

# THE IRREGULAR



## LITTONIAN

Fall 2013, Number 42

Over the past 42 years literature has been read, discussed, and written about at Stockton (State) College in the belief that its study is useful preparation for life. You know best whether this is so. Given the response to our call for anecdotes and remembrances of Stockton, it seems clear that your time on campus was at least memorable. Most of the following newsletter has been written by you, the alums. Thousands of LITT majors have graduated from Stockton; and though a smaller number have written here, we believe this is a representative sampling of reflections upon your time at the college.

On a personal note, I have kept the Literature alumni e-mail list for many years now, and it has usually been a delight. Keeping the list means a certain amount of grunt work each time it is processed for a mailing, and I have to remind myself frequently to place new (and resurfacing) alums on the list. But it has never been a burdensome chore. Working with the list allows me to scan through names from former times, many of which are familiar, and most which evoke fond memories of past students, past courses, and past aspects of life. There is one downside: each time I send out a mailing some of the emails bounce – often a familiar name – and for a time I register another “lost” alum, and think it a shame. So please remember to reach out to someone in the faculty every once in a while. It will be a pleasure to hear from you, and it ensures that we can stay in touch.

Warm Regards from South Jersey,

Tom Kinsella

## Remembrances and Anecdotes of Past Times at Stockton

Below is a picture from October 19, 1971, Campus Day. Dr. Richard Bjork, first president of the college stands in the forefront with Richard Schwartz, the first campus planner behind to the left; Dan Moury, first Dean of NAMS, is to the right, and with his back to the camera, Wes Tilley, first vice president for academic affairs. The picture was taken by my Aunt Alida who was a teacher and elementary principal, and who was very proud of the school opening so close to her and my mother Ardrey Cordrey French's home. They lived in Port Republic. What could be better than H, S, N.<sup>1</sup> We all loved attending Stockton and swimming in Lake Pam after classes were over. The classes on the boardwalk were really outstanding experiences for openness and debates on about anything you could think about.

Dan French

Class of '73



Well, where do I begin. My husband and I were early Stocktonites. I was there for the Mayflower, and my husband was there for the first B-court. We loved Stockton and the Pine Barrens, though we live in Southern Calif. South Jersey is still one of our favorite destinations. Our niece graduated from Stockton in 2007 and our nephew may be attending soon. We met and made wonderful friends. The experience of life at the beach in the winter, Ventnor, Margate, Leeds Point and the Pine Barrens is still fresh. The quiet and emptiness, the winter white and the pure beauty of the Wading River is forever etched in our brain. It will be our final resting place.

Michelle Henrici

Class of '73

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<sup>1</sup> Editor's note: This was Stockton's first grading system: high pass, satisfactory, and no grade.



I do not remember all of the Profs from back in the day . . . However, Fred Mench and Phil Klukoff were always there to help out. I never had a bad Prof at Stockton. It was a little strange after graduation to try to explain the grading system on a job interview of H, S or N. The “REAL WORLD” was not ready for Stockton yet.

George Taylor

Class of '74



This series of black & white pics is taken from the faculty *Who's Who* books published from 1988-2004.



I am a graduate of Stockton's Literature Program, Class of 1975. I am sorry, but it has been so long that I have forgotten the names of the professors who were so kind to me. They were inspiring and did everything they could to accommodate me, a part-time student. I was not the typical student. I am now approaching my 100th birthday, so I must have been in my 60s when I was earning my degree. I am a child of the Great Depression and a college degree was always beyond my reach. Also New Jersey was very remiss in providing the means of getting one. In educational circles it was known as the Cuckoo State because most of its students had to obtain their higher education in other states. When Atlantic Community College was established it gave me the opportunity to realize my dream. I earned my Associate Degree (still part-time) and when Stockton opened shortly afterward most of my credits were transferable. All of my life I had felt inadequate not having a college education and now there was nothing more that I could want and Stockton was responsible and I am very grateful for this fulfillment. It has given me the confidence that I always lacked and now in my extreme old age I am still active and am holding my own with my younger associates. I edit the newspaper circulated in my community. Earning a college degree was the only thing I ever wanted and it has made my life complete.

Sincerely, Jeanne Frymire

Class of '75



Back in the olden days when I graduated from Stockton, Litt/Lang was obsessed with wine & cheese parties. Yes, we actually drank wine on campus back then, and the department's end-of-semester bash was just such an occasion. I had just been accepted into the Graduate School of English at Rutgers, Camden (quite a surprise to all since Rutgers was pretty snobby and Stockton was considered a party school at the time – 1979 – and applicants not taken seriously). I happened to be walking around clutching my copy of Stephen Dunn's latest collection (don't remember why or even which one), and my Preceptor, the avuncular Texan, Royce Burton, suggested that I ask Stephen to sign my copy because he was sure Stephen was well on his way to becoming a world-famous poet. I had never had Stephen Dunn in class, so I really didn't know him the way I did other faculty. Of course, I was in awe of him, and he was vaguely aware of my existence. But he readily agreed to sign it when



I timidly approached with my request. He took my book, pen, and a glass of wine to a far corner of the room and settled into one of those very deep comfy chairs that used to be scattered everywhere at Stockton. And there he stayed. And stayed. For a long time. My girlfriends – two of whom had mad crushes on him, as I recall – and I tried not to stare at him so as not to disrupt his creative process, but we were excited about what great words of wisdom he was about to record for the ages in my copy of his poetry collection. After the usual toasts and congratulations all around, the party ended, and Stephen handed me the book as he left the room. With friends crowded around me, hands shaking, I opened to the title page and found: “To *Elizabeth*, Good luck in graduate school. Stephen Dunn.”

Eleanor Hansen

Class of '79



*the furniture of early Stockton*



When I matriculated at Stockton, I was a mother of 3 college students and a partner in a family retail complex. My motivation was to earn a college degree to match my husband's (degree for degree); keep up with my children; and have an excuse for time away from the complexities of a family business.

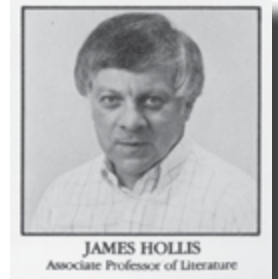
What I received from Stockton was so much more. I give credit and thanks to Professor Adrian Jaffe (who was adored by his students but not favored by the administration) and to Professor Ken Tompkins. With Professor Jaffe, I was guided through the world of Greek tragedy, “The Waste Land” of T. S. Eliot; and most memorably, the *Trial* and *Metamorphosis* of Franz Kafka. Professor Tompkins gave me the gift of loving Shakespeare.

I spent eight wonderful years at Stockton, taking one or two early morning (mostly) literature classes so that I could be back at work for the afternoons. Luckily, I had a year of college before marriage and had completed science and math requirements. I even went back to Stockton after graduation for a series of art history courses.

What did I gain? Renewed love of reading and discussion; a better way to deal with relationships – courtesy of those wonderful Greek plays; an appreciation of story telling and understanding of alienation – from Kafka; and the joy of history, fantasy and language – from Shakespeare. Thank you, Stockton!

Ruth Raphael

Class of '80





A meaningful anecdote, eh? Well, I remember that Kinsella was young and had bought a new sports coat and at the end of class realized the price tag was dangling under the arm and berated the class for not informing him!<sup>2</sup>

But on a more serious note, I remember Kinsella's passion for poetry and his openness and willingness to entertain student interpretations. This was unique; my experience in high school had been having to have the "right" interpretation. I believe it is New Criticism that espouses the view that the work belongs to the reader? It was a new concept for me (I had gone to Catholic schools!). So naturally I never liked poetry – until taking Kinsella's class. Thank you for that.

Alex Chileen

Class of '92



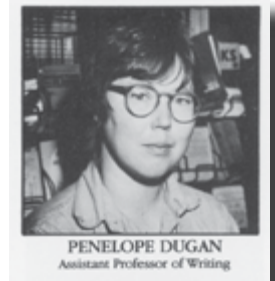
When I attended Stockton, I worked full-time and usually did not have any spare hours for literary events that the LITT/LANG program offered. However, I did attend one reading by Stephen Dunn and heard him read a poem that I thought was extremely funny. I must have arrived late or not listened closely because I never heard the poet's name, just the title of the poem, "Did I Miss Anything." Later I tracked down Stephen Dunn to ask him for the information, so I could find the poem, and he said, "Tom Wayman." How ironic that I missed the poet's name, considering the title of the poem. Later when I began teaching, I used the poem on the first day of class to emphasize the attendance policy, but I soon discovered the same response that Tom Wayman writes about: "I stopped showing the poem to my students, because when I did they became more aggressive. The sentence they used after they'd read the poem became a declarative one, rather than an interrogative. After they missed a class or classes, they'd say to me: 'I didn't miss anything, did I.' The last two words were uttered like a dare" (<http://www.library.utoronto.ca/canpoetry/wayman/pub2.htm>). The poem is great, so if you have never read it, please give it a look.

Patrice Hollrah, PhD

Class of '92

"Did I Miss Anything"

(<http://www.library.utoronto.ca/canpoetry/wayman/poem5.htm>)



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<sup>2</sup> Editor's Note: Kinsella's mother bought that new suit coat for Tom and sent it through the mail. She, in the first instance, should have taken that tag off. But the students, in the second, should have told him at an earlier, less embarrassing moment – that's part of the student/professor compact, right? Of course, giving this more thought, perhaps Kinsella should have seen that tag.





Jeanne-Andrée Nelson was my advisor. I remember sometimes having the sense that, in an entirely good-natured way, she found me and probably many other undergrads amusingly absurd. I always found her classes immensely interesting, and I think I might have ended up with more credits than I needed for graduation because I took as many of her courses as I could and sort of neglected distribution requirements. She gave me my love of Camus, and her course on absurdist theatre was a bit of a revelation to me. I remember thinking for the first time, “Wow. I might actually like theatre.”



There were legends that Ken Tompkins sometimes wore a kilt while teaching. I never saw that. But I do remember his telling us all about the species of medieval chicken that Chaucer most likely had in mind when writing the “Nun’s Priest’s Tale.” In fact, one of the things that really impressed me about Ken Tompkins’ Chaucer and Shakespeare courses was how he’d bring to life interesting aspects of everyday life in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, in ways that gave the literature an extra aura of fascination. His tales of his work at Wharram Percy, the deserted medieval village, were captivating and made me dream of spending a summer there somehow helping with the archaeological work. I was never able to do that but did, after many years, finally have the chance to visit Wharram Percy in 2012. It was kind of a pilgrimage for me.

Norma Grasso’s passion and humor while teaching was intensely contagious, awakening in me an enthusiasm for Cervantes, Golden Age theatre, and, especially, Unamuno. After I finished my BA, I returned to Stockton to take Spanish language and literature courses, some of which she taught. She had us do heaps of writing and her standards were, of course, rigorous and tough. In retrospect, I think that writing – lots of literary analyses in Spanish, having to pay very close attention to word choices, phrasing, and so on – was pivotal in my development as a writer and my preparation for grad school. I ended up writing my master’s thesis partly on Unamuno. I was also playing in a band around that time, and one of my friends in another band wrote a song called “Tragic Sense of Life” (the title of an Unamuno book) because I was always talking about Unamuno, having read him in one of Norma’s courses. So, she in a way introduced Unamuno to the garage-rock scene of South Jersey and the Delaware Valley.



Another post-BA course that was crucial to my writing and preparation for graduate school was a literature and theory course that Tom Kinsella taught and which he very graciously allowed me to audit. When I think about that now, I sometimes feel pretty guilty – after all, he ended up having to grade the papers of some guy who wasn’t even officially in the class! That course really helped me get to grips with the superhero-like powers and potential pitfalls of theory, including introducing me to narrative theory, my first favorite “school” of theory. Among the papers he had us write was one on *To The Lighthouse*, using narrative theory. That was the first time I felt I was working with theory both usefully and with some actual confidence. And using narratology as a tool to examine that novel opened my eyes to, well, the genius of Virginia Woolf – not exactly a bad outcome. A direct consequence of that course was that the MA I went on to do was basically a theory degree.

Kurt Douglass

Class of '91





It's been some time since I attended Stockton, but I still recall the Delphic voice of Dr. James Hollis as our *Myth and Meaning* class sat waiting for a film to begin. Apparently, audio/visual was having difficulties, and the TV screen was just snowy blue static. After several minutes, Dr. Hollis looked at the class, looked back at the snowy screen and simply said, "Mist over the Aegean." That comment was so him, so fitting, and so indelible.

Pam Wirstad

Class of '91



Late nights of Mountain Dew, Snickers and *Candide*. Madelyn Jablon's *European Literature* class is etched heavily in my memory. The final was a blue book, and three questions could be asked about any three works read during the semester. To prepare, you had to go over every book read that semester and consider all of the possible essay questions that could be asked. Even if you triaged to the major attack points, it made for many nights of extensive preparation. Many of us formed study groups and repeated essay questions and answers orally, which did the trick.

