

# The Irregular Littonian

The Literature Program Newsletter

Number 42, Issue 2

Welcome Alumni, Students, Faculty, and Friends,

This issue of the Stockton LITT Program Littonian is a humble shadow of the fall issue extraordinaire assembled by Professor Kinsella, full of Stockton history, photos, alumni testimonies, and much more; if you missed it, you can see it here:

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/literature/files/2007/08/IrregularLittonianF2013.pdf>

Since this issue is close to the end of the semester, let's start by inviting you to a few events: **Suey Park** will speak about "Hashtags as the New form of Social Activism" this Monday, April 21, in the Campus Center Event Room. And the 40th Anniversary **Stockpot Reading**, with poet **Frank Sherlock**, will be April 23, in the L-Wing Art Gallery, 6:30 p.m. All leading up to our ultimate event:

## **THE REALLY, REALLY HUGE LITT BASH**

*will be on Friday, April 25*

*at 4:00 in the TRLC.*

*There will be spectacular food, literary quizzo with prizes, literary awards, honor society inductions, and...*

*Tom Kinsella's pig cookies.*

*They'll be there, just waiting for you. Join us!*

To see the most recent Bash fliers (worth seeing) go to:

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/threecourses/2014/04/13/more-than-six-bash-flyers/>

As always, we have been busy, with much news to share. Probably the biggest shakeup in the LITT Program is that the lovely Lisa Honaker is moving up to be the Dean of the School of Arts and Humanities! Congrats to Lisa!

However, this does not mean she will not still teach an occasional LITT course and always have a novel within hand's reach. At least we hope so!

### Some of our Spring events:



The Visiting Writers Series, invited author/editor Ewuare X. Osayande, to read from his edited anthology *Stand Our Ground: Global Anthology of Poetry for Trayvon Martin and Marissa Alexander*, an event co-sponsored by the Council of Black Faculty and Staff. And, fiction writer Rahul Mehta read from his collection of stories *Quarantine*.

Stockton Literature majors (and Sigma Tau Delta members) **Sarah Baginsky** and **Mark-Allan Donaldson** presented their research on digital medieval manuscripts at the Delaware Valley Medieval Association at Rutgers University in Camden in February. This meeting featured papers by faculty and graduate students, as well as featuring a series of “lightning talks,” including those by Sarah and Mark-Allan, who presented research on John Shirley, the 15th century scribe of works by medieval writers Geoffrey Chaucer, John Gower, and John Lydgate. **Sarah** examined two digital facsimiles of manuscripts attributed to Shirley and argued that Shirley should be considered both a professional and amateur scribe. **Mark-Allan’s** addressed whether the Harley 7333 manuscript was the work of multiple scribes. He looked at specific sections throughout the manuscript to examine the letter forms, the spacing of words, the ruling of the page, and other paleographical details to show the differences and similarities within the single manuscript.

Four current LITT students, (left to right, background) **Christina Wheeler**, **Andrea Manley**, **Kirsten Corley**, and (foreground) **Suzi Odlen**, traveled to Paterson, NJ for the all-day Paterson University Writing Conference last week, taking workshops in revision, creative non-fiction, and the world of publishing.



More highlights of LITT student scholarship: **Christina Wheeler** (LITT '15) also attended and presented at the Sigma Tau Delta National Conference in Savannah, Georgia in March. **Dana Oberkofler** presented a paper she wrote for ProfH's class "Literature & Genocide": "Genocidal Rape: Slavenka Drakulic's *S.* A Novel about the Balkans" at the Stockton Day of Scholarship. **Ciara Barrick**, a junior LITT major, was awarded a \$1,000 Board of Trustees Distinguished Fellowship Award for a project titled, "Marianne Moore and William Carlos Williams Performance." Barrick's project aims to stimulate interest in the arts in South Jersey and the Stockton community and help promote the Literature and Theatre Programs at Stockton.

