

# IN ENGLISH

Occasional Newsletter of the Whittier College Department of English Language and Literature

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Charles S. Adams, Editor

## Our Seniors!

Rumor has it that the folks below will actually graduate with completed English majors this year (or will come close enough that we threw you in anyway). Indeed, some actually did graduate mid-year already. Believe it or not, we are not always totally sure that this list includes all who should be included. Our apologies and we celebrate you as well. We extend our congratulations at the accomplishment or at least the prospect. We will miss you!

**Daniel Armas**

**Jessica Cortez**

**Andrew Guss**

**Peter Johnson**

**Lani Shui-Lan Louie**

**Chelsea Runco**

**Mark Bade**

**Justin D'Angona**

**Jason Jenkins**

**David Laine**

**Amy McDaniel**

**Shannon Siracuse**

**Lillian Borgeson**

**Miguel Felix**

**Barbara Johnson**

**Jennifer Lang**

**Danielle Orner**

**Aisha Takashima**

## Department/Faculty News

**dAvid pAddy** was selected the "California Professor of the Year" by the Carnegie Foundation. Folks, there is only one of these, and our colleague is the guy this year. And this is not Wyoming. It does not get a lot bigger than this. Dave will continue to accept congratualtions for a while.

**Tony Barnstone** continues to reap substantive awards for his writing. Most recently he has collected both the Benjamin Saltman Poetry Award and a Pushcart Prize. He has been awarded a prestigious National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship foir the next year to work on poetry. In 2007 he will publish two new books, *The Golem of Los Angeles* (Red Hen Press) and *Chinese Erotic Poems* (Everyman, 2007). He will join dAve in accepting congratulations!

Next year will be an exciting and complicated one for the English Department in that we have a number of changes:

**Sean Morris** will be on sabbatical leave in January and Spring semester, but will at the same time be living on campus in the Johnson House residence. (Still another person accepting congratulations!—see below!)

**Tony Barnstone** will be stepping down as Faculty Master in Garrett House and will be stepping onto a year-long sabbatical leave (see below).

**Anne Kiley** keeps retiring, but keeps teaching—so you will see her name on our schedule, as usual.

Perhaps the most significant development is that we have hired **Andrea Rehn** in a full time tenure-track position (more or less Anne Kiley's old position). This is pretty exciting for all of us. Andrea will suffer many introductions, but we will start by letting her speak for herself for once at least. She writes:

“Hi folks. I am excited to join Whittier's English Department in Fall 2007 as your new Victorianist and thought I'd tell you a bit about myself as we begin to plan for next year. I grew up in California and did my undergraduate work at UC Berkeley before coming to New York to complete my PhD at Cornell. My interests include British literature, postcolonial studies, women's writing, feminist criticism, and the literature of travel. When not reading, I love backpacking and salsa dancing, and later this spring I'll run my first 5K race.

“As I finish my dissertation, I am also anticipating the appearance of my first publication, a discussion of British imperialism in Southeast Asia via Joseph Conrad's novel *Lord Jim*. I am also revising an article on the photography of Isabella Bird, an intrepid Victorian travel writer who disdained hoop skirts but lugged a bulky camera across Asia. Next year I will teach courses including a freshman seminar on contemporary women's writing from a variety of American cultures, a section of “Why Read” focusing on the literature of travel, surveys of Victorian poetry and the nineteenth century novel, and a senior seminar on swashbuckling adventures. Please feel free to email me if you'd like more information on courses or just to say hello (the department has my contact information). See you in the fall!”

To pick up for **Tony Barnstone's** absence, **Sharon May** will be joining us. **Sharon** is an award-winning fiction writer who has edited an anthology of Cambodian literature that reflects back upon the Killing Fields of the Khmer Rouge regime, and she will be teaching poetry writing and fiction writing in the fall, and advanced fiction writing and an introduction to literature class in the spring.

Other Doings:

**Sean Morris** says, “**Wendy Elizabeth Luthien Morris**, born 12/29/06. 'Nuff said. Oh, yes, and Johnson House, here I come...”

**Tony Barnstone** will be living in Greece over the summer and into the fall, where he will be at work on a screenplay that he is co-writing with **Sean Morris**, and on a novel. After that, his plans are vague. He has applied for a literary residency in the Azores, and

will go on tour to promote his two new books, *Chinese Erotic Poems*, and *The Golem of Los Angeles*, in the spring of 2008. He has been reading a lot of translation theory and practice books, in order to develop a literary translation class to offer at Whittier when he comes back in fall of 2008.

**dAvid pAddy** says, “The biggest piece of news is that I will be presenting a paper, “Empires of the mind: Autobiography and anti-imperialism in the work of J. G. Ballard,” at the first International conference on J. G. Ballard, which is being held in Norwich, England this May. This is a big deal for me and I am absolutely ecstatic to be a participant. In addition I will be chairing a panel at the conference. I am also finishing up a short piece on contemporary Welsh writer Niall Griffiths for the *Literary Encyclopedia*.”

**William Geiger** was recently part of a panel at the National Social Science Association convention that discussed a recently NSSA published history of Western Civilization. Geiger's chapters dealt with 19th c. Imperialism, European thought at the end of the 19th and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and the rise of totalitarianism.

