Collecting the Life of an Author
by Paul Merchant

Around 1998, when I'd been working with the William Stafford archives for a couple of years, and Vince Wixon and I had finished editing Stafford's prose collection Crossing Unmarked Snow, I was given a surprise bonus by Dorothy Stafford. I was able to afford a great treasure, a copy (in almost mint condition) of the first serial publication of David Copperfield, one of Stafford's favorite books, about which he had written eloquently in the volume Wixon and I had just edited. I was also able to purchase from the same British book dealer a disbound canto of Lord Byron's Don Juan in its first printing—one of my favorite long poems.

Reading those first chapters of Copperfield just as its first readers experienced it in May 1850, and meditating on the challenges of writing a novel in serial form, I began to think of collecting Dickens in early printings more systematically. The two complete Copperfields of 1850 – the first British and the German Tauchnitz in English – came along quickly, followed by early American printings in 1851 and 1852, the second a Christmas gift from Doug Erickson. Before long the whole printing history of that novel was in hand.

When Pauls Toutonghi began teaching Hard Times, that novel became a new focus. Its advertising slip of 1854 was the start, then portions of the New York serializations in two different journals, and an American selection for children, Sissy Jupe from Hard Times. A true first edition is still to be found, though we have the first illustrated edition of 1877. Other novels in their first editions, all bound from the original parts, include Dombey and Son, Bleak House, Our Mutual Friend, and The Mystery of Edwin Drood. The products of these years of collecting now reside in Special Collections, and a substantial selection is on display in the library to celebrate the bicentenary of Dickens' birth.

Happy Birthday, Charles Dickens
by Pauls Toutonghi

Excited by the opportunity to celebrate the bicentennial of Dickens' birth, Paul Merchant and I decided to put together an exhibit that would showcase Watzek Library’s impressive holdings – as well as Paul’s own private library of manuscripts and editions of David Copperfield. My role, from the English Department, was primarily as a sounding-board for ideas.

Since I was planning on teaching a Dickens course in the Spring of 2012, I was excited to help support my students’ research interests with archival materials.

I was delighted by the beautiful work that Jeremy Skinner and Paul did with the exhibit cases, and I was happy to provide some of the text for the exhibit.

The cases came together in an astonishing way, spanning all the eras of Dickens’ life, and providing illumination for a number of critical biographical issues.

My own interest lies in Dickens as an exemplar. His blend of wit and sorrow – and his ceaseless, boundless energy – is something I try to emulate. What a joy it was to assist in the assembly of this phenomenal resource.
### Graduating Seniors

**Majors**
- Marnina R. Bates
- Claire H. Burdick
- Emma B. Chandler
- Emily J. Cousins
- William H. Cross
- Karla L. Dechamps
- Molly E. Dickinson
- Nicholas L. Erickson
- Joshua S. Francis
- Sarah L. Gottlieb
- Erin T. Gravley
- Isabel F. Greiner
- Rachel B. King
- Warren R. Kluber
- Lynsey L. Lacher
- Lauren S. Lederman
- Christopher M. Leja
- Ryan M. Mooney
- Kelsey M. Morris
- Maya A. McOmie
- Thomas D. Moore
- Casey E. Newbegin
- Virginia C. O’Brien
- Olivia B. Reed
- Kenzie S. Rowlett
- Erin K. Raprecht
- Richard E. Sames
- Laura R. Santos-Bishop
- Kathryn M. Simmons
- Colter A. Thomas
- Casey R. Twining
- Alexander S. Whistler
- Eric O. Wilton
- David A. Zilban

**Minors**
- Sarah Burgess
- Claire Cushing
- Olivia Erlanger
- Stephanie Levine
- Sarah Patterson
- William Preston
- Lyndsey Romick
- Gareth Stacke
- Louise Trueheart

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### Lewis & Clark Visiting Writer Series

**Fall 2011 / Spring 2012**

- **Keith Scribner**
  - September 13th
- **Diane Wakoski & Matthew Dickman**
  - October 27th
- **Diana Abu-Jaber**
  - October 4th
- **Julian Smith**
  - January 31st
- **John Beer**
  - April 10th
- **Jeff Sullivan**
  - March 12th
- **Cary Howie**
  - March 22nd
- **Jesús Barquet**
  - April 5th
- **Thomas Pruiksma**
  - February 22nd

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### Faculty News & Updates

**Rachel Cole**


**Kurt Fosso**


**Mary Szybist**

Her second book, *Incarnadine*, will be published this coming year by Graywolf Press. An essay, “‘There interposed a _______’: Reflections on Poetic Drama,” is forthcoming in *The Writer’s Notebook II*, by Tin House Books, and her poems recently appeared in *The Kenyon Review* and *Ploughshares*. This spring she traveled to Laos and Cambodia to begin research for her next book.