Lastly, the following alumni appeared at the LITT Alumni Career panel on March 18: **Toni Baisden**, Coordinator for Housing Operations, Rider



University, Writer/Editor, Silent Noise Publishing; **Mike Nees**, Case Manager, South Jersey AIDS Alliance; **Scott Mulraney**, Senior Copy Editor, H4B Catapult; **Samantha McCorry Conrad**, Social Worker, Salvation Army; and **Robbie Dulaney**, blogger and author of *The Knitster*.

And speaking of Alumni, here's more Alumni News (in no particular order):

**Corey Labruzzo** (LITT '14) has been accepted to Rutgers-Camden School of Law. **Amanda Kennedy** (2013) has been accepted into the Graduate Program for Speech Language Pathology at Richard Stockton College, her first choice of programs. **Kevin Reilly** (LITT '13) has been accepted to an MFA program in Fiction at New York University. **Stephanie Cawley** got in to Ohio State University, Syracuse and University of Pittsburgh for an MFA. She received a fellowship at OSU but chose Pittsburgh where she will be a teaching assistant.

**Jessica Maratea**, class of 2009, will be graduating from Rutgers University with a degree in Library and Information Science this December 2014. **Preston Porter**, class of 2009, has been doing social media marketing and website/blog writing for two restaurants and their owner's TV show on PBS "Eat! Drink! Italy!" Also, congratulations to Jessica and Preston, on the recent announcement of their engagement!

**Ashley Ayer** directed a production of Shrek at the high school where she teaches French. She was recently named 2014 Teacher of the Year at her school! **Chris Moore** completed yoga teacher training in Massachusetts. **Samantha Conrad** works as a disaster case manager for Hurricane Sandy victims. **Dennis O'Connell** completed his masters at Seton Hall.

AMST graduate student and AC High School teacher **Ricky Epps Kearney** won the 2014 Graduate Student Recipient of [The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey](#)'s Community Engagement Award. **Mike Nees**, class of 2007, organized the second annual Atlantic City Story Slam at Stockton's Noyes Museum Art Garage.

**Robert A. Geise**, class of 2005, recently participated in a collaborative art show at the Riverfront Renaissance Center for the Arts in Millville. Titled "See Me, Hear Me, Get My Story," the show featured 28 local artists and poets who randomly selected each other's works to create new visual art and poetry. Robert's untitled sonnet became the inspiration for an etching by painter and

printmaker Maryann Cannon; similarly, the watercolor "Base Harbor Head Light" by Linda Gazsi of Gazsi Studios, inspired Robert's notable poem "lighthouse."

**Sara Moulton**, class of 2008, is taking a year off from teaching in the US to teach abroad. She is currently applying to a program in South Korea. **Toni Baisden**, class of 2006, is editing a poetry anthology titled *A Literary Assault on the American Mind* for Silent Noise Publishing Group, which was founded by another STK alum, Bruce Jennings (Public Health, class of 2009). It is due out later this year. **Lydia Fecteau**, LITT alum and Adjunct Professor at Stockton, will be presenting two papers at Syracuse University for CripCon and two papers at Rutgers-Camden for the Buffy to Batgirl: Women & Gender in SciFi, Fantasy, & Comics/Conference.

Stockton Alums **Philip J Reed** and **James Lawless** have combined their passion for writing with their love of video games in *The Lost Worlds of Power*, a fiction anthology containing 12 literary adaptations -- each by a different author -- of classic NES games. The project pays tribute to the original *Worlds of Power* books, and aim to capture the spirit of inaccuracy, irrelevance and ineptitude that made the original books so memorable, while being a bit more self-aware about the shortcomings, and having a lot of fun along the way. The finished product will be available for free download in eBook format, and it's due to be released late this spring.

