

WIDELINES

UNCW ENGLISH DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER

Take the Chair

When Dr. Philip Furia joined UNCW as chair of the English Department in July 1996, he brought with him a wealth of university teaching and administrative experience as well as expertise in writing, publishing and getting media exposure.

"There's no such thing as bad publicity," Professor Furia said with a grin, pointing to his color picture on the front page of the local section of the *Wilmington Star News* on December 19, 1996. The article stirred up considerable excitement about the Film Studies Program being designed by a committee chaired by Professor Furia. It concerned UNCW interns being trained by Screen Gems Studios, which resulted from Professor Furia making the right connection with Screen Gems President Frank Capra, Jr. through Visiting Professor Stanley Colbert.

Films tie into Professor Furia's background of publishing, teaching and media exposure since his particular interest is in lyrics and lyricists, poets and poetry. Professor Furia's musical fascination with "Tin Pan Alley" songwriters like George and Ira Gershwin, Irving Berlin, Cole Porter, and Rodgers and Hart stems from his attraction to the movies that made them famous. His book, *The Poets of Tin Pan Alley*, was selected by the

American Library Association as one of the best books published in 1990, and it led to appearances on "The Larry King Show" and NPR's "All Things Considered" for its author.

Professor Furia is prepared for most anything that could come his way at UNCW. He holds a B.A. from Oberlin College, an M.A. from the University of Chicago, an M.F.A. from Iowa Writers Workshop, and Ph.D. from University of Iowa. He taught for



Chancellor James Leutze (left) and Professor Philip Furia at an English Department Faculty Appreciation Reception in January 1997.

26 years at the University of Minnesota, where he also served as chair of the English Department and associate dean for faculty, while writing *The Poets of Tin Pan Alley, A History of America's Great Lyricists*, and *Ira Gershwin: The*

Art of the *Lyricist*. Currently, he is working on two new books – a critical biography of Irving Berlin for Simon & Schuster and a book on songs from Hollywood films.

"The Jazz Age: 1910-1938" is the topic of Professor Furia's first UNCW course this spring. He has taught courses ranging from "Medieval Literature" to "Shakespeare: Early Plays" to "William Carlos Williams and Modern American Painting."

A warm Wilmington welcome to Professor Furia and his lovely wife, Laurie Patterson.

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Special Thanks
To Professor Bill Atwill
for giving our newsletter
its name.

English Department Faculty Books

The English Department would like to congratulate the following faculty members on their recent books:

John Fleming

Legend of the Barefoot Mailman

Philip Gerard

Creative Nonfiction (paperback ed.)

Chris Gould

Ele Byington

*Critical Issues in
Contemporary Culture*

Richard Veit

Chris Gould

John Clifford

*Writing, Reading, and Research,
Fourth Edition*

Paul Wilkes

The Good Enough Catholic

Congratulations..

are in order for **Kathleen Halme!** Her good news started in February with a Faculty Reassignment Award from UNCW for Fall 1997. In March, she received the National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship in Poetry of \$20,000. In addition, she has a book contract for her new poetry collection, *Equipoise*.



Professor Kathleen Halme

Todd Berliner Joins Faculty

Dr. Todd Berliner arrived in UNCW's English Department in August 1996 with excellent credentials, film expertise, innovative teaching methods, and enough boyish charm to launch any career.



Professor Todd Berliner

Professor Berliner holds an A.B. in English and Psychology and M.A. and Ph.D. in English from the University of California at Berkeley. His fields of interest and specialization include Hollywood films, film history, modern drama and literature, Shakespeare, Renaissance drama, performance literature, literature and psychology, and aesthetics.

