Jennifer McCauley Receives NEA Grant

On November 1, 2017, Jennifer McCauley received a call from someone who said that she had won an award from the National Endowment for the Arts. This is a call that most writers dream about, but Jennifer was immediately skeptical. There had been some chatter online about fake calls being made; plus she was having, as she says, “a bad writing day.” Regardless, she gave them her information and was sworn to secrecy. It wasn’t until three weeks later that the NEA made its announcement of the winners, and Jennifer’s name appeared as one of 36 prose writers from across the country who had been awarded $25,000 each by one of the most prestigious arts organizations in the country. Writers apply year in and year out for an NEA, always knowing that it’s a long shot. How many years had Jennifer been applying? Part of why she didn’t trust the guy on the phone was that this was her first.

Jennifer came to the MU English PhD program in Fall of 2015, after having completed an MFA at Florida International and taken a year off to teach and write. Since arriving at MU she has had a number of projects in the works, all of which have one thing in common: they play with the hybridity of genres. While she applied for the NEA in the “prose” category, she explains that the writing samples she submitted were part nonfiction, part flash fiction, part a piece of a novel, and part short story. And she doesn’t just play with the line between prose genres. Her first published book, *Scar On/Scar Off*, which was published by Stalking Horse Press last year, is a combination of essays and poetry and, as Jennifer says, “pieces that probably are somewhere between them.” *Scar On/Scar Off* was recently awarded the bronze medal at the Independent Publisher Book Awards. (continued on pg. 2)

Ray Ronci Wins Kemper Award

When he won the William T. Kemper Fellowship for Teaching Excellence award in the spring of this year, Ray Ronci had already been teaching for nearly forty years, in a career stretching from his early graduate education at the University of Colorado-Boulder through stints at Emerson College campuses in both Boston and Holland, on to the University of Nebraska, and finally to Missouri beginning in 1999. Since his arrival here his teaching has been honored with the Mary Lago Teaching Award, the Purple Chalk Award, and the Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Education. He has also been, for the same nearly four decades, a student and a teacher in the Rinzai school of Zen Buddhism. As an ordained Rinzai monk he has directed a zendo, a center for Zen practice, during most of the time he has lived in Columbia.

I sat down recently with Ray to talk about his career and asked him how his practice of Zen had influenced his classroom teaching at Mizzou. “Profoundly,” he told me. “It’s had a huge impact.” The Rinzai school emphasizes zazen, “sitting,” a disciplined approach to extended meditation that opens the mind to greater insight and empathy. It also stresses, in Ray’s words, “doing directly and specifically the task at hand,” with “one hundred per cent presence.” This ability to be completely present and open to students in the classroom, to be a trusted “ear that listens” to what students need in a particular moment of their lives, has led to connections that endure for years after graduation. Ray told me that what he teaches “is not just for the classroom, it’s for life,” and his students agree: in his teaching evaluations they routinely (continued on pg. 2)
But Jennifer’s work doesn’t just tackle the forms of hybridity, it also thematizes hybridity at every turn. As she explains it, she’s interested in “the hybrid experience of being from different worlds, of being biracial.” The pieces in Scar On/Scar Off are steeped in issues related to her African-American and Latina experiences, as well as the issues of family and redemption. This investigation of hybrid identities and experiences will continue in the work she does on her NEA project, as she pitched the project as one that will take her to the places where her family resides: Puerto Rico, Kansas City, St. Louis, and Miami.

Jennifer spent this past summer in Puerto Rico and will head back for another trip this December. When reflecting on her time there, she seemed most struck by how different it is now, after Hurricane Maria. She says it will undoubtedly change the scope of the project, as buildings she once knew well are now totally gone and certain towns don’t look the same. She’s spending most of her time in San Juan and Guayanilla, where her family resides.

To talk to Jennifer about her work is to be caught up in a cluster of projects, all of which bleed into each other, both thematically and formally. As soon as you think you can pin her down as one type of writer, she’s quick to tell you about something else she’s working on that defies it. In her MFA program, for example, she applied in fiction, became a poet, and wrote a historical novel while she was there. At MU, she’s published a book of essays and poems, but right now it looks like her dissertation will be a collection of short stories. For Jennifer, this crossing of boundaries is exactly the point.

