

# MUSINGS

## IN THIS ISSUE:

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| <i>From the Chair</i>        | 1 |
| <i>Printed and Presented</i> | 2 |
| <i>Team Updates</i>          | 2 |
| <i>Writing Center Update</i> | 3 |
| <i>Faculty Favorites</i>     | 3 |
| <i>News</i>                  | 4 |
| <i>Grapevine</i>             | 4 |

## Dates to Remember

- February 7-11: Global Awareness Week.
- February 17: Poetry Reading for African American History Month, 6:00-9:00pm in the Student Activities Center.
- February 18-26: SCC presents *The Trojan Women* in Blair Hall Theatre.
- February 21: Deadline for Creative Writing Contest judges' decisions.
- Saturday, March 5: Last day to Withdraw with a "W."
- March 20: Winter quarter classes end.
- March 22: Grades due.

## FROM THE CHAIR

### *Annus Horribilis, 2004*

Families must change;  
                   the body, though, suffers  
 when it loses members.  
                   Lamentations rise  
 from these accidents and fatalities.

Growth and death, divorce and suicide,  
                   murder and disease,  
 fire and flood have altered Sinclair  
                   during this tragic year –  
 dismembering the body from the family.

With the sun in her eyes,  
                   she drove into the blank day,  
 affecting in physical ways  
                   the brain waves of one for whom  
 the biology of all eases into complex thought.

On the course of leisurely escape  
                   he met his biological end  
 while another in a room alone  
                   found no more rationales  
 except for those remaining mysteries.

Who can understand the psyche  
                   beset with infected blood  
 and marital failings – all lightened  
                   by substantial essence  
 mingled with chance, weather, and road conditions?

Many family members feel the same –  
                   the mind is an accidental place  
 where misfirings often encompass  
                   the innocent body nearby  
 who has no choice in the drama.

These fires are tsunamis enveloping  
                   in haphazard ways the family's  
 house, burning rafters, yes, but  
                   disrupting so much more  
 than structures.

And when the sun went out of the eyes,  
                   sepsis infected every body,  
 clotting the breath, that gasp everyone  
                   took when the year's realizations  
 settled in the veins of the Sinclair family.

Gary Mitchner



## PRINTED AND PRESENTED

Clearly, **Tim Waggoner** never sleeps. Here's what he's been up to lately: His novel *Pandora Drive* has been accepted for publication by Leisure Books. He's signed to write two media-related novels: *A Nightmare on Elm Street: Protege* for Black Flame Books and *Thieves of Blood* for Wizards of the Coast. His short story "Homebody" will appear in the magazine *Inhuman*. *Writer's Digest* has accepted his article "The Work-for-Hire Novelist" for publication. He'll be presenting at the World Horror Convention in NYC on April 7-10th; "The Creative Writing Connection" at the spring meeting of the CEA March 31-April 2 in Indianapolis; and "Writer's Voice: Finding What You Never Lost" at the Columbus State Community College Writers' Conference in Columbus on April 7-10. He'll also be teaching a fiction intensive at the Antioch Writers' Workshop in Yellow Springs from July 9-16.

**Becky Morean** has been busy too. She presented *Reflecting on Memories and Other Treacherous Acts: A Memoir Writing Workshop* at Clark County Public Library in early December, working with both established writers and beginners, all ages. She also participated in a panel discussion: *Historical Takes on Actual Fiction*. The panel included faculty from Marlboro College (VT), Norwich University (VT), and Greenfield Community College (MA) dis-

cussing the impact of social change on literature, and trends in fiction relating to historical and cultural settings. The event took place at The Village Bookstore, Brattleboro, VT over the holiday break.

**Liz Christensen** headed the display in the LRC for Global Awareness Week focusing on immigration. She presented "Immigration: Becoming an American" on February 7.

**Jack Bennett** presented "The Niagara Movement: What Is Your Talent?" for a research division of WPAFB's African American History Month Celebration.

**Jamey Dunham** gave a poetry reading in New York last fall with the poet Russell Edson, as part of the Reading Between A & B reading series. He has six poems published in the current issue of *The Cincinnati Review*, more in the journal *Paragraph* and work upcoming in a special edition of the journal *Sentence*. Jamey published a review, a critique of six literary journals, in the current January/February issue of *The American Book Review*. Jamey's poetry was nominated for the fifth consecutive year for the Pushcart Prize and his prose poem, "Urban Myth" was selected by the poet Paul Muldoon for *The Best American Poetry 2005*.