## FACULTY UPDATES

### Professor Deb Gussman



Deborah Gussman is finishing up revisions to the introduction for her scholarly edition of Catharine Sedgwick's *Married or Single?* and expects to have the manuscript completed by June. She is working on a digital collection of Sedgwick's uncollected tales and sketches; the work-in-progress can be seen at: <http://sedgwickstories.omeka.net/>. She will begin a new role as director of Stockton's MA program in American Studies in the fall, while continuing to teach courses in the LITT and WGSS programs.

#### **She offers this learning moment from her past:**

I've never been particularly athletic or physically active (unless there's a large body of water nearby. I do love to swim.). As a kid, if you found me

outside, chances are I was sitting on the steps and reading a book. I almost failed gym in my senior year of high school. I don't know how to skate, or ski, and I once broke my back sledding. And yet one of the most important non-academic learning experiences I've had is a physical one, and it has come from practicing yoga. I've been going to a yoga class, with the same teacher, for the last five years or so, and I've learned two wonderful things. The first is not waste time or energy comparing myself with other people. While I expected that there would be poses that were difficult, even anatomically impossible for me to do, what I discovered was that this was true for everyone – even the younger, stronger, and more obviously limber students -- and, as it turns out, that there are poses that come quite easily to me after all. I'm not sure why, but this is an enormously helpful realization. Second, I've come to be grateful for my physical body and all of the amazing things it does, each and every day. After spending so much time in my head, as academics do, learning to be in my body has been a joyous lesson.

### Professor Adalaine Holton

is on sabbatical this semester and will return in the fall. Look for an update on her research and activities in the Fall Littonian.

## Professor Marion Hussong

is currently working on an article on the literature of the persecuted Slovenian minority in Austria. She will present her paper in September at the German Studies Association conference in Kansas City. But Prof H is really most excited about recent developments in her private life: her granddaughter Allison Nicole Shepherd was born on February 1, 2014. At the moment, Allison's reading preferences include nursery rhymes and lullabies, but she is looking forward to a full reading of *Good Night, Moon* as soon as she is able to stay awake for more than a few minutes.

### **She offers this learning moment from her past:**

I have a skill that my American friends and family find really creepy: I know how to find edible mushrooms in the forest, and I collect and prepare those mushrooms in all kinds of delicious recipes. I learned how to do this when I was a preschooler. On warm, humid summer days the whole family would fan out into the forest behind my grandparents' old farmhouse in Austria, and the hunt for mushrooms was on! We only collected two kinds: chanterelles and summer boletes.

My American friends always turn pale when I tell them about our mushroom feasts. "How remarkable!" they mumble in that polite American way that avoids offending. And then I can see that they hope I will never invite them to a mushroom dinner.

It's really not risky thing, though, if you know what you are doing. Neither the chanterelle nor the bolete has any lookalike cousin that is poisonous. When my friends ask: "But isn't this dangerous?" I ask them if they know the difference between an orange and a banana. "You wouldn't mistake one for the other?" I point out and explain that it is the same with chanterelle, boletes, and poisonous fungi. They look too distinctive to get them mixed up. "Of course I would not mistake an orange for a banana!" my friends say, but I can tell that they'd rather not try my dumplings with mushrooms dinner. I, however, will continue to roam the forests in search of bounty.





## Professor Kristin Jacobson

In the fall Professor Jacobson taught in the American Studies graduate program for the first time. In February her chapter, "Profitable Sentiments: HBO's *The Wire* and Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*," in the book *The Sentimental Mode: Essays in Literature, Film and Television* (edited by Jennifer A. Williamson, Jennifer Larson and Ashley Reed) appeared. If you want to know what her research students are up to this term, check out their Zotero bibliography on Eudora Welty's *Thirteen Stories*:

[https://www.zotero.org/groups/eudora\\_welty-litt\\_2123\\_sp14](https://www.zotero.org/groups/eudora_welty-litt_2123_sp14). Last, but not least, she is co-chairing a task force to try to bring a women's, gender and sexuality center to the Galloway campus. The task force has just completed the report, and they continue to collect support signatures: <https://www.change.org/petitions/support-rscnj-women-s-gender-and-sexuality-center>.

