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Alumni News

Linda Martin—"I graduated from UM in 1967 with a degree in English, Broadfields. Although I taught for three years at Wenatchee High School in Washington, I found my delight as a journalist and ski travel writer for Ski Racing in Denver and then Skiing magazine in New York City. I think a person can do anything with an English major.

In 2011 I received my MFA in creative writing from Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma. The University of Alaska Press will publish my book of poetry, "I Follow in the Dust She Raises", as part of their spring literary series in 2015. The book is a series of linked poems, beginning with a section of Montana farm memories."

Laurie Blauner—"My forthcoming book of poetry (Fall 2014) is titled “It Looks Worse than I Am” from What Books Press in L.A. My book was chosen in their first Open Submissions for the press. This will be my seventh book of poetry."

Thank you,
Laurie Blauner

Christa Marie—“One week after my 2013 graduation, I moved to New York City to study Publishing and Digital Media at New York University. I am now a Foreign Rights Associate at Jabberwocky Literary Agency. In what little spare time I have, I am hard at work on my Young Adult novel, which I hope to finish by the end of the year.

Thank you for keeping all of us alums updated with what's happening in the department! I've only been gone a year, and I already miss it!"

Best,
Christa Marie
Joshua Corey is an associate professor of English at Lake Forest College in Chicago. He has two brand-new books coming out this year: Spuyten Duyvil Press published his first novel, *Beautiful Soul: An American Elegy*, and in October, Omnidawn Publishing will print his fourth poetry collection, *The Barons*.

“I just wanted to share my good news and see how you and the gang were faring. Please give my best to Bob and Casey and the MFA gang if you get a chance.”

All best,
Josh

Larry Rooney—“I received this newsletter while traveling and will look at it more closely when we return. Those were four great years with H.G. Merriam, Leslie Fiedler, John Moore, and fellow English majors.”

Larry Rooney, BA 1948, MA 1950


Department Chair
Beverly Chin

Earlly fall the English Department elected Beverly Ann Chin as its new chair. Professor Chin has been a faculty member since 1981 and has served the department in many ways. She has directed the Montana Writing Project (1981-1994) and the Composition Program (1989-1993). Since 1998, she has directed the English Teaching Program. An enthusiastic, articulate advocate for students, faculty and staff, Chin is committed to increasing the reputation, visibility, and vision of the English Department within and beyond the university.
A key factor is apparently the ability to enter into a simulated world in a comprehensive way, to be “sucked into” a narrative, one of the fundamental pleasures of reading that so often draw us to the study of literature. And of course, many readers take a keen pleasure from engaging with the characters, who simulate—in admittedly dynamic, exaggerated, and intentionally distorted form, from time to time—the human beings about whom our brains are primed to be curious. The study found that nonfiction reading, generally lacking such a “peopled” environment, does not allow us to cultivate those social simulation skills to the same extent. (See, among many other papers, "Bookworms vs. Nerds," 2006: http://www.yorku.ca/mar/papers.html).

While humanists typically respond to such studies with something like self-congratulation or utter mystification as to why one would need to study something so obvious, I’d argue we increasingly need a new vocabulary to describe the importance of reading literature. For example, to see the study as obvious might suggest we do not recognize how rare such sustained, absorptive attention is in our present cultural climate, which rather encourages rapid-fire response that tends to fall back on existing beliefs and values. Despite the theoretical access to a world-wide community dizzying in its diversity, we tend to fall back on the “like-minded” folks with whom we already share a system of values. Empathy—the real, hard, and life-changing kind that challenges what we know about ourselves—requires a certain courage, and literature has historically been a powerful tool in cultivating that courage.

In literature we find a means to “simulate,” as our cognitive scientists tell us, the forms of life and the forms of feeling of people we have never met, and can never meet. Through that encounter, clothed in language that dazzles our mind and tickles our brain’s creative chemistry, we grow a whole new set of cognitive muscles, become more capable, more capacious, and yes, more empathetic with our fellow human, and non-human, beings. In a world of hurry and haste, rush and rash action, the slow, patient attention required to read and think with a great author offers us more than a respite, but a survival skill that sharpens our minds to be our best social selves.
In a culture in which we have been seduced into adopting a pernicious notion of life as a good to be consumed, literature offers the goods in a much fuller sense: an inexhaustible supply of rich questions to be pursued, rich experiences to be drawn upon, that do not merely affirm what we already know, but tell us something new about the world in which we live.

We don’t need science to tell us why we love literature; but we can use this science as a way of re-thinking what that love might mean, and how that love might grow. Our students, our alumni/ae, and our faculty are engaged in an ongoing social experiment, one that is at least 3,500 years old, of shaping imaginative worlds out of words. To keep that experiment vital, we’ve got to keep reading, and telling our story about the power of the written word to the wide, wide world.

