

UNL ENGLISH DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER AND CALENDAR

Friday, March 20, 2009
Special First Day of Spring Issue!

Editors: Gerry Shapiro and Judy Slater

Publisher: Joy Ritchie

"Speaking Truth to people in varying states of powerlessness"

Recent Publications and Other Achievements

Shoshana Sumrall's story, "John's Germs," appears in the Jackson issue of *Paradigm* at <http://www.paradigmjournal.com/jackson/fiction.html>.

Cody Lumpkin's poem, "At the Peepshow," is forthcoming from *Another Chicago Magazine*.

Tamy Burnett attended the Southwest/Texas Popular Culture Association conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico at the end of February, where she presented her paper, "'What'll She Do Next?': The Development of Ethical Codes of Action for Scientifically Engineered Soldiers as seen in *Firefly/Serenity's* River and *Dark Angel's* Max," as well as chairing panels on the works of Joss Whedon and science fiction films. This was Tamy's first year serving as a co-chair for the Science Fiction and Fantasy area, one of the conference's largest topic areas. Tamy was also selected by the UNL chapter of Mortar Board, an undergraduate senior honors society, as their March 2009 "Professor of the Month." Congratulations, Tamy!

Wheeler Winston Dixon's review of Mikita Brottman's *The Solitary Vice: Against Reading* appears in the spring issue of *Prairie Schooner*.

Upcoming Events

March 23: "Teaching in a Politically Charged Atmosphere," a panel discussion sponsored by the Committee on Teaching and Research, noon, Bailey Library. Bring your lunch.

March 24, 9-ish - 11-ish a.m. -- How would you like some books for breakfast? Well, okay, breakfast rolls and stuff while you browse through the books at the **W. W. Norton Book Fair**. In Bailey Library.

March 25: Writer in Residence **Naomi Shihab Nye**, author of more than twenty books, reading from her work, 7:30 p.m., Great Plains Art Gallery. Reception and book-signing to follow.

March 26, 8:30-11:30 a.m. -- More books for breakfast, at the **Cengage Learning Book Fair**; if you like the Heath anthologies, don't miss this. (Cengage took over Houghton Mifflin's College Division, publishers of the Heath series.)

March 27: Cody Lumpkin and Gayathri Prabhu, reading from their work, as part of the **No Name Reading Series**, 4 p.m., SUR tango bar *et* café, 12th and P Streets, downtown.

March 30: The film version of Marjane Satrapi's graphic memoir *Persepolis* will be shown as part of the Women's Lit Film Night series. 6:00 p.m., Bailey Library). Free and open to the public. Light snacks provided. Direct questions to **Tamy Burnett**, tburnett2@unl.edu.

April 2: Professor **Wai Chee Dimock**, speaking on "Three Wars: Henry James and Others," this year's **Robert Knoll Lecture**, 7:30 p.m., Great Plains Art Gallery, 12th and Q. Reception to follow.

April 3: Barnes and Noble, 5150 O Street, a fund-raising event for the **Nebraska Summer Writers' Conference**. Creative writing graduate students **Krista Ferguson, Megan Gannon, and Cody Lumpkin** will lead a workshop for children at 4 pm; there will be readings by undergraduate students 5-6:30 pm; at 7 pm, there will be a panel discussion about publishing and the editorial process, with **Jonis Agee, Grace Bauer, Joy Castro, James Engelhardt, Anthony Hawley, Hilda Raz, and Timothy Schaffert**. Look for vouchers in your mailboxes soon; if you use the voucher, your purchases made at the Barnes and Noble at 5150 O Street on April 3 will raise money for the Conference.

April 23: Hilda Raz reading from her recent poetry, 7:30 p.m., Great Plains Art Gallery, 12th and Q. Book-signing and reception to follow.

American Life in Poetry – Column 206

by Ted Kooser, U.S. Poet Laureate, 2004-2006

Ah, yes, the mid-life crisis. And there's a lot of mid-life in which it can happen. Jerry Lee Lewis sang of it so well in "He's thirty-nine and holding, holding everything he can." And here's a fine poem by Matthew Vetter, portraying just such a man.

Wild Flowers

At fifty-six, having left my mother,
my father buys a motorcycle.
I imagine him because
it is the son's sorrowful assignment
to imagine his father: there,
hunched on his mount,
with black boots, with bad teeth,
between shifts at the mill,
ripping furrows in the backroads,
past barn and field and silo,
past creek and rock,
past the brown mare,
sleek in her impertinence,
never slowing until he sees
the bull. He stops, pulls
his bike to the side of the road,
where golden rod and clover grow,
walks up to the fence, admires
its horns, its wet snout snorting and blowing
its breath, its girth, its trampling
of small wild flowers.

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Name That Tag-Line Competition

Please help the department "re-brand" itself with a new tag-line for our department webpage. The tag-line should capture the ethos of the department and communicate our strengths to multiple audiences within and beyond the university. Entries should be no more than 10 words in length--shorter is better. The winner, selected by the chair's advisory committee and its designated experts, will receive \$50.00 for book purchases from the vendor of their choice. Deadline is April 1.