The Literature Program Newsletter

THE IRREGULAR LITTONIAN

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For this edition of the Irregular Littonian, LITT faculty have given us their usual research and life updates and answer the question "What is a memorable lesson you've given or received about literature?"

Deborah Gussman

Deborah Gussman has returned to teaching after an intellectually rewarding and productive one-term sabbatical. During that period, she made significant progress on three separate, related projects: a scholarly edition of Catharine Maria Sedgwick's novel Married or Single? (1857), a digital collection of Sedgwick's uncollected tales and sketches, and an article on marriage and singlehood in stories by Sedgwick and Edith Wharton. She will continue working on these projects this coming year. She is glad to be back in the classroom teaching some of her favorite courses with her fabulous students, and working on college and program related initiatives with her wonderful colleagues.

About a memorable lesson, she says:

While I am grateful to many professors for inspiring and challenging me, there are two "lessons" that stand out in my memory. The first, from graduate school, was during a seminar on Hawthorne and Melville with Myra Jehlen at Rutgers. The class was sitting in a circle, discussing whatever we were reading that day, and the discussion moved from our analysis of a specific text to a deeply engaging consideration of the potential of human beings for self-annihilation and the prospect of nuclear war. While I no longer recall the details of the book or the conversation, I do remember leaving the class feeling exhilarated by the power of literature to engage with and change the world, and more committed to the profession I had chosen. The second happened in an undergraduate course on Comparative Romanticism taught by Marilyn Gaull at Temple. Having heard that a snowstorm was predicted for later in the week, Professor Gaull told the class: "If the weather is really bad, don't come to class. I won't. There's no such thing as a literary emergency." Unforgettable, and a lesson I have repeated many times.

Adalaine Holton

Over the summer, Adalaine continued her research on Zora Neale Hurston's ethnographic novels Tell My Horse and Mules and Men. She had the opportunity to present her new research at the American Studies Association conference in Baltimore, MD in October. This Fall, she is enjoying teaching a new upper level Literature course on Comparative American Literature in which *students are reading the literature of various cultural "contact zones" and exploring methods of comparative literary study. Adalaine is also chairing the Masters in American Studies Committee this year, and is pleased to announce the inaugural term of the new MA program will begin in Fall 2012.*

She shares a favorite assignment:

One of my favorite teaching assignments is the response paper. One of my beloved college professors assigned these in her classes, and I loved writing them. As a student, the response paper gave me the opportunity to approach a text from my own perspective, to write about what fascinated me, disturbed me, or confused me. I have assigned response papers of varying types since I was an undergraduate teaching assistant. Once I became a more experienced teacher, I realized that response papers had three important outcomes, in addition to giving students freedom to explore their own thoughts. By practicing "low-stakes" writing on a regular basis, students are better prepared for formal essay assignments. Writing doesn't feel foreign, but natural. And, of course, when we write about something, we understand it better. Finally, I find class discussions to be more productive when everyone has not only read the assigned text, but written about it as well. These days, I tend to ask students to submit response papers electronically. In addition to saving a few trees, I hope that students will find writing less daunting when they are free to complete and submit their writing whenever and wherever they choose.

Lisa Honaker

This semester Lisa Honaker is back from a sabbatical, during which she undertook a project on the Man Booker Prize and its role in the development of contemporary British postcolonial fiction. She created a blog, Reading the Bookers, to keep track of and reflect on the works short-listed for the prize. You can read about the first seven years worth at http://readingthebookers.com. (Look for additional postings in Spring 2012.)

Happy to be back in the classroom, Honaker is currently forcing students into the library in Intro to Literature Research and through long Victorian novels in Victorian Literature. She is also "shadowing" ARHU Dean Rob Gregg as part of Stockton's Faculty Administrative Fellowship initiative.

About her favorite assignment she's received, she writes:

Early in my graduate career at Rutgers, I took a Classical and Modern Rhetoric class with Professor Ron Christ. In addition to doing frequent rhetorical analyses, Ron had us do a number of imitations, where we were asked to write in the style of a particular author. My favorite version of this assignment was what Ron called a "translation." We were given passages by the novelist Leonard Michaels and philosopher William James and asked to translate each passage into the other's style. I remember that the Michaels' passage took place in a pool hall and that the style was staccato and rough, while the James piece was about the need for an expansive and inclusive imagination. The assignment was exacting and liberating, requiring both analytical skill and creativity. (I know that I ended up describing the angles of connection of the balls on the table in my Jamesian version of Michaels.) The assignment was the ultimate close-reading exercise and resulted, for me, in a deep understanding of narrative voice and style, critical concerns in my own work and my teaching.