If you want to share your own story about the way reading and writing literature has helped to shape your life, post a comment on our English Blog. We’d love to hear from you!

Yours from the margin of the book—
Ashby Kinch
Associate Chair | Director of Graduate Studies
Joanna Klink was part of the Provost's Distinguished Faculty Lecture Series. Joanna talked about the essential strangeness of poetry - its power to move you even when it doesn't make sense. She also read from Excerpts From A Secret Prophecy, (April 2015).

Joanna Klink is the author of three books of poetry, They Are Sleeping, Circadian, and Raptus. Her new book, Excerpts From A Secret Prophecy is forthcoming from Penguin (April 2015). Her poems have appeared in many anthologies, most recently The Penguin Anthology of Twentieth Century Poetry. She has received awards and fellowships from The Rona Jaffe Foundation, Jeannette Haien Ballard, Civitella Ranieri, and The American Academy of Arts and Letters. From 2008-2011 Klink was the Briggs-Copeland Poet at Harvard University. She teaches in the Creative Writing Program at University of Montana.

Faculty Advisor Robert Stubblefield and Graduate Assistant Caitlin Stainken have launched an alumni spotlight feature for The Oval blog. Keep up with Oval events and get updated on the activities of Oval alumni here: http://umoval.wordpress.com/.

Join us for an MFA Thesis reading with fiction writer Caitlin Stainken on Friday, December 5, Jeanette Rankin Hall, room 205, 7 p.m.
Adjunct Assistant Professors, Natalie Peeterse and Henrietta Goodman co-founded a new Missoula reading series called Open Country Reading Series.

The Open Country Reading Series brings emerging and established writers from across the Northwest together with local musicians and artists to read, perform, and talk about their work. Based in Missoula, Montana’s historic Crystal Theater, our bi-monthly events are free and open to the public.

The first reading will take place on Thursday, December 4th and will feature three writers from Spokane --Sharma Shields, Ellen Welcker, and Ryan Scariano--as well as the music of Sierra Kamplain. (Sharma has an MFA in fiction from UM.) Open Country is on Facebook..."Like" them to receive announcements of their February and April readings.

CutBank Literary Magazine will publish Issue 82 in December. Also, CutBank will release three chapbooks at AWP this year from the winner and two runners up of the 2014 CutBank Chapbook Contest.

This summer, CutBank started a new online summer project called “All Accounts and Mixture: A Celebration of LGBTQ Writers and Artists” and received almost 200 submissions.
This semester Walter Kirn teaches fiction and Amanda Fortini teaches magazine writing as our Kittredge Visiting Writers.

Jennifer Moxley is the author of five books of poetry, most recently Clampdown (Flood 2009) and The Middle Room (Subpress 2008), a book of essays, and a memoir.

Bernard Cooper has written two memoirs, Maps to Anywhere and Truth Serum, as well as a novel, Year of Rhymes, and a collection of short stories, Guess Again.

Antonya Nelson is the author of eleven books of fiction, most recently the story collection Funny Once (2014) and the novel Bound (2011).

Thomas Sayers Ellis is our Visiting Hugo Fellow for Spring 2015. He is the author of two poetry collections, Skin, Inc. and The Maverick Room, which won the John C. Zacharis First Book Award.
Caitlin MacDougall
(second year MFA) has an internship with Elle Magazine in January.

Congratulations to Micah Fields (UM, BA, CW, Senior) for the publication of his personal essay Zeh Mutaasif Yum.


Julia Ohman's (second year MFA) essay "Model Girl" was recently published in Willow Springs 74 (an interview and the online version is here: http://willowsprings.ewu.edu/authors/ohman.php), and her essay "The Big One" will be published in Camas this winter.

Brendan Fitzgerald's (second year MFA) essay, "The Combination Lock Test" was published in The Morning News, on Oct. 9, 2014.

Jolene Brink's (first year MFA) chapbook, Peregrine, will be published by Red Bird in 2015. Two of her poems, "Peregrines" and "The Break Up" appeared in the spring issue of Kudzu Review.

Caylin Capra-Thomas' (second year MFA) poems, "Poem with Susan Sarandon" and "Poem with Geena Davis," have been accepted for publication in the next issue of Bat City Review.

Allison Linville (second year MFA), in October, has four poems published with Cascadia Review. She and JP Kemmick (third year MFA) read at the Wilderness and the Human Imagination event in the Theta Rho Room of the Mansfield Library. Allison also has a poem titled "Now, Hunger" forthcoming in the Bellingham Review this winter, and five poems forthcoming in The Lonely Whale Anthology, which will be published by Chatsworth Press in February 2015.

