



# The English Update



Volume IV

A newsletter for English majors at BSC  
Interim Editor: Ann Brunjes

Fall 2003

## Apply Now for Department Scholarships!

There's money out there, people! All English majors are encouraged to visit the BSC web page (<http://www.bridgew.edu/StudentAffairs/Sch&Awd.s.cfm>) for information and applications for departmental scholarships and awards.

The department has five awards: the Nicole T. Prince Memorial Award (\$100); the Dr. Harold G. Ridlon Memorial Scholarship (\$200); the Edith G. Shoolman English Award (\$125); the Rose Leonard Coveney, Class of 1939, Scholarship (\$850); and the Professor Thomas M. Curley English Scholarship (\$550).

Details concerning scholarship and award criteria, including application forms and standards for eligibility, are available on the web page. Students may also pick up application forms on the first floor of Boyden Hall, outside the Student Affairs Office (Room 106).

Completed applications must be submitted to Professor Ann Brunjes in the English Department by February 11, 2004.

Particularly since all applications require letters of recommendation and a writing sample, students are encouraged to begin the application process immediately. Applications will be accepted from now until February 11. However, students must submit their transcript authorization form by February 4. Recipients will be notified of selection by the Office of Student Affairs on March 22, 2004.

## Nineteenth Century British Lit. and Culture Specialist Joins Department

### Which writers in your area of specialization interest you most, and why?

The writers who interest me most include the Brontës, George Eliot, and Anthony Trollope, all for very

different reasons. What I love about certain Victorian novelists, particularly Eliot and Trollope, is their perspicacity in depicting complex human emotions and motivations and the subtleties of social interaction. I also find their sympathy and wit refreshing.

### Can you say something about your approach to teaching a 300-level literature class?

The approach depends on the subject matter, but in general the goal is to expose my students to a representative sample of texts from whatever period or genre we're dealing with; to study them together in depth, with close reading of vital passages; and to locate them within their literary, historical, and cultural contexts. I always include secondary readings in the cultural and critical backgrounds. It's a challenge to keep the reading load manageable when you're teaching the Victorian novel, but I try to make it a pleasurable and edifying experience, as it was meant to be for the original readers.

### An Internship in English?

What do you do: sit around and write essays? Read Shakespeare? What does an internship in English actually look like? This semester three English majors, Jennifer Hubbard, Sasha Link (both seniors), and Linda Newman (a junior) are trying to answer that question for themselves in three very different ways. Jenn Hubbard has been working for the Silver

City Galleria working on PR for the mall's Donation Celebration holiday fundraiser. Jenn's internship required her to create all kinds of professional texts. "I wrote all the communication for the event—promotional materials for mall merchants, information for donating merchants, press releases that got sent out to area newspapers. I learned how to be fast and accurate this semester."

(cont'd p. 3)



Professor Kathleen Vejvoda

### *Vejevoda Interview (cont'd)*

#### **What literary and/or cultural theorists have influenced you the most?**

I suppose I admire Michel Foucault especially, because reading his *History of Sexuality* was kind of a breakthrough for me. Even though subsequent feminist critics of all kinds have taken issue with it, I still admire the work of feminist psychoanalytical critics of a quarter-century ago: without them, where would we be? I also have a deep appreciation of excellent biographers.

#### **What will you teach in 2004-5?**

I'm looking forward to teaching *Women Writers to 1900*, which I will design primarily as a course in the rise of domestic fiction. I will also be teaching the English Novel II and, hopefully, a 200-level course about film adaptations of nineteenth-century novels and a graduate course in either the Brontës or Victorian literature.

#### **What other new courses would you like to develop?**

I'd like to teach single-author courses on Eliot, Trollope, or Dickens and perhaps teach a colloquium or course on a topic in late Victorian culture.

#### **What do you like best about teaching at Bridgewater?**

It's great to have the opportunity to teach in very specific subject areas. I also like teaching so many students who are preparing to be teachers themselves.

#### **What do you do after work?**

I love to take long walks or to make the impromptu jaunt into the North End for a cozy dinner. I also read of course, and with shocking regularity, I do laundry.

### **Sigma Tau Delta Off to a Roaring Start**

Have you heard? Sigma Tau Delta, the International English Honor Society, will be inducting 41 new Bridgewater members this January! These new members are overflowing with enthusiasm for their new positions in a higher academic community, and they want you to share in their success.



Why have they joined Sigma Tau Delta? First of all, they deserve the recognition. They have all completed at least three semesters at Bridgewater and have earned a 3.0 GPA (or higher, as in the case of many) in their English majors. Also, these students are interested in pursuing the sense of community Sigma Tau Delta offers.

From informal discussions of literature and theory to member presentations of critical or creative works in progress, from attending a play or film to getting together for a casual evening out, this organization is built to enhance their academic and social lives. Membership in the International English Honor Society looks good on paper too, and most students are aware of this.

Our chapter of Sigma Tau Delta is growing more and more rapidly as the semester continues. We now have a full executive board: President Elizabeth Robbins, Vice President Kathryn Powers, Secretary

Kendra Sharp, Public Relations Coordinator Lindsey White, Historian Joe Cutrufo, and Membership Chair Theary May.

These six students have dedicated their time and energy to making Sigma Tau Delta all it can be. They have already begun planning future events for the group and are eagerly awaiting the ideas of our new members. Vice President Kate Powers says: "Sigma Tau is an opportunity for all people in the English major to get recognized for their achievements. Sigma Tau is devoted to making you and your peers in the English major realize that you're among the most dedicated and hard-working students at Bridgewater. The group is full of wonderful and amazing people."