**Charles Adams'** presentation at the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium on Baseball and American Culture at the Baseball Hall of Fame was one of seven selected for publication in a volume commemorating the event. The revised essay is now entitled “Jackie Robinson, Curt Flood, Baseball, and the Slave Narrative Tradition.”

## **Sigma Tau Delta**

Congratulations to all of you who qualified this year to be members of the Whittier (Jessamyn West) chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, the national honorary society in English! Well done! (Note: you're not really a member until you get initiated. And the national folks say you are not really in until you have paid a membership, but you get listed here this time for free!)

**Mark Bade**  
**Tenzing Doleck**  
**Cory Howell**  
**Janina Maniaol**  
**Martina Miles**  
**Danielle Orner**  
**Diana Vu**

**Branden Boyer-White**  
**Miguel Felix**  
**Erica Lindquist**  
**Julia Martinez**  
**Donovan Moloney**  
**Andy Orwol**  
**Calli Welsch**

**Ross Castile**  
**Georgia Hirsty**  
**Jeremy Lum**  
**Amy McDaniel**  
**Gillian Nixon**  
**Arturo Rubio**

## **Alumni News**

We get notes. From *some* of you. We see people, when they remember to stop by. Sometimes we hunt them down, when we know where to look. And we have no shame

about printing anything we get or rumors we hear. We are told that this is a good way to get your name recorded for yet another Google hit. Whatever works.

From **Floyd Cheung** to Charles Adams:

“I have some news. Yesterday, I was informed that I earned tenure at Smith College. My education at Whittier, of course, was crucial in this success. For the past eight years I have tried to carry on the spirit of Whittier in my work at Smith. Specifically, I try to transmit the love of learning that many great professors at Whittier fostered in me. Now I get to continue doing so for as long as I like.

Warm regards, Floyd”

From **Carrie Higgins** to Charles Adams:

“I just wanted to keep you posted on how my life is going since leaving Whittier. I am currently teaching 7th and 8th grade Reading and Language Arts at Panorama Middle School in Colorado Springs. I never thought I would end up in a middle school classroom, because these kids are all crazy; but it isn't as bad as I thought it would be, and I actually enjoy it. The hardest part is planning 4 different lessons every day, but I'm learning the tricks of the trade to lessen my workload. I got this position strictly by accident as the former teacher of this classroom left the school when they told her they would not renew her position for next year. I have been subbing (is that spelled right?) at the school and at the high schools in the district and when the position became vacant, I was called to take over the classroom for the rest of the year. I love it; and it is great experience for my MAT program, which I start in June at Colorado College. Thank-you so much for your recommendation-whatever you said, it worked. They told me they would contact me within a month, and I heard back from them with my acceptance three days later. Though I miss my friends and family in California, I am very happy with my decision to move back to Colorado. I hope all is well with you. Keep in touch, and say "hello" to Wendy and Sean and everyone for me. Talk to you later.--Carrie Higgins

From **Lisa Nunn** to Wendy-Furman-Adams:

“Hello. How are you? I think the last time we exchanged emails was when I was hitting you up for a letter of recommendation for grad school. Sorry it's been so long. I hope I at least emailed you again to tell you that I got in! . . .

“I'm now in my fifth year at UCSD in the Sociology Dept, and can definitely see the light at the end of the tunnel. The program is 6 years, so I am getting close, but of course that 6 year time frame is more a recommendation than an average. Most of our grads finish somewhere around 8 years. I know, it sounds exhausting just thinking about it. What's a typical Literature program like? From what I know about Lit at UCSD, it is a pretty long haul as well. . . “

From **Josh Lowensohn**—excerpted from a long e-mail to dAve pAddy:

“I thought it would be worth an update, since my job now has moved me in a completely different direction from where I was just six months ago. I'm not writing to brag, rather just to explain how an English degree is still worth something these days, and how new media companies are offering some interesting opportunities to people in our field. Consider it a motivator to this year's graduates who 20%+ of I'm sure have no idea

what's happening after the three-month, post-college summer break. Here's my blurb:

"I took a big chance and quit my old job doing copy editing and proof reading for a small marketing company. I'm now a full-time blogger for CNET.com <<http://www.cnet.com/>> , working on their Web 2.0 blog Webware.com <<http://www.webware.com/>> . I write 3-4 news stories and reviews on a daily basis, and work in the heart of San Francisco's financial district under the former editor in chief of Red Herring <<http://www.redherring.com/ArticlesHome.aspx>> . I've gone from editing other people's work to creating my own, which I find incredibly rewarding.

"There's a huge shift underway in the media industry right now, and unfortunately it's taking away a lot of the opportunities us English majors once had in journalism. At the same time, the cause (the internet) is also creating a ton of new jobs, which makes things interesting. Blogging has become new form of journalism, and companies like CNET are putting resources into hiring bloggers for new projects that might have originally required that journalism degree Whittier couldn't provide (at least when I was there). What's likely a hobby for many students, could end up putting a roof over their head.