Marion Hussong

Marion Hussong is currently teaching "Introduction to Research in Literature" and "Children's Literature." She looks forward to teaching a senior seminar in Spring 2012 on fairy tales and a graduate course for the Master's program in Holocaust and Genocide Studies on Nazi art and propaganda. Marion is serving as the Program Coordinator for Literature and continues her research on the impact of National Socialism on Austrian Literature.

Dr. Hussong's favorite teaching anecdote:

Professor D. at the German Department of the University of Pennsylvania was a lively teacher, to put it mildly. I studied with him when he was in his sixties and close to retirement. Not always easy to get along with, moody and curmudgeonly, he could drive his graduate students crazy with his high demands and incessant criticism. However, he could hold a class under his spell like no other. I never heard him deliver a boring lecture.

The small seminar room where the Germanists held their graduate classes was set up with a large oblong table and a blackboard situated about two feet behind the long side of the table. Dr. D. preferred to sit right between the blackboard and the table. During lectures, he could comfortably lean back in a half-twist and write notes and diagrams on the board. He never got up to do this. He simply tilted his chair back as far as it would go, turned slightly, extended his right arm toward the blackboard and wrote over his shoulder, never breaking eye contact with his students. His notes were utterly indecipherable, and the "diagrams" were really doodles that defied interpretation. Yet somehow, his sweeping "board work" effectively supported whatever point he was trying to make.

Literary interpretation was his strongest suit. I'll never forget the half hour he devoted to a close reading of Goethe's poem "To Coachman Chronos." http://www.recmusic.org/lieder/get_text.html?TextId=6342 Goethe, he explained, traveled often by stagecoach and loved to compose poetry while on the road. The rhythmic swaying and bumping of the vehicle helped him as he worked on the meter of his poems, and he found the snug interior of a coach inspiring and conducive to his work. The rhythm of his poem "To Coachman Chronos," an allegory of the passage of time, was in fact inspired by the physical sensation of traveling by coach, and actually written as Goethe was traveling across the German landscape. Reciting - from memory of course - each stanza of the poem, Dr. D. began to rhythmically sway in his chair, tap the meter of the poem on the table with one hand and on the blackboard behind him with the other. Students watched with alarm as his chair tilted farther and farther, until it almost toppled over. And indeed, as Dr. D. gesticulated animatedly, still performing the poem, he suddenly found himself firmly wedged between the board and the table in a steep angle, unable to move: even the slightest motion would have caused the chair to crash to the ground, inevitably taking the professor, who was not a young man, with him. We students were bewildered: We were terrified that our professor might crash but at the same time struggling to suppress laughter.

Dr. D. was unfazed. While still stuck in his impossible position he explained that this sort of scenario was not unknown to travelers in the 18th century: Coach axles, you see, would break on nearly every trip, causing stagecoaches to roll into ditches and throwing travelers from their seats. He never stopped lecturing as a the two graduate students seated to his immediate left and right rushed to his aid and carefully dislodged the chair and the stuck professor. Nary missing a beat, Dr. D. continued his interpretation of "Coachman Chronos." This man could turn any situation into a teaching moment. He was very, very good at his job.

I saved all the notes from all the courses I took with him. I base many of my own close reading discussions of German works of literature on his work, and I credit him when I present his literary interpretations to my own students.

Kristin Jacobson

Kristin Jacobson is on sabbatical during the 2011-2012 school year. She will spend the year researching and writing about nonfiction extreme adventure stories for her new book project, The American Adrenaline Narrative. This fall she is also working on an article comparing the use of the sentimental in Harriet Beecher Stowe's ***Uncle Tom's Cabin*** *and the HBO series* ***The Wire****.*

Dr. J's memorable lesson:

I recently read a *Wall Street Journal* review by Joseph Epstein of *The Cambridge History of the American Novel* ("What Killed American Lit." 27 August 2011: http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424053111903999904576468011530847064.html). The review bemoans the following, "In today's university, no one is any longer in a position to say which books are or aren't fit to teach; no one any longer has the authority to decide what is the best in American writing." The review connects the content of the book, this cultural context, and the decline in English/Literature majors at American universities and colleges. Reading this review reminded me of a lesson about the role of the literature teacher that I consciously relearn every time I teach a class or write about literature.