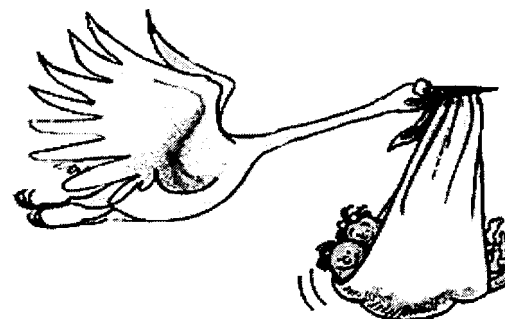
UNCW's Film Studies Program was in its "incubation" period when Professor Berliner arrived. He worked on the Film Studies Committee with representatives from the English, Art & Theatre, Communications, and other departments until the

coursework design was complete and the minor was "hatched" in December.

When the English Department needed advice on setting up a room in Morton Hall as a film studies classroom, they turned to Professor Berliner who researched and provided the specifics on equipment and supplies along with estimates on cost. Now all we have to do is wrap a budget snugly around it.

Professor Berliner takes teaching that extra step. One of his students wrote an essay to thank him for not simply having students read a textbook then lecturing on the same material. The student praised Professor Berliner for providing challenging classes as students actively work in groups on course material instead of just listening and taking notes. Realizing the value of seeing the play performed, Professor Berliner made arrangements for his English 110 class to go and see "Equus" as a class field trip.

Professor Berliner and his wife, Dana Sachs, have incubation of their own going on - They are expecting the birth of their first child in early May.



Graduate Students Excel

Students in the UNCW English Department's M.A. program – and, beginning in Fall 1996, M.F.A. program – have reaped more than their share of accomplishments and honors.

For example, the Champion McDowell Davis Graduate Scholarship has gone to a graduate student in English for each of the past four years: to Pat Coughlin in 1993-94, to Paul Cairney the following year, to Carolyn Pittman in 1995-96, and this year to Nancy Jones.

The UNCW Alumni Association awards several scholarships each year; the only one designated for the Graduate School has been held for the past two years by Frank Tascone. Last year's Outstanding Teaching Assistant award went to Michelle Manning. Lavonne Adams, currently enrolled in the M.F.A. program, won the Schwartz Graduate Scholarship when she was completing; her M.A. degree several years ago; she and Douglas Eyman have also won summer research grants from the UNCW Graduate School.

Though the graduate scholarships and other awards are based on several criteria, one reason why our students have done so well in the competitions has undoubtedly been their high level of professional activity beyond the classroom while they were students. Graduate students

have delivered papers at the national Conference on College Composition and Communication and have published papers and creative works first completed as assignments in their graduate courses.



MFA Student Nancy Jones,
recipient of Champion McDowell
Davis Graduate Scholarship for
1996-97

The list of current and former students who have received this distinction include Lisa Daldone, Carolyn Pittman, Michelle Thompson, Brigette Craft, Dawn Radford, Jane Addison, Paul Cairney, Debra Burdick, Bill DiNome, Michelle Manning, and Nancy Jones. In addition, this year Bill DiNome, Tim Bass, Lavonne Adams, and Agnes McDonald have won awards in various regional fiction and poetry writing contests.

The quality of both our students and our graduate programs themselves has also been acknowledged through our students' success in being admitted into doctoral programs. Master's degree recipients have been accepted into programs at, among others, Duke, UNC-Greensboro, UNC-Chapel Hill, the University of South Carolina, Purdue, Syracuse, the University of Mississippi, and Illinois State University.

All in all, this is an enviable record of achievement for a program that is only eight years old!

Another Milepost - UNCW

M.F.A. Program Completes First Year

As the azaleas and wisteria come into bloom, the recently established Masters in Fine Arts (M.F.A.) program at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington looks toward the bestowal of its first M.F.A. degree when Tyler Wood receives his diploma in May.

"It's an important moment for the M.F.A. program—one that confirms it as a reality rather than just an exciting possibility," M.F.A. Coordinator Philip Gerard says of Wood's graduation.