"So that's the news from me. Also something you might find interesting- out of curiosity I participated in a fan letter event for Chuck Palahniuk that I heard about on an NPR podcast. All you had to do was write the guy, and he'd write back and send you some free stuff--guaranteed. Sure enough just a few months after writing (and sending him copies of both of my senior papers), I got a surprise package in the mail from Chuck himself. . . I might also note this is the second time in my life I've written a large paper on an author and then been in personal contact with them soon after. I experienced the same thing in high school with Ursula K. Le Guin . . ."

From **James Ryan Young** to Charles Adams:

"I just wanted to say hello and tell you what I have been up to. I have been working full time at the airport since graduation and now I am getting ready for graduate school. This January I will be attending California State University of East Bay (formerly known as Cal State Hayward) to earn my M.A. in English. Thanks once again for helping me with your recommendation. I always appreciate all of your help and guidance. I am very excited and ready for new challenges though my biggest challenge will probably be trying to get the hang of the quarter system! I will also still be working full time. If I get the chance to come down to Whittier next "quarter" I will be sure to stop by and say hello."

A note to Anne Kiley from **Genevieve Roman** indicates that she has been accepted at at least five law schools. **Cathy Johnson** got accepted to the Masters Program in Literature at American University. She'll be starting this Fall. **Kaylee Carrington** has been working on various art projects on campus and elsewhere. All we know right now is the words "steel" and "big." Reports tell us **Sarah Razor** and **David Razor** are headed perhaps to Massachusetts and Brandeis University graduate school for David (rumors of a very large scholarship). We hear they plan to hike the John Muir Trail with Kaylee first! **Christina Gutierrez** tells us that she is finishing up her grad school work at Colorado, but I have no details I can actually remember. **Dawn Finley** is finishing up work at Claremont graduate school, but you can all ask her yourselves about that because she will

be very much on campus next year. **Katie Hunter**, still running the Whittier study abroad office, won the Whittier faculty/staff NCAA basketball prediction contest for the second year in a row. Her deal with the devil is clearly in effect for the long term—it is already oddly warm in her office. And that sulfur smell. . .

## **College Writing Program News**

From **Charlie Eastman**, Director of College Writing Programs, fellow-traveller, co-conspirator, etc. (is College Writing English?—who knows?):

The winners of the first-year writing contest for the best essay submitted in the College Writing Seminars are:

**Wren Saito**--first place

**Dorothy Tunnell**--second place

**Anthony Bursi**--third place

Congratulations! All the winners will be recognized more appropriately at the Honors Convocation.

**Claire Koehler** and **Daniel Holland** recently took their INTD 100 classes to the Ahmanson see the production of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* featuring Kathleen Turner.

Charlie writes, “Well, what I *haven't* been doing is winning the NCAA Tournament Bracket contest. But I console myself with the knowledge that the roster of instructors for next year's freshman writing offerings is finally filled with the addition to our adjunct corps of star alumna **Dawn Finley**, who will be teaching a seminar called “Reading LA” (linked to Endi's Art 210), and **Elizabeth Aamot**, who will be teaching a seminar called “Survival Narratives” (linked with Marie-Magdeleine Chirol's French 120).

“I am also happy to announce that our adjunct instructor **Daniel Holland** will have his piece on the cover-up of former NFL star Pat Tillman's “friendly-fire” death published in the Philadelphia *Enquirer* April 2<sup>nd</sup>.

“I attended the “4Cs” (Conference on College Composition and Communication) in New York at the end of March, where I think I had a revelation about assessing student outcomes for the program. I also had the greatest pastrami sandwich of my life, a revelation of another sort. **Lisa Bortman** and I have also just broken ground on an article on student evaluation surveys; more on that as it evolves.”

## **What Have We Been Reading Lately?**

**Andrea Rehn** reports, “I just finished *Dead Man Walking* by Sister Helen Prejean, a really inspirational polemic about the death penalty in the United States and the basis of the 1996 film of the same title. I am currently reading Eliot's *Romola*, a novel about feminine aspiration set in Renaissance Florence in the eventful year 1492. But the book

whose pages are most frequently turned is Nadine Gordimer's recent anthology of short stories *Telling Tales*."

**dave paddy** reports, "A dotty and spotty batch of reading this time around. Over Christmas I had a great time reading Martin Gardner's new annotated edition of Lewis Carroll's *The Hunting of the Snark*—much stranger than the Alice books. Over the semester I've been reading a few collections of Flann O'Brien's journalism, the weird satirical rants he wrote for the *Irish Times* during the 1950s and 1960s under the name Myles naGopaleen. Just finished John Betjeman's *Collected Poems*, largely because Philip Larkin always talked about him and he continues to be rated as Britain's most popular poet. In terms of Welsh stuff, I can recommend a great history, Geraint Jenkins's *A Concise History of Wales*. More fun, but probably less recommendable given the language issue, is Mihangel Morgan's short novel, *Modrybedd Afradlon*. Hands down, though, my favorite book I've read in some time has been Emyr Humphreys *A Man's Estate*, a recently reprinted Welsh novel from the 1950s. A beautiful and devastating book. Finally, in sporadic fits I find myself picking up Greil Marcus's latest, *The Shape of Things to Come, Prophecy and the American Voice*, a fascinating take on the outsider voice as the quintessential voice of America. I was most happy to read his chapter on David Thomas of the band Pere Ubu, who I've long regarded as one of the most important voices in American music."