I still remember that test, and I think it was good preparation for life. Additionally, there were Fred Mench's *Greek Tragedy* quizzes, which would consist of a quote from anywhere in a play. You had to record who said it. Detail, rigor. Good preparation for those who will enter the ranks of business. It matches up well with what goes on in the company. ("Better be prepared for that client meeting tomorrow," or "Do a report on that three-day convention in a few paragraphs for the CEO, thanks!")

The stronger memories of Stockton for me, I must say though, are mostly outside the classroom, I remember orange and golden leaves in autumn, and getting lost in long walks in the forests around the college grounds.

Bruce Carlson

Class of '93



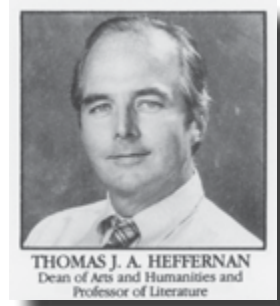
This is a meandering response to your request for Alum remembrances or reactions. It coincides with a recent trip "In the Steps of St. Paul," since we traveled near the Meander River in Turkey.

Words delight me – meanings, roots, connections – cultural, mythological, etc. A trip like this reminds us that we are not the center of the universe. Workmates were shocked when I mentioned our Istanbul hotel "The Titanic." Titanic for us is usually connected with a modern disaster; however, we were not attacked by giants!

I thank Stockton for encouraging my word trait.

Elizabeth Goodwin

Class of '94





Senior year, 1994, my major author class was *Faulkner* with G. T. Lenard. I liked G. T. even if she was scary strict about punctuation. The end of the semester potluck coincided with “Faulkner Dress Up Day.”

I was dressed up as Miss Quentin from *The Sound and the Fury*: Tight black dress, bright red lipstick, shoe box full of money, and my stuffed Opus as the Man with the Bow tie. Totally out of the norm for my usual sedate jeans and t-shirt style.

It became an issue because I won one of the graduating senior awards. Stephen Dunn was my adviser and I remember he made a point of explaining my wild outfit when he introduced me.

I didn’t take *Shakespeare*, but I had Ken Tompkins for another class. He made his big, scary speech about how he doesn’t give A’s; we have to earn them. One of our first papers was supposed to be 6-10 pages long. I was freaking out because I didn’t have enough to say about the topic. I sent him a long email (ha! from the computer lab with the green screens) about how it should be only a 4 page paper because  $10-6=4$  and some other arguments. He responded that if I was going to do that I should put it on one page and save paper/trees. Fortunately, I was working on the *The Argo* and appealed to the staff for help. One of the editors formatted my essay so the four pages were in small, but readable font all on the front of one sheet of paper. When the papers came back, Tompkins had written an explanation of how many words should fit on a page, compared to how many I had, and that I was technically short of 4 pages.

I’m pretty sure I still got an A on the paper and I think an A for the class over all.

Ann (Grant) McClure

Class of ’94



One of my professors said, “And you’re going to be a teacher?” after reading one of my opinions on a piece (obviously, she didn’t like my critique of the story). I will always remember that. I’m one of the best Litt/Lang teachers in my district now. That was the not-so-pleasant memory.

A more memorable one is learning about “gerunds” in Kinsella’s grammar class, and that crazy book he had us purchase (that I still have).<sup>3</sup> I had never heard about a gerund in my life.

I remember reading Faulkner’s *As I Lay Dying*, and Addie was buried in her wedding gown. We read that part on the day I got married to my husband. Nice.

Renee Irwin

Class of ’94



<sup>3</sup> Editors’ Note: This is probably Karen Elizabeth Gordon’s *Transitive Vampire: The Ultimate Handbook of Grammar for the Innocent, the Eager, and the Doomed*.





I loved my time as a literature major at Stockton. Someone once asked Walt Whitman about his time as a Civil War hospital volunteer, “Do you ever go back to those days?” To this question, Whitman replied that he did not need to go back because the experience “never left me.” That’s exactly how I feel about Stockton.

I graduated in 1995, and still, Stockton crosses my mind 2 or 3 times a week at least. I have such fond memories of Stockton. A major reason why is because Stockton prepared me for every possible type of job a person can hold as a writer . . . and I do mean *every* possible job. I’ve been a marketing copywriter, copy editor at a publishing company, a public relations coordinator. I’ve been in corporate communications – even rose to the level of Employee Communications Manager at Intel Corporation in Arizona. I’ve done video production, “ghost writing” for senior business executives, and speech writing. I’ve been an adjunct professor of English at a community college. And, for the last 7 years, I’ve been a Certified Professional Resume Writer for [Monster.com](http://Monster.com). At the heart of all of these endeavors of course . . . is my writing. I am a writer. And I always credit Stockton for making my writing skills what they are, or at least providing me with a strong foundation. After Stockton, I went on to earn my Master’s and Ph.D. degrees at another university, but if someone were to ask me where I learned to write, I would tell them, “From Stockton!” From Cross. From Lenard. From Kinsella. From Tompkins. From Williamson-Nelson. From my fellow tutors at the Stockton Writing Center. Ahhhh, I just smiled as I typed. Yep, it’s true, I don’t have to “go back” to my Stockton days. Truly, those days are with me, even still.

Christy Bouziotis

Class of ’95



I look back on my days at Stockton with fond memories of odd items, like Chaucer in Middle English & strange quotes and anecdotes about the characters (that always pop into my head during some meeting when a chuckle isn’t the most appropriate response). I hear students complain about reading or writing assignments and think back to all we did and how hard we worked. While I spent my time at Stockton with the goal of teaching English, my life took another course and now I use my writing skills for marketing purposes. Not exactly the literary achievement of the classics, but something I enjoy and the time at Stockton allowed me to learn to be expressive and find my own voice.

Colleen Clayton

Class of ’95



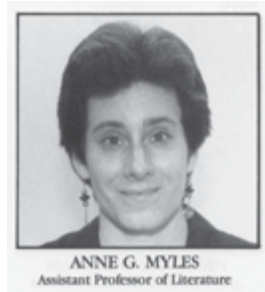
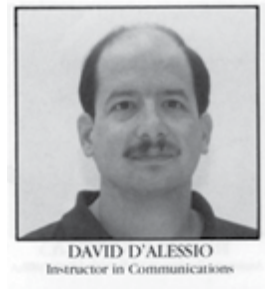


When I began at Stockton, I was a practicing Catholic. After taking *American Literary Naturalism*, I not only became an a-theist (I wish to emphasize the most honest use of this word – without god; not a condemnation of all others who happen to be theists, which it seems to me this word has come to imply), but I became a Naturalist . . . not the sort who builds twig shelters and bonds with raccoons. I came to believe, like Dreiser and Norris, that we are not even in control of ourselves; that we are driven by instinct and random chemical and electrical processes. I was in a sad state and grew somewhat desperate. And so I went to Prof. Tompkins’ office. I was first struck by the huge library of books that lined the back wall of his office. “Have you read all those,” I asked in wonder. “Of course,” he replied, his eyes shining with enthusiasm, “that’s my job.” I didn’t quite feel foolish for asking my question – Tompkins didn’t condescend. I felt oddly inspired. Then I told him about my situation. Yes, I sat in my English professor’s office and asked him the meaning of life. I’m fairly certain I actually said, “What’s the meaning of life.” He didn’t laugh, he could have, but he grew quite serious. He told me about his own fears over death and that he’d been exploring his own faith. Then he said what has continued resonating in me like the reverberations of an enormous bronze bell, “It’s all about the connections we make. Life is about really connecting with people.” If you know Tompkins, then you know how he said these words. They rustled a bit as they breezed through his beard, and with them came all the sincerity of his being. I knew my question was his question. At the time, I didn’t think much of his response. Perhaps I was too young; too thin; too pale; or too ignorant to understand. I was not immediately comforted. The experience was more like a delayed ringing of a giant bronze bell. His words – the clapper – hung in the air, far away from the rim of the metal. I left his office and felt nothing. I graduated and felt less. Then, as I began connecting with others – really connecting with them – the clapper swung with swift, heavy precision and thundered against the bronze.

At Stockton, I learned to think deeply. From professors like Tompkins, I learned to live deeply.

Bryan Hoffman

Class of ’96



Bright college years – so full of the promise of achievement and the fulfillment of expectations! As I sit at my work terminal winding my way through a maze of confusing data, I sometimes pause and reflect upon memories of the folks who guided me on my mission of discovery. I recall Ken Tompkins who introduced me to intrinsic analysis and who taught me the value of having a clean, well-lit place.

Then there was Professor Norma Grasso who shared my love of Cervantes’ *Gypsy Queen*, and who taught me to be a challenger of my preconceived judgments and assumptions. I also have to thank Tom Kinsella who taught me that a good story works on many levels. I never had the pleasure of taking a course with Jeanne-Andrée Nelson, but I have seen some of her work in the original French in the library. I’m sure that I could have learned



a lot from her. Last of all, there was Fred Mench: my long suffering preceptor and teacher of Classics. Boy! What a load of grief he had to put up with in mentoring me! It was Fred who introduced me to Steven Saylor's really excellent series of novels about Gordianus the Finder. We can all learn a lot from the Classics. You know, as a young man I once prayed to a statue of Mary in the hope that I might win the love of the girl of my dreams, just as a suitor of ancient days must have offered prayers to Venus, Aphrodite, or Astarte. I'm sure Fred would understand. Collectively, these educators taught me that a student can be as blind as Oedipus, and that the monster in the labyrinth is a mirror. In gratitude to these teachers, some of the finest human beings I have ever met, I can only promise to continue on my odyssey of life long learning. Thank you all.

Jim McGettigan

Class of '96



Only have fond memories of my time at Stockton and the Literature program therein. Fun times, lessons that kept me interested and wanting more info on the great authors, and all around caring professors whom I admired and could approach openly about whatever.

James Feichthaler

Class of '97



The fondest memories I have of my years at Stockton are, of course, from the Literature program. Ken Tompkins was a daunting figure at first, but quickly became one of my favorites. I especially enjoyed the trip he arranged to The Cloisters in New York City. As I toured the facility, I took lots of pictures of tapestries, statues, and other artifacts on display, using 1000-speed film, since flash is not allowed. I had double prints of the photos made, so that I could share my pictures with Professor Tompkins. He seemed grateful for them, but his only remark as he thumbed through them was to point out the one photograph that was slightly out of focus!

One thing I am not likely to forget about Ken Tompkins is the two-fingered signal he introduced in class of an archer who still has his digits, since punishment of enemy archers in medieval days was chopping off the index and middle fingers, the "trigger fingers" for shooting with a bow. Since I am a bit of an amateur archer, and also have thus far lived out a 57-year-long roller coaster ride of a life, this gesture is both literal and spiritual to me . . . this girl still has her fingers!

Professor Tom Kinsella is another favorite of mine. During the first course in which I sat under his tutelage, he shared a short poem by Ben Jonson entitled "On Spies." I remember remarking that this "spoke candles" to me, apparently correctly. It may seem a small thing, but that confirmation helped to boost my confidence as I started at Stockton as a non-traditional student at the age of 40.



LINDA NELSON  
Associate Professor of Writing



JAY CORWIN  
Assistant Professor of Spanish



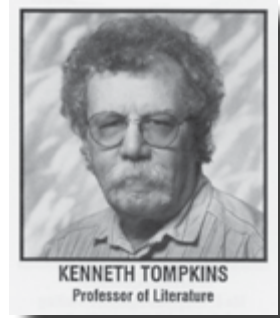
LISA HONAKER  
Visiting Assistant Professor  
of Literature

Tom often shared entertaining anecdotes in class, one of which demonstrated for me quite clearly the power of a story. It was the one about the deer crossing the road, followed by the fawn . . . It had me (almost) crying!

Tom and Ken will always be remembered for taking our class “kicking and screaming” into the 21<sup>st</sup> century of computer technology, for which I will be eternally grateful.

Anonymous

Class of '98



new pic c. 1995



I attended Stockton from January 1996 until 1998. I didn't spend much time at Stockton except for the time I spent in class. Nonetheless, I enjoyed my time there and use a lot of what I learned in what I do today. I am currently a certified teacher working in the North Carolina Public School system. I am certified in Elementary Education, Middle Grades Language Arts and Mathematics, and Special Education. I have taught various subjects including Resource English, 8th-grade Mathematics, 6th-grade Science, and several classes upon the collegiate level.

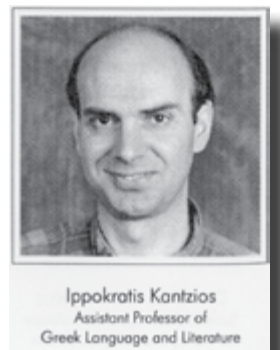
When first a Literature major at Stockton, I did not write well at all. My biggest flaw was not proofing my work well enough to ensure there were no errors in my prose. With time, effort and repetition, I improved how I wrote. The biggest obstacle I faced was letting go of my pride and taking my time to proofread before submitting any work. Today, I would rather proofread my work, or have someone else proof it, before being confronted by the dean of Education about how poorly I might have written.