**Rishona Zimring**

Rishona Zimring’s recent and forthcoming publications include a review of Susan Gubar’s *True Confessions: Feminist Professors Tell Tales Out of School*, and an article entitled “Mansfield’s Charm: The Enchantment of Domestic ‘Bliss.’” She will be speaking about ballet, folk dance, and British culture at a conference at Brown University in June, and plans to contribute an essay to a special journal issue in honor of the 100th anniversary of the first performance of the Russian Ballet’s “The Rite of Spring.”

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The Dixon Award – Jordan Buysse

This year’s award goes to junior English major Jordan Buysse, for his proposed research of James Joyce. Buysse plans to travel to Trieste, Italy to participate in the 14th Annual Trieste Joyce Summer School. Buysse was inspired to travel to Trieste after reading *Years of Bloom*, a book written by the founder of the summer conference. Buysse is interested in how Joyce’s experience in Eastern Europe emerges as metropolitanism in his novel *Ulysses*. Upon Buysse’s return to Lewis & Clark, he will describe his experiences and research to the department and campus in a formal presentation. The Dixon Award was established in 2002 by the Dixon Family Foundation. Each year a junior English-major applicant is awarded a $2,500 research and travel grant to enrich his or her current studies in preparation for the senior year and beyond.

The Jerry Baum Award – Claire Burdick

This year’s recipient is senior English major Claire Burdick, for her paper “A Poet’s Epitaph: Wordsworth’s Epitaphic Poetics.” Her essay investigates, in part, the force of pastoral genre in a rather overlooked and undervalued poem in Wordsworth and Coleridge’s *Lyrical Ballads* of 1800. The Jerry Baum Award was established in 2007 by the Department of English with alumni, family, and friends to honor the memory of professor of English R. Jerold Baum. The recipient is always a senior whose seminar paper addresses the relationship between literature and history and is recognized as outstanding by the English faculty.

Senior Fiction Prize

This year’s winner of the Lewis & Clark College Fiction prize is English major Eleanor Embry, for her short story “The Day The River Overflowed.” Embry is also a writer of poetry. The Fiction Prize was judged by author David Wolman. The winner receives $100.00 and recognition at the Honors Convocation.

Senior Poetry Prize

This year’s winner of the American Academy of Poets’ Prize is English major Molly Dickinson, for her poem “Great Blue Heron, Dance With Me.” The Poetry Prize Contest is held at 177 undergraduate institutions annually. All the winners will be listed in the summer issue of the Academy’s journal, *American Poet*.

Honorable mentions:
Garrett Chavis – “Mistletoe”
Claire Burdick – “Tops and Pots”

Honors Recipients

Karla Dechamps

Karla Dechamps received honors for her thesis, “Implications of Identity: The Green Knight of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight.” Her essay explores the implications of legitimizing the Green Knight as a knight proper.

Molly Dickinson

Molly Dickinson was awarded honors for her thesis, “Redefining the Lay-Mystic: *Pearl* and Vernacular Theology,” which argues that *Pearl* contains a liberal image of lay worship and vernacular theology, poised on the eve of the Protestant Reformation.

Casey Newbegin


Molly Dickinson

Molly Dickinson

2012 SAAB Grant

Casey Twining received a SAAB research grant this year to travel to the Elizabeth Bishop archives at Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, NY. As part of this project, she set up a library display of Bishop’s drafts and journal entries. SAAB supports students who are conducting self-motivated research that adds depth to existing courses at Lewis & Clark.
In Memoriam: Rudolph Byrd, 1953-2011

The Lewis & Clark English department regrets the passing of an esteemed alumnus, Professor Rudolph Byrd (’75), who was the Director of the Program of African American Studies at Emory University. This past February, at Lewis & Clark’s Alumni Honors Banquet, Professor Byrd was posthumously awarded the title of Distinguished Alumnus. The year before, Byrd had spoken at Lewis & Clark on “The Death of the Essential Black Subject: Marlon Riggs’ “Black Is, Black Ain’t.”” Professor Byrd was Lewis & Clark’s first African American recipient of the Rena Ratte Award, and went on to receive a Ph.D from Yale. He was the founder and director of Emory University’s James Weldon Johnson Institute for the Study of Race and Difference, founding co-chair of the Alice Walker Literary Society, and the author of some dozen books. At the time of his passing, he had just finished writing a series of lectures, to be presented at Harvard, on race and sexuality. He was also in the midst of several other projects, including a biography of author Ernest Gaines, a monograph on the early novels of Alice Walker, and, in collaboration with Harvard professor Henry Louis Gates, Jr., an anthology of African-American poetry. Professor Byrd died on October 14th, 2011. He was 58 years old.

Ann Dobyns to speak at PBK induction ceremony

This May, English alumna Ann Dobyns (’68) returned to Lewis & Clark’s campus to be inducted into Phi Beta Kappa as an honorary member. Dobyns is Professor of Rhetoric and Medieval Literature in the English Department at the University of Denver, where she teaches classes on argument, Chaucer, the Pearl Poet, and Malory. She is the author of The Voices of Romance: Studies in Dialogue and Character and co-author of several others. Professor Dobyns also helped to establish the LC English Department’s Baum Essay Award.