**Charlie Eastman** says, "Since the flurry of frenetic reading while were selecting the freshman text for 2007 (from which Dave Eggers' *What is the What* and Karen Tei Yamashita's *Tropic of Orange* emerge with my strong recommendations) I was able to take my time with *Suite Francaise*, the first two books of a projected five novella series on French life under German occupation by Irene Nemirovsky (a project cut short when she was deported to Auschwitz); Amy Hempel's *Collected Stories*; Richard Dawkins' *The God Delusion*; Alistair Horne's *A Savage War of Peace* (This is the history of the French-Algerian conflict which Kissinger urged Bush II to read in reference to Iraq; there aren't many pictures, though, and what there are are grainy and old-timey); and David Mamet's *Bambi vs. Godzilla*, which is to do with another type of "savage war," the movie business. After I heard Frank Bidart won the Bollingen I returned to what I think is his best collection, *Desire*; and simply because it caught my eye from the "autographed copies" table in the Strand Bookshop ("18 Miles of Books!") I picked up *Mitz, Marmoset of Bloomsbury* by Sigrid Nunez, which despite the "Children's Literature" sounding title is actually a very poignant story of love and loss set in (of all places for this material) the various homes of Leonard and Virginia Woolf. *Cloud Atlas* was recommended as spring break reading, but my plan is to re-inhabit an old favorite, *Confederacy of Dunces*."

**Charles Adams** says, "The best book I have read in the past months is *The Worst Hard Time* by Timothy Egan. This is one terrific book about the heart of the dust bowl in the 20's and 30's. One of those works of history (here, intertwined narratives of people who lived through it) where you know what happened, but turn each page still wanting to know what could possibly happen next. Beyond that I have been reading for school. But I stongly recommend several films: *Amazing Grace*, *Children of Men*, *God Grew Tired of Us*, and *The Namesake*. I think everyone at Whittier College should see *Amazing*

*Grace*, the story of the end of the slave trade in England, essentially as a result of the efforts of one man in concert with the Quakers.

**William Geiger** recently read Peter Ackroyd's *Milton in America*, Geoffrey Smith's biography of the French jazz violinist Stephane Grappelli, and James Michener's *Iberia*.

**Wendy Furman-Adams** says, "I've read two great books of a literary nature: Alice Munro's *The View from Castle Rock* and Anne Patchett's *Bel Canto*."

**Sean Morris** reports, "In addition to course materials, I spent a lot of time with *Gilgamesh* last summer, and am pursuing research for projects with Tony Barnstone; I've also recently read two brilliant and important non-fiction works, James Surowiecki's *The Wisdom of Crowds*, and *The Progress Paradox (How Life Gets Better While People Feel Worse)* by Gregg Easterbrook (both very highly recommended for all!), as well as the highly ideological yet, when sticking to facts, useful *Lies My Teacher Told Me* by James Loewen; Iris Chang's *The Chinese in America*; Elcock's impressive *The Romance Languages*; the Harry Potter series, yet again, aloud over speakerphone to the family nightly; and, when I have time, Silver Age "Legion of Superheroes" stories in Adventure Comics (look for a "What Would Superboy Do?" sign soon).

## **Events, Writing Contests, Publication Opportunity**

Please be alert for early spring deadlines **next year** for submissions to our writing contests for fiction and poetry, and the English Department Scholarly Writing Prize. We have been able to give **cash prizes** in recent years, and have no plans to change, but the sheer glory of enetering is alone enough! Also, we note that the *Literary Review* will again be soliciting submissions for next year's issue as well. **All students at Whittier are eligible to have their work considered for all prizes and Review publication.** See any English department member for details and look at your mail in early spring. **Save Your Work!**

## **2007-2008 English Department Courses** (All still subject to some change)

Below is supplemental information from some of the faculty about the courses scheduled to be offered in the department in the next academic year. The details are, again, always subject to change (and we will have another newsletter in fall to elaborate a bit more on January and Spring courses), but we hope this will help. Please see or e-mail the instructors, the department office, or our exalted department chair, **dAve pAddy**, for answers to questions these descriptions might raise.

### **Fall**

### **ENGL 120, Why Read?, Section 1 (dAvid pAddy)**

Rooted in Mark Edmundson's book, *Why Read?*, this course is an introduction to the study of literature through some of the Big Questions we face as human beings, such as "Who am I?", "What is my place in the world?", and "What does it mean to be human?" Texts I am considering include Salman Rushdie's *Haroun*, Franz Kafka's *The Metamorphosis*, Yann Martel's *Life of Pi*, Angela Carter's *The Bloody Chamber*, Anthony Burgess's *A Clockwork Orange*, Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*, plays of Samuel Beckett and the poetry of R. S. Thomas.

### **ENGL 120, Why Read?, Section 2 (Andrea Rehn)**

Travel: the word conjures images of romance, adventure, exotic locations and "getting away from it all." Yet in seeking to describe the soul of another place, writing about travel often end up describing the self. These texts enable us to ask big questions, such as what does it mean to be civilized, or, for that matter, human? How do gender, sexuality, race, and nationality fashion our beliefs and conduct? How does the literary structure of a travel narrative shape our geographic imagination? We will read nonfiction travel narratives by such influential historical figures as Christopher Columbus and Charles Darwin, fiction including Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* and Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, and films such as *Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World* and *2001: A Space Odyssey*. The seminar will focus on the cultural impact of descriptions of travel in terms of empire, exploration, and self-definition. Assignments will include presenting historical research, writing a fictional travel narrative, and writing and revising critical essays.