I always enjoyed the personal stories that professors shared in class about their personal lives. I enjoyed hearing about Prof. Kinsella's cats, Mug Mug et al.<sup>4</sup> I also learned that Prof. Tompkins had a family member who had a name similar to mine. He asked me once if we were related!?

The professors at Stockton are always friendly and go beyond the call of duty. They take an interest in their students. I remember taking the senior seminar in my last semester. It was a rhetoric class. I was contemplating on what book to use for my senior paper. I guess Professor Anne Myles saw that I was perplexed about it because she approached me after class one day and offered me a book from her private collection and provided me with suggestions on how to proceed. I am grateful for her efforts. To this day, I give Stockton and its faculty a lot of credit. My experience there allowed me to expand upon on my thoughts and ideas. I had entered Stockton dreading research and the writing process – dreading writing papers that had a minimum of 5, 10, and 25 pages. Since my graduation in 1998, I have pursued a Master's degree in Elementary Education and pursued additional post-graduate certifications. I feel more comfortable writing a paper of various lengths than I did a decade, two decades and even three decades ago.

Marg Jaynes

Class of '98



<sup>4</sup> Editor's Note: Now long dead, sweet kitties.



I took *Absurdist Playwrights* with Professor Jeanne-Andrée Nelson in fall of 1996. We were reading a Mamet play (*American Buffalo*, I think.) The issue of profanity came up as some students were hesitant to read certain lines aloud. (Not me – I f-ing love Mamet.) Professor Nelson explained that saying English curse words aloud didn't really bother her as her native language was French. She repeated a profanity several times, fairly loudly. She then looked sheepishly to the open door and said, "Oh, I forgot that Fr. Constantelos has a class next door!"

Sometimes, it feels like I never left Stockton. Not in a Stephen King/Stanley Kubrick "but you've always been here, Mr. Torrance" way, but in a more positive fashion.

I graduated from Stockton in 1998. The LITT/LANG faculty was fantastic. I couldn't have handpicked a better selection of professors from whom to learn. In 2010, I returned to Stockton and found that the faculty is still stellar. I participated in the *Examined Life* fellowship program. This program is for teachers who want to learn more about Hellenic history and culture and it includes a study tour of Greece (I highly recommend taking it if you're a teacher.) This led to working with Professor Dave Roessel, who ran the program the year that I participated.

Under Professor Roessel's guidance, I had the opportunity to do some research on Susan Glaspell and George Cram Cook. This research turned into a presentation in New York City at the *International Eugene O'Neill* conference, a co-authored introduction (with Professor Roessel) to a previously unpublished Glaspell short story in *Resources for American Literary Study*, and another piece co-authored with Victoria Conover (another Stockton LITT alum) that recently appeared in *The American Experience of Delphi*, edited by Paul Lorenz and Professor Roessel.

I graduated fifteen years ago – but Stockton continues to offer me opportunities I don't think I would ever have anywhere else. I would like to thank all of my former professors for all the opportunities afforded me. I would especially like to thank Professor Kinsella and Professor Roessel – without their help and guidance, I would never have had the opportunity to be published.

Steven R. Wertzberger

Class of '98



### Stockton Literature Memories

It was a 6:30 am class, or was it an 8:30 am class? Anything at that hour in college was too early to be awake. I don't remember what the class was but I remember what happened on the first day of that class. Ken Tompkins was our professor. Maybe it was *Renaissance Literature* – He seemed nice enough in his brief small talk with the class since I heard he had earned the nickname "The Viking." He started to discuss the syllabus and mid sentence a man walked in, grabbed a desk, and walked out. Tompkins turned red with anger and said "Excuse me" to the class, opened the door and yelled to the man now halfway down the



new pic c. 2000



hall “Excuse me – what are you doing?” (It was a rhetorical question) as the man’s voice was trembling “I was just . . . getting . . . a desk –” (The Viking arrived!) “NO, you interrupted MY class! Don’t do that again, don’t EVER do that again!” And then he returned and told us frankly “That boils my blood!” and everyone sat terrified, and proceeded to listen to every word he spoke that class and every class thereafter and even if they weren’t serious, they pretended to be.

This small anecdote summarizes the Literature program at Stockton. It was serious. But it became less about fear and more about desire. For me anyway, I can’t speak for the rest of the scared souls in that class. This was when getting up at 6:30 wasn’t a bad thing. We analyzed texts, poems, stories, and although I didn’t participate in the conversation as much as I would have liked, I listened attentively, I ate it up, took notes, and went home and read. There was a lot of reading, a lot of writing, and a lot of discussions. There was passion in his voice, in all their voices. The discussions were the best part. It was feeling like you were a part of something bigger and better than anything else in the school like it was a secret. It was not going to campus parties, but instead going to poetry readings and then after to Stephen Dunn’s house for wine and cheese and discussions with the author and then later being questioned by peers how we skipped that party in G-court; and then arriving at the party in G-court and realizing why. It was the lasting imprint of Latin American Literature, of Irish and Celtic Literature and the Druids, and Tom Kinsella willing to talk endlessly about it after class and loving that someone else was as into it as you were, it was reading *Light in August* because you wanted to, it is knowing your favorite short story of all time is “The Rocking Horse Winner,” it was knowing Shirley Jackson’s “The Lottery” scared you, it was understanding Dante and Shakespeare at least a little, it was spending Fridays at the writing lab, and it was working really hard for an A on a paper, it was mastering the language, it was the fortitude of the professors, it was their commitment, it was being an old soul in a sea of youth, it was knowing first hand why they called him “The Viking,” it was a willingness to now go to go battle ready to fight desk thieves who intruded on your sacred time with druids, angels and devils with your helmet and shield, and pen spear raised high.

Anthony Bonazzo

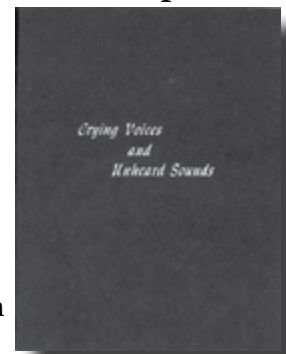
Class of '00



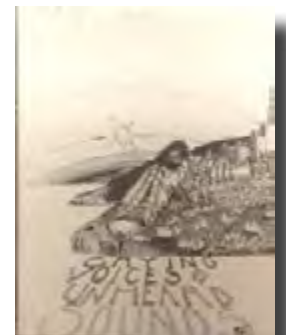
My very first memory of Stockton’s Literature program is that of the over-sized wristwatch hanging wall clock in Professor Tompkins’ office. The moment was surreal, not because of the overflowing shelves of books, the multiple computers jammed into the small office, or his ability to add whimsy and fun to what, to me, was a very serious institution. The moment was surreal because I wasn’t supposed to be there. I was told at an impressionable age that college wasn’t for me and, more specifically, that I would never go to Stockton. Yet there I was, anxious and excited to pick my first classes as a Litt Major at the school no one (except for my then girlfriend & now wife) thought I’d ever be able to attend.

That day changed my life. It sounds cheesy but it’s true. In high school, I never expected to go to college. That day marked the beginning of great friendships I never would have had, great discussions I never would have been a part of, and great challenges that never would have shaped who I am today if I hadn’t gone to Stockton. It was also my introduction to the best teachers I have ever had.

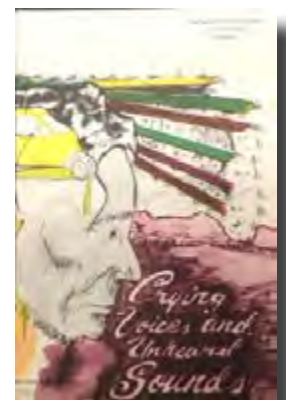
## Before Stockpot



*Crying Voices and Unheard Sounds* (1973)



*Crying Voices and Unheard Sounds* (1973)



*Crying Voices and Unheard Sounds* (n.d. 1974?)

Three issues of *Crying Voices and Unheard Sounds* predate the first issue of *Stockpot*. Fred Mench was the early advisor (listed as *Oracle* in the bibliographic information).

Professor Tompkins taught me how to read and it wasn't until that first *Literary Methodologies* class that I realized I was doing it wrong. He also taught me HTML and that coding, like literature, has meaning and purpose and should be done carefully and creatively. He once told me that I should be a teacher and that I was well suited for the classroom. That is one of the most encouraging things anyone has ever said to me. I don't teach in the traditional sense, but I do support a school full of great teachers and I try to teach them what I know when I can.

Professor Kinsella taught me how to love grammar and punctuation. I may never master it, but I love it. When I have the chance to edit a paper or a piece of writing, I like to make it a game. It's a game I don't always win, but one I like to play. And even though I got a 76 on Professor Kinsella's famous grammar and punctuation test, I think if I took it now I could probably swing at least an 85. If nothing else, I have a pretty classy set of Punctuation Cards to help me when I forget the rules!

There are 2 classes that stand out in my experiences with Professor Honaker, *Detective Fiction* and my Senior Seminar *Hardy & Conrad*. Both classes were divisive, but not in a negative way. In *Detective Fiction* it was an even split between the hard boiled Raymond Chandler set versus the Conan Doyle/Agatha Christie set. The *Hardy & Conrad* split was obvious, and while I stood with only two other students on the Conrad side we held our own and defended him proudly. Professor Honaker had a way of making you feel like she was always on your side, which helped foster some very lively discussions in both classes. I discovered my favorite author Paul Auster and post-modernism in the detective fiction class and I will still defend Conrad when people slam *Heart of Darkness* to this day.

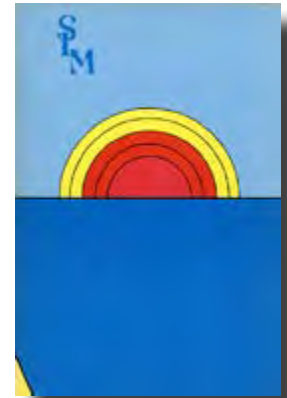
Professor Gussman was able to breathe life into my opinions of *Early American Literature*. This class was difficult for two reasons, the first is that I took it in my final semester as an undergrad at Stockton and second because the early Americans writers didn't quite have a handle on entertaining fiction yet. The genuine interest that Professor Gussman had in the subject matter made the class work. Not long after graduation, I found an old tattered copy of *Last of the Mohicans* in a used bookstore and it is because of this class and Professor Gussman that I have that book on my shelf today. I may never read it again, but it will always remind me of Stockton and this course.

I was not the best student and it would be hard to even define me as a good student, but the literature program at Stockton did change my life. Since graduating, I married my high school sweet heart (the only person who encouraged me to go to college), I went back to Stockton to get my Master's in Instructional Technology, and I have two amazing kids. I read to them everyday. Words and books helped shape me and I want that for them.

I had many teachers at Stockton but the four mentioned above are time locked in my memory of college. Many things from college are ethereal and foggy, but I will always remember the papers I wrote, the discussions I've had, and the books that I have read in the classes I took with these professors.

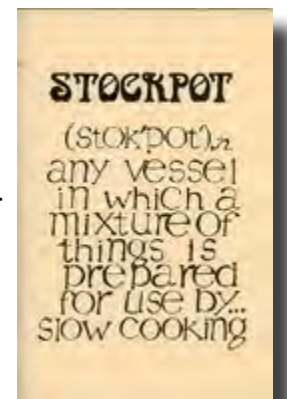
Doug Skinner

Class of '01



*Stockton Literary Magazine*  
(1975)

Like *Crying Voices*, *SLM* predates the first *Stockpot*, and like its predecessor and successor features poems, stories, photographs and drawings. *SLM* marks Stephen Dunn's appearance as literary advisor.



The first *Stockpot*  
(1975)



How could I forget one day when I picked up textbooks for another new semester. Loaded down with back-pack, purse, and full bag of textbooks, I faced the daunting task of climbing that huge flight of out-door cement steps. You know the one from outside the back door of the bookstore level to go up to the G-wing cafeteria.<sup>5</sup> When I reached the top I hurried along to go to the cafeteria, get a quick coffee then rush to Prof. Nancy Ashton’s class. Wow! I tripped on a two inch ledge at ground level near the entrance door. Did not notice it while trying to push open the door with shoulder; “look Mom no hands.” Hit the floor on knees first. Several students rushed over to pick up my belongings and me. They wanted to call the RSC police for help, later was sorry that I refused their offer. They helped me to get to a chair in the cafeteria. I remember one lovely student by the name of Monique who stayed with me for a while. I always tried to find her later to thank her, but did not have her last name. Thank you for your kindness that painful day, Monique. Long story short, after resting my swollen, black and blue leg across an empty seat in class (Thanks for your concern Nancy), I managed to hobble out to my car, put the car in automatic drive; GSP with no traffic or lights, it was not difficult. Made it to the emergency door at the hospital – honked horn, nearby people helped carry me in. Soft knee cast for a few weeks, hobbling around campus. My classmates were so helpful: many carried my things to class and/or to the parking lot. I love my former classmates and professors – will remember them and RSC for the rest of my life.