Tyler Wood's commencement caps a year during which several possibilities were transformed into realities. Enrollment in the M.F.A. reached 28, an 83% increase over the projected enrollment of 15. Bob Reiss (*The Road to Exfrema*, *Purgatory Road*) served as the program's first Writer-in-Residence. Distinguished writers such as poet Alice Fulton, journalist and *Prime Time Live* senior producer Ira Rosen, and novelist Susan Power gave public readings and visited with M.F.A. students. After an extensive search in which M.F.A. students played a vital role, fiction writer Wendy Brenner, 1996 Flannery O'Connor Award winner and author of the short story collection *Large Animals in Everyday Life*, joined the faculty. It was also announced that Alice Fulton will return to campus as a Visiting Writer in the fall, and Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Philip Levine will serve as Writer-in-Residence in the spring of 1998.

(continued, page 4)



Bob Reiss - Writer-in-Residence - Fall 1996

UNCW's first Writer-in-Residence, Bob Reiss, has an impressive resume - author of nine fiction and nonfiction books, former reporter for the *Chicago Tribune*, and freelance writer for *The Washington Post Sunday Magazine*, *The New Yorker*, *Washingtonian*, and *Outside Magazine*.

Over the years, Reiss visited and wrote about the Amazon rain forest, Antarctica, Somalia, and, most recently, Hong Kong. This "field train-



Novelist and UNCW's first Writer-in-Residence Bob Reiss

ing" in conjunction with the teaching experience garnered at numerous writers' conferences (including the prestigious Bread Loaf Writer's Conference) made Reiss a logical choice to lead a nonfiction writing workshop in the newly "christened" M.F.A. program at UNCW and to present a reading of his work for the enjoyment of the general public.

"Professor Reiss' class," said M.F.A. student Paul Gallagher, "was somewhat unique in its approach to the writing process. He began each class with readings on a particular theme from several published examples. We would often see him combing the library shelves for just the right examples. After his reading, the rest of the class was spent workshopping students' materials.

"Professor Reiss' workshops involved extensive role playing as students reacted to submissions not only as peer readings but also as the editors of various magazines and publishing houses. Pieces were accepted or rejected based on a magazine's audience as well as the quality of writing, and the students' roles were based on figures from Professor Reiss' experiences in the worlds of book and magazine publishing.

"Assignments varied from student to student. On a given day, some students were required to read several different popular publications, some to read numerous back issues of a specific magazine, and others to read nonfiction books and excerpts. Professor Reiss stressed the specific needs of writers and their manuscripts.

"The experience of the students in his class was as unique as Professor Reiss' style of teaching. He brought students to a view of

the publishing world that only years of experience could have otherwise yielded."

Reiss' stay in Wilmington proved to be anything other than a quiet immersion in the academic life. The day after he moved into his Wrightsville Beach home-away-from-home, he joined the throng of locals who were forced to evacuate due to Hurricane Fran. Using his "field training" technique, he parlayed that experience into a lead editorial for *The Washington Post*.

Reiss has now returned to the "quiet life" in New York City, where he is working on a new novel, but rumor has it that Reiss is planning a 1998 workshop at UNCW - but that's another article.

Another Milepost (cont. from page 3)

Part of the reason for this strong first year could be the high level of anticipation surrounding the initiation of the M.F.A. at UNCW. Long before the M.F.A. was approved the program was drawing students. Current M.F.A. student Nancy Jones ventured to Wilmington from the Washington, D.C., area after meeting Philip Gerard at Breadloaf. She explained why she left a lucrative position as a speech writer in anticipation of the M.F.A. program at UNCW. "His generosity--he stayed for 45 minutes after our workshop concluded to continue a discussion with students--and the way he centered discussion about a story on matters of craft that would benefit all the participants, not just the writer, impressed me. I was also impressed by the collegiality between the creative and scholarly faculty (at UNCW). The students seemed to enjoy a good rapport with each other and with their professors."