Ray acknowledged the difficulty of getting students to think differently about so many things, but he embraces that process. The name that his Zen Master Sasaki Roshi gave him is Seido, which means “One for whom the Way is his home; one whose home is the Way.” His 2018 Kemper Teaching Fellowship is a fitting recognition of the work he has done over a long career in guiding his students along their own respective ways.
Chair Chat

Welcome to the annual edition of the Tate Times! With this issue, we bring you so many exciting stories about the astounding work going on in and around Tate Hall. Members of the English Department have recently been recognized for their accomplishments with some of the most prestigious awards out there (see the stories on Joanna Hearne’s NEH and Jennifer McCauley’s NEA Awards), and we are thrilled to bring you behind the scenes to see how such achievements came to be. We also bring you stories about the amazing things going on in our classrooms and the people who make learning truly transformative (see the stories on Ray Ronci’s Kemper Award and on the trip to Africa undertaken by Michael Marlo’s linguistics students). In these pages you’ll also meet new faculty, new English majors, graduating seniors, and all the people who make Tate Hall an intellectually lively place to be. We hope that if you are an alum reading these pages you will get a feel for what the English department is like today. We invite you to come back for a visit any time – come hear a talk or a reading, visit with current English majors, get involved with our alumni board! We appreciate your support and look forward to staying in touch in the years ahead. Please drop me a line any time at socaridesa@missouri.edu.

Sincerely,

Alexandra Socarides, Chair

Leaders Board

This fall we welcomed two new members to the English Department’s Leaders Board, Jenelle Beavers and Stefanie Wortman, who were undergraduate English majors at the same time. The Leaders Board is a dedicated group of English alums with a wide variety of professional experiences who meet twice a year to discuss ongoing innovations, developments, and challenges facing the department. They generously support a variety of programs, including the undergraduate literary magazine EPIC and various scholarships for both undergraduate and graduate students. Welcome to Jenelle and Stefanie!

In 2018, Jenelle Beavers joined the UM System Office of the General Counsel. Originally from Kansas City, MO, she graduated from MU in 2001 with a B.A. in English. She earned her J.D. and M.P.H. from the University of Michigan in 2005. Jenelle is honored and excited to join the English Leaders Board. She credits her professional success with the fantastic education and roots that she received as an English major at Mizzou, and looks forward to giving back to current and future students as a member of the board. She loves being back in Columbia, and when she’s not representing the University she spends time with her husband and two young daughters.

Stefanie Wortman is a documentation developer in the State and Public Health group at Cerner in Kansas City. She has both her B.A. and Ph.D. in English from the University of Missouri (B.A. 2002, Ph.D. 2010) and her M.F.A. in Creative Writing from Boston University (2003). Having taken a winding career path, she is interested in helping English Department students and graduates showcase the skills they have gained from studying the liberal arts but don’t always know how to articulate.
Outstanding Seniors

English/Theatre double major Zahria Moore has many things to be proud of as she heads into her senior year. Last fall she wrote a play called “Passion Play” in her Intermediate Playwriting course, and in one year’s time it has travelled from Columbia to Iowa to Washington, DC. “Passion Play,” whose title invokes plays about the resurrection of Christ and the three Marys’ visit to Jesus’ grave, is about three African-American women, each of whom visits the same grave, each believing it is her son in the ground. Through each mother’s telling of the story of her son’s life, Zahria explores a variety of issues that have been important to the Black Lives Matter movement, including police shootings, gun violence, and suicide. “Passion Play” was named a national finalist for the John Cauble Short Play Award at the Kennedy Center in April 2018, and Zahria had the opportunity to go to DC and do a playwriting fellowship and meet with playwrights from around the world. Zahria will be writing an honors thesis with Dr. April Langley this spring and then plans to pursue a Master’s degree in either playwriting or performance studies, a stop along her way to eventually owning her own theatre company.