Monica Lampkin

Class of '02



*G-wing with second-story overbuild  
and veterans' garden*



Julius Lester in *A Day of Tears: A Novel in Dialogue*, describes spring as “. . . caught somewhere between hope and regret.” It was Senior Seminar with Lisa Honaker. Mid-spring; the weather had one foot in winter and the other trying to root itself in the thawed earth. The chatter in the room was simmering down. “What’s the matter, Lisa?” I asked. The mood in the room suddenly shifted to quiet and serious.

<sup>5</sup> Editor’s Note: That cafeteria has been gone since the opening of the campus center in 2012. G-wing now houses classrooms and faculty offices.



For the 40th anniversary of *Stockpot* next spring, editors are looking for previous authors and artists. Would you like to be acknowledged? Show up at the publication launch? Read a poem? Contact a faculty member or the student editors directly at [rsc.stockpot@gmail.com](mailto:rsc.stockpot@gmail.com).



Between sobs, we learned that our friend and his wife had lost a baby earlier that day. I have many happy memories of my days as a literature student, but this sad memory has surfaced several times in my mind over the last month. Maybe it's my mom who gives her annual holiday outlook, "It's the melancholy holidays . . . more people commit suicide between Thanksgiving and Christmas." Maybe it was just a memory that needed to be remembered.

I just remember how we took care of each other that day and the days that followed throughout that spring. A life lesson, I suppose, was what we really learned that semester – more than any novel or great work of literature could have taught us.

Concetta Burzo

Class of '03



There are so many things that stand out in my memory from being in the Litt Program. I fondly recall Kinsella describing *HELG* and subsequent references to the dry study of English grammar as being "sexy stuff" and had found myself using that little nugget of a description with my own students which always garnered chuckles. I will also never forget Ken's descriptions and reenactments of the "old lady" who marks the way along any Northrop Frye Archetypal Hero Quest; Ken revealed his ability to shimmy his shoulders like the best of 'em!

Finally, there was G. T. Lenard's constant homage to Huck Finn and his "howling fantods" which was an item we later came across in *Postmodernism Senior Seminar* with Scott Rettberg while studying the works of David Foster Wallace, whom Mark Baird and I both got to meet at the Philadelphia Public Library that year (2004) – he actually autographed my 40-page Senior Sem research paper, which was an analysis of his work – probably THE highlight of my entire experience in the Litt Program (besides graduation, of course). Note: I have also incorporated the word "fantods" into my description of things that make me anxious.

Laura Birchler

Class of '04



When I think of the Litt program, I think of Professor Kinsella. There are a couple of reasons for this. First, he has had a huge impact on my professional life. For instance, I admire and try to emulate his laid-back teaching style. Through him, I learned how important it is to be approachable to my students. Second, he teaches holistically. For example, on 9/11, he had his *Literary Methodologies* students stop and think about the terrorist attacks. He could have just held class and skipped over the tragedy, but he didn't. He cared about the world and how his students were impacted by the attacks. Because of this, I try to teach holistically. Lastly, he went far and beyond for his students. There were many times when he answered my frantic email messages and advised a special project for me. Because of all this, Professor Kinsella stands out when I think of the Litt program.

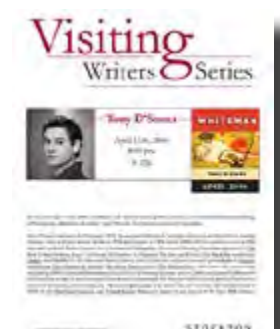
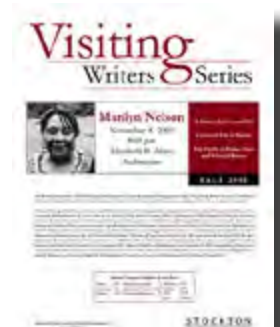
Shawna Beals

Class of '05



For an incomplete list of *Visiting Writers* who have read at Stockton, see the Literature Archive page. If you have additional flyers or other records of past readings, we'd love to have copies.

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/literaturearchive/>





My first 3000-level course was *Shakespeare* with Ken Tompkins. I loved the course, but due to my lack of background, it was a bit over my head. I remember getting one paper back with the comment, “A beautifully written paper, grammatically perfect – that somehow misses the point.” I tried, but somehow I never did quite grasp the concept, “How does this character FUNCTION?” I don’t think I was alone; I’m sure I heard a few groans whenever Ken said the F word.

I took G. T. Lenard’s class and fell in love with William Faulkner, so much so that I used his book *Light in August* in my Senior thesis on intertextuality. Call it silly, but something happened to make me feel like my connection with his work was preordained. I learned that Faulkner was given his Nobel Prize on December 10, 1950 – the day I was born.

In Tom Kinsella’s research class, working on my portion of the *American Weekly Mercury*, still wet behind my computer ears, I entered my material over and over and over again. I thought I was doing it all wrong, so I went to his office for help. It turns out that I was doing it right, I just didn’t know where to locate it. But having entered it repeatedly as I did, I ended up being the only one whose finished product was error-free. (I still remember fondly Kinsella’s remark, “It takes you time to get it, but once you do, you’re brilliant.” It got me through a few tough spots in subsequent semesters. Thanks!)

JoAnne Henderson

Class of '05



I can never forget about the bookbinding discussion during Kinsella’s research class. Currently, I teach Language Arts to juniors and seniors in high school and I always make it a point to share my senior seminar research paper with my students. They are always fascinated by it since *The Great Gatsby* is a book I teach every year.

Christine LaFemina

Class of '05

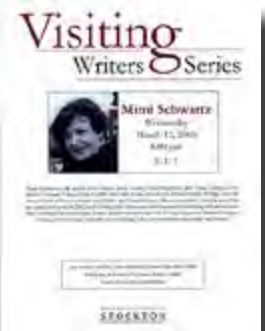
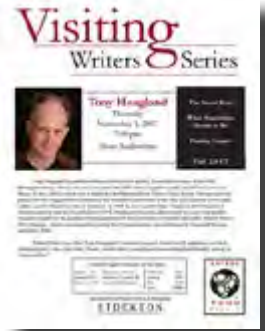


Professor Kinsella spoke very passionately about how many times he would write and rewrite his papers and how much he would obsess about every little piece of punctuation, every comma, every word. It was moving, and he was absolutely right. We need to take responsibility for everything we produce. This lesson was invaluable. If I’m going to make it as a comic writer or letterer – and that’s a VERY big if! – it will be because on a certain day, waking up for *History of the English Language and Grammar* was a priority!

Justin Piatt

Class of '05

[www.unlikelyheroesstudios.com](http://www.unlikelyheroesstudios.com)





But let it be known you are willing to suffer  
 only in proportion to your errors  
 not one unfair moment more.  
 Insist on this as if it could be granted:  
 not one moment more.

I refuse to break up the format of Stephen Dunn’s “Talk to God” since the man is the 2001 Pulitzer Prize winner for poetry. When honored with such an accolade, fellow writers should never minimize said greatness by putting five powerful lines into one long one to save space.

Use the space for Dunn, he deserves it. I know this, why? Because I studied under him during my Stockton stint 10 years ago.

I will never forget sitting surrounded by about 8 or so of my peers in Dunn’s *Advanced Fiction* class, being asked by Dunn to peel the layers from a story in search of symbolism and such. As I was explaining my take on the tale, Dunn questioned my education, if you will, saying, “Angela, you are not very well read are you?”

“No professor Dunn, I am not. As a matter of fact after not graduating high school, traveling and partying my entire twenties and not deciding to go back to college until my mid-thirties, I am not well read,” I replied with great respect and excitement that Dunn, an Academy Award winner in Literature, would even notice me, nonetheless serve me a back-handed boost.

Driving home from Pomona up the Garden State Parkway after a long day of Dunn’s class and other Stockton studies, I looked up to my Providence as I threw one of my hands in the air shouting, “Did you have to use a Pulitzer Prize winner to tell me I am not well read?”

And the answer was, “No.”

Remembering that my stepfather, a very wise man and mentor, often said to me, “Writers read and you must read the classics.” In that moment, I realized it was not necessarily Dunn drilling the likes of Hemingway and Poe into my psyche, rather it was a man that I respected and revered growing up, a much louder voice than a world-wide name in poetry.

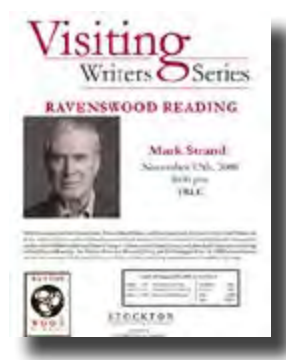
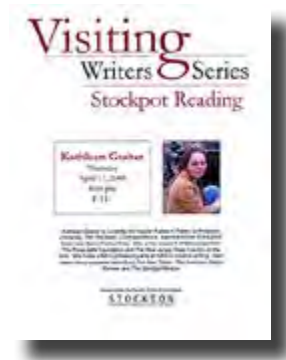
However, there is something to be said for Dunn’s desire to condescendingly educate me so I could become more well read, inevitably composing more compelling content in my own name.

Without trying to sound conceited, I received a B+ in *Advanced Fiction* studying under the professor. And for a New Jersey Press Association Lloyd P. Burns Responsible Journalism Public Service honoree, that says a lot about Dunn’s teaching.

When you can take an award-winning writer in love with non-fiction and teach her – or any writer – how to tap into her or his imagination to create fiction, you are not just a Pulitzer Prize Winner, you are a good teacher. And for that I am grateful to say I studied under Stephen Dunn.

Angela Santoriello

Class of ’05





I will never forget the discussions we had in Fred Mench's class, *The Bible as Literature*. We spent almost a full class arguing about what Abraham's wife might have said to Abraham after he came back down the mountain and whether he was delusional or not. I had never seriously considered the possibility that characters in the Bible could have been real people with some pretty awful family conflicts. It was a mind-blowing day and a wonderful class overall because of our ongoing, fierce debates!

Michelle Wendt

Class of '05



I had two choices for my senior seminar heading towards the spring of 2004. I could have waited until the fall to take Ken Tompkins or take Scott Rettberg's section on postmodernism. Many of my *Shakespeare* classmates in the fall of 2003, with Tompkins, decided to hold off until the fall because Scott was pretty new and they felt that taking KT's class was the safer route. I ended up, after a quick meeting with Scott, taking his class and it changed the direction of my life. I ended up diving into the deep end of Scott's interests in postmodernism, electronic literature (I am wearing my ELO shirt right now), and hypertext fiction. I took a few more classes with him and then headed to graduate school. I ended up writing my MA thesis, in part, about the epic hypertext novel *The Unknown* by The Unknown Collective, of whom Scott was a member. Each spring I also teach a course called *Literature and Film*, which is highly influenced by Scott's old *From Books To Movies* course at Stockton. I would not be here without Scott Rettberg.

William Patrick Wend

Class of '06



These days we don't see our old litt pals too often, but every year at a not-so-little-anymore gathering called Friendsgiving, a tight group of the alums reminisce about our time in the litt program. It's hard to pick an anecdote between dog-sitting for G. T. Lenard, dressing up as writing faculty, hanging out in the writing center with Pam Cross, or getting life-changing precepting by the master of the litt bash pig cookie himself, Tom Kinsella. From *Litt Meth* to *Senior Sem*, there were so many moments. I share stories with my students now, tell them to make new friends, and laugh about them with old ones whenever the chance occurs.

Ashley Ayler

Class of '07





*Friendsgiving*



A particular memory of the Literature program is the day a few friends and I dressed as members of the LITT faculty/family. I think it was Halloween, but I wouldn't be surprised if it were just a typical Tuesday. I attempted Emari DiGiorgio; Lisa Longo dressed as a rather passable Ken Tompkins; Ashley Ayer donned some itchy facial hair to impersonate Brian Stefans; and Donna Huneke represented Pam Cross of the Writing Center, where we four worked together as tutors.

Perhaps the best part of this adventure was accompanying Lisa-Ken to one of Professor Tompkins' actual classes. Professor Tompkins walked in to find his doppelgänger sitting in the front row. He was delighted, and exclaimed, "Can I have a hug? There's a sight I thought I'd never see . . . me hugging me." It was absolutely fantastic, and just embodies the reason I love Stockton: the professors are some of the most gracious, good-humored, fun, eccentric, and of course wickedly intelligent people I have been fortunate enough to meet.

I am still in fairly regular touch with many faculty members in the program, and the friends I made in the LITT program form my core group of friends to this day. I am grateful for the experiences and the classes, but I think I am most grateful for the people who made showing up every day such a blast.

Maureen Riggi (née Egan)

Class of '08





G. T. Lenard - “Whoa wee, gotta holler!” Nikki C., Dan A., and I kept G. T. on her toes during Faulkner class. Nikki and Dan with their insightful comments, and me with my general misunderstanding and constant questions about Southern culture.