### **ENGL 120, Why Read?, Section 3 (Dawn Finley)**

### **ENGL 202, Writing Short Fiction (Sharon May)**

### **ENGL 203, Writing Poetry (Sharon May)**

### **ENGL 220, Major British Writers to 1785 (Wendy Furman-Adams)**

The very ambitious purpose of this partially team-taught course (required for all English majors) is to introduce you to the major themes and writers in British literature from its beginnings, in the seventh century, until about 1785--in sequence and, insofar as time allows, in context. We'll begin with *Beowulf* and selections from *The Canterbury Tales*, the two most important (and utterly contrasting) works of the English Middle Ages, moving on to selected texts from the Renaissance, Restoration, and Eighteenth Century--ending with Samuel Johnson on the threshold of the Romantic Age. We will attempt to define some of the continuities and discontinuities in British literature, as well as to develop a clear sense of the movements and ideas that shaped its first 1000 years. In the second semester of the sequence--English 221--you will become acquainted with the second half of the story: British *and American* literature from about 1789 to the present. By the time you have completed the sequence, you will be ready for the study in depth provided by our 300-level courses, and should have some idea of the areas you will want to explore most fully. **All majors or prospective majors should take the sequence during their sophomore year.**

### **ENGL 305, Screenwriting (Sean Morris) English 305**

You know you've always wanted to write your own movie, and here's your chance! This course will give you the tools you need to write for the silver screen—including plot structure, character development, scene building, dialogue, and screenplay format. Our methods and assignments will include short writing exercises, outlining, discussions, workshops, readings, and a weekly film lab (time and day to be fixed when the course begins). For your major project, you will submit a detailed outline for a feature-length film, and a complete first act (30 pages in screenplay format). Readings will include Robert McKee's *Story*, Denny Martin Flinn's *How Not To Write a Screenplay*, Syd Field's *Screenplay*, a few professional scripts like *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*, *Sense and Sensibility*, and *The Illusionist*, and your fellow students' drafts.

### **ENGL 310, Linguistics (Sean Morris)**

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves  
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:  
All mimsy were the borogoves,  
And the mome raths outgrabe.

Lewis Carroll invented half the words in “Jabberwocky” himself, yet you still know how to say, correctly, “That mimsy rath loves to see a gimbling tove,” even if you don’t know what you mean. How is this possible? And how can we understand people who say, “This man is a tiger,” or “That course is a bear”? While we’re at it, where do different languages come from in the first place? And why is it so hard to learn a new one when you didn’t have any trouble learning the first? Does someone who speaks another language think differently? And what’s with English spelling? How come “knight” and “bite” rhyme, but “police” and “ice” don’t? Want to know? Tune in to English 310 and find out!

### **ENGL 325, Literature of the English Renaissance (William Geiger)**

As in past offerings, the course will stress close analysis of the assigned texts as interpreted in light of the artistic, philosophical, political, religious, and scientific contexts of 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century England.

### **ENGL 328, Shakespeare (Sean Morris)**

No quips or sales pitches on this one: Last year's entry said only, "If you do not know who and what this class is about, you need to do some personal reflection (ed.)," and I'll say, with apologies to Stan Lee, "Shakespeare: 'nuff said." I haven't yet worked out all the details, but I know that I want the course to cover part famous works, part obscure works, to give you a full understanding of, arguably, the greatest writer ever to pen the English language. Some works I'm thinking of include *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and something less common like *Two Gentlemen of Verona*; *King Lear*, *Hamlet*, and *Titus Andronicus*; *Richard II*, *Henry IV Part 1*, and either *Henry VI Part 1* or *Richard III*; *The Winter's Tale* and either *The Tempest* or *Pericles*; plus a handful of sonnets and some supplemental film versions, including *Henry V*, *Much Ado about Nothing*, and *Romeo and Juliet*. There will be some scene acting as well as

traditional English papers, and the traditional off-campus (andon-campus) trips to plays.

**ENGL 329, Milton (Wendy Furman-Adams)**

This course will consider the poetry and major prose of John Milton (1608-1674). Second only to Shakespeare in the scholarship he inspires each year, Milton was a major actor on the political stage of his own day--a radical whose views on religious, political, and domestic liberty still generate endless controversy. *Paradise Lost* has inspired more artists than any work except the Bible, and has become a part of the mental furniture even of those who have not read it. To read Milton is to enter an entire world of thought about good and evil; about the right uses of nature; about men and women; about friendship, sexuality, and marriage; about politics and freedom; and about what the world might be like if we took the poem's moral imperatives seriously--seeking, as Milton suggested, "a paradise within." About half way through the semester Milton students (and any others who are interested) will have the opportunity to join with Milton lovers around the world in a "Milton Marathon" reading of *Paradise Lost*.