*"Winter is the time for study, you know, and the colder it is the more studious we are."*

—Henry David  
Thoreau

## FROM THE TEAMS

The **Composition Team** will be working on two projects winter 2005. We will be reviewing and expanding the English 113 Master Syllabus for additional detail and focus to assist part-time faculty who have requested additional clarity, as well as providing more uniformity in meeting the objectives for the course. The team will also begin the review of the existing departmental student evaluation form and work on adjusting it (or creating a new form) to correlate with the course objectives and performance outcomes identified for English 111, 112 and 113.

The **Literature and Scholarship Team** hosted a public reading as part of the Sixteenth National African American Read-In Chain sponsored by the NCTE (National Council of Teachers of English) on Feb. 7. Faculty and students read favorite works written by African Americans at an informal gathering in the LRC. The event is similar to the 1984 + 20 Project last fall. Schools and other community organizations hosted read-ins on Feb. 6 or 7,

as a way of celebrating African American writers and promoting literacy during Black History Month. Participating groups register with the NCTE. This year's goal was to document at least one million readers.

The **Business/Tech Team** reports that the master syllabi for English 121 and 122 were recently revised and updated. Liz Christensen offered English 132 online for the first time fall 2003 and every quarter except summer since. The course has had full enrollments and continues to be successful. Vicki Stalbird's English 121 and 122 online courses also show continued success. In 2003, the English 121 online course had a 78.26% retention rate compared to 59.63% for all other distance learning sections. Enrollments in all sections of 121, 122, 131, and 132 continue to rise. In all sections, Liz Christensen teaches her students how to use the portal technology. All sections of 121 and 122 and most sections of 131 and 132 are now taught in computer labs.

## WRITING CENTER UPDATE

Collectively, the Coordinator, the Academic Technician and Tutors share the responsibility of keeping the Writing Center environment clean and receptive to the tasks that must be discerned. Students desiring guidance in any endeavor should feel welcomed when they visit the Writing Center. The on-going changes of overseeing updating hardware and software, plus keeping our supplies stocked are the technician's responsibility. Systematically, the three types of personnel involved should know the philosophy of this area's existence and have offered input on how we can be more effective.

As the Coordinator this year, I have met with each tutor and collected compelling data that needs resolution. I am also in contact with Angie Long, who is the Tutorial Coordinator, in an attempt to resolve concerns tutors have brought to the table. These interviews sought information on their tutorial skills which they bring to the varied tasks they perform: their expectations and how they can become Master Tutors; how to handle a myriad of issues involving students and faculty demands; and how to be responsive within time frames while several students await tutorial assistance. All these issues affect everyone involved in this operation. Finally, I have encouraged students to inquire further on what their instructor expects, and to document

the negative feedback they periodically receive.

I am creating compressed information on card stock to be shared with students coming for assistance and with their instructors. The information includes what the Writing Center will and will not do; and what tutors will and will not do to ease the role each tutor has undertaken trying to oversee the needs of so many different types of assignments. Our tutors are an important asset, who must be encouraged, not discouraged in their primary goal to assist faculty in providing reasonable guidance to their students.

It is my belief that taking new directions with new tutors will require better communication with all faculty members whose students visit the Writing Center. More direct training and clarity are needed from the array of faculty who teach so uniquely and assign writing that is not always consistent with generic teaching styles. I am also asking for tutors to attend conferences, so they can realize other methods from interacting with other tutors in other schools to set new goals for themselves and to learn current techniques in the philosophy of teaching writing. Their mastery of skills in so many courses and styles demand this support from Sinclair and from the English Department.

Dr. Mildred Melendez

*"Perhaps I am a bear,  
or some hibernating  
animal underneath, for  
the instinct to be half  
asleep all winter is so  
strong in me."*

—Anne Morrow  
Lindbergh

## FACULTY FAVORITES: ADRIENNE CASSEL

The most vivid memory I have of myself as a child is lying on the bed in my upstairs bedroom staring out the window, daydreaming of the day I could escape the clutches of my family and travel the world, having the great adventures to which I knew I was born. I guess that is why Jean Craighead George's *My Side of the Mountain* meant so much to me.

Sam Gribble, the protagonist in the book, is only eleven when he manages to escape his family in New York City and head into the Catskill Mountains. Equipped with only a penknife, some cord, some flint and steel, and forty dollars, he not only survives, but also has a wonderful time of it.

Besides telling Sam's riveting story, the book also includes illustrations and instructions on how to build just about everything in the book including a tree house like the one Sam lives in, a lean-to like the one that protects Sam from one of the most

horrendous snow storms in his memory, a working fireplace like the one Sam uses for cooking food that he has gathered from the woods, and more. Although I was a girl, I knew that equipped with Sam's instructions and drawings, it was absolutely possible that I could do what he had done, what I so badly wanted to do.