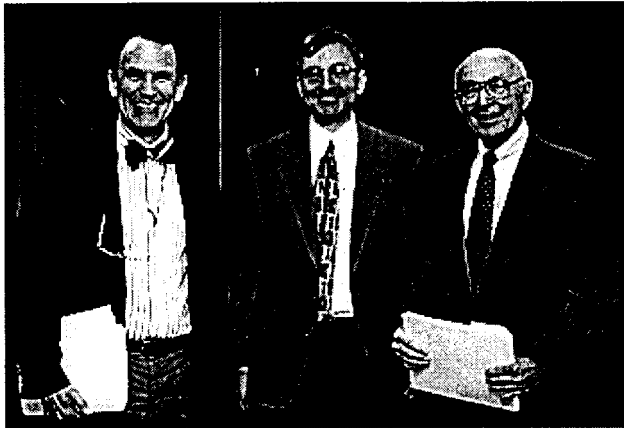
M.F.A. student Bill DiNome, is pleased with the program's interest in helping its students to get published. "UNCW is managing to design a program that dovetails such practical training with high literary standards, and I don't think I could ask more of any writing program anywhere."

Of course, any discussion of UNCW's M.F.A. program must at some point consider the allurements of the surrounding area, which includes an historic downtown district of restored antebellum buildings and mansions, a thriving community of artists, musicians and actors, a booming film industry, the Cape Fear River, and the Atlantic Ocean. If you've been in Wilmington for any period of time, the inevitability of a group of serious writers assembling here to refine their craft seems implicit. Perhaps faculty member Rebecca Lee sums it up best: "If it is true as Neruda says that literature begins where the sea ends, then this seems as good a place as any to start an M.F.A. program."

Buckner Lecture Series

Established in 1994 by Charles F. Green, III, the Katherine K. Buckner Distinguished Presentation Series seeks to foster a greater understanding of literature and to encourage the literary writers of the future.

Each year, the English Department has the privilege to invite two distinguished lecturers to speak at UNCW. The Buckner lecturers meet with individual classes and student groups in addition to giving an evening lecture to which the general public is invited. The evening includes a reception, providing an opportunity to meet the lecturer one-on-one.



Left to right: Lewis Walker, Chair of the Buckner Lecture Committee, with Charles Green, and W.O.S. Sutherland

On March 25, Buckner Lecturer W.O.S. Sutherland met with English graduate classes as well as presented a lecture on "Jane Austen and the 18th-Century Novel" to the general public. Professor Sutherland's awards include the Scarborough Excellence in Teaching Award at the University of Texas, Austin; the Liberal Arts Pro Bene Meritis Award; and the Press Associates Teaching Award. He is currently teaching British Literature and an 18th-century novel course at the University of Texas at Austin.



Charles Green, David Bevington, and Philip Furia

Professor David M. Bevington of the University of Chicago served as a Buckner Lecturer on April 1, meeting with graduate students and presenting to the general public. His subject was "Love and Friendship in Hamlet," which showcased his Shakespearean specialty. A Harvard University graduate, Professor Bevington has twice served as president of the Shakespeare Association of America, most recently in 1995-96. His many achievements include founding the Renaissance and Medieval Drama Society and serving as its president; editing the Revels plays; and receiving two Guggenheim Fellowships.

GEA and Sigma Tau Delta bring Novelist Jill McCorkle to Campus

Several weeks of hard work paid off on Friday, April 11, when the Graduate English Association and Sigma Tau Delta welcomed novelist Jill McCorkle to UNCW's Bryan Auditorium.

GEA President and M.F.A. student Jennifer Falvey introduced Ms. McCorkle to a full house of students, faculty and the public, many of whom arrived at the reading with well-worn copies of Ms. McCorkle's books in hand.

Reading from her latest novel, *Carolina Moon*, Ms. McCorkle charmed the audience with her sassy southern drawl and her humorous portrayal of life in a small North Carolina town. The reading was immediately followed by a lively question-and-answer session and a book-signing hosted by Bristol Books of Wilmington.

Born and raised in Lumberton, North Carolina, Ms. McCorkle is also the author of *The Cheerleader*, *July 7th*, *Tending to Virginia*, *Ferris Beach* and a collection of short stories, *Crash Diet*.

During an informal meeting with students and faculty prior to her reading, Ms. McCorkle discussed her writing process. A graduate of UNC-Chapel Hill and Hollins College, she currently teaches Creative Writing at Harvard.