### **She offers this learning moment from her past:**

I try to learn something new at least once each year--something that really takes me out of my comfort zone. I like to do this because it reminds me what it is like to be a new learner, and I hope that helps make me a better teacher. I've tried waterskiing, knitting, and most recently I tried a new class at my gym called "insanity." It was insane. I was out of step with the rest of the class the entire time and so I felt stupid, out of shape, and old. A friend, who regularly takes the class, asked me what I thought of it. "I hated it. I couldn't keep up," I panted. She replied, "Oh, that's just because it was your first time." Such experiences remind me of how regular failure is an important part of the learning process and how good teaching depends on allowing for failure as much as it is measured by student success.



## Professor Cindy King



This year Professor King has been devising a quilting course for GENS for Fall 2014 and Skyping a lot of poets into her classes. She has been writing a collaborative poetry manuscript with the poet Hillary Gravendyk and working on a third poetry manuscript. She has also been writing feminist film criticism for Bitch Flicks. She continues to teach meditation and the examination of choices through mindfulness in GIS Politics of Food.

### **She offers this learning moment from her past:**

My brother was trying to teach me how to ride a bike. He was getting crabby and even forgot to tell me how to brake so I crashed into a tree. Then my dad came to the door and I said I want dad to teach me. So my dad walked up and down the street with me talking to me and holding the bike up and telling me to pedal. We did this for about half an hour at the most. Then we went to the park with the bike and he kept walking me and talking to me while I pedaled. At one point, I asked him a question and he didn't answer, and when I looked back, he was pretty far away, waving at me. I actually hope that my pedagogy follows this model of teaching: low-stress practice that leads, seamlessly to agency and to mastery.

## Professor Tom Kinsella

Over the past year Tom Kinsella has been teaching a lovely range of courses—Shakespeare, Grammar, Writing South Jersey, and Designing Literary Apps, the latter team-taught with Professor Ken Tompkins. In addition, Kinsella has been working hard to enrich Stockton’s library collections as they pertain to South Jersey. He has facilitated several donations, large and small, which have added thousands of interesting and informative items to the Special Collections area of Stockton’s library. If you don’t know about our growing Special Collections, it’s no big surprise. A decade ago they didn’t exist (beyond a quite small collection of old books on various unrelated topics). Now there are well over 10,000 titles pertaining to the Pine Barrens, John Henry “Pop” Lloyd, Buzby’s General Store in Chatsworth, and the Cape May Jazz festival. The collections are anchored by large donations from William W. Leap and David C. Munn, two well-known historians and collectors of South Jerseyana. Tom continues to try to interest students, the College community, and the wider local community in all aspects of South Jersey culture and history.



### **He offers this learning moment from his past:**

Nathan asked that each of us describe a moment of learning outside of an academic setting. For the last twenty minutes I’ve been sitting back in my chair, hands behind my head, remembering one moment after another. Many memories have stopped for a visit, but when measured most have seemed too complicated or too long for writing here. The following, though, is short and I hope will do.

At fourteen I was summer-time friends with Mike Girdwood, and one day we decided to build a raft to sail on the lake. We had an outrigger design in mind—a craft with a long thin platform balanced by an arm for stability. We described our plans to Mike’s grandfather, a famed local craftsman and a master of woodworking. “Just remember,” said Mr. Girdwood, “anything worth building will take time. Don’t hurry the project.” Well, I was fourteen and Mike was thirteen, and we were in a hurry. So we built our raft out of old scrap lumber in about an hour, and then we carried it to the lake and floated it for the first time. Unmanned, it was clearly unseaworthy, tipping and swaying precariously in 4-inch waves. When Mike and I gently cast off, paddles in hand, it just sank under our weight and then tipped to the side. It was a piece of crap. Sitting in 12 inches of water with the raft bobbing nearby, I thought of the advice we had been given. I won’t suggest that I was struck immediately and completely by the idea that good work takes time. But at that moment, I think, the lesson began to sink in.



