphire spoke eloquently about the importance of the symposium: "Experiencing this, being here today, means my life means something. My work means something."



*Sapphire discusses her work on February 28.*

Discussing ways to engage Sapphire's work in the curriculum and canon, the symposium successfully demonstrated how Sapphire and the singular voices she immortalizes are welcome among today's readers and tomorrow's scholars, with awe, gratitude, and open arms.

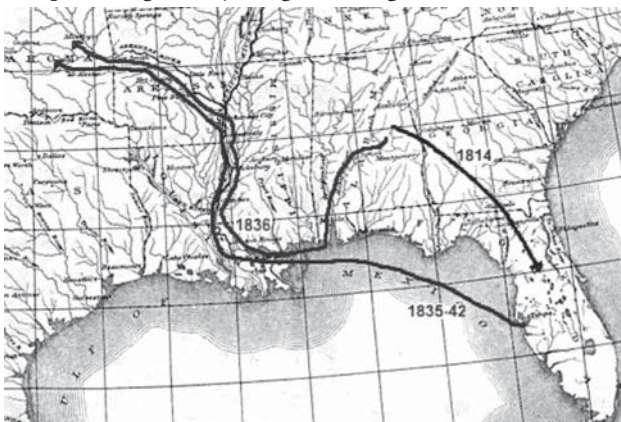
—Marq Wilson

## Student Jim Larney: "Working on My Language"

Jim Larney graduates this May with a BA in English and a concentration in linguistics. A returning student, Larney works full time as an administrative assistant for the department of Political Science. He is of Seminole and Creek heritage. His wife is of Navajo heritage. They have two young children.

Larney lived in Oklahoma with his grandfather for the first six years of his life. His grandfather was an accomplished speaker of Mvskoke, also called Creek and Muscogee. Larney's life eventually led away from Oklahoma and away from the language of his grandfather.

Despite being told by a high school guidance counselor that



*Creek (or Muskoke or Muskogee) was originally spoken in northern Alabama and southern Georgia. In the 1700s and early 1800s, some Creek speakers moved to Florida and became known as Seminoles. In the 1830s, most Creeks and Seminoles were forced to move to Indian Territory. Today Creek is spoken by several thousand citizens of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, and the Seminole Tribe of Florida. (Text and picture from [www.um.edu/linguistics/creek/](http://www.um.edu/linguistics/creek/).)*

he "should really think about the military or vo-tech" because he wasn't "college material," Larney took G. Lynn Nelson's ENG 102 English First-Year Writing course and decided to major in English. When he began taking classes offered by the English Department's faculty in linguistics, his thoughts and heart returned to the language of his grandfather. He wrote papers on Mvskoke literature, weaving his own experiences into his library research. He also petitioned to fulfill a requirement for language study by working independently on re-acquiring Mvskoke and by using written materials developed by linguists and Creek teachers. Associate Professor Dawn Bates has supervised Larney's work. For his study, Larney also used rare materials in Creek located in the Labriola National American Indian Data Center of the Hayden Library. Every week, after the two met to discuss Larney's work, Bates was amazed at the amount of language facility Larney regained from his early exposure to the language and how he built on the foundation that his grandfather had provided.

Mvskoke, like all other Native American languages, has become an endangered language due to the increased use of English. As Jim Larney graduates with his English degree, his studies have also helped to preserve another ancient and beautiful language and literature. Larney reports that he is pleased to share both his languages with his own children. His career plans after graduation? "I would like to eventually work in a high school system as a teacher or counselor and preferably with Native American students. I enjoy working with students and that is where I find my peace and satisfaction in life—by helping others." Larney also says, with great satisfaction, "I can now say that I am college material."

—Author Anonymous

## New Faculty & Staff



It takes two to speak the truth,—one to speak, and another to hear.  
—Henry David Thoreau, *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*

### Novelist Anjana Appachana: Creative Writing Visiting Professor



Anjana Appachana

“I write because I have to,” affirms Anjana Appachana, a Visiting Writer at ASU teaching two advanced fiction workshops, and author of the collection *Incantations and Other Stories* (1995) and the novel *Listening Now* (1998). Appachana says that writing is “the only time I feel completely independent. Writing frees me as nothing else can—to be who I am.” Who Anjana is includes mother, caregiver, practitioner of Jin Shin Jyutsu (an energy healing art), and once assistant Northern Region organizer of the World Wildlife Fund–India. Born in India, Appachana took a BA in

English from Delhi University and an MA in Sociology from Jawaharlal Nehru University. In 1984, she came to the United States to attend Pennsylvania State University, where she earned an MFA in Creative Writing. Appachana first came to ASU seven years ago as a Visiting Professor and currently divides her time between Arizona and India, where family and cultural ties remain strong. Her awards include a National Endowment for the Arts Creative Writing Fellowship and an O. Henry Festival Prize. She is in the process of completing a novel and a novella.