I didn't run away from home as soon as I finished reading the book, but I did find my way out of the house some years later. I hid out in a little hollow in the midst of some cornstalks, a place cleared out by some deer who bedded there, and I spent two lovely days contemplating the injustices of my parents and the beautiful skies of autumn.

I don't remember thinking specifically of Sam when I headed out that time, but I do know that Sam inspired me in a way that I will never forget and kindled in me the dream of adventure which has given my life a richness that makes me forever indebted to him.

## Faculty and Staff

- Chair:

Gary Mitchner

- Secretary:

Fortunate Finley

- Faculty:

Jack Bennett

Kay Berg

Susan Callender

Adrienne Cassel

Liz Christensen

Ed Davis

Jamey Dunham

Chuck Freeland

Dana Frierson

Kate Geiselman

Sarah Kiewitz

Sally Lahmon

Mildred Melendez

Becky Morean

Carol Nancarrow

Vicki Stalbird

Lisa Tyler

Tim Waggoner

Chuck Wagner

- Tech support:

Doug Greathouse

- Student worker:

Natalie Day

- Newsletter Editor:

Kate Geiselman

## NEW FACULTY

“Your writing is atrocious.” These were the words scrawled across the first paper **Adrienne Cassel** submitted as a first-year student at Ohio University. After going to the dictionary to find out just what that comment meant, she spent the next year in the school’s writing center. The rest, as they say, is history. She shares the above anecdote with her composition students to illustrate that anyone can learn to write. Adrienne’s genuine affection for her students and enthusiasm for her work are apparent to anyone who meets her.

The English Department is pleased to welcome Ms. Cassel as the department’s newest Assistant Professor. Adrienne has a Bachelor’s degree from Central State, an MFA from Bennington College, and an MA from Wright State. She has taught composition and poetry at Wright State and Antioch, and is also a published poet. Several years ago, Adrienne took a hiatus from the classroom to move to Oregon for a few years while her husband worked for the Nature Conservancy. After her somewhat reluctant return to Dayton, she spent two years at Wright State in an administrative capacity. Today, she is thrilled to be back in the classroom, where her heart is. Welcome, Adrienne.

## LRC NEWS

LRC Director **Doug Kaylor** invites interested faculty members to come to his office in the LRC to view the latest floor plans (slightly changed from previous versions) and to discuss with him any concerns or questions we may have. He is optimistic about the renovation and says that those of us who have worried about the book collection can breathe a sigh of relief; it is not in danger. The library will have a different look when it is finished, but will still have many of the features of a traditional library. In addition, it will attract more students and provide a wider variety of services and learning options. The move to temporary quarters will be a tremendous project, but the librarians are making every effort to keep services running smoothly during the interim.

Doug says, “The LRC will move to the Building 7 ballroom during Spring break. We expect to be in this space for at least a year (until April-May 2006). The Temporary LRC will include major print reference tools identified as directly supporting instruction, the current periodical subscriptions (no back files), and a small circulating collection—altogether about 10% of our total collections. It will also include thirty-eight public computers—our current number in the LRC. The

library catalog will display only those titles that are available in the temporary collection, and we will be emphasizing OhioLINK borrowing. We did subscribe to the electronic versions of *Opposing Viewpoints* and the Literature Resource Center so we could take better advantage of the technology and compensate for the smaller print collection. We will also have a small classroom space comparable to what we currently have (same furniture, screen, projector), so it should be possible for us to still provide information literacy support.”

When the renovation is complete, “the library-as-place will be a more inclusive, multi-dimensional environment as we bring in the Writing Center, Developmental Learning Center, cafe, and increase the number of PCs.” But Doug reminds us that the new LRC will also have the following essential features:

- “Adequate space to support our print collection,
- Good, reading-friendly spaces with a good ‘library feeling,’
- A library classroom, one schedulable classroom, and group study spaces, both quiet space and space for public readings.”

Kay Berg

## GRAPEVINE

**Zoey Lynn Dunham** was born November 23, 2004. She weighed 7 lbs. 6oz. and was 20 inches long. She is a healthy, happy baby and Jamey is happy to report that Zoey, like her big brother Sam, looks like her mother. Thank God!

Recently, **Cynthia Richardson** and her hus-

band, Leonard, both received certificates and pens from Sinclair to commemorate 10 years of part-time teaching. Cynthia teaches English; Leonard teaches computer courses for BIS Department. Both are program analysts at WPAFB when they’re not enlightening Sinclair students. Congratulations!