## Professor Adeline Koh

Adeline Koh has been busy getting [DH@Stockton](#), the Digital Humanities Center, off the ground as well as starting with students and faculty on digital humanities projects. She has been giving talks at many institutions (Columbia, Cabrini College, The University of the Pacific, Princeton, University of Virginia, Emory, etc.) on the digital work she does at Stockton. She gave the keynote

lecture for [Re:Humanities](#), a digital humanities conference at Haverford College, which she also published as a peer reviewed essay titled "[The Political Power of Play](#)" with [Hybrid Pedagogy](#). She has two peer reviewed essays in the academic journals *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* and *French Forum* forthcoming this semester. Adeline is also looking forward to [THATCamp Digital Pedagogy](#) in Atlantic City this summer, a beginner-friendly conference open to anyone (especially Stockton-related folk) interested in digital pedagogy.

### **She offers this learning moment from her past:**

This semester Adeline and her husband rescued the newest member of her family, a gorgeous collie-shepherd mix who is named Cooper. Being their first dog (and a very smart canine to boot), Cooper has taught them more on how to listen to him than vice versa. One of the most memorable lessons Adeline has learned from Cooper so far is how dogs respond more to body language and energy than to verbal commands. She is currently reflecting on how this translates into teaching and lecturing!

## Professor Nathan Long

Professor Long has been busy this spring teaching a new course, Flash Fiction Workshop, which he describes as the Titanic of all courses: the most modern, up-to-date, unsinkable course available. In it, each of the fourteen student has to complete 50 assignments, a total of 700 assignments in all. Much to his chagrin, the students have virtually turned in every single one on time. He is also offering Queer



Autobiography, three American Studies independent studies, and a senior seminar/graduate workshop for four dedicated students working on book-length manuscripts. With his ‘course release’ time, he is sending out stories and essays, though concentrating on researching small presses and sending out his story collections. He just recently took four Creative Writing track students to the Paterson University Writer’s Conference (see alumni news above).

### **He offers this learning moment from his past:**

As a bicyclist, I’ve had drivers get so mad that I’m on the road that they’ve shouted at me and even gotten out of their cars to threaten me. I’ve known a few bicyclists who have been intentionally hit by a car—one, my housemate, landed in the hospital with a broken hip.

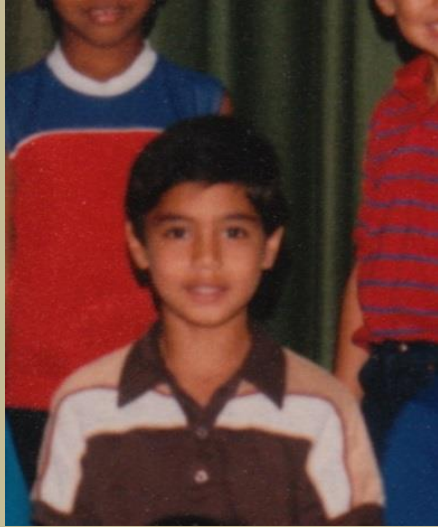
Last year, while I was biking on a narrow road in Philadelphia, I heard a large car behind me, starting to pass, but then hesitating. I imagined the frustration building up in the driver, and I prepared for the worst—a loud honk, an angry comment, or being run off the road. Finally, the car started to pass, but instead drove right beside me. It was an old large sedan, low to the road, and inside were two middle-aged women—but I’ve come to learn that road rage is an equal opportunity emotion, so I did not let down my guard.

My head was above their roof, so I couldn’t see the driver or exactly hear what she was saying. But I thought I knew the gist of her words: what was I doing on the road? Why wasn’t I on the sidewalk (though there was no sidewalk)?