—Cornelia Wells

### Three Cheers for Erika Watt, English Education

My name is Erika Watt and I am the Office Assistant/Receptionist, Sr. in the English Education office. I hail from Boston, Massachusetts, where I was born and raised. I hold a Bachelor’s degree in Recreation Management and Policy from the University of New Hampshire, Durham, and am currently pursuing a Master’s of Science in Recreation Management and Tourism Studies here at ASU.

I am researching variables influencing fan behavioral intentions and game attendance at collegiate sporting events and the physical environment (e.g., servicescape), such as sporting venues. My thesis topic is “A Study of Factors that Influence



Erika Watt

Fan Behavior for Arizona State University Football.”

I have always had a love for the sports industry, and have attended the Summer Olympic Games in Atlanta, Stanley Cup Hockey Finals in Montreal, and World Cup for soccer. I enjoy watching sports, especially track and field and the Boston Red Sox. My hobbies include yoga, going to concerts, and exploring and traveling to new destinations. My hero is my older sister Karyn, a marathon runner and a dedicated athlete.

My favorite quote is “Live Well, Laugh Lots, Keep It All in Perspective.” One of my favorite websites is [www.boston.com](http://www.boston.com); it has all the happenings in and around the city of Boston—everything from sports to health and fitness news. Another favorite, [www.howstuffworks.com](http://www.howstuffworks.com), offers information on science, electronics, health, and computer stuff. It will certainly satisfy your thirst for knowledge!

—Erika Watt

### The Idea of Work: Examining Business, Ethics, and Work through Literature

What does the movie *Office Space* have in common with “Bartleby the Scrivener”? Just ask department alumna Maire Simington (MA 1976, PhD 2003), who will teach “Business in Literature” as a Community Faculty Associate next year. Simington, whose dissertation discusses literature and advertising post-WWII, believes that Melville’s short story, which portrays how one feels at a dead end job, inspired the creators of *Office Space*.

Her students will discuss how the meaning of work is portrayed in literature and will question how literature reflects business, how writers portray work, and whether lessons from previous generations are still relevant.

“I think many writers have pondered this topic,” says Simington. “Sinclair gave us insight into factories and working conditions; Steinbeck wrote about migrant workers; Conrad provided us with the notion of responsibility at work (“The Secret Sharer”). And don’t forget *Death of a Salesman*, the story of someone stuck in a rut while the world passes him by.”

The world is definitely not passing Maire Simington by. As

Director of Care Management Services at Banner Health, she is responsible for clinical improvements, physician leadership development, and continuing education. She serves on the boards of Ballet Arizona and Arizona Humanities Council, and was recently appointed chair of AHC’s marketing committee. With Dan Shilling, she co-chairs the Department of English Advancement Board, which is promoting the department in the community.

“I have a very fond place in my heart for the English Department,” says Simington. “The professors I had were stellar and I am thrilled to be reconnecting with the department.”



Maire Simington

—Sheila Luna



## In Memoriam: George Herman

We need greater virtues to sustain good...

—François, duc de La Rochefoucauld, *Maxims*

ASU English Professor Emeritus George Richard Herman of Tempe was the beloved husband of Betty and loving father of Martha (Herman) Miller, Mark Herman, Vincent Herman, Matthew Herman, and Katherine (Herman) Callaway. Herman passed away on December 19, 2007, after 81 wonderful years. During World War II, he served in the 101st Airborne Division. He graduated from the University of Kansas and returned to military service in the Air Force during the Korean War.



George Herman

In 1958, Herman moved his family to Tempe to begin a 30-year career as an English professor for ASU. During his

tenure at ASU, he taught classes, developed lasting relationships with many students and faculty members, and co-wrote a series of composition textbooks for junior and senior high school students. After retirement, he continued in his craft: writing poetry, short stories and novels.

Throughout his life, Herman was generous with his time and resources, helping friends and extended family, giving to charities, and supporting humanitarian causes. He loved to spend time with his family, including his seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. His kindness, as he cared for each student and listened to each colleague, was legendary. His many friends in English will miss him—we will think about him often!

—Karla Elling

## Word Lover's Corner:

### 'Sustainability' and Related Words

In wildness is the preservation of the world.