**ENGL 335, Victorian Poetry (Andrea Rehn)**

What's a poet to do in a literary period dominated by the realist novel? Answers include: ventriloquize madmen, mirror beautiful embowered women, and seduce readers with intricate patterns and flexible rhythms that nearly overwhelm sense. Victorian poetry offers a wide variety of themes, styles and innovations, chief among which is the "dramatic monologue," a form that reminds us of poetry's proximity to both drama and music. In seminar, we will read poems aloud, memorize and recite short lyrics, and develop a sensitivity to the seductive rhythms, complex argumentation, and surprising humor of Victorian poetry. Poets will include Tennyson, Robert Browning, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Arnold, Meredith, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Christina Rossetti, Morris, Swinburne, Hopkins, Carroll, Michael Field, Hardy, and Kipling. Writing assignments will include two essays and regular reading responses.

**ENGL 352 Modern British Novel (dAvid pAddy)**

This semester we will explore some of the developments made by British novelists in the first half of the twentieth century. Much of our attention will be given to the set of artistic movements that have come to be known as modernism. Modernism constituted a radical shift in the production and perception of art, spawning numerous new approaches to writing, with innovative considerations of perspective, time, consciousness, memory, human character, form, and symbol. A truly exciting period of literary art. We will read works by Joseph Conrad, Ford Madox Ford, James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, and several others.

**ENGL 355: Contemporary Drama (dAvid pAddy):**

Welcome to a strange world of rants, flailing bodies, obsessive monologues, drag, activism, the grotesque, and the ineffable. In this course we will examine developments in the dramatic arts since the 1960s, with special attention given to the rise of performance art. What we will read—plays, monologues, performance texts, and essays—will be strange, beautiful, and disturbing, and will demand radically new ways of thinking about audience, space, identity, representation, and the body. Readings will

feature the likes of Samuel Beckett, Antonin Artaud, Harold Pinter, Sarah Kane, Suzan-Lori Parks, and such movements as Fluxus and Vienna Actionism. **Note: this class is paired with sal johnston's Sociology of Gender; you must be enrolled in both courses.**

### **ENGL 361, American Romanticism (Charles S. Adams)**

American romanticism actually has its own name, "Transcendentalism." Not all of the American writers who are classified as "romantics" would subscribe to this philosophy, but I am willing to say that even if they were extremely suspicious, they were still stuck with responding to the power of the movement's ideas, thus they too are "romantics," at least for our purposes in this class. This is the movement that claims to make American writing really American, and it launches the 19<sup>th</sup> Century explosion of all sorts of new ideas and literary forms in this country. So, for example, we have Emerson, Thoreau, Fuller, and Whitman laying down some new ground rules, and Poe, Hawthorne, Melville, and Dickinson thinking hard about why they are not necessarily comfortable with either the new ideas or forms, or are using them to go in directions the transcendentalists had not contemplated (actually, what fascinated Poe was the idea of no rules at all and what that might let you consider). But all are caught up in a powerful groundswell of idealism and intellectual ferment of the times, a great deal of which is brought about by social, economic, and political change. That idealism is both political and philosophical and produces some of the greatest American literary work. The course is not supposed to survey everything, and will not. But we will try to get at crucial historical questions in this critical American literary period. Those interested in any of the forms of American literary modernism later on will find here materials they will need to know.

### **ENGL 400, Critical Procedures (Bill Geiger)**

Reading a novel, poem, or play may seem a fairly fundamental skill for you by the time you're a senior English major. But how do you go about making an interpretation of a literary text? What kind of questions should you be asking? How do you find meaning? How do you know if your interpretation has any validity? Throughout this course you will encounter a vast array of critical essays by literary theorists who have raised difficult questions and offered compelling ideas as to what or how a literary text means. Many of these theories are difficult if not mind-boggling, but they will all help you become a more thoughtful reader, careful critic, and, perhaps, sophisticated teacher of literature. Our main text will be Rivkin and Ryan's *Literary Theory: An Anthology*. Instructor permission required.

### **English 410, Senior Seminar: Whitman and Melville (Charles S. Adams).**

Whitman and Melville both produced incredibly significant works at virtually the same literary moment. These works, *Leaves of Grass* and *Moby-Dick* are epic, dense, profound, difficult, obtuse, offensive, glorious, insane, cosmic, and deeply rewarding. We will look at them closely and take our time to know all that we can about them, their writers and the times that produced them. The course will involve substantial secondary reading as well. This is the good stuff folks—the texts that changed everything, that try to do everything. Not for the faint of heart or those who like to think small.

**ENGL 420, Preceptorships (Various Faculty)**

This course is for advanced students who will act as assistants to faculty in some of the courses above. See individual ENGL faculty members concerning possible openings and what might be involved. **Instructor permission required.**

**January**

**ENGL 303, Advanced Poetry Writing (Mariano Zaro)**

**Please see Tony Barnstone as soon as possible for details concerning the nature of this course. It may involve some travel.**

**ENGL 365, Hemingway and Eliot (William Geiger)**

Once again it's time to read works by these important writers. Hemingway and Eliot are important because they are great writers (well, not all the time), and because their dissimilar world views provide a matrix for your own developing philosophy of life.