A semi-formal induction ceremony for new members is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, January 21, 2003 at 6:30 pm in the Campus Center small ballroom. English department faculty and staff are also invited.

For more information, or if you have any questions, please feel free to contact Prof. Kathleen Vejevoda (kvejvoda@bridgew.edu) or Beth Robbins (erobbins@bridgew.edu). You can also find out more about Sigma Tau Delta at the official website, [www.english.org](http://www.english.org).

We hope to see you at the induction ceremony!

**-Beth Robbins**

Letter from Dr. Evelyn Pezzulich, Department Chair

In my last letter written for the Spring 2003 issue of *The English Update*, I informed you about the results of the English major survey and also responded to your ideas and concerns. I would like to devote this letter to sharing some results of the English Department's curriculum review which we have been working on for the last several years.

To begin, we have created some new courses that we hope majors will be as excited about as we are. Since they must go through college governance first, we will not be able to offer them this year, but here is a sneak peak. As EN 310 changes from The African American Novel to African Literature I, we have also introduced the following two new courses along with six others:

- EN 233 Introduction to the African American Novel
- EN 311 African American Literature II
- EN 315 Ethnic American Literature
- EN 354 Twentieth Century British Drama
- EN 357 Recent American Drama
- EN 387 Advanced Fiction Writing Workshop
- EN 388 Topics in Literature (with changing topics of interest)
- EN 399 Post-Colonial Literature

In addition to developing these new courses, the faculty have worked together to create English Department Program Outcomes.

By the end of their program, majors should be able to demonstrate:

1. knowledge of works from different periods and genres within the evolving canon of English language texts, including but not limited to texts by women, African Americans, other ethnic and racial minorities, Anglophone authors, and gay and lesbian authors
2. knowledge of the various critical and theoretical approaches to texts
3. in their own texts, an understanding of the writing process and of the roles of audience, purpose, and various rhetorical forms
4. the ability to analyze and interpret the texts of others as well as their own, recognize the contexts in which they are written, and understand the ways in which texts and contexts interact
5. the ability to write coherent, organized, well-developed, and substantive texts that follow the conventions of standard written English
6. in their own texts, the ability to locate, evaluate, and cite primary source material, literary criticism, theory, and other scholarly texts relevant to the profession.

In closing, I hope it is apparent that we, the English faculty, value our majors highly and continue to work hard to strengthen our program for your benefit. Until the next issue of our newsletter, I wish you success on your final exams and a relaxing and joyous holiday season.

## The English Update

### English Internships

(cont'd from page 1)

Sasha Link is working for *The Onyx Informer*, a small journal out of Boston that chronicles the urban experience. "It's been a great opportunity. I worked at *The Standard Times* last semester—and I had never worked in journalism. This semester I feel like I'm using that experience to help me learn even more at *The Onyx*. I love writing about living in the city. I love the way you write on a job—with other people reading it and giving you advice." By the time the semester ends, Sasha will have at least three pieces published in the magazine.

Finally, Linda Newman is working for the local ABC affiliate in Boston where her primary job is to write the ads for the news. "You know the ten second spots that tell you what you can see if you watch the news at six? That's me. You'd be amazed the amount of time you spend to get to those two minutes."

In the end, what all these women are really learning is how to live a writing life -- how their education fits in with the lives they will lead after they graduate. That's what a good internship in any major should do. If you are interested in doing an internship in English, stop by Lee Torda's Tillinhast 307 office, send email (ltorda@bridgew.edu), or phone her (531-2435). You can also contact John Paganelli, Associate Director, Internship, in the Career Services office in the Campus Center (ground floor, room 008; phone 531-1328, or email jpaganelli@bridgew.edu).

### Milton Specialist Joins Faculty



*Professor Gregory Chaplin*

#### What interests you most about Milton?

As a young man, Milton aspired to great things, and after a difficult beginning, service to his country, blindness, and political persecution, he exceeded all expectations. I have a tremendous amount of admiration for courage, fortitude, and ambition. Milton embodies those qualities for me. Besides, he really is a brilliant poet. The more you read him, the more this becomes clear. In any case, my interests encompass more than Milton. I am interested in Renaissance Humanism, the early modern theater, sixteenth- and seventeenth-century lyrics, and all sorts of other things.

#### What literary and/or cultural theorists have influenced you the most?

When I went to graduate school, I was really invested in literary and cultural theory—and if I had more free time, I'd probably revert back

to being a bit of a theory junkie (and wearing flannel shirts and listening to grunge). My theoretical tastes are a bit dated at this point: my thinking has been shaped by anthropologists like Pierre Bourdieu and Mary Douglas, while a lot of the issues that I address have been framed by Michel Foucault. I should also confess that I am really fond of twentieth-century literary scholars like C. S. Lewis and William Empson.

#### Can you say something about your approach to teaching a 300-level literature course?

I am increasingly trying to let the course material shape my classroom approach. Different types of texts offer different opportunities, and I am trying to take more advantage of this fact. At the same time, I feel that the assignments in 300-level literature courses should both reinforce and expand the skills of our majors. In the spring, I am teaching Seventeenth-Century Literature, a course that includes a lot of different types of literary texts, and that variety is going to translate into a range of in-class approaches and writing assignments.

#### What will you teach in 2004-05?

I might offer a seminar on *Paradise Lost*, in which we will examine the poem from a number of critical perspectives. Also, I may be offering either Continental Renaissance Literature or Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama.

#### What do you do after work?

Cook, read, exercise, and perhaps more work. Sometimes I watch the Flyers beat the Bruins, the Sixers embarrass the Celtics, or Sherlock Holmes keep England safe in the Granada Television series based on Conan Doyle's stories.