Deb Gussman - I went to Deb’s office in 2007 and asked, “Deb, should I be a graduate student or an activist after I graduate?” I bet you can guess what she replied. I attribute my final decision to serve in AmeriCorps to Deb and Emari. I made it a priority to enroll in Deb’s American literature courses after I had her for *Literary Research* and we annotated Mary Rowlandson with HTML (those were the days!). I enjoy her wit and wisdom, admire her honesty, and am inspired by her continued work for civil rights. It is because of her *American Drama* class that I began to seriously study Political Science.

Tom Kinsella - I only took one class with Tom - *Grammar* in 2005. And what a doozy! Just teasing – it was a great experience, and I had the opportunity to write a paper about words found in *Harry Potter*. But even though I didn’t have him as an instructor for a more “literary” topic (I still regret not taking his Irish lit class), I’ll always remember Tom as a general father-figure, mentor type for all LITT students and faculty.

Ken Tompkins – “Emily, smile once in a while! It’s not so bad after all, kiddo.” Ken always made sure I was putting my best self forward, by telling me to smile when I first came to Stockton, or to wake up during the long, last semester of my undergraduate years. Later, Ken asked me to write a piece for the 40th anniversary commemoration book. It’s needless to say that I was, and still am, deeply honored to be a part of that project.

Lisa Honaker – Lisa was my first LITT professor; I was enrolled in *British Literature II*. I asked permission to come to class late (or leave early?) so that I could participate in a “Die In” held by STAND back in 2004. I knew then that I was in the company of scholars and activists, and that this type of behavior was not only accepted by encouraged. I worked with Lisa on various extracurricular projects throughout undergraduate (PEP) and even now as a graduate student.

Emari DiGiorgio – My mentor, inspiration, confidant, and friend. As my instructor, Emari graciously facilitated an “independent study” with me during my senior year. We met at Celina’s weekly and she helped me craft poetry in order to cope with some demons from my teenage years. Emari is also an excellent cook and host.

Cindy King – Sadly, Cindy started as I was exiting. However, since I’ve known her, she has always been a good and generous friend!

Emily Heerema

Class of ’08



This might be an odd thing to remember, but now that I teach I find it popping into my mind somewhat constantly. My sophomore year at Stockton I took a 2000-level Litt course with Tom Kinsella. The course was themed, as most literature courses are, around books. This was a bit more literal, though, as books were the subject of the novels we read and



the class discussion itself – Kinsella knows quite a good deal about bookbinding and the history thereof. Anyway, one day in class he was announcing that an upcoming class would be canceled . . . or maybe he was positing the possibility of it. And he said something that stuck with me.

He said (and I'm paraphrasing, of course), "As a teacher, and a teacher of a Litt course, there is always a fleeting dream of mine. That one day class will be canceled, and there will be a note on the door to indicate such. And some of you – some students – will arrive and see the yellow piece of paper outside the door and walk away happy. But maybe one of you lingers for a bit, enough for another one of you to walk up and stand next to the other. And you both say something about the class being canceled to make small talk, but then one of you mentions the reading for today in passing. A small conversation starts. And maybe at this point someone else walks up and sees the note, but hears your small talk about the reading and joins in. Now a sort of conversation has started between the three of you . . . and maybe a fourth walks up. And maybe now, just maybe, without me being there, and completely prompted on its own, you all are discussing the reading without me. You're all doing what we do in here, but out there, on your own, thinking and learning and discussing without necessarily being aware of it. If that were to happen – and I'll probably never know if it does – then my dream will have come true."

I teach my own English (not Litt) courses now at Clemson University, and now I seem share this same dream. I catch glimpses of it – when my students tell me they were talking to their parents about the novel they're reading or I hear a few people talking about the assigned section before I enter the classroom. But I know the ultimate truth here: that in order for this dream to come true I would have to be there, which inherently means it can't really come true. And that's just fine. It's a wonderful part of teaching, and I don't completely understand why. So, thanks Kinsella for this piece of memory.

Andrew Mathas

Class of '08



Professor Tompkins' class: I remember how he magically went into character as he recited Shakespeare. Suddenly you felt like you were at a theater as his voice boomed out the lines of Hamlet. Somehow, I expected for him to be in costume; it would have been fitting.

Professor Kinsella's class: his favorite line; "You are to eat a book with your brain." I remember as I look over my notes how he dissected sentences so that after he finished they looked like a football coach's play book.

Professor Honaker's class: we looked up every word in a historic poem. This brought my attention to the meaning and usage of old world words.

These are a few things that I can recall, I hope later I will remember more. Most might remember me, as the lady who ran through the campus wearing light blue scrubs.

Jeanette Imperial

Class of '09





Aside from my professors, the thing I miss most about Stockton is the environment. I do think I explored every foot of those woods. In fact, I prided myself on knowing my way around. My first year, I even took a nap in between the made-for-Deanna-Thon-sized roots of a tree in the bog by the dorms. Here are two memories of my time on campus out of doors.

1) It must have been early October for the leaves were still green on the trees. I had a book to read for class. I read very slowly as if books are rich dark chocolate. Too much too fast and the appreciation is lost. I was lagging significantly behind the class in reading. But the trees on the dark path whispered comfort, and Lake Fred pulled insistently. Taking the book to the water's edge I found a nice tree root to sit on. This is what makes Stockton great: light path, dark path, path to Lake Pam, The Island, and the bog. These things ripped you out of all the social drama and academic stress. And they are unavoidable. I took it all in on that root by the water. When I was finally peaceful enough to read I heard a sound like that of a balloon being rubbed. I looked up to see a young man lying in an inflatable tube floating by me. I nodded, understood. Yes, this is what makes Stockton home.

2) It was an odd occurrence that I still quite can't explain. From our dorm window my freshman roommate and I watched the snow accumulate foot after foot. We looked at each other and knew. Quickly we put coats on and rushed outside. Perhaps it was the vast amount of snow, or the way two feet of snow balanced precariously on branches. But the woods called to us. We jumped and ran and trodded, exploring the snowy woods. My roommate suddenly stopped in her tracks and looked past me, behind me. Her eyes were wide with surprise. A deer, I thought, I can't believe it she has seen a deer behind me. I turned excitedly. There stood a man all in black, his long dark hair tied back. This fellow student became my dear friend, an honorary brother. As he led us safely back out of the woods, we realized that the woods had not only pulled at us but at many others. Therein is Stockton's allure. It's in the bark of every tree around it.

Deanna Thon

Class of '10



Since Tom Kinsella issued a call for alumni memories of the LITT program weeks ago, I've been struggling with what to write, partially because I was – I admit – a LCST major who changed her LITT minor to a major in the eleventh hour, so most of my memories are of moments spent in language rather than literature classes. I also work for and take courses in the academic division in which LITT is housed; several former, current, and possibly future LITT professors are now my bosses and this makes me reluctant to write about them. However, I can say that on countless occasions the LITT faculty have supported me as a student, whether by providing feedback for and encouraging my work on essays, counseling me about my future, or recommending and loaning me books to read.

The time I spent as a LITT major continues to influence my life as an alum. It was in my LITT courses that I learned how to read closely, write sharper, and research thoroughly,





and it's to these skills and the professors that taught me them that I owe my current employment – the first job I've held that doesn't feel separate from the rest of my everyday life. In addition, when working freshman and transfer orientations, I'm able to draw on firsthand experiences in helping new LITT majors register for classes. On a personal level, while I've always loved reading, the LITT courses I took broadened my literary horizon and introduced me to new favorite writers. Some of my closest relationships are with LITT majors: I met my best friend in a course she was taking to fulfill the language requirement for her LITT degree, and we give each other reading recommendations all the time; my stepdad is a LITT/LANG alum from way back, and talking about the books we'd both read in literature courses helped break the ice when he and my mom first started dating. When I was an undergrad, during holiday dinners this time of year relatives frequently posed the inevitable question every humanities major faces at least once: "But what are you going to do with that?" My postgrad experiences so far have taught me that there will always be opportunities, however unexpected, to do things with my LITT degree.

Victoria Conover  
Class of '11



Below is a picture of me assisting with a project that incorporated poetry into nature. A friend and I took portions of my poems containing lines about nature, wrote them on leaf-shaped cutouts, laminated them, and then tied them to trees along Lake Fred. One of the poems read:

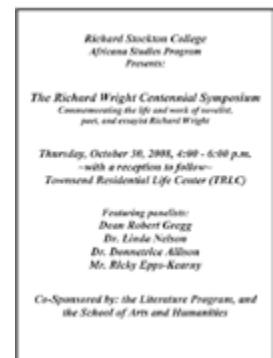
All the bees know it's right,  
that flowers give them flight,  
as well as the butterflies.  
Its nectar is sweet, enough  
for hummingbirds to eat and  
drain the roses dry.

Jacob Whritenour  
Class '11



Most of the material seen here is found on the Literature Archive. You can get a better look there.

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/literaturearchive/>





One night during *Medieval Irish Literature*, Professor Kinsella was drawing pictures on the board: fences, huts, animals, all kinds of things related to the stories we were reading. Finally, he tried to draw a cow. I say “tried” because the result was something that looked like a cross between a deformed hand and an amoeba. (To be completely forthcoming, Kinsella *did* usually warn us before he began to draw: “Use your imagination,” he would say.) He left that sad little creature on the board for the entire class despite the fact that any time one of us looked at it, we very nearly laughed out loud.

Anonymous

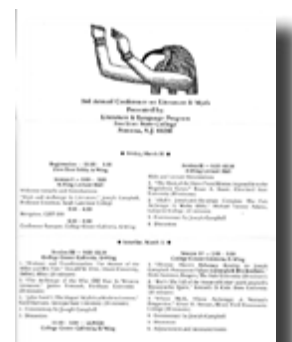
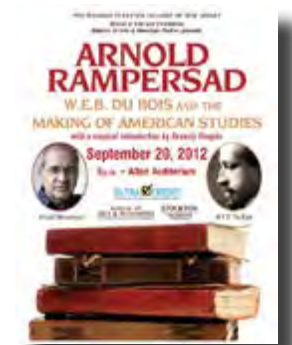
Class of '12



In the spring of 2010, I agreed to be a part of a project with Professor Richard Trama in which a group of students would collectively read the Man Booker Prize longlist for that year. In addition to reading the novels, each student would write short reaction papers about the novels they read. Our initial group of four students shrank to two by the time of the longlist announcement. So, between the announcement of the longlist in mid-July and the announcement of the winner in early October I read nine of the thirteen longlisted novels and wrote about eight of them. During that time, under the direction of Professor Trama, we were constantly revising; sharpening our arguments, excising extraneous passages, and ultimately crafting stronger, more lucid essays. Thinking back on my all-too-brief time at Stockton it was this experience – completed for no credit outside the confines of a literature classroom – that most contributed to my success as a student. It taught me to read critically, to write engagingly, to edit carefully, and to be more open to all types of literature. It is a credit to Stockton, and more specifically the School of Arts and Humanities, that such an experience is available to any students who want it.

James Pomar

Class of '12





I still struggle with the rules of grammar from time to time. This is a humbling statement coming from a literature major. We literature majors are people of words, letters, and books. We should be able to argue about the use of Oxford commas, and split infinitives. I have to run to Google once a day to make sure I don't sound like an idiot in work emails. With that said, my most memorable moment at Stockton College was in a grammar course. Struggling as always, I sheepishly proposed what I thought of as a shortcut. Professor Kinsella stopped and said "Hmm, let's try it."

It worked, and it kept working with different examples! For everyone else, this was a shortcut for three questions on the next test. For me, this was my four-minute mile.

The next class Prof. Kinsella wrote the following on the board, "Potter's theorem distinguishes between relative and subordinate clauses using 'that' by substituting 'which' for 'that.' In relative clauses the switch will make sense." Prof. Kinsella tells me he still uses this "theorem" with his students today. I hope that it helps them. I know that it helped me.

Phillip Potter

Class of '12

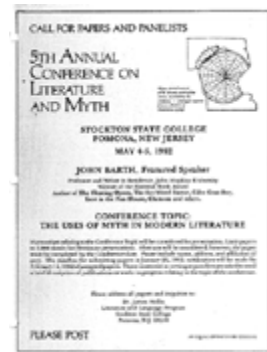


### *Reliving Lasting Impressions from My Time at StoCo*

You must always title every paper you write for Professor Kinsella. One, because that is his favorite part about collecting and reading papers but also because he reads them out loud to the class after everyone has handed them in. Continuing with Kinsella, and looking back at some of my college memories, I specially remember Kinsella's grammar course. I remember him telling us off-the-wall stories about gnomes and cats. We had to correct sentences that I still can remember. To this day I correct people when they use the wrong tense, the wrong "there" or wrong "then." Sometimes when I read a paper, or correct something of my younger siblings, I'll draw squiggly lines or a V or N or ADJ above certain words.

Another professor who made a lasting impression was Professor Gussman and her group discussions and hands-on activities. I read books in her course that I would not necessarily choose on my own, but when studying American Literature, Native American literature is now one of my favorite genres to read. I remember *Reservations Blues* so clearly in my mind. In addition to Gussman, Professor Hussong gave me confidence in writing a 38-page thesis, on princesses in fairy tales nonetheless. I remember on presentation day that all the other literature professors came in to see what we had accomplished our senior year.