**Spring**

**ENGL 120, Why Read?, Section 1 (Wendy Furman-Adams)**

**ENGL 120, Why Read?, Section 2 (William Geiger)**

**ENGL 120, Why Read?, Section 3 (Anne Kiley)**

**ENGL 120, Why Read?, Section 4 (Sharon May)**

**ENGL 201, Introduction to Journalism (John Mitchell)**

John Mitchell is an active reporter with the *Los Angeles Times* who has been with us for several years teaching this course. How do you get into journalism? Find out.

**ENG 221: Major British and American Authors from 1660 (dAvid pAddy):** This course continues the survey of literature begun in ENG 220. One of the big differences from the previous course is that in addition to looking at the development of British literary history we will also consider the trajectory of American literary history. The course will in fact begin with some of the foundations of American literature. Moving back and forth between British and American literature, we will examine Romanticism, the Victorian Age, Realism, Modernism, and conclude with some directions taken in contemporary literature. As we investigate the intellectual ideas and aesthetic premises that guide each era, we will also address such issues as the rise and fall of the British Empire, the building of the American nation, the historical importance of revolution and industrialization, and the roles of race, class, and gender. As we consider shifting notions of aesthetics, we will also consistently ask: What is the relationship between national identity and literature? We will read a wide range of poems, stories, essays, and excerpts, and we will read several full length works: William Blake's *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, Benjamin Franklin's *Autobiography*, Ralph Waldo Emerson's *Nature*, Charles Dickens's *Hard Times*, Henry James's *Daisy Miller*, Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, Samuel Beckett's *Endgame*, and Brian Friel's *Translations*.

**ENGL 275, Chicano Literature (Rafael Chabran)**

See the Spanish department for more information. This class is cross-listed with SPAN 225.

### **ENGL 302, Advanced Fiction Writing (Sharon May)**

#### **ENGL 320, Literature of Medieval Europe (Wendy Furman-Adams)**

The period of European history running from about 500 to 1500 is one of incredible diversity--not to mention upheaval and violence. Yet somewhat paradoxically, medieval architects, philosophers, painters, and writers managed by about 1300 to bring the entire cosmos into a hard-won but comprehensive system of thought in which unity and diversity, faith and reason, center and circumference come together, as Dante puts it, into a "single volume bound by love."

This course is paired with Professor **David Hunt's** course in Medieval Philosophy, and the literature we read will vividly illustrate the development traced in the philosophy course, as we move (1) from early Christian lyrics to the Old English and early French epic (*Beowulf* and *Roland*), while focusing on the first classic of Christian philosophy: Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*; (2) to the new courtly elegance of the Troubadours and Gottfried von Strassburg, as well as to the Gothic synthesis of Dante Alighieri (1265-1321), inspired above all by the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas; (3) to the new trends reflected at the end of the period by Petrarch, Boccaccio and Chaucer (1340-1400). (The middle stage in this development, the rise of "courtly love," will also present a fine opportunity to explore gender issues in literature.) Enrollment in the pair strongly recommended.

### **ENGL 332, 19<sup>th</sup>-Century English Novel (Andrea Rehn)**

#### **ENGL 334, Romantic Poetry (Anne Kiley)**

**ENG 350: Modern Drama (dAvid pAddy):** Early in the twentieth century, the dramatic arts transformed from a popular but aesthetically and critically disdained medium into a forum for artistic innovation that led the cutting edge of other art forms. In this course, we will explore this dynamic literary history (roughly 1879-1967) of twentieth-century theater. Primary attention will be given to the tensions between naturalist drama and a host of anti-naturalist dramatic movements, such as futurism, surrealism, epic theater, and the theater of the absurd. Playwrights to be considered include Henrik Ibsen, Anton Chekhov, Luigi Pirandello, Bertolt Brecht, Eugene Ionesco, and Samuel Beckett.

#### **English 362, American Realism and Naturalism (Charles S. Adams)**

This course will examine American literature of the period roughly between the Civil War and World War I. The title comes from two related American literary movements that many of the writers of this period take a special interest in. We find writers taking a new look at social, philosophical, and aesthetic issues in the light of the experiences of the war, the development of the frontier, industrialization, and the increasing voice of women and African Americans. Among a variety of possibilities, we will probably consider Jackson, Crane, Chesnut, Twain, James, Gilman, Norris, Chopin, and Wharton.

You will note that these writers (and any others we might do) wrote mostly fiction. Indeed, the fiction is what we will read, and the reading load will be pretty substantial—these are the American “Victorians,” so (setting aside some important ideological and cultural concerns) if you know something about the traditions of fiction in the U.K. of the period concerning length, you know something about those in America.

**English 373, The African-American Literary Tradition (Charles S. Adams)**

We are all familiar with the ways in which race has been a fundamental source of difficulty in American culture. On the other hand, it has also been the source of some of our richest traditions, especially in the arts. African-Americans can claim a special place in terms of their importance and influence in American literature, with a long and complex history, marked by the nearly unique experiences of slavery. This course proposes, then, to start at the beginnings of what has become a tradition of literary production and influence. It is a tradition that begins with writers for whom the very act of writing could bring the penalty of death, yet who did it anyway (Phillis Wheatley, Frederick Douglass). It continues with writers who use words to create freedom for themselves and others, and indeed use then to create “being” itself, when that had been denied at the most fundamental levels (Paul Lawrence Dunbar, James Weldon Johnson, Charles Chesnutt, W.E.B. DuBois). And, as we look at the 20<sup>th</sup> century and beyond, we see African-Americans creating forms of literary expression that are arguably the only forms that are truly American, having their origin here and using materials and experiences that only happen here (Jean Toomer, Zora Neale Hurston, Langston Hughes, Ralph Ellison). The influence of such writing on our contemporary literature is profound, and African-American writers are some of our most important (Gwendolyn Brooks, Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, Maya Angelou, August Wilson). This course will be paired with HIST 310, “The History of Slavery in North America,” with Professor **Susanah Romney**. Students who are in the pair will have considerable advantages.