Though I was scared she would just knock me over with a turn of the wheel, I yelled back to her that I had the right to be on the road, that if she didn’t know the rules of the road, she should re-read the driver’s manual or stop driving. Of course it was likely that if I hadn’t heard the driver, she wouldn’t be able to hear me. The passenger heard me though. She remained silent and blank faced as the car sped away in front of me.

I felt a great release. Then, at the next bend, I noticed that the car was pulled off to the left. Were they going to turn around and to come up behind me again? I was scared. I watched closely, and as I got closer, I stared inside the cab of their car. The two women had a large map out and were looking at it. They didn’t even notice me go by.

It was then I realized my mistake: they had pulled up to me to ask directions. I was the one who had offered up the undeserving rage.



## Professor Adam Miyashiro

Prof. Miyashiro co-organized the February meeting of the Delaware Valley Medieval Association, where he and two Stockton undergraduates presented papers. He also presented his research at the American Comparative Literature Association conference at NYU in March and contributed to the State of the Discipline Report for the ACLA. He is preparing to present research on globalization and pre-modernity at the Fourth World Congress on World and Global History at the École normale supérieure in Paris in September. He is currently completing his first book to be published with Fordham

University Press. He looks forward to teaching courses on King Arthur and medieval romances in Fall 2014, and to teaching his first online and hybrid courses over Summer and Fall 2014. He will be the incoming Secretary for both the Stockton Federation of Teachers and the Delaware Valley Medieval Association.

### **He offers this learning moment from his past:**

Academic and non-academic learning are not too far apart. Learning always implies a challenge – sometimes the mastery of difficult subject matter, sometimes a challenge of your own limitations – and learning a skill that’s outside of your own comfort zone is always a more difficult challenge. When I was a poor, very broke, undergraduate in the late 1990s, computers started to become necessary for college-level work. But when my old Windows 95 PC was on the fritz, I had no money to replace it. So I did the next best thing: I built one. I had no degree in electrical engineering, nor in software programming, but I was determined to build my own computer, despite not knowing anything about the process. So I went to the local computer store and asked what I would need to build my own PC. They said, “Oh, it’s so easy! You need a motherboard, memory, a video card, hard drive, CD-ROM drive, etc.” So I went to the discount warehouse, got all of the materials for roughly a third of the cost of an already-built PC (around \$300 at that time). Like a super easy puzzle, all of the parts magically fit together – some snapping and popping, some use of the jeweler’s screwdrivers – and voila! I had a PC. I switched it on and installed the software. I used this computer for six years: I finished my BA degree on this computer, wrote my first two articles on that PC, and my dissertation proposal. That computer was so reliable, I subsequently had a small cottage industry of building custom computers for my family and friends. Every couple of months, I’d build a computer with someone else’s money, and I got better and faster at it. I offered a \$1500 computer for \$500. No warranties, though, and buyer beware! Many of these computers lasted for more than 5 years (an eternity for a PC). Even after I switched to a Mac in 2004, I continued to build PCs, including one I built for my wife in 2005, which still works, miraculously. That’s how I learned how to build a computer. And it proves the old Latin dictum: “Mater artium necessitas” (Necessity is the mother of invention/skills).

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That's it from the faculty! Thanks for reading another issue of the Irregular Littonian. As always, if you have news to share, please send it to any professor in the LITT Program. And, if you're feeling generous . . .

We are looking for on-going donors for our literary and creative writing awards. If you are interested in becoming the donor for an award, please contact Nathan Long ([longn@stockton.edu](mailto:longn@stockton.edu)).

We also have a new addition to the LITT Program website. You can now contribute tax-deductible donations to the LITT program, to help bring in distinguished speakers and fund other Literature student program activities. Details on donating can be found here:

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/literature/donate-to-the-literature-program/>

You can donate to the Literature program's operating fund by selecting "Previously Established Restricted Fund" and naming "Literature Program" in the blank.

As always, you can follow the LITT Program at <http://www.facebook.com/LITTatStockton>.

From all of us at LITT Central,

Happy writing and reading,

Nathan Long