Novelist Jill McCorkle

Making Waves

Faculty Acclamations

Congratulations to:

Betsy Ervin, recipient of a Cahill Award for Summer 1997.

Paula Kamenish, who has been awarded a National Endowment for Humanities Summer Grant for Seminar on Modernist Paris, which means that she will be funded to travel to Paris this summer with a group of Princeton University professors to take part in a seminar which explores Modernist Paris literary trends.

Keith Newlin, recipient of a Teaching with Technology grant.

Dan Noland, this year's recipient of the Chancellor's Award for Teaching Excellence.

Mike Wentworth, for a Distinguished Teaching Professorship.

Ask and You Just May Receive

Barbara Waxman submitted a "Request for Funds from the Friends of the University" when she received notification of the opportunity to do so. The funds request was for the purchase of videotapes to support her British literature course—for instance, Samuel Taylor Coleridge: "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner;" Christina Rossetti: "Goblin Market;" and "Victorian Poetry." Her request totalled \$974.85, and she received notification on March 12 that she was awarded \$696.00 towards the videotape purchases.



Undergraduate Boasts

Gotterdammerung, a play written by UNCW senior Don Lashley, was a top-ten finalist out of over 2,500 submissions to the Lamis Ink International One-Page Play Competition. Lashley, an English major and a former Sam Ragan Poetry Award winner, traveled to New York City (courtesy of UNCW) where his play was performed off-Broadway on February 28 and March 1 along with those of the other finalists. He was "very pleased" to have been awarded third place in the competition.

Bryan Oesterreich and Joe Venafro have been exercising their speech writing abilities for Frank Capra, Jr., President of Screengems. Their first assignment was for Mr. Capra's address to the Governor's Conference on Tourism and Trade in Asheville, NC, on April 8. Next, they will draft his commencement speech to be delivered to the North Carolina School of the Arts on May 31 in Winston-Salem.

Composition Essay Contest Winners

English 101 — Anna Gregory, \$50 First Prize; Cate Revell, \$30 Second Prize; Virginia Pyrtle, \$20 Third Prize

English 102 — Veronica Stouffer, \$50 First Prize; David Wayne Ray, \$30 Second Prize; Brian Nelson, \$20 Third Prize.

Alumni Anchorings

1996 M.A. graduate Sara Sobota is Writing Center Coordinator at Coastal Carolina University, a public university with about 4,500 undergraduates. Her responsibilities include directing the writing center and teaching one section of composition per semester.

Jessie Rehder & Sam Ragan Prize Winners

The Jessie Rehder Short Story Prizes and the Sam Ragan Poetry Prizes are awarded each year to UNCW undergraduate students by the English Department. Entrants submit work for blind judging by distinguished writers.

This year's Rehder Prize entries were judged by novelist and Fall 1997 Semester Writer-in-Residence Bob Reiss (*Purgatory Road, The Road to Exfrerna*). The First Prize of \$50 was awarded to Merry Lynn Kornegay for "Suck-Creek Mountain"; the Second Prize of \$30 went to Michael C. Alewine for "Jenny"; and there was a tie for the Third Prize of \$20, which went to Art Pickering for "Water" and Randy Connor for "Eulogy."

Poet Alison Hawthorne Deming (*Science und Other Poems, Temporary Homelands*) of the University of Arizona judged Ragan Prize entries. The First Prize of \$50 went to Don Lashley for his "Fifteen Haiku to the Madonna's Veil"; the Second Prize of \$30 was awarded to Rachel Newman for "Lopard"; and the Third Prize of \$20 went to Randy Connor for "Summer's Worn-Out Welcome."

Congratulations to all of our winners and a thank you to our judges for their time and expertise!

Editors' Note

Thanks to this issue's contributors: Lavonne Adams, Don Bushman, Brooks Dodson, Paul Gallagher, Jan Keller, Lisa Mincey, Kathy Rugoff, and Frank Tascone.