Lauren Pike, a senior English-major Journalism-minor who hails from Nashville, Tennessee, has a passion for stories of all varieties, and that shines through when one looks at the spectrum of issues and topics she writes about. This fall, Lauren’s story about a national trend to reduce food waste by marketing “ugly” fruits and vegetables, which appeared in the Missourian, took first place as “Best Business Story” from the Missouri Press Association. Her current research, which was supported by the Undergraduate Research Mentorship Program in her junior year, concerns the presence of nineteenth-century poetry in the present day, and seeks to understand the ways that these poems have been adapted to fit the demands of contemporary life. Lauren is not only an accomplished researcher and writer; she also dedicates herself to supporting the work of other writers. As a current intern with Wigleaf (a flash fiction journal that publishes a wide range of stories, all 1,000 words or less), she reads submissions, always looking for engaging stories with immediacy and traction. And this past summer, in an internship supported by the College of Arts & Science, Lauren worked at the State Historical Society, building a database for the Missouri Encyclopedia project. In Spring 2018, Lauren was one of fourteen students from across the entire campus who was awarded the Award for Academic Distinction.
Interview with Karen Piper

Karen Piper’s memoir, *A Girl’s Guide to Missiles: Growing Up in America’s Secret Desert*, was published in August 2018 by Penguin. The book tells the astonishing story of growing up on a secret missile range in the Mojave Desert. The book received immediate and widespread attention from places such as NPR and Harper’s. Karen sat down with Alex Socarides to talk about what it was like to write this book.

Q: When did it first occur to you that you wanted to write a memoir about where you grew up?
A: I’ve written creatively since I was nine years old, but I honestly thought my life was pretty boring. Like many writers, I thought I should write about something dramatic and exotic instead. So I wrote a novel about a pilot who kept getting lost . . . or whose plane kept drifting off course. I can’t really remember which. But that novel was really based on my dad’s work with missiles. He was always frustrated, as an aerodynamicist, with not being able to get them to fly straight. Finally, a good friend of mine read the novel and said, “You should really make this a true story and set it on the base. Put in all those quirky China Lake characters you’ve been telling me about.” So I have to credit my friend with coming up with the idea. He was able to see my life as something interesting.

Q: What’s it like to finally write about a place that is shrouded in mystery and that you weren’t allow to talk about for so long?
A: It was cathartic but also extremely difficult. I say it took me ten years to write, but really I think it was longer than that. When a place hasn’t been represented before—because it’s so secret—you pretty much have to build it from scratch. You have to trust your gut that you’re creating an authentic picture of the place and also do an endless amount of research to try to piece together all the little secrets you can dig up.

Q: What’s been the most rewarding part of publishing this book?
A: The most rewarding part—besides the coverage from the New York Times, NPR, and Time—has been the response from scientists and engineers who used to work at China Lake. It’s not until you publish a book about such a secretive place that you realize how many people have been deeply affected by it. For instance, one woman wrote that her father had been killed in an explosion out there when he was thirty-five. She wanted to know if I had any information about his death, since the Navy had been so secretive about it. A lot of people want me to ask my mom if she knew so-and-so out there. It makes me want to write a companion piece filled with all their stories.

Q: What has your family’s reaction been to the book? And what about the different communities that feature in the book?
A: That was the most frightening part about writing the memoir. I kept the whole thing hidden from my family, partly because I was afraid and partly because I thought it would never get published. When I got the contract from Penguin, I let my mom read it and, despite some disapproval (she hates the sex scenes), she is still my best friend today. I didn’t even know my sister read it, and was afraid to ask, until I recently saw she gave it four stars on Goodreads. I thought, “Hey, that’s not so bad.”

Q: What’s the one piece of advice you have to someone who wants to write a memoir?
A: Don’t be afraid and dig deep. It’s very scary to write about the people you love. Every family has its own dysfunctions and most of them are hidden for a reason. Sometimes writers want to smooth over the dysfunction and never get to that core of how it affected them. But it’s that raw emotion that makes readers connect to you. Skeletons in the closet make the best stories. I was just lucky that mine was a top secret base.
This fall, the English Department was thrilled to welcome its newest professor and newest Miller Family Endowed Chair of Literature and Writing, Dr. Phong Nguyen. Phong’s arrival strengthens an already elite creative writing program, gives us another dedicated and engaged professional editor, and provides another skilled voice in the teaching of literature. One critic has said that Phong asks the essential imaginative question ‘What if?’ in a host of different ways, and the English Department looks forward to the ways he will ask that question with us.