—Henry David Thoreau, *Walking*

In keeping with the theme of this newsletter, we set out to see what we could learn about the newly popular term, *sustainability*, and such related words as *ecology* and *recycle*. We discovered that *sustainability* is a cover term that hints at mutual benefits to be derived from cooperation among people working with environmental, societal, and economic interests. It is a broader and more inclusive word than *recycle*, which at Starbucks we discovered is already on its way out of fashion. The same people who brought us *tall* to mean “small,” *grande* to mean “medium,” and *venti* to mean “large,” no longer describe their *green* stores as using paper cups made from recycled materials. Instead they are made from “First-ever 10% *post-consumer* fiber,” while the insulating sleeves are made from “60% *post-consumer* fiber.”

These examples illustrate how speakers constantly search for new terms and new words that will better express their particular take on both abstract concepts and concrete items. While words describe and communicate the concept of *sustainability*, they are also a demonstration of “sustainability” in that speakers have to come to agreement on what they mean, and as ideas and values change, so do the meanings of words.

The word *sustain* goes back to Latin, with the first part coming from *sus* meaning “up,” as in *suspend* (to “hang up”), and the last part from *tenēre* (to “hold” or “pull”), as in such words as *tenable*, *tenacious*, *tensile*, *tentative*, and *tenuous*. These small parts of words are called *morphemes*. While they carry their basic meanings into new words, they also *morph* (undergo change) depending on their contexts.

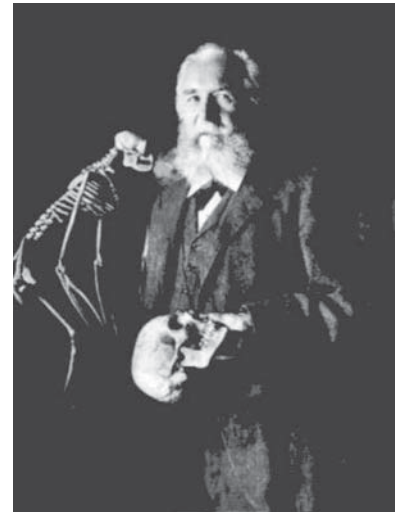
*Eco* is a good example. It comes from Greek *oiko* and *oikos* meaning “house” or “habitat,” which evolved in Late Latin into *oeko* meaning “household,” and with its English spelling of *eco* into the word *ecology* to refer to the

scientific study of interrelationships between organisms and their environments, and into *economics* to refer to the careful management of one’s home. The term *home economics* (now labeled “archaic”) is actually a tautology—one of those terms that repeats itself because speakers do not recognize the “foreign meaning” of one or more of the words, as when we talk about “chile con carne with meat” and “the Rio Salado River.”

*Economics* now has the broader meaning of “the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services.”

How far the term has morphed is illustrated by the fact that many people think of *economic* considerations as being in competition with *ecological* considerations. Nevertheless, Microsoft has developed an ECO software, some universities are offering ECO degrees or at least *eco-studies*, eBay has a section devoted to “Eco for less,” and Leonardo DiCaprio has established his own *Eco-site* web page. But in spite of the work of the International Ecotourism Society, Carl Hiassen’s 2006 *Nature Girl* is enough to give tourists pause before they sign up for any kind of an *eco-tour*, while the term *eco-feminist* puts a new slant on the old idea of “Mother Nature.”

—Alleen Nilsen and Don Nilsen



Ernst Haeckel, a German biologist, coined the term *oekologie* in 1866.

## Well(s) Said: A Column



Every poet has trembled on the verge of science.

—Henry David Thoreau, journal entry, 18 July 1852

## Keeping an Eye out for Nature: An Eleventh Hour Watch

Which American poet wrote...

- (1) "At the end of its procession through the stone / Falling / The water remembers to laugh."
- (2) "The way a crow / Shook down on me / The dust of snow / From a hemlock tree // Has given my heart / A change of mood / And saved some part / Of a day I had rued."
- (3) "I've known rivers ancient as the world and older than the flow of human blood in human veins... // ...Ancient, dusky rivers. // My soul has grown deep like rivers."
- (4) "I will be the gladdest thing / Under the sun! / I will touch a hundred flowers / And not pick one."
- (5) "The bud / stands for all things, / even for those things that don't flower, / for everything flowers, from within, of self-blessing...."
- (6) "Some keep the Sabbath going to church; / I keep it staying home, / With a bobolink for a chorister, / And an orchard for a dome."
- (7) "O sweet spontaneous / earth how often have / the / doting // fingers of / prurient philosophers pinched / and / poked // thee... // thou answerest // them only with // spring...."
- (8) "There was a child went forth every day, / And the first object he look'd upon, that object he became, / And that object became part of him... // The early lilacs became part of this child, / And grass and white and red morning-glories... and the song of the phoebe-bird, / And the Third-month lambs... / And the fish suspending themselves so curiously...."
- (9) "A man faced with his own immensity / Wakes all the waves, all their loose wandering fire."
- (10) "Pile the bodies high at Austerlitz and Waterloo. / Shovel them under and let me work— / I am the grass; I cover all."
- (11) "Did you too see [the swan], drifting, all night, on the black river? / Did you see it in the morning, rising into the silvery air— / An armful of white blossoms... / A white cross Streaming across the sky, its feet / Like black leaves, its wings Like the stretching light of the river? / And did you feel it, in your heart, how it pertained to everything?"



*Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, Concord, MA, has the graves of many of America's early naturalist writers, including Henry David Thoreau (above).*

Photo by Rachel Osen

—Cornelia Wells

Answers: (1) W. S. Merwin, "A Scale in May" (2) Robert Frost, "Dust of Snow" (3) Langston Hughes, "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" (4) Edna St. Vincent Millay, "Afternoon on a Hill" (5) Galway Kinnell, "St. Francis and the Sow" (6) Emily Dickinson, "LVI" (7) e. e. Cummings, "O sweet spontaneous" (8) Walt Whitman, "There Was a Child Went Forth" (9) Theodore Roethke, "The Far Field" (10) Carl Sandburg, "Grass" (11) Mary Oliver, "The Swan."

## Student Accolades

This Spring, many of our graduate students, across all programs, have received recognition for their scholarship, service work, and quality of research. Paul Walker and Chen Chen Sun, both PhD students in Rhetoric, Composition, and Linguistics, were awarded the Division of Graduate Studies Completion Fellowship—a competitive award intended to move graduate students towards degree completion. Doctoral candidate in Literature Ellen Johnson published an essay in *Women and Material Culture* titled, “The Taste for Bringing the Outside In’: Nationalism, Gender, and Landscape Wallpaper (1700-1825).”

Three of our graduate students have also been awarded

the Graduate and Professional Student Association Teaching Excellence Award. This student-nominated, peer-reviewed, interdisciplinary award goes to graduate students who show particular excellence in teaching. The winners this year were Sherry Robertson, Cambria Stamper-Santana, and Barbara Kirchmeier.

The February 2007 Southwest Graduate English Symposium, sponsored by the Graduate Scholars of English Association (GSEA), brought graduate student presenters from across the country. It was a wonderful opportunity for ASU students to meet and network with other students interested in pursuing similar topics of study. —Kirsti Cole

Undergraduates in the English Club enjoyed a relaxing spring semester until Shakespeare’s Birthday and the Beowulf Symposium loomed on the horizon—then we rolled up our sleeves and dug into these spring projects! In addition to ongoing social ventures, the English Club is organizing a series of workshops aimed at helping undergraduates prepare for graduate school. We are also looking for creative ways to promote the English Department’s “English: Define Yourself” campaign.

*Marooned*, the English Undergraduate Creative Review, has begun accepting submissions.

Undergrads, are you sitting on a short story, poem, or artistic masterpiece? Then share your creative work with *Marooned*! Students can submit to [asumarooned@gmail.com](mailto:asumarooned@gmail.com) or to the *Marooned* mailbox in the English office. Our new website, [www.asu.edu/marooned](http://www.asu.edu/marooned) will soon feature selected submissions awaiting publication.

The English Club is on Blackboard, so any student interested in joining or curious about the club can check out the site. Enrollment is open to all!

—Ryan Lepic



*Chaucer students celebrate their quiz victory over Shakespeare students during English Club Festivities at Shakespeare’s Birthday Bash, April 23.*

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NEWSLETTER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AT ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

## Coming Events . . .

- |   |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| <b>Department of English Graduation Reception &amp; Awards Ceremony</b><br>T. R. Hummer, Featured Reader<br>Memorial Union Alumni Lounge (202), 3:30 p.m. | <b>May 9, 2007</b>         |
| <b>Young Adult Writing Project (YAWP)</b><br>G. Lynn Nelson, Director<br>LL Building, M-Th, 9:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.  | <b>June 4-21, 2007</b>     |
| <b>Ian Fletcher Memorial Lecture</b><br>Catherine Gallagher<br>University Club, 6:00-8:00 p.m.  | <b>September 27, 2007</b>  |
| <b>Sustainability</b><br>Western States Rhetoric & Literacy Conference<br>ASU Tempe campus, times TBA   | <b>October 25-27, 2007</b> |
| <b>Come Home to English</b><br>ASU Homecoming 2007<br>ASU Tempe campus, times TBA   | <b>October 26-27, 2007</b> |

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