One way to state this lesson is that I aim to teach something more valuable and enriching than a literary top ten list. In other words, as American writer and critic Elizabeth Drew beautifully describes in "Is There a 'Feminine' Fiction?" (*The Modern Novel* 1926), "The test of literature is, I suppose, whether we ourselves live more intensely for the reading of it." This is not to say, if one does not relate to the story, the story is not good. Rather, this perspective positions every reader as an arbiter of aesthetics. I cannot imagine anything more democratic, more American. I wonder at the readers nostalgic for authoritative kings (and they were mostly kings, not queens). To inspire the reading public to take this democratic duty seriously and thoughtfully is the lesson at the heart of my work. Thus, what if the decline in literature majors--really, the decline of the liberal arts generally--indicates not a failure of the profession's authority but a more disturbing decline in democracy?

Cynthia King

Cynthia used her summer research and development grant to do research on Mei-Mei Berssenbrugge and Kiki Smith's collaborative work Concordance and to complete and to revise her second book of poems, Manifest. She also watched all of Twin Peaks in a heinously short period of time and wrote a review-in-conversation with recent LITT graduate Stephanie Cawley (Stockton '11) about the series that was published on-line at Bitch Flicks, a feminist film criticism site. Cynthia received a huge compliment back in May when her book of poems People are Tiny in Paintings of China appeared on the magazine The Believer's Reader's Survey Favorites list for poetry published in 2010 and later in the fall, when her book was briefly reviewed on Seth Abrahmson's poetry column on the Huffington Post as focusing on the "very best works of contemporary poetry in the United States."

Mid-fall, LITT majors Jenna McCoy, Laura Alexander and sound intern Keith Allen teamed up with Cynthia to create The Last Word, an hour-long talk show on WLFR that showcases writers and writing from South Jersey and the Tri-State. Guests have so far included Maxine Patroni (LITT '09), Poetry and Prose Getaway creator Peter Murphy and Darrel Blaine Ford, a Walt Whitman impersonator. The show airs Sunday mornings at 11AM at wlfr.fm. She has also organized the Visiting Writers Series for the term with visits from Joseph P. Wood, Kathy Graber and Marissa Johnson-Valenzuela in the absence of Nathan Long. She notes that at Joseph's reading, several people who had never had a book of contemporary poetry before came up to get one of his.

Most memorable lesson:

This is hard. I've had so many great teachers. Teachers that had me hiding under the podium reading the part of Caliban from the *Tempest*, teachers that had me think about postmodernism versus postmodernity in DeLillo and I've never been confused on the subject since; teachers that made me obsess about the history of *The Scarlet Letter*. But this one professor really stuck with me. He was a Philosophy professor. Everyone took him and feared him and revered him. One woman told me she always drank two cups of coffee before his lectures so she could write fast enough to get down everything he said, because it was all worth having, and it was.

I remember when Professor Breslin at the University of Louisville was talking about the character professions in *Heart of Darkness* and writing the first letter of each profession on the board behind him without turning around to look; On any given day, the marks he made on the board looked kind of hieroglyphic and prehistoric. And after he'd got through all four jobs, the word MARS sat on the board. He never looked at it. This made a heavy impression on me: not only was it eerie that he wrote this word and might not have known it--he was in the moment, he was somewhere else, he felt what he was telling us was that important. There was also the time he wrote a huge list of names of writers on the board and asked us what they had in common: Woolf, Hemingway, Gilman. This list was about three columns across the board. We couldn't really figure it out and he told us they had all killed themselves. (There's a wiki of this now though there wasn't in 1994). To be fair, this was the finest scholar you can imagine, someone who inspired you to excellence and respect just by his bearing, his incredibly high level of discourse, and his respect for you. His point that day was that writing was a way of existing that could be very pricey, very dear, but reading literature as a way of living out other extra lives to arrive at a virtuous life (he mentioned Socrates) was not so expensive.