Phong says he likes “every new work to be a radical departure from the one before”, and a look at the range and constant evolution of his fiction bears this out. He categorizes his 2011 collection of short fiction, *Memory Sickness, and Other Stories*, as being of the “dirty realism” tradition. Protagonists include survivors of the Cambodian genocide, an ex-con trash collector, and a dumpster diver, their stories revealing both suffering and courage. *Pages from the Textbook of Alternate History* (2014) imagines a series of episodes from world history—the voyage of Columbus straight to China (because there was no America); the ancient Egyptians, having access to large forests, build funeral pyres for their pharaohs rather than pyramids; “Hitler Goes to Art School,” in which the title character finds a different path than the one we all know of. Taking on some of the forms of a high school history text, this volume of stories takes one playful and thought-provoking turn after another, and moves from the more American locales of the first book to a world stage. In another radical departure, Phong returned to America with his 2016 *The Adventures of Joe Harper*. Following the wanderings of a minor character from Mark Twain’s *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Phong starts his story twenty years after Twain’s, adopting some of his predecessor’s mordant wit. Joe Harper, a failed pirate looking for the right cave in which to die, finds instead a philosophizing Chinese railroad worker and an Amish woman fleeing her marriage. This novel of outcasts gives us a lively American picaresque.

Phong recently completed a new collection and is working on a longer novel. *Senior Skip Day* is a unique anthology: a collection of high school essays authored by (fictional) seniors who are writing in response to famous American poems. A tongue-in-cheek work that avoids any tone of mockery toward these young students, it seeks, in Phong’s words, “to explore the alchemy between these things:” the classic literary tradition and the lives of contemporary American teens. *The Brass Drum* is yet another dramatic turn, this time into historical fiction, specifically Vietnam in the first century A.D., where the Trung sisters raised an army and led a military rebellion. Phong’s father emigrated from Vietnam, and here Phong is exploring that country’s history, doing a deep historical dive.

Phong’s wide-ranging interests, and his ability to fuse the global with the local, have already been demonstrated to the local community in a talk he gave in October, “Memory Sickness: How the Survivors of Trauma Use Art to Confront the Past.” Phong prefaced his fiction reading with a bracing historical and personal reflection on the Cambodian genocide; the story itself, “Memory Sickness,” told in the voice of a young survivor, moves fluidly and movingly across time periods and continents.

Phong has moved to Columbia with his wife Sarah Nguyen, who is an accomplished visual artist, and their three sons. Welcome to the Nguyens!
Preserving African Languages

Sarah Pribe didn’t know what she was getting into when, in 2016, as a first-year student, she answered a call by the MU Honors College for participants in a linguistics research group. She just thought “it sounded like fun.” Two years later, Sarah, an English and International Studies major, has now been on the linguistics team of the Honors College’s Art, Social Sciences & Humanities (ASH) Scholars program for two years running; she has helped with the linguistic analysis of multiple African languages; she has developed her own research project documenting six eastern Ugandan dialects and their oral literatures, and she has gone on two separate research trips to Africa, one to Kenya and one to Uganda.

The Documenting Luyia Together linguistics team of the ASH Scholars program is co-directed by two of the English Department’s linguistics professors, Rebecca Grollemund and Michael Marlo, and is dedicated to the documentation, preservation, and linguistic analysis of languages belonging to the Luyia group. When Professor Marlo first applied to the Honors College to run an ASH undergraduate research team, it was an experiment with an unclear future. The first group of undergraduate students beautifully rose to the occasion, leading to an ongoing multi-year group research effort as well as individual projects.