Tidelines welcomes input for these columns. Please let us hear from you.

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snail mail:

Tidelines

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Training Tomorrow's Teachers

From the time the graduate program in English was founded in 1989, there have been Graduate Teaching Assistants (TAs) training with the English Department faculty to teach sections of First year composition. The current training program provides five basic levels of support for these teachers-in-training.

During their first year of the graduate program, TAs are paired with a faculty "mentor" each semester. The TA assists his or her mentor in an ENG 101 class in the fall semester and in an ENG 102 class in the spring semester. The job of the faculty mentor is to introduce the TA to the culture of the composition class: demonstrating the importance of whole-class and small-group discussions, of conferencing, and of well-designed writing assignments.

During this first year, the TA also serves as a tutor in the University's Writing/ Reading Place (W/R Place), where they receive training in one-to-one interaction with students and in talking about writing. In the W/R Place, TAs get to know the typical problems beginning writers encounter, and they get practice doing the sort of one-to-one conferencing that is central to teaching first-year composition. They work in the W/R Place six hours a week in the fall and three hours a week in the spring

In the spring semester of their first-year, TAs also enroll in ENG 503 ("Theory and Practice of Teaching Composition"). This class is devoted to exploring the variety of theories that surround the teaching of writing and to introducing students to the sorts of classroom tech-

niques that those theories entail. ENG 503 students also spend part of the course developing their syllabi for the 101 and 102 courses they'll teach the following year.



TAs receive a full year of valuable instruction

In their second year of the program, TAs teach two sections of ENG 101 in the fall and two sections of ENG 102 in the spring; they are given full responsibility for those classes. During this year as beginning teachers, the TAs receive frequent classroom visits from the Director of Composition, and they are required to meet in the monthly Composition Discussion Group, which addresses relevant pedagogical issues, classroom problems, or any other concerns TAs have.

Finally, each second-year TA is assigned a faculty "consultant" who serves as a resource person, someone with whom to talk about assignments, classroom activities, and any other questions the TA may have.



Film Studies Minor in Action

Places everyone! UNCW takes the director's chair and is hard at work bringing the world of film to campus. A faculty committee formed by the Dean of College of Arts and Sciences at UNCW has taken action by proposing the establishment of Film Studies at the school. Several of the faculty members of the English, Communications, and Art & Theater Departments specialize in film studies and many others regularly teach courses in film or use film as an important component of their courses.

Film specialists at UNCW include Professor Philip Furia, chair of the Film Studies Committee; Professor Todd Berliner, American Cinemaspecialist; and Visiting Professor Stanley Colbert, who has worked as a screenwriter, director, and producer.

This spring, thanks to Frank Capra Jr.'s interest, UNCW was able to offer nine student internships at various companies on the Screen Gems Studio's lot. The faculty committee is pleased with the internship program and is pushing forward to continue the progress. "We have all the right people to make this happen, eager students, a dedicated staff, and cooperation with the studios, and the faculty film committee plans to do just that," said Professor Philip Furia.

The internships will remain only a portion of the proposed program. They serve to allow students to study aspects of film within its true environment. The film minor, requiring 18 hours of study, is set up to teach basic skills of understanding film through courses of analysis, history and production of films. Courses include American Cinema Since 196 1, French Cinema, Performance for the Camera, Scriptwriting for Television and Film, and Politics and the Entertainment Media..



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Looking Forward.

Fall 1997:

Fiction Writer **Wendy Brenner** will Join the
English Department Faculty as Assistant Professor.

Poet **Alice Fulton** Returns to UNCW in October
for a week-long poetry workshop.

Spring 1998 Writer-in-Residence:

Pulitzer Prize-Winning Poet
Philip Levine

Dividends on Your Contribution

Making a contribution to the English Department Trust Fund pays dividends to the contributor in the form of student awards, public readings, book signings, and receptions for visiting authors; the Faculty Appreciation display and celebration; and refreshments and meals with lecturers and interview candidates.

So please make your check payable to "UNCW English Department Trust Fund" and mail it to:

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