Jeff Gailus (second year MFA) is a contributor to a new anthology called Global Chorus about the environmental future of the planet.

Sarah Kahn (second year MFA) has a story published in the Cobalt Review.

Tarren Andrews (second year MA LIT) presented a paper at Tuft's Eco-Imaginaries Conference in October, 2014.

Rachel Mindell's (third year MFA and MA) poetry chapbook, Teardrop and a Bullet, has been selected for publication with Dancing Girl Press. She is also one of seven finalists who were chosen by Rebecca Morgan Frank for the Writer's Block/Memorious poetry contest.

Eve Kenneally (first year MFA) had this article published back in July on xoJane: http://www.xojane.com/issues/the-10-weirdest-things-people-said-to-me-when-they-found-out-i-was-bisexual "The 10 Weirdest Things People Have Said To Me After Finding Out I'm Bisexual".


Sarah Lane (second year MA LIT) presented "Reanimate Earth" in a session at South Atlantic MLA Annual Conference on "Sustainability and the Humanities", Atlanta 2014.

Adam Andis (first year EVST TA) was selected and recently spoke at the National 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act Conference in Albuquerque, NM. He was selected to give two presentations and invited to speak as part of a panel. One of the presentations had a literary focus.
Associate Professor Louise Economides received a book contract recently from Palgrave-MacMillan for an upcoming monograph titled *The Ecology of Wonder in Romantic and Postmodern Literature*. The final manuscript is due to the publisher on Jan 30, 2015. The book will be out either late in 2015 or early in 2016. The book will be part of a series titled "Literatures, Cultures, and the Environment" edited by Ursula K. Heise. Economides is still writing the manuscript and aims to finish it by the summer.


Brady Harrison & Lisa Simon - *These Living Songs: Reading Montana Poetry*, co-edited by Lisa Simon and Brady Harrison has been published by the University of Montana Press, 2014.

Professor Greg Pape served as judge for California’s Ina Coolbrith Poetry Awards. He has new poems in *The Louisville Review, The Sugar House Review*, and the next two issues of *Miramar*. *Miramar* will publish his long poem, “Road Trip with Lulu.”


Professor Kevin Canty published "Story, With Bird" in The New Yorker, October 6, 2014.

Professor Beverly Ann Chin was the keynote speaker at the Institute on Critical Issues: Assessment for School Leaders and Teachers, in Chicago. Her address focused on “Professional Development that Improves Instruction and Assessment.” Chin traveled to Taipei, Taiwan, to be the keynote speaker and featured workshop presenter at the English Teachers’ Association—International Symposium and Book Fair on English Teaching.

Professor Heather Bruce presented two papers at the 2014 Race and Pedagogy Conference, at The University of Puget Sound, in September - “Between principles and practice: Tensions in anti-racist education” and “Subversive Acts of Revision: Writing and Justice”.

Assistant Professor Chris Dombrowski’s most recent book of poems, *Earth Again*, was recently named runner-up for *ForeWord* Magazine's 2013 Poetry Book of the Year.

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Lecturer and Faculty Advisor

Adjunct Ryan Bell’s (MFA 2014) story "Mountain Passage" won a Silver Medal in the category of U.S./Canada Travel at the 2014 Lowell Thomas Travel Journalism Awards. And his story "Sitting Bull's Lost Horses?" was awarded Best Feature at the 2014 American Horse Publication Awards.

Professor Debra Earling’s novel, Perma Red, is being made into a movie. The Screenplay was written by Ken White. You can check out the films progress on Facebook, or at permaredfilm.com.


Professor John Hunt’s The Joyce Project displays a critically edited text of all 18 chapters of James Joyce’s great novel Ulysses. Variable pagination has been installed in 13 chapters. Joyce lovers, Joyce newcomers, and frustrated Joyce readers are encouraged to try the site and provide feedback! Come visit at www.joyceproject.com.


Professor Emeritus Phil Fandozzi gave two lectures: “Mountaintop Confluences: Brokeback Mountain and the American West” given at the Literature/Film Association’s conference, “Grand Illusion: Too Real for the Nazis” at the Mansfield Library Exhibition / Lecture Series (“Fighting the Fires of Hate: America and the Nazi Book Burnings”) at UM, on December 11th, 2014.
Production Jobs

Film Studies (in conjunction with its sister options LIT, CW and ENT) has proven effective in preparing its graduates to compete nicely in a very competitive media-related job market.