As literature students, we were almost always in class with the same close-knit group of people. We saw familiar faces; we helped each other and gave each other advice and even read over each other's papers to make sure we were doing the best we could. I remember on the first day of class going over the syllabus and class schedule always feeling overwhelmed wondering "how am I going to accomplish all of this in such a short period of time," but I surprised myself when I did. All of my professors have gone out of their way and have spent



their own time with me to make sure I could be the best literature student I knew I could be. They were always available and constantly understanding when I needed help or had what I felt was a stupid question. Yet, they never made me feel that way.

Lastly, the most exciting day ever, yet at the same time a sad day to see end – graduation day. I was relieved to see all I had accomplished and to receive my literature degree yet sad to say goodbye to all of the friends I had made along the way, including professors. On graduation day I will never forget crossing the stage and seeing all of my professors on the other side clapping and cheering for me. They were just as excited for me as I was to graduate. I hugged and thanked all of my professors because if it were not for them I wouldn't be where I am today – remembering so clearly my time spent at Stockton College.

Samantha Rada

Class of '12



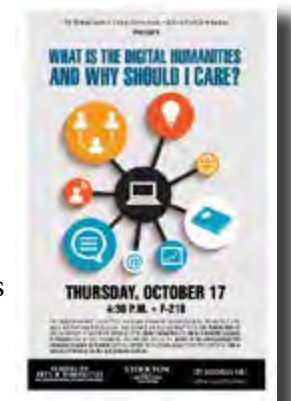
There are three people from the LITT staff that I'll never forget. Tom Kinsella was the first professor I ever had that appreciated the work a modern student did. He acknowledged how we had to juggle much more than he did when he was in college. He was the first professor that made me feel like I wasn't wasting my time throwing meaningless assignments down a black hole, but actually working on papers that he truly wanted me to succeed at. Every semester afterward he would stop and talk to me for 10 or 20 minutes to see how I was doing. He really cares about his students, and I love him for that.

Emari DiGiorgio wasn't technically part of the LITT faculty, but she was my professor for *Introduction to Creative Writing*. Without her, I wouldn't be where I am now. She made me fall in love with writing fiction again. She brought so much energy into her class. Some days I didn't even want to leave. She made me want to keep writing just to see what she would have to say about my work, good or bad. She believed in me when I didn't. She helped me see my potential and always wanted me to challenge myself. She even thought I had what it took to be a tutor. I still regret not taking that opportunity. She was very patient with me, even when I was whiny and self-defeating. She's a great person that opened so many doors for me.

Nathan Long was my professor for the majority of my workshops after *Intro*. His classes are the ones I remember most. He taught me how to truly look into a piece of fiction, how to analyze every word in every sentence to see how it contributes to each piece. To this day, I still hear his voice while editing my work, choosing what's worth keeping or discarding. He taught me how to truly appreciate literature, and through that, life. It sounds weird, but learning this has made me into a better person, and I can't thank him enough. To top it off, he's looked out for me on more than one occasion through personally tough times. He's e-mailed me to see if I was okay and even took time out of his schedule to talk about my issues in his office. He's been a bit of an inspiration, even when he worked me to death during Senior Seminar.

Gabriel Raffe

Class of '12





### 3 professors

Professor Gussman may be an American Lit professor, but she can turn anyone into a feminist in fourteen weeks or less.

Dr. Jacobson taught me that it is completely appropriate to use reality television to teach literature; in *Literary Methodologies*, she turned “the total artistic situation” into a character from *The Jersey Shore*.

There are a handful of stories I could tell about Professor Kinsella, but one in particular is never very far from my mind. I had decided to take his class on Milton, and about halfway through I found myself struggling mightily with the reading, especially *Paradise Lost*. After class one evening I couldn't help venting my frustrations, complaining that Milton's style of writing was just too hard to understand: “It makes me feel so stupid,” I whined. He looked at me for a minute then launched into a seemingly random description of the difference between a sweet, bubbly champagne and a richer, more complex liqueur: with one, everything about it is right there on the surface; with the other, you have to concentrate and pay attention – you have to work for it. He ended this comparison by saying, “Anyone can read the easy stuff, but why would you want to do *just* that? It's the hard stuff that makes you better.” He was right, of course, and not just about literature. Years later, if I'm having a difficult time with something, I still stop and remind myself that whether it's in school, in work, or in life, it really is the hard stuff that makes you better.

Stephanie Allen

Class of '13



I arrived at Stockton knowing I wanted to be a high school English teacher; however, I had no preparation for what I was in for with the Literature Program. I had taken a few Literature classes at my local community college, but Stockton offered me so much more than a few necessary literature classes. Not only were my professors knowledgeable and well read in their topics, but they taught with such zeal and excitement that I had no other choice but to fall in love as well. I dove into the books and topics with fervor wanting to match their passion for a particular piece.

I have taken several classes in which I feel I have grown as a student and as a “book worm.” In the fall of 2011, I enrolled in a course based around Milton. My professor taught with such esteemed conviction and appreciation. It was hard not to partake in his excitement as well. I would later read other works by that author just for the sheer enjoyment now that I understood the author and his works.

Another professor who sparked my excitement in reading taught my senior seminar, Lisa Honaker. The class was on the postcolonial novels of British literature. The name alone was enough to scare any student! Instead of shying away, I went in with an open mind. Not only did I enjoy the class and the knowledge Lisa had to bring to the class, I found one of my favorite pieces of literature – a novel I hold very dear to my heart.



Stockton's Literature Program is more than a few necessary classes. The professors educate students with the necessary knowledge to move forward, but they teach it bundled in a package of passion and excitement.

Danielle Bond

Class of '13



During our *Creative Writing Workshop*, we shared a lot of our work with Professor Nathan Long, and with one another. He gave us a lot of insight into the writing process, but never showed us one of his own stories. All semester, we begged him to read something of his. In the end, he acquiesced. He read us a great flash fiction piece that he had written, a strange take on the famous tale of Goldilocks and the three bears. It was brilliant, but it was a little difficult to understand him because he decided to wear a bear mask the entire time!

Professor Cynthia King was my instructor for *Advanced Poetry*. During that semester, we had to write thirty poems in thirty days. It was a difficult assignment that tested the limits of our creativity as time went on. I didn't think I would be able to complete it, but with Professor King's advice and encouragement I reached the goal. My ability to write poetry improved drastically in a single month, all thanks to Professor King.

Kevin Reilly

Class of '13

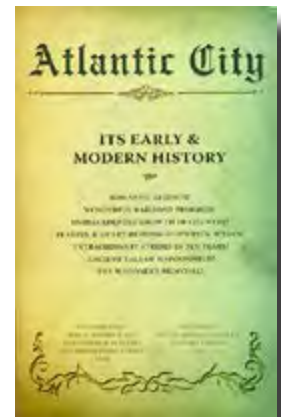


### *Several Remembrances*

In the spring of 2012, while I was fretting over which classes I still needed to graduate, I was contemplating taking *Nineteenth-Century American Women Writers* with Dr. Deborah Gussman. Surprisingly, I had never met Professor Gussman, so I had to ask around. The answers I got were from the high positive to low negative with no in-between. The



*Divergently*, volume 1, is a collection of stories from Stockton's *Fiction Workshop* (2005-2010).



*Atlantic City: Its Early & Modern History* is a republication of the 1868 first history of Atlantic City. The text was reset, edited, with new foreword and afterword, by Stockton students, and published by the South Jersey Culture & History Center, 2013.

best, and most accurate answer I heard was from a close friend of mine; she was only an acquaintance at the time. She told me, “Deb is a great professor. She’s a strong feminist, and you’ll know it right away, but she won’t force it on you. Take the course with her, I promise, you’ll love her.” My friend was right. Over the past eighteen months, I’ve grown to love Professor Gussman, as a teacher, as a friend.

“Forever fear the famous Gussman Circles” we were warned with disdain. Well, those warnings were right! However, Professor Gussman’s circles were beneficial. Instead of two or three people participating, or the emptiness of the crickets, or even the class coming close to being sent home (yes, she was pissed), the entire class actually talked! Who’d a thunk?

I met Professor Kinsella in the fall of 2010 for his *Intro to Research in Literature* class. Very early in the semester, after class one day, I told him that I wasn’t sure if I could finish the semester due to my pregnancy. His answer? “Oh, I’ve had plenty of pregnant students make it through a semester, you’ll be fine.”

The following week we walked together after class and chatted. I mentioned something about the twins, to which he answered, “Oh! You’re having twins?” I said, “Yes, I did tell you last week after class.” His reply, of course, “Well, I can’t hear, so I must have missed that part.” The following week, my husband came to school with me and we both chatted with Tom after class. I cried, my husband held me, Tom consoled. I had to leave his class and go on bed rest.

A professor with a heart is the best professor in my heart.

My second semester at Stockton, spring 2010, I took a writing class called *The Spiritual Quest*. I had no idea what to expect, but it filled a requirement for me, so I took it. Professor Judy Copeland walked in, gave us a syllabus, and I decided right then and there to drop the class. I’m not sure what made me want to drop, but I’m forever grateful that I stayed in Judy’s class. She’s an amazing person, a wonderful teacher, and the best friend I could ever have imagined. We’ve been through a tremendous roller coaster ride of life together, and she’s carried me across every valley and been there to catch me too. Judy makes me tear when I tell her how much she’s helped me become the writer I am. She always tells me, “But Jenn, you were already a great writer!” She never takes credit, but always gives applause.

At graduation, spring 2013, I obviously didn’t know what to expect. I walked across the stage, an absolutely surreal experience, just hoping I wouldn’t trip or throw up. By the time I finished having my awkward picture taken with my empty folder, I realized they were there. All of the professors (minus one who wasn’t able to make it) who had carried me through the literature program. I didn’t know that they would be there, but I absolutely attacked them. All of them. Deb Gussman, then Kristin Jacobson (who I had only met once and I think I scared her), and then Judy Copeland. I released every tear, smile, hug and thank you out on them. It was “perfectly lovely.” (Quote courtesy of Tom Kinsella.)

Jennifer Robinson

Class of ’13

## Why 42?

Since the spring of 2006 (with one exception), each of the issues of the *Irregular Littonian* has been identified as the 42nd. Why?

Because around spring of 2006 Ken Tompkins announced, “the answer to life the universe and everything.”

Go ahead, type that exact phrase into Google (but don’t use the quotation marks) and see what turns up: the number 42.

You might also remember that in *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy* the computer “Deep Thought” is asked the answer to the ultimate question of life, the universe, and everything. After seven and a half million years of computing, the answer turns out to be 42. The problem, of course, was that those who received the answer all those years later no longer knew what the question was – so the answer wasn’t much help.

Nevertheless, 42 seemed like a reasonable number of years to wait before writing this newsletter.

## Literature

Kenneth D. Tompkins, English  
Literature, 1970-2010

Gerald E. Enscoe, English  
Literature, Romanticism,  
1971-1987

Philip J. Klukoff, British  
Literature, 1971-1987

Adrian Jaffe, Literature,  
1971

Stephen E. Wilmore,  
Creative Writing, 1971

David Filimon,  
Communications,  
Linguistics (1972)

Fred Mench, Classical  
Languages and Literatures,  
1972-2008

Barney Milstein, Germanic  
Languages (1972)

Adam Sorkin, Literature (1972)

## Language

John C. Miller, Romance Languages  
(1971)

Leonore B. Loft, Romance  
Languages (1971)

## Literature and Language

Moira Babb, Literature, 1973

Royce E. Burton, American  
Literature (1973)

Norma Grasso, Spanish Languages  
and Literatures (1973)

James R. Hollis, Modern Literature,  
1973-1989

Simon Mpondo, Literature, French  
Language, African Literature, 1973

Frances Novack (1973)

Thomas Cardoza (1974)



*J K-wing courtyard c. 1985 & 2013*

### Literature and Language Faculty through the years

When the College opened in 1971, the Literature and the Romance Languages programs were separate. By 1972 the two programs were mixing faculty, though they maintained two program descriptions, and in the 1973-74 *Bulletin* they are listed as one. When portions of the program split into independent programs (COMM in 1996 and LANG in 1998), we no longer list their hires.

Note on Dates: Dates refer to the first year that faculty are identified as teaching within the LITT/LANG or Literature program. Most dates are drawn from coordinator's reports. Years placed in parentheses, however, signify the year of *Bulletin* when faculty were first listed; in these instances faculty may have first taught a year or two earlier. Some faculty, teaching in programs outside of LITT/LANG, may have been on campus for years before joining the program.







Stephen Dunn, Creative Writing, 1974

Francisco (Paco) Moreno, French and Spanish (1974)

Christopher Burnham (1975)

Jeanne-Andrée Nelson, French Languages and Literatures, 1975

Marcia Satin, Russian Language and Literature, 1975

Penelope Dugan, Writing and Composition; will become Coordinator of Developmental Education in Reading and Critical Thinking (1976)

Eileen Hatala, Linguistics (1978)

Michael J. Rose, Director of Performing Arts Center, Comparative Literature (1978)

Rae Lee Siporin, Dean of General Studies, Medieval Literature (1978)

Karen Fox, TESOL, 1981?