The longer I teach, and the more people I see learning, the more important these two ideas--passion and being schooled in virtue--seem to become.

http://louisville.edu/artsandsciences/hallofhonor/inductees/breslin.html

Tom Kinsella

A few years back, when Ken Tompkins began transitioning from his full-time position, I got the chance to teach one course on Chaucer's poetry and another on medieval British literature. The Chaucer course allowed me to share one of my favorite texts with students. For thirty years now the deep emotional core of ***Troilus and Criseyde*** *has moved me, and it was delightful to reread it once again, sharing the experience with students. The medieval course was also rewarding, although no single English text stood out (a few Irish and Scots texts did, though). One delightful aspect of stepping back to early English literature is the necessity of handling the language. I have long enjoyed considering literature at this level. Perhaps this stems from my days translating Herodotus and Sappho, lexicon in hand, one word at a time. I cannot tell you how much I take pleasure in working with the* ***Oxford English Dictionary****—although if you have taken courses with me, you know I often try. This love of word-level study continues in my grammar and punctuation courses. I enjoy what I teach.*

Tom's memorable lesson

Here's a true story that I often tell students when I teach Senior Seminar; it reaches back to my second-last year in graduate school. I was writing a dissertation on dialogue in eighteenth-century English literature—how *he said / she said* was used within a work and presented on the page. My second reader was Paul Fussell, recently appointed as Donald T. Regan Professor of Literature at Penn. I had known and admired Fussell's work before he arrived at Penn, in particular his *Great War and Modern Memory*, a work about the poetry and literature of World War I. It is a great book, in my estimation, a smart book; and as a graduate student I especially admired its prose. Fussell writes in a tough, spare, no-nonsense style. He has the ability to purposefully misdirect (so does Milton). He writes a sentence that seems perfectly reasonable, then a second deriving logically from the first, then a third. All the time I'll be nodding my head, "Yep, that seems right." But then he shifts his direction abruptly, and as it turns out, appropriately, in order to expose the fallacy of the logic he has been espousing. I loved his tough-minded writing.

When he agreed to be my second reader—essentially a co-advisor—I entertained fantasies about office visits where we shared the secrets of careful editing and Fussellian style. We would be great friends. The graduate student/Professor bond would grow and flourish. It was, therefore, with some excitement and expectation that I knocked on his office door in Bennett Hall at the appointed time one afternoon. Three weeks before I had delivered the first 150 pages of my dissertation, the fruit of two years' labor. Fussell had read it through. Today we would begin what surely would be a long, detailed, and fruitful conversation.

Fussell's office was capacious, three times the size of other English faculty at Penn; a twenty by twenty foot Persian rug spread across the center of the room. Built-in floor to ceiling bookcases, with charming glass doors, covered each wall and were filled with books. Fussell was sitting at his desk and motioned me to sit opposite. My dissertation sat before him.

I took a seat and asked how he was. "I am well," he responded. We sat in silence for a moment. I inched forward expectantly. Then Fussell did something with an elegance that I never hope to equal. Moving the three middle fingers of his right hand in a sort of twisting motion, he pushed my dissertation across the desk and toward me. It slid quietly, lightly, turning as it went, and stopped inches from the edge where I sat, perfectly aligned facing me. It was at once a graceful motion, and disdainful.

"Mr. Kinsella," he said to me, "about your dissertation: Think smarter; Write better."

I sat erect, dumbfounded, reddening. "That is all," he said, and watched as I stood up, took my dissertation, and moved toward the door. "Thank you," I mumbled as I quietly left the office. But thankful I was not. I was beginning to rage. "What sort of advice is that!" I thought. For the next two weeks I repeated that same question to myself and to my fellow graduate students. I stuck to my dumbfoundedness so tightly that finally friends held an intervention and told me bluntly, "Get over it, move on."

So I did. With a cooler mind, I carefully considered the advice. I admired Fussell. If that's what he told me, perhaps it was good counsel. And I came to believe that it was. We could have sat down on that first day and begun to discuss and edit my work, but Fussell was a busy guy, and he wanted to make sure that it was my best effort before we sat down to discussions of that sort. In retrospect, I realized that I had not given him my best work. So I read more, tried to think smarter, and eventually wrote better. The reception of my second draft is a story for another time; I will simply remark that our second conversation was longer than the first.

Adeline Koh

Adeline Koh has had a productive summer. She is thrilled that her Stockton Postcolonial Studies Project (http://wp.stockton.edu/postcolonialstudies) is now indexed by the MLA Catalog of Scholarly Websites. Adeline has also been busy in terms of publishing. Her peer-reviewed article, "The Uses of Racial Melancholia in Colonial Education," was published in The Journal of Postcolonial Writing in October, and she has a review of Cowboys in Paradise forthcoming in *the online journal, Films for the Feminist Classroom. She also published an encyclopedia entry on the Singapore Association of Women for Action and Research for the History of Feminist Thought (ABC-CLIO, October 2011). At the same time, Adeline has been eagerly exploring new directions in the digital humanities, attending ThatCamp Philly and ThatCamp Publishing this fall. She will be writing a report on ThatCamp Publishing for the Chronicle of Higher Education's Profhacker column.*