In 2016-17, ASH students processed and analyzed previously collected data of three Luyia languages, developing talking dictionaries, classifying nouns into tonal classes, and writing grammar chapters. In summer 2017, Professor Marlo took four MU undergraduates on a month-long research trip to western Kenya, during which students worked with a previously recorded corpus of about thirty folktales in the Bukusu language. During the stay, students learned how to create so-called “time-aligned” transcriptions and translations of these texts, that is, the transcriptions and translations that are matched with the recordings and thus allow for easy cross-referencing between oral recordings and written documentation. As Sarah explains, the goals of the project were to translate and analyze the collected texts, but also to preserve the oral literature and cultural heritage of Kenya.

Despite her initial lack of a linguistics background, Sarah took to it like a fish to water and has enthusiastically continued working with the ASH team. In June 2018, she returned to Africa, this time to eastern Uganda, to pursue her own project of documenting six dialects of the Gisu language. She spent hours recording speakers saying core vocabulary words in each dialect. She feels profoundly rewarded by contributing to the linguistic knowledge and preservation of African languages. The biggest payoff, though, is to experience life in an unfamiliar place and share in a new community, whether it’s walking to the market, careening to town on a borrowed motorbike, or comparing life in Africa and North America with the speakers of the languages being documented (and, sometimes, their family members).

Even though Sarah is an English not a linguistics major, her linguistic work has influenced her literary studies, making her more aware of the sounds used in literature and of the translatedness of texts when reading in translation.

So what recommendations does a successful student like Sarah have for her peers? First of all, “Read emails!” Secondly, “Study what you are interested in!” Students are often advised to focus on a single interest. She is in favor of dipping one’s toes into many waters, because “if you’re interested, you’ll be good at it!” The impressively versatile English major Sarah Pribe has certainly proven that many times over.
Meet a New Major

This semester we welcomed Ian Kweon to the English major. Ian came to us as a transfer student from MCC Longview, where he says he changed his major 4 or 5 times before deciding on English. What made him decide on English? He worked for the Writing Center at Longview, tutoring students on their papers, and there he developed a passion for one-on-one communication and helping people work through the ins and outs of the writing process. This semester he is taking ENG 2015HW, The Theory and Practice of Tutoring Writing, and has set the long-term professional goal of becoming a Writing Center Director. But not all of his time is spent in the Writing Center. Ian is a voracious reader (American Gods, by Neil Gaiman, is his latest, favorite book) and an enthusiastic podcast listener (he’s currently keen on “Hello Internet”). He enjoys drawing and playing the piano, and he strongly identifies as the owner of Brownie, his 5-year-old Chiweenie (Chihuahua Wiener dog mix). When asked what he enjoys most about the English major, Ian says “that there isn’t one defined approach or answer. There’s a lot more variety of thought in English than in other fields.”

Hearne Awarded NEH for Book on Indigenous Film

Professor Joanna Hearne has been awarded a prestigious grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities for the completion of her new book Chickasaw Hollywood: The Fox Brothers and the Studio System, 1914-1954. Professor Hearne, who describes her research as a process of “recovering history,” traces the lives and careers of the first Indigenous American family of writer-directors in Hollywood. A central figure in the story is director Edwin Carewe (born Jay J. Fox in 1883). Identifying as Chickasaw throughout his Hollywood career, Carewe directed more than 50 films between 1914 and 1934, attaining prominence during the “golden age” of silent film. Additionally, Hearne follows the careers of Carewe’s brothers, Wallace and Finis Fox, who also worked in the film industry: Wallace directed B-Westerns and serials, and Finis frequently collaborated with Edwin as a scenarist and scriptwriter.

The scope of Hearne’s research spans the local—a family drama rooted in the Chickasaw Nation—and the international. As Hearne points out, silent film traveled easily across international borders because only limited translation was required. As a result, Hearne’s dedicated archival research has taken her from locations ranging from Oklahoma (for records of family genealogy) to Los Angeles (where the brothers’ film careers unfolded) to Prague in the Czech Republic, where she viewed the only extant print of one of Carewe’s films, relying on an archivist to help her translate the intertitles from Czech.