Mateo Pardo, French 1981?

Joe-Ann McLaughlin, adjunct, rhetoric and composition, 1982

Catherine Iacone, adjunct, French, F 1983

John McCall, adjunct, Literature, F 1983

Catherine Smith, adjunct, Spanish, F 1983

Tracy K. Harris, Spanish and French, 1984-1986

Joanna Clark, adjunct, European Literature, F 1984

Barbara Groark, adjunct, Introduction to Fiction, F 1984

Walter Newman, R., adjunct, Fiction Writing Workshop, F 1984

Denise Ramos, adjunct, French, Spanish, F 1984

Ruthann Johansen, American Literature, 1985-1986

Pamela Avery, adjunct, French, S 1985

Anne Neumann, British Literature, 1 term appointment, S 1985



Ann Enscoe, adjunct, Introduction to  
Literature, F 1985

Brian King, adjunct, Introduction  
to Latin, F 1985

Peter Steinfeld, adjunct, Bible  
as Art & Literature, F 1985

R. Michael Haines, Dean of  
General and Experimental  
Studies, Medieval  
Literature (1986)

Neil Kleinman, Vice  
President, Literature  
(1986)

Pia Walters, American  
Literature, 1987-1988

L. Antonio Calderon, French  
and Spanish Languages, 1988

Georgeann Lenard, Writing,  
American and British Literature,  
1988

Jack Connor, Writing (1988)

Donna Lubot, 13-D, British  
Literature, 1988

Anita Foeman, Communications,  
1989-1991

Annette Federico, English  
Literature, 1989

Thomas Heffernan, Dean of  
Arts & Humanities, Medieval  
Literature, 1989

Madelyn Jablon, American  
Literature, 1989-1994

Thomas Kinsella, British  
Literature, 1989

Angel Santiago, Spanish,  
1989

J. Melman, adjunct, French,  
S 1990



*F-wing overbuild*





C. Staehle, adjunct, French, S 1990

Ivan Drufovka-Restrepo, 1990

Robert Johnson, Jr.,  
Communications, 1990-1992

Joseph Marthan, French, 1990-  
2003

M. Roccia, adjunct, Introduction  
to Fiction, F 1990

Patrice Hannon, British  
Literature, 1991-1995

Bernadette McNulty, 13-D,  
Communications, 1992

Lynn Tomlinson, 13-D,  
Communications, 1992

Charles McGeever,  
Communications, 1993-1998

David D'Alessio,  
Communications, 1993-1998

? Serben, adjunct, Communications,  
S 1994

Ann Myles, American Literature,  
1994-1999

Linda Williamson Nelson, Writing,  
1994

Carol Vernallis, Communications,  
1994

Jay Corwin, Spanish, 1995-1998

Damian Rubino, 13-D, Spanish, 1995

Ippokratis Katzios, Greek Language and  
Literature, 1995

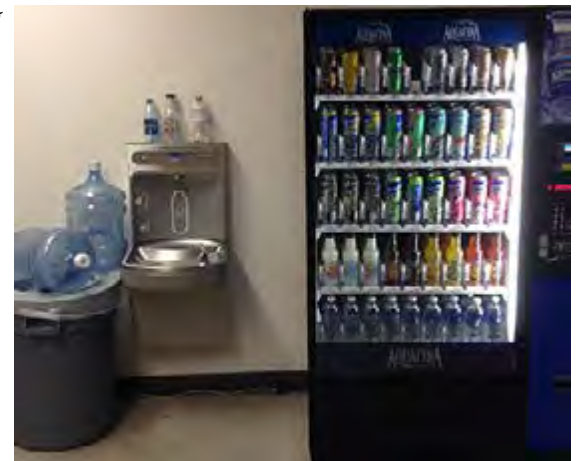
Lisa Honaker, British Literature, 1995

*Communications established its own free-standing  
program in 1996.*

Roberto Madero, Spanish, 1996

Lydia Fecteau, adjunct, Literature, 1996

*In 1998 the Literature and Language program split  
into two free-standing programs: Literature and  
Romance & Classical Languages & Literatures.*



Deborah Gussman, American  
Literature, 1999

Scott Rettberg, New Media  
Studies, 2002

Marion Hussong, German  
literature, 2002; joined  
program full-time 2007

Barb Daniels, 13-D,  
Creative Writing, F 2003

Mary Emilie Steinacker,  
adjunct, Introduction to  
ESL, F 2003

Louise Wigglesworth,  
adjunct, Writing for Stage  
& Screen, S 2004

David Roessel, Literature,  
2004

B. J. Ward, 13-D, Creative  
Writing, F 2004

Heather McGovern, Internet,  
Writing & Society, S 2005

Kristin J. Jacobson, American  
Literature, 2005

Nathan Long, Creative Writing, 2005

Stephen Gnojewski, adjunct,  
Playwriting, S 2006

Peter Murphy, adjunct, co-  
teaching with Stephen Dunn, S  
2006

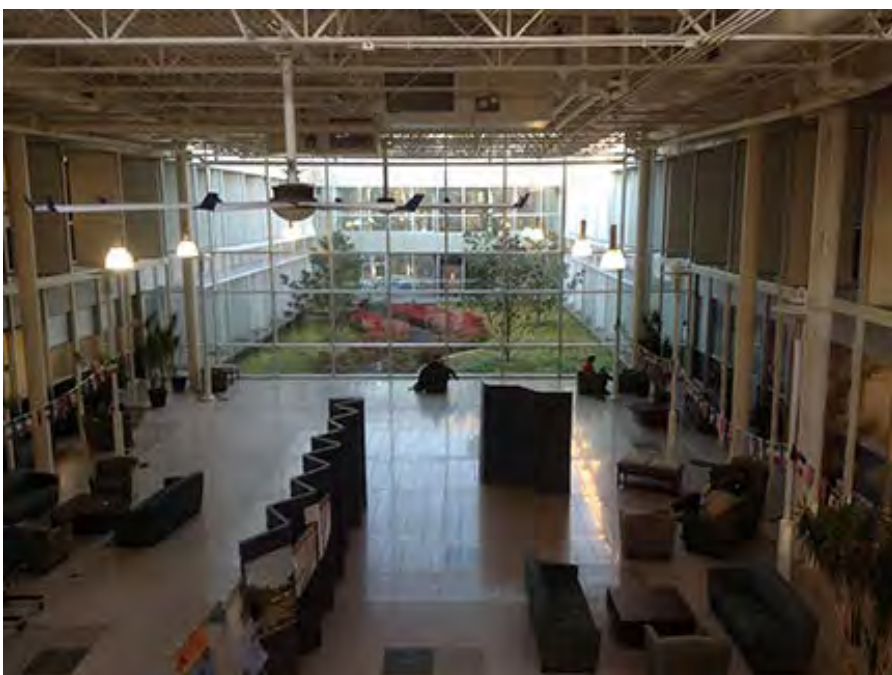
Emari DiGiorgio, Creative  
Writing, 2006

Adalaine B. Holton, Multi-Ethnic  
Literatures of the United States,  
2007

Brian Kim Stefans, New Media  
Studies, 2007

Maria Castillo, adjunct, English  
Language & Grammar, S 2007?

Kathy Sedia, Writing Speculative  
Fiction, 2007





*a smoking gazebo*

Cynthia Arrieu-King, Creative Writing, 2008

Judy Copeland, Travel Writing, 2008

John Perovich, adjunct, Playwriting, F 2008

Adam Miyashiro, Medieval Literatures, 2009

Danno Madden, adjunct, Playwriting, S 2009

Adeline Koh, Postcolonial Literature, 2010

Ken Kaissar, adjunct, Playwriting, 2010

Jo-Anne McLaughlin, adjunct, Introduction to Creative Writing, F 2010

Marissa Johnson-Valenzuela, adjunct, Creative Writing, 2011

Kathleen J. Graber, adjunct, Creative Writing, S 2013

Christine E. Salvatore-Smith, adjunct, Creative Writing, F 2013



## Three Centers Associated with the Literature Program

**Stockton Text Center.** The Text Center is the brainchild of Professor David Roessel, who in 2005 decided that our students deserved the opportunity to work closely with rich archival material within relatively easy reach of Stockton. From its inception, the Text Center has allowed undergraduate and graduate students to work with primary, often unpublished, manuscript material. Students gain insight into the nature and practice of scholarship and have often produced work that has been publicly performed, exhibited, or published. Students have edited unpublished one-act plays by Tennessee Williams, two of which were given a live-reading at Stockton. This led a student to translate one of Williams' plays into Spanish, a translation that was later given a live-reading in Provincetown, MA. A student who prepared a one-act play based on the letters of Lord Byron gave a performance at the international Byron Conference in Athens in 2009. In 2010 "Aegina," an unpublished story by H. D., was performed at the Ezra Pound Conference in London. And on July 17th, 2012 the first Bardwalk was held in Cape May: a series of scenes from Shakespeare's plays performed around the streets of that vacation town (the second Bardwalk was held this past summer in AC). Many on-going projects like these, often completed outside of the standard classroom setting for no credit, continue to provide students with meaningful ways to engage with the scholarly life while at Stockton.

**South Jersey Culture & History Center (SJCHC).** The goals of the SJCHC are to help foster awareness of the rich cultural and historical heritage of Southern New Jersey, to promote the study of this heritage, especially among area students, and to produce publishable materials that provide a deepened understanding of this heritage. To that end, since its inception in April 2011, the SJCHC, directed by Tom Kinsella, has produced three issues of a newsletter *Sandy Shorts*, trained students who have curated six library exhibitions (and assisted with three other exhibitions), republished a student-edited edition of the first history of Atlantic City, and held a day-long symposium on John McPhee's wonderful *The Pine Barrens*. The SJCHC has also assisted in the development of Stockton's Special Collections, aiding in the donation of thousands of books, pamphlets, maps, business ledgers, and ephemera with direct bearing upon aspects of South Jersey culture. The new collections are especially strong in poetry, literature for the young, and historical texts pertaining to our area. Students are working with these collections as part of senior seminars, independent studies, and internships. In the near future we hope to have increased opportunities for students to work with materials held by historical societies throughout South Jersey. We are also looking to develop a series of lectures and short courses on topics pertaining to our area. If you are an expert in an area of South Jersey culture or history (or just well versed), consider contacting Kinsella. Perhaps you can be a featured speaker!

**DH@Stockton** (<http://dh.stockton.edu>), directed by Adeline Koh, is the new Center for the Digital Humanities at The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey. Following on the heels of Stockton's rich historical engagement with new media and the digital humanities, this center seeks to provide a collaborative space and support for all members of the Stockton community interested in digital culture. Every semester, we will host a series of online and virtual events regarding the digital humanities. In Summer 2014, we will also be hosting THATCamp Digital Pedagogy (<http://digped2014.thatcamp.org>) in Atlantic City, which will both offer workshops on digital tools and provide discussion spaces for collaborative work. THATCamp Digital Pedagogy is open to anyone, especially people new to digital pedagogy or associated with Stockton College. We hope to see many of our students and alums there!

## Two Sentences apiece from the Faculty

Deborah Gussman is still working hard to complete her scholarly edition of Catharine Sedgwick's final novel, *Married or Single?*, which she hopes to see in print in 2015. She and her students in LITT and WGSS are all working hard to re-commit to their reading and writing for the final stretch of the fall '13 semester.

Adalaine Holton will be on sabbatical during the spring 2014 semester. She'll spend her time working on a book project on the treatment of archives in African American literary and historical writing.

Lisa Honaker is currently Interim Dean of the School of Arts and Humanities. She finds the position fun and exciting, though she misses her colleagues and her books.

Professor Hussong is happy to report that her binge-reading problem is out of control, as always. Life is good.

Kristin Jacobson is part of a group of faculty, staff and students trying to establish a Women's, Gender and Sexuality Center on campus. Please sign and share our petition: <https://www.change.org/petitions/support-rscnj-women-s-gender-and-sexuality-center#>.

Fall 2013 has brought me three wonderful classes of prepared, thoughtful, pleasant, humorous students who seem to all be doing their homework well and on time and who support each other openly and warmly: I feel very lucky. I am currently taking the *Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction* course offered by Marcello Spinella and hope to add that to the psychology of habits unit in my course, GIS *The Politics of Food*. —Cynthia King

Kinsella has been thinking about three lines from Lou Reed: "There are problems in these times / But, oooh, none of them are mine / Oh, baby, I'm beginning to see the light." Bold words; hopeful words.

Adeline Koh is very happy to be back at Stockton after a year away from her much loved students and colleagues. She is currently focusing most of her energies on creating a vibrant digital humanities center called DH@ Stockton (<http://dh.stockton.edu>).

It should tell you something that Nathan Long was born in the Columbia (as in District of) Hospital for Women, and narrowly escaped death twice as an infant, once, at four months, when his stomach muscle shut down and then a few months later when he reacted to a series of vaccines that sent him to intensive care for two weeks; no doubt this accounts for many of his unusual behaviors and his interest in stories, some of which seem to defy all odds.