The highlight of Adeline's semester has been taking Stockton LITT senior Svetlana Fenichel to present at the National Women Studies Conference at Atlanta, GA on a panel titled "Producing the Modern Oriental Woman" in November 2011. Svetlana co-presented with Adeline on a paper about self-Orientalization in contemporary Singapore literature, and on her own digital research on the colonized body as a space for resistance for the Stockton Postcolonial Studies Project (more info on the panel here: http://www.adelinekoh.org/?p=440). Svetlana's presentations impressed the audience so much that she was approached by a University of Michigan Women Studies Department recruiter, who invited Svetlana to apply to their graduate program. This made Adeline's entire week! Finally, Adeline is looking forward to listening to her students' impressive senior seminar presentations on Postcolonial Studies, which will undoubtedly end her semester on a high note.

Here's her memorable lesson:

My most memorable lesson was reading Frantz Fanon's "Black Skin, White Masks" as a student. I was hooked from the first chapter, "The Negro and Language," where Fanon writes: "The Negro of the Antilles will be proportionately whiter--that is, he will come closer to being a real human being--in direct ratio to his mastery of the French language." Reading this stunned me: how did this Caribbean writer from the 1950s describe the situation I encountered growing up in Singapore so accurately? Singapore, a tiny but extremely wealthy and developed country in Southeast Asia, was colonized by the British in the nineteenth century and only became independent in 1965. Despite the country's formal independence, social prestige in Singapore is calibrated by one's mastery of the English language. Why did the Singapore of the 1990s resonate so strongly with the situation Fanon describes in 1940s Martinique? Reading "Black Skin, White Masks" forever changed my worldview. It pushed me to explore how African and Asian countries share many cultural similarities because of their histories with colonialism, and to consider how issues in these two geographical regions intersect with minority politics in the United States. These questions inspired the writing of my dissertation, and now drive my current book projects. I now teach Fanon in most of my classes, and many of my students tell me that he has inspired them as much as he has me.

Nathan Long

*Nathan Long is on sabbatical for the 2011-2012 academic year. Since finishing classes this past Spring, Long has presented on flash fiction and given a reading at the Philadelphia Queer Literary Festival, and had three flash fiction works published ("Keeping Us at Bay" and "Genre" in **Marco Polo Review**, vol. 3, and "Another Tale" in **Monkeybicycle**). Another two short pieces are forthcoming in **The Journal of the Compressed Arts Journal** and the fiction anthology **Stripped**.*

He spent the summer reading and working on three personal essays, about growing up in a cabin in rural Maryland, seeing the body of a suicide in the park near his house, and on experiences while meditating in Thailand in his early twenties. These essays are currently being revised and sent out for publication.

Starting in September, he began work on his sabbatical official project, completing his short story cycle, The Sleep of Reason, begun in his Senior Seminar class in the spring of 2009. For November, he is writing a novella for the collection by participating in National Novel Writing Month(NANOWRIMO), in which thousands of writers take the challenge to write 50,000 words in 30 days.

Long was recently accepted as a Scholar in Residence through NYU's Faculty Resource Network. He hopes to participate in a writing workshop at NYU in the Spring.

About a most memorable lesson, Nathan writes:

As a Literature major at The University of Maryland, I took a number of wonderful courses, including a two-year honors course that traced the history of English and American literature, from Beowulf to Barthelme. But my most memorable class was Professor Russell's *The European Novel.* I can still remember many of the authors we read: Gide, Celine, Yourcenar, Bowen, and Kafka. Besides having brilliant and painfully honest things to say while discussing the texts, Russell created the best final exams. Every time I read one of his questions, which asked us to compare several novels on a specific theme, I smiled. Though we had discussed each text thoroughly, Russell asked questions that really suggested a whole new way of looking at the novels and how they connected to each other. Though we were to write the answers, the questions already suggested the possibilities. Reading one of Russell's exam questions was like getting a synopsis of another one of his great lectures.

It's easy to think of exams as opportunities to test a student's knowledge, or, as another professor of mine once said, "to show how brilliant a student is." But Professor Russell taught me to also think of an exam as one last moment to teach something new about the material.