Hearne explains that her archival discoveries help film and cultural historians to develop and an expanded view of the roles Native Americans played in the early Hollywood film industry. Rather than being limited to a few named performers, un-credited “extras,” and consultants, Indigenous Hollywood included people working at all levels of production and, as in the case of Carewe and his brothers, exerting creative control over their works. Native Americans also participated in and influenced creative output in many genres, such as silent film, television, melodrama, crime drama, comedy, and western.

One question that particularly interests Hearne is how and why the brothers’ films both comply with contemporary stereotypes about Native Americans and simultaneously resist them. By unearthing the history that surrounds the films’ production, she hopes to better understand how commercial pressures and studio expectations intersected with the agency and opinions of Indigenous writers and directors to shape representations of Native Americans on screen. While it might seem surprising to see stereotypes perpetuated in works where Indigenous people exerted creative control, Hearne describes these artistic choices as complex “negotiations” through which Edwin Carewe, in particular, managed to address national political issues affecting Native Americans and “selectively accommodate” the requirements of Hollywood’s studio system.

Chickasaw Hollywood will be Professor Hearne’s fourth book to draw on her expertise in both film history and Indigenous Studies. Her earlier books include Native Recognition: Indigenous Cinema and the Western, Indigenous Media, and “Smoke Signals”: Native Cinema Rising. Chickasaw Hollywood thus promises to build on her impressive body of work and to interest readers of film history, biography and Indigenous Studies alike.

By Anne Myers
Recommended Reading

Speer Morgan: These Truths, Jill Lepore’s new single-volume history of the United States.


Stephen Karian: The Bad-Ass Librarians of Timbuktu and their Race to Save the World’s Most Precious Manuscripts by Joshua Hammer and The Sellout by Paul Beatty.

Cheryl Hall was promoted to the rank of Teaching Professor.

Becca Hayes, who joined the faculty as Assistant Professor in 2018, joined the Advisory Board of the Coalition for Community Writing, a national and global network of scholars, writers, teachers, students, activists, and community organizers who are reimagining how communities write themselves; how writing is used as a tool for public awareness and expression, dialogue across difference, and community building; and how higher education and communities can collaborate to these ends.

Noah Heringman published a chapter on the French naturalist Buffon in a volume entitled Multispecies Archaeology and another chapter on Captain Cook’s second voyage in a volume entitled Curious Encounters. In the past year he has given invited lectures at universities in the US, Switzerland, England, and Japan.

Cheryl Hall traveled to the archives of the Royal Geographical Society in London, thanks to a grant from the University of Missouri Research Council. There she worked to decipher journals and letters written by nineteenth-century British explorers as they traveled across Western China: writings that both described their journeys and also anticipated the future literary fame that they hoped publication of their travel writings would bring.

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Lynn Itagaki was invited as a 2018-2019 Visiting Fellow in the Department of Humanities at Northumbria University in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England. This northeast region of England is fascinating for its connections to Black freedom struggles in the US and hosted visits from luminaries in the modern Civil Rights movement such as Ida B. Wells and Martin Luther King, Jr. and abolitionist Frederick Douglass. Also in the area, Newcastle University was the only university in the UK to confer an honorary degree to Dr. King in his lifetime.

Johanna Kramer holds the department’s Susan Kircher Faculty Fellowship for 2018-19 and has started a new book project that examines the use of proverbs in Geoffrey Chaucer’s Canterbury Tales.

Trudy Lewis’ story “Go for the Road” was accepted for publication in Chicago Quarterly Review. This piece is the first in a series of Irish stories about marriage, citizenship, and migration.

As an English Department Davidson Fellow, Lee Manion traveled to Washington, D.C. to do research at the Folger Shakespeare Library, which houses the world’s largest Shakespeare collection and is steps from the Capitol Building. In the Folger’s theater space Taffety Punk’s Bootleg Shakespeare Company put on a production of The Faculty
Third Part of Henry VI where the point is that no one rehearsed together until the day of the performance, keeping the audience engaged and excited.