Adam Miyashiro is wrapping up his fall courses in literary research and comparative medieval literature, and co-organizing a Delaware Valley Medieval Association conference featuring two Stockton students in February at Rutgers-Camden. He is excited by the upcoming performance of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* at the Stockton Performing Arts Center, and will go to New York to see Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* with Patrick Stewart and Ian McKellen.

Ken Tompkins continues to direct Shakespearean plays in his head, continues to explore America on his motorcycle and still wishes he had started a religion in the 1960s. For the third time, he just finished the 20 volumes of sea novels of Patrick O'Brian and is now working through the trilogy of "Wool" by Hugh Howey.

## Stockton Rugby, 1972-1973

Bjork was the Prez, Chuck Tantillo was his assistant, and there were about 100 Nam vets in a student body of 900 or so. Dan McMahan was running the school rag, *The Argo*, Chris Cirece was trying to get into the pants of Dan's girl, Marge, so he was assistant. Ed Price and I were sports editors but with no sports. Don Bragg, the last of the steel or bamboo pole vaulters, was Athletic director and Larry James, a really fast brother from Nova, was his assistant. Bragg just strutted around campus trying to act like Tarzan and Larry was running around the open fields to the west of the main buildings and the lake both with nada mas to do.

Eddie and I tended bar down the road at a gun toting country dump called "Louie's Inn" about halfway to Route 9. Louie was 96 and sat in a big wing chair by the door watching the telly. His 92 year old wife, "Mom," cooked a turkey and a rib roast every day to make the best sandwiches in the county. Lutzie was their alcoholic son and WWII veteran of Saipan and Okinawa with the 27th Division. He was haunted by a lot of demons and was well into his V.O. by noon with an occasional ten-cent beer chaser. We took care of him.

Ed and I lived at the Crest Motel with a couple other vets for 35 bucks a week, which included a sheet change. The sheets were a distinct pleasure since it beat the hell out of living in a poncho liner, which was wetter inside from sweat than the outside was from the wet monsoon. We didn't let on, as the management might have changed their policy to once a month.

There was one other problem than no sports at Stockton and that was that I would run out of G. I. Bill education bennies by the last month of the next semester. I had over 140 credits but no major, but I had 47 weeks of Vietnamese language at the Defense Language Institute (DLISC) at Ft. Bliss, Texas.

Now, Chuck Tantillo would come to Louie's, sometimes by himself but often with the school bursar. Occasionally, those two would walk in with the Dean of Students. They all liked their California sours in shaker glasses. Ed and I needed some sports to write about and I needed to get out of undergrad by my 9th anniversary of starting college. We delegated soccer to Rick Doering who worked on Larry James to get the team going. We went through James because Bragg thought soccer was a pussy sport. You know that Tarzan doesn't play with his feet, he plays with his chimps. Rick was a good choice.

Now to double jiggers of Fleischman's bonded whiskey in the school administrators' sours. I had snail mailed a request for my Vietnamese transcript and had thrown together a bullshit budget for the Rugby club. The boys started coming more regularly to be topped up for the grueling afternoon of work facing them. After three weeks of plying them with top shelf booze and bullshit, we got 2,000 dollars for the club and I got 21 credits for the DLISC course and the Dean's secretary for a girl friend.

The club spent \$640 for solid black uniforms, \$15 per week to an Asst. Prof's wife to launder them every 2 weeks (the Prof played 2nd Row for the team) and the remainder was spent on beer, usually kegs at \$26 per. The bad news was Chuck cut us back \$500 for the next semester! Acting shocked, while including Ed and me in a couple celebratory sours, we reluctantly informed the dean that the team could be fielded even with such a steep cut in our budget. The net effect was \$140 more for beer and weed, since we didn't buy new uniforms.

I don't know what happened to the rugby club after the next semester since I was off to graduate school with a B.A. in Litt/Languages. That might make me the only grad with that major. What was unique was the influence of a hundred or so vets on school policy at the time. We knew what we wanted, we were an average four years older than the typical student, the time was right and we gamed the system.

Frank McAlonan, Jr.

Class of '73

Maybe next time I tell you how Lutzie cried when he had to raise the price of drafts a nickel, but he did buy bigger bell glasses.



## Simon Mpondo



Sometime in the summer of 1973 a young African and his wife moved into an apartment in Atlantic City. Before he came to Stockton he had studied at the University of Washington, where he received his Ph.D. There he met and married Shannon Johnson. He also had a radio show on KRAB in Seattle, one of the earliest listener-supported stations in the country, where he read and discussed African writers. His name was Simon Mpondo.

At Stockton in the fall of 1973, he taught *Advanced French* (a LANG course) and *The Western Tradition of Literature -1* (a LITT course) as well as *Africa and the West* (a General Studies course). In the spring of 1974 he taught *How the World Sees the USA* (another General Studies course). Also, in 1974, he published a volume of poetry that he had translated from the French: *Hammerblows*, written by David Mandessi Diop – a Black nationalist intellectual and poet who died in a plane crash in 1960. Mpondo was already an established scholar working within the “Negritude” movement, having published *From Independence to Freedom: A Study of the Political Thinking of Negro-African Writers in the 1960’s* in 1971. He was an excellent poet in his own right; his poem “The Seasons of the Rain” is still included in the *Penguin Book of Modern African Poetry*.

The few faculty who knew Simon Mpondo all remember him as a “sweet” colleague – polite, quiet, bright and an excellent teacher. But by the spring and early summer of 1974, for reasons that are obscure, his visa was withdrawn and he returned to Cameroon. James Hollis, a colleague who was appointed to the LITT Program the same time as Simon, remembers that the College was reducing faculty positions. Simon – as one of the most recently hired – did not have his contract renewed. Hollis also remembers Simon’s mild British accent.

Between 1974, when he returned to Africa, and 1979 little is known here about his life. He may well have taught at the Université du Douala across the river from where he lived. We know that he and his wife had two children: Nicholas born in 1975 and Marc-Antony born in 1979.

We also know that in the fall of 1979, he and Shannon and their two sons were all strangled to death in their home!

We don’t yet know why. Was it political (Simon had translated Diop who had strongly supported the ideas behind the black nationalist “Negritude” movement)? Was it tribal (not only was Simon and his family killed but so was his brother some years later)? Was it a random act of terrifying violence (it seems unlikely given the deaths of the complete family)? Was it selective given his role as an educator (there is an article about a math professor being killed in Cameroon in 2006 which mentions Simon’s death)?

So far, we have found no comprehensive and objective report on his death. His murderers were apprehended and later sentenced to death by the government of Cameroon. Still, no motive was ever mentioned that we have found.

Why is all of this important? Clearly, in forty-two years of LITT faculty coming and going, there have been tragedies and unfortunate deaths of a few. This incident shocks us because of its senseless violence rained on a whole family.

Recently, I taught Donne's Meditation XVII which, for us, speaks to why this is important and important to retell:

No man is an island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main; if a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as any manner of thy friends or of thine own were; any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind. And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.

Simon Mpondo was headed for an important career as a voice for African freedom and dignity. He would have become a superb teacher influencing generations of African youth. He was a fine poet and, I'm convinced, would have only gotten better.

Thus, his loss is much more than a tiny statistic hardly remembered by anyone. He was here on this campus, in some of these classrooms, teaching students very much like all of us.

In a strange way, he was us.

Ken Tompkins and Tom Kinsella

## **The Season of the Rains**

The season of the rains  
Signs its name in a thousand fashions  
Those who want to read omens there  
Will find their signs  
In the flowering beard of the maize  
And in the black or red rings of millipedes  
Does the swallow's departure for the Margui-Wandala  
Announce many storms and floods along the Wouri?  
Has the spider woven its web  
Stored up insects and light and the sun's warmth  
To vanquish a cold season of a thousand days?  
Does the plucked chicken speak of hard or easy times?

What says the black millipede?  
What says the red millipede?  
They say what the omens say  
Yes or no or even perhaps  
These are the signs  
But they tell mainly what happened in the dry season  
And not what the rains will bring forth  
Plenty of labour in the dry days  
Translates itself as maize in the wet  
And in food for millipede's colour  
And the largeness of its rings  
Which the sorcerer measures in his secret hut  
Owe nothing to the season  
Those colours will always vary  
Some rings will always be large  
And some narrow

Let each person make of it what he will  
The signs of the rainy season  
Say exactly what everyone wants to hear  
Surely there will be plenty of water  
Plenty of swamps and mud  
That's the message we read in the signs  
Of the season of rains.

*Présence Africaine*, 93, 1975

## Asking For Help

*The story goes that a man was approached by a Native American in a western city asking him for money to buy food. The man, who was well off, instantly refused thinking that the Indian would waste it on alcohol or drugs. Having his request denied, the Native American walked away.*

*But the white man felt guilty about his rejection and later, when he met a tribal Elder, he asked what he should have done. The Elder thought for a minute and then asked the white man why he had refused. He replied that he didn't believe the Indian, thinking he would waste the money given him.*

*"Ah," the Elder said, "Your refusal says a great deal about you and nothing about the man you denied."*

I don't like to ask for money. Asking suggests need and I'm uncomfortable needing anything I can't get for myself. Yet, this response doesn't deal with the need.

In Shakespeare's *King Lear* one of the most powerful lines comes in a confrontation between the father and his daughters. They are arguing that he doesn't need 100 followers or 50 or 25 or 10 or even 1. The argument is reasonable to us.

Lear's challenge to them is "Reason not the need." If a need exists, you can't "reason" it away.

The LITT Program needs funds! Given who we are and what we do, we can only ask our alums to provide them. Until recently, regulations and red tape prevented us from asking at all. Other English Departments had large fund-raising efforts; we couldn't even ask. Now we can.

The Program would like to provide modest awards to students with financial needs. These grants would be in small amounts – just enough, say, to help a student through a difficult term. It wants to continue the awards we provide at the BASH for writing and service to the community. It wants to offer travel monies for speakers and writers who share their lives with us from time to time.

We'd like you to share in our efforts by sending us whatever you can afford. All monies received will be placed in a special fund which will be overseen by the College.

If you can't share now, that's fine. We still love you. After all, that's what is really important!

KT



To donate, search the Stockton website for the "Stockton Foundation Giving Page." Here is the direct address:

<https://intraweb.stockton.edu/eyos/page.cfm?siteID=221&pageID=101&action=regform>

You can donate to the Literature program's operating fund by selecting "Previously established Restricted Fund" and naming "Literature Program" in the blank. (Donations are tax deductible.)

You may also donate directly to the Visiting Writers Series by selecting "Previously established Restricted Fund" and writing "Visiting Writers" in the blank.



*Kenny invites you to the Really, Really Big LITT/LANG BASH on Friday, April 25, 2014, from 4:00 pm till 6:00 pm at the Townsend Residential Life Center on campus.*

## **The Literature Program On-Line**

Blog: <https://blogs.stockton.edu/literature/>

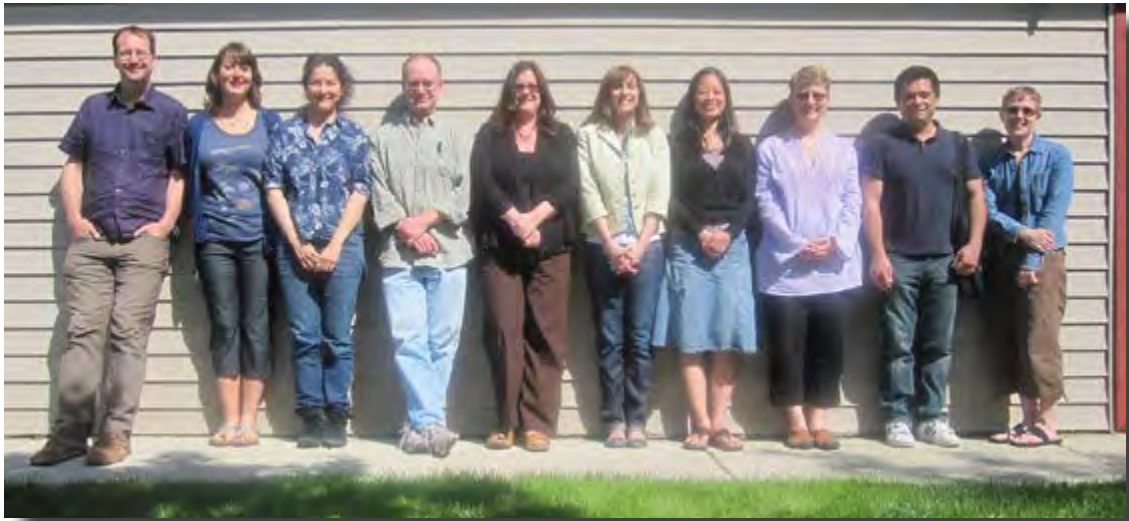
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*The LITT program, 2008*



2011



*At the Pitney Tavern, c. 2003*