**English 381, Discourses of Desire: Plato—20<sup>th</sup> Century (Wendy Furman-Adams)**

This course takes a long historical look at the idea of romantic love, from its very beginnings through the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, including works by both women and men. Beginning with the biblical Song of Songs and Plato's *Symposium*, we will look at some of the many ways *eros* (desire) has been constructed in treatises (such as Andreas Capellanus' *Art of Courtly Love* and Castiglione's *Courtier*); in painting; in both secular and religious poetry; in epic and romance; in drama; and finally in Milan Kundera's novel, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* and Wim Wenders' film *Wings of Desire*. The course involves the close reading of a number of primary texts, all of which are to some extent in dialogue with each other, allowing us to compare the experiences of men and women--and thus of the tension, never far from the surface, between love and power--as well as to discover some of the historical roots of our current, often unexamined ideas about love. Also counts toward the Gender and Women's Studies minor.

**ENG 400: Critical Procedures in Language and Literature (dAvid pAddy):**

Reading a novel, poem, or play may seem a fairly fundamental skill for you by the time you're a senior English major. But how do you go about making an interpretation of a

literary text? What kind of questions should you be asking? How do you find meaning? How do you know if your interpretation has any validity? Throughout this course you will encounter a vast array of critical essays by literary theorists who have raised difficult questions and offered compelling ideas as to what or how a literary text means. Many of these theories are difficult if not mind-boggling, but they will all help you become a more thoughtful reader, careful critic, and, perhaps, sophisticated teacher of literature. Our main text will be Rivkin and Ryan's *Literary Theory: An Anthology*. Instructor permission required.

**ENGL 410, Senior Seminar (Andrea Rehn)**

Professor Rehn gives us the word "pirates." H'mmm. . .arr. . .

**ENGL 420, Preceptorships (Various Faculty)** This course is for advanced students who will act as assistants to faculty in some of the courses above. See individual faculty members concerning what might be involved. **Instructor permission required.**

## **Why Did You Get This?**

The purpose of this newsletter is to keep students, faculty, and friends informed about the wide variety of activities the Whittier College English Department is engaged in. If there are events of a literary nature that could use a bit of publicity through this vehicle, send information about them to the English Department office. We cannot guarantee when or if they will appear, but it never hurts to try! If you get this and do not want it, or if you did not get it but see a copy and want future issues, please let our Department Secretary, Marilyn Chavez (x4253 or see e-mail list below), in the department office know.

## **To Contact Us**

The best way to keep up to date on the happenings, doings, events, oddities, etc. in English is to check the **English Department Website** regularly. Some faculty members have put a good deal of individual information there, and the rest of us are doing our best to catch up as soon as we can. Go to:

<http://web.whittier.edu/academic/english/index.htm>

Some of you have asked how to get us by e-mail, so here are some addresses:

**Charles S. Adams:** [cadams@whittier.edu](mailto:cadams@whittier.edu)

(American Literature, American Studies, Autobiography, Literary Theory)

**Tony Barnstone:** [tbarnstone@whittier.edu](mailto:tbarnstone@whittier.edu)

(Creative Writing, Modern American Literature, Translation)

**Wendy Furman-Adams:** [wfurman@whittier.edu](mailto:wfurman@whittier.edu)

(Milton, Renaissance Literature, 18<sup>th</sup> Century Literature, Women's Studies, Literature and Visual Culture, The Bible, Classics)

**William Geiger:** [bgeiger@whittier.edu](mailto:bgeiger@whittier.edu)

(Renaissance Literature, English language, Modernism, Literary Theory)

**Anne Kiley:** [akiley@whittier.edu](mailto:akiley@whittier.edu)

(19<sup>th</sup> Century British Literature, Shakespeare)

**Sean Morris:** [smorris@whittier.edu](mailto:smorris@whittier.edu)

(Linguistics and English language, Medieval Literature, Creative Writing)

**dAvid pAddy** (Department Chair): [dpaddy@whittier.edu](mailto:dpaddy@whittier.edu)

(Modernism, Postmodernism, Welsh and other Celtic Literatures, Literary Theory, Creative Writing)

**Andrea Rehn** [arehn@whittier.edu](mailto:arehn@whittier.edu) (but probably not an active address until some time this summer)

(19<sup>th</sup> Century British, Post-Colonial Studies, Women's Studies, Travel)

**Charlie Eastman:** (College Writing Program Director) [ceastman@whittier.edu](mailto:ceastman@whittier.edu)

**Marilyn Chavez** (Administrative Assistant): [mchavez1@whittier.edu](mailto:mchavez1@whittier.edu)