This year, stories by Phong Nguyen are appearing in three national literary journals: Story Magazine, Prairie Schooner, and Wigleaf, and an essay has appeared in Boulevard. He also attended the annual Creative Writing Studies conference and is undertaking multiple pedagogical experiments in his fiction-writing class, including collaborative writing and gaming.

Julija Šukys was promoted to the rank of Associate Professor.

**Graduate Students**

Heather Heckman-McKenna published two creative nonfiction essays, “Drive” in Newfound and “Target” in Open: Journal of Arts & Letters; “Drive” was also selected as a Notable Essay in Memoir Magazine. Heather also presented a paper at her first national conference in her field, the North American Society for the Study of Romanticism.

In March, Hobart published Lacey Rowland’s short-prose “exhibits” from a longer project she is working on. The exhibits are from a self-guided tour exploring a fictitious Museum of Broken Marriages. In July, she was awarded a June Dodge Fellowship to attend the Mineral School Residency where she spent two weeks in Mineral, Washington working on her novel-in-progress.

Carley Gomez’s short story “In Her Absence” has been published in the current issue of Passages North.

Jake Young’s first collection of poems American Oak has been published by Main Street Rag. His essay “The Offal Truth” was published in the Spring 2018 issue of Gastronomica: The Journal of Critical Food Studies. His essay “Cheers, Emily Dickinson! An Analysis of Her Poems of Drink” has been accepted for publication in The Emily Dickinson Journal.

Vedran Husic’s collection of short stories, Basements and Other Museums, has been released by Black Lawrence Press.

Jeff Wasserboehr’s essay “Var” was named the runner-up in the Iowa Review Award in Nonfiction, judged by Kiese Laymon and Alexander Chee.

Cassie Donish won the Iowa Poetry Prize for The Year of the Femme.

One of Katie Rhodes’ essays has been accepted for publication by Fourth Genre: Explorations in Nonfiction, and a short story will be published in The Southampton Review.

Ashley Anderson’s creative nonfiction essay “Petals” appeared in the summer issue of the Tahoma Literary Review.

Rebecca Pelky’s first collection of poetry, Horizon of the Dog Woman, has been accepted for publication by Saint Julian Press. Work from the collection is forthcoming in Cream City Review, Stoneboat, and December.

Thanh Nguyen, together with Erik Platner, Sarah Pribe, and Alexa Thein, presented a poster entitled “Phylogenetic classification of Luyia language varieties” at the 49th Annual Conference on African Linguistics (ACAL) supervised by Dr. Rebecca Grollemund and Dr. Michael Marlo. Thanh won first place for the best paper written by a graduate student in an English graduate course AY 2016-17 or 2017-18 with the paper “The Endangerment of the Laha Language in Vietnam.”

Gwendolyn Edward and Lindsay Fowler have both been selected as STAR recipients (Student Teaching as Research); these grants support research by MU graduate students and post-docs for studying and evaluating learning methods and impacts.

**Alumni**

Jen Julian’s first book, Earthly Delights and Other Apocalypses, has won Press 53’s 2018 Short Fiction Award.

Richard Schwartz, Professor Emeritus, published Postwar Higher Education in America: Just Yesterday, a comprehensive sequel to his 2012 ebook, Is a College Education Still Worth the Price?


Carol Poster’s chapbook of poetry recently appeared from Finishing Line Press, blurbed by fellow Mizzou alumnus Gregory Dunne.

Pat O’Connor’s third book, Justice on Fire: The Kansas City Firefighters Case and the Railroading of the Marlborough Five, is about wrongful convictions and was published by the University Press of Kansas.

**In Memory**

Susan Kircher

Susan Kircher maintained a strong connection to the department. A longtime member of the English Department Leaders Board, Susan and her husband Bill generously established the Kircher Faculty Fellows program, an endowment that supports faculty research by funding one faculty fellow a year.

Julie Melnyk

Longtime faculty member in the Honors College and English Department, Julie Melnyk died in December 2017. Known for her deep attention to students and for her insatiable love of literature and music, Julie made meaningful connections to those all around her. She is missed in the hallways and classrooms of Tate Hall.
English Department Donors

Many thanks to all who donated to the English Department between December 2017 and November 2018

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