Adam Miyashiro

Adam Miyashiro has been working on a book project, entitled ***Reading Race in Medieval Europe: England, Iberia, and the Mediterranean****, due to be completed this academic year and is involved in two interdisciplinary research groups: the Mediterranean Seminar of the University of California and a new collaboration called the Spain-North Africa Project. He will be presenting portions of his book project at the American Comparative Literature Association in March 2012 and is co-editing a book project called* ***Medieval Cultural Routes: 1250-1350****, due to be published by the John Benjamins Press as part of the International Comparative Literature Association's (ICLA) series on the Comparative Histories of Literatures in European Languages. He has a book chapter forthcoming 2013, called "Postcolonizing the Medieval Text," in the anthology* ***Medieval Comparatism: A***

***Challenge**, also part of the ICLA's book series. This year, he is teaching a series of courses on medieval literature, including Chaucer, the Arthurian Legend, and Medieval English Literature, and will be teaching a new course in General Studies entitled "Medieval Cultural Encounters," which examines the culture, history, and arts of Iberian peninsula in the Middle Ages from the perspectives of the three religious communities (Jewish, Muslim, and Christian). In February, he is organizing a meeting of the Delaware Valley Medieval Association at Stockton College, where Teofilo Ruiz (Prof of Spanish and History, UCLA) will give the keynote lecture and Prof. David King (French-Stockton College) will present his work. He will also accompany two Stockton Literature majors -- Sviatlana Fenichel and Tania Rivera -- members of Sigma Tau Delta (the Literature Honors society), which he co-advises with Prof. Gussman, to the Sixth Annual Undergraduate Medieval and Early Modern Studies Conference at Moravian College in December, where they have had their papers accepted for presentation. He is incredibly proud of the work of Stockton's Literature majors, and for their engaging discussions of medieval literature and activities both on and off campus.*

Adam's memorable lesson: "Introduction to Higher Education"

A couple of weeks ago, during a Stockton Open House, I was approached by a student and her mother, because they wanted to ask me how I became a literature professor. Her daughter wanted to be one too. And this is the story I told them about how I was introduced to higher education.

In the days before college and universities offered "Open Houses," my own parents took me to the University of Southern California while I was in high school, to introduce me to higher education. As a first-generation college student, I had trepidations about higher ed, and after visiting the university, meeting faculty, and touring the library, I was not only inspired to do well in my high school curriculum, but my experience on that campus demystified my preconceptions about higher education. I sat in on a class (and even knew the answer to a question the professor asked!), sat down with a few faculty members to discuss entry to college-level work, and what to expect once I graduated from high school. Instead of fear, I excitedly looked forward to college life, to pursuing academic interests not offered in high school, and I even enrolled in college courses during my summer vacations while I finished my high school diploma. This learning experience influenced my choice of career, and it also offered a positive looking forward to life after high school.

Staffing the Open House at Stockton reminded me of this time in my life, and I was more than happy to meet and talk with students and parents at our own Open House. I hope I have an impact on these students as much as my visit to USC opened new horizons in my own life.

Ken Tompkins

On September 21st at 5:30 PM I opened a door to the past. I say "I" though in truth there were two of us. The other door opener was my Co-Editor Rob Gregg – the dean of the School of Arts and Humanities. The "door" that we opened was our history of

Stockton *Reaching 40*. This 200 page volume took two years to compile; it contains 64 essays and as many photographs and works of art.

To be honest, I had never edited a book before nor had I considered it. Agreeing to do so was one of the best decisions I've ever made.

Being one of the few survivors of the beginning of the College, I've been troubled recently by the fact that few faculty and no students have any idea about why the College exists as it does, why the culture is as it is and why we do what we do. For example, why are advisors called "preceptors"? Why are departments called "programs"? What was the H-S-N grading system all about? What was the idea behind the Gallery linking all of the wings?

Perhaps it's acceptable not to care about such things. But, if you like me, believe that all decisions are political, then calling departments "programs" must be more important than it seems. As a matter of fact, I argue in the book that that decision was one of the most important actions we founders took.

The book, therefore, is a way to describe those decisions and why they were taken. My hope was that every faculty member would read the text and, at last, understand that what we were shapes, in a very real way, what we are.

The book was also intended to preserve a moment in the 40-year history of the College. In this sense, it is a kind of archive. We are losing much of our history because, for many, it doesn't appear to be important. The book is a kind of sea-wall against further erosion of our communal past.

I'm proud to have been a part of creating the book. It marks a place in time when forces came together to create a college. It tells the story of us.

The book's website is here: http://www.stockton.edu/reaching40

Yet meet we shall, and part, and meet again,
Where dead men meet, on lips of living men.