In her Phi Beta Kappa speech, Dobyns recalled her matriculation at Lewis & Clark in the mid 1960s, notably “the nagging sense that I ought to be doing something that mattered: day-to-day, in my life and in my occupation.” Through teaching, she found a lifelong career that offered her “a way to do something that mattered,” including “talking about issues that are complicated” and that require us “to make ethical judgment about how to live in the the world together.” This year’s PBK English inductees include Jordan Buyssse (’13), Emily Guasco (Dec. ’12), and Lyndsey Romick (’12).

Selected Notable Alumni


An interview with collaborating professors Kurt Fosso and Jerry Harp

English major Sara Balsom sits down with professors Kurt Fosso and Jerry Harp to discuss their upcoming article “J. Hillis Miller’s Virtual Reality of Reading.”

Sara Balsom: So tell me about the foundation of this article. Where did the idea originate?

Jerry Harp: This article really got started with Kurt and me sitting after hours talking about literary theory. Those conversations started generating ideas, and at some point we decided to read J. Hillis Miller’s book On Literature.

SB: And why specifically did you land on that book?

JH: For one thing, it was Miller’s most recent book. For another, he was talking about this idea of literature pre-existing its being written down, almost like it’s a Platonic form, and we thought, “That’s an awfully strange attitude for a deconstructionist.”

Kurt Fosso: A real enigma.

JH: It really was. Because what’s being deconstructed if not the metaphysics of presence? And what is the metaphysics of presence if not Platonism? It seemed utterly strange, and we found ourselves asking, “What is he getting at?” That became the starting point of our article.

SB: And in reading your article, I found myself thinking about times when I’ve read something and it makes sense in this eerie déjà vu sort of way. So I’m wondering, to what extent do you two believe in the pre-existence of the literary object?

JH: Well, I certainly believe in the pre-existence of the literary object, at least in the way we’ve made sense of it in the article. Language is a shifting structure that exceeds any one consciousness, and the possibilities of any number of literary works exist already in this structure. We speak language, but it also speaks us. It pulls the mind outward into possibility and creation.

KF: One point we make in the article is this notion that representation can give this uncanny sense that in some way what you’re reading is a reflection of something else; imitation, in performance, tends to invoke that. You can’t read and not get some haunting sense, maybe not of a whole virtual world, but of something… beyond.

SB: In the article you mention the “trope of tropes” of literary representation. To me this reflexive nature of literary criticism seems almost as baffling as the idea that literature reflects itself –

KF: That’s Miller’s favorite figure, prosopopeia – to make a face. It’s the trope of giving voice, and for him the figure that leads to the absent and the dead. We think it also points toward poesis as performance, and toward why readers feel invested in literary works in the ways they do.

SB: So have you two enjoyed collaborating on this article?

KF: Yeah, it’s been fun working together to sort out Miller’s sense of the virtual. We’ve really enjoyed it, and the whole process of writing collaboratively....

JH: Yeah. You know, there was a moment when I was pointing out to Kurt a sentence that needed to be clarified, and he looked at it and said, “That’s your sentence, Jerry.” So we truly lost track.

KF: That’s right, although at a certain point it may be that anything unclear would have to be the other person’s.

JH: [Laughing] Yes. It’s the principle we’ll stand by: anything that remains unclear – is Kurt’s.

KF: Exactly. No, it’s been really interesting. I had never collaborated with anyone before.

JH: I had never written anything in collaboration. I had edited in collaboration, but this is the first time I collaborated on writing.

KF: We end up … sort of taking different pieces of it, occasionally even operating with slightly different trajectories, and then trying to get it all to work together. There were chunks that Jerry or I wrote that went out, because, well, we were trying to make an essay! We were trying to make art out of it, in a sense. So, you know, we had to murder a few virtual darlings along the way.

“J. Hillis Miller’s Virtual Reality of Reading” by Kurt Fosso & Jerry Harp will be published in the September 2012 issue of College English.

We want to hear from you!

Drop us a line to let us know what you’ve been up to, where you’re living, and what plans you’re making.

You can write or e-mail the department at english@lclark.edu

Two Student-Professor Research Collaborations

Kurt Fosso & Emily Guasco

Kurt Fosso and English senior Emily Guasco (Dec. ’12) spent a part of this year researching depictions and descriptions of crows and ravens in late eighteenth-century British literature and natural history, for Fosso’s work-in-progress on Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s fable-like poem of animal revenge, “The Raven.”

Rishona Zimring & Casey Newbegin

Rishona Zimring and English senior Casey Newbegin (’12) collaborated with Watzek Special Collections to produce an exhibit focused on the visual work of two artists, E. McKnight Kauffer and Gwen Raverat, set within the broader context of cultural history, the avant-garde, other visual artists, and literary examples of modernism’s fascination with travel, speed, and transportation. It will be on exhibit Fall 2012.