John Cleary, a 2014 graduate in Film Studies and Creative Writing, landed an excellent video editing position in Idaho just weeks after leaving Missoula.

Sage Knox, a Film Studies minor who took a Film Studies internship last spring that involved producing promotions for CHS, also found a job with a young, hip advertising agency in Seattle after a surprisingly short job hunt in the city.

The Audience Awards, which sponsors awards for timed (or rushed) documentary production shorts, recently hired Marshall Granger, a senior in Film Studies, to shoot “the making of” portion of the short-term documentary production process.

Thanks to the joint and considerable effort on the part of numerous faculty in the various options, the English Department is now graduating Liberal Arts-trained students who are readily making their way into media-related professions.

UM’s STEM YouTube Channel

Montana Hodges, an Interdisciplinary PhD student pursuing a Film Studies/Science Education curriculum, will soon begin producing a weekly STEM YouTube channel dedicated to promoting both education and careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math. The channel, the creation of which currently fulfills certain requirements in her PhD program, will predominately feature UM scientists and their various research projects. Montana hopes that once she graduates, the STEM YouTube channel will continue in the hands of other competent Film Studies students hoping to obtain valuable hands-on production experience.

Robert Rustad’s Book

Since graduating last May, Film Studies’ Robert Rustad has managed to publish his first book, True Love’s Kiss: Disney Romance From Snow White to Frozen, a psychoanalytic romp through love Disney style, which will be published by New Element Publishing in late January or early February. Congrats to Robert!
Upcoming Events

The Open Country Reading Series—
First reading will take place on Thursday, December 4th and will feature three writers from Spokane--Sharma Shields, Ellen Welcker, and Ryan Scariano--as well as the music of Sierra Kamplain.

We Did It Ourselves Documentary Film Festival -
Be sure to catch our annual documentary film festival on Sunday, December 7 at 7:00 at the Crystal Theater, located in the rear of the Silk Road Restaurant. The films shown will be those produced in Sean O’Brien’s fall semester Film Studies Documentary Production class, and will include some “feel-good” shorts on snakes, bartending, Missoula Roller Derby girls, and one particularly talented Dionysian reveler who plays a mean guitar. Other documentaries to be shown include a short exploring the trials and triumphs of one of UM’s blind students, and another documenting a student’s journey to Tacoma in search of his homeless father.

Thomas Sayers Ellis—
Poetry Reading, Friday, February 20, 7 pm, Dell Brown Room of Turner Hall, UM campus. Sponsored by the Hugo Visiting Writer Fellowship.

Merriam-Frontier Award Reading—
Friday, February 27, 4:10 - 5 pm, Theta Rho Room, Mansfield Library, UM campus. Sponsored by the Creative Writing Program and the Mansfield Library.

Antonya Nelson—
Fiction Craft Lecture, Friday, March 20, 12:10 - 1 pm, location TBA, UM campus. Fiction Reading, Friday, March 20, 7 pm, Dell Brown Room of Turner Hall, UM campus. Sponsored by the President's Writers-in-Residence Series.
Maria Mangold has been elected as vice-chair of the Montana University Staff Senate Association (MUSSA) for the 2014-15 academic year. MUSSA leadership meets with the Board of Regents a few times per year.

Congratulations Maria!

Brianna Denman is a student returning after taking several years off to explore just what exactly she wanted to be when she “grew up.” Finally deciding that they only thing she knew for sure was that she wanted a degree, she came back to the University to pursue her passion for literature and creative writing.

Stop by and say “Hi” at the English department front desk!

Joel Kempff is heading off to Cork with the Study Abroad program during spring semester 2015. While away he will blog about his experiences for the U of M English department and Irish Studies.

Bon Voyage Joel!

Cheyenne Goetz is a freshman here at UM pursuing a double major of English and Computer Science. She grew up in Meridian, ID and has always loved to write, but only recently discovered a fascination for Computer Science. When she has extra time, Cheyenne enjoys photography and camping in the Pacific Northwest.
My great hope is to laugh as much as I cry; to get my work done and try to love somebody and have the courage to accept the love in return.

-Maya Angelou

April 4, 1928—May 28, 2014

Happy Holidays to you and yours.

The English Department
Contact Us & Contribute

Contributions from English alumni and friends fund a variety of department initiatives, programs and student scholarships. If you would like to support the English Department, please send check or money order to The University of Montana Foundation, P.O. Box 7159, Missoula, MT 59807-7159, with a note in the memo line designating it for the English Department.

Contributions are also accepted online at:
http://www.cas.umt.edu/english/donate.php

For more information about making a gift (with no obligation to do so), please contact Marci Bozeman of the UM Foundation.

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University of Montana English Department

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