

Dimension and Directions

Newsletter of the Joint Program in English and Education

Fall 2004

No. 11

Lesley Rex

It is with great pleasure that I write to you as the new co-chair of the joint program in English and Education. I am already enjoying my collaboration with Anne as I find my way around behind the scenes of such a thoughtfully run program. In many ways I feel right at home.

My relationship with the program as a long-standing member of its Program Committee and my engagement with JPEE students extends back to my arrival at Michigan seven years ago. Even then, I recognized an environment that respected individual initiative, supported intellectual curiosity, and built community. Cleverly, I accepted Anne's offer of an office right in the middle of the JPEE suite and hung out at Chalk and Cheese. So, you could say that I've been an ex-officio JPEE member all this time.

I also recognized the quality of JPEE's students, recruiting **Tim Murnen**, **Matt Nelson**, and **Zandra Jordan** as co-researchers and article authors, and **Shari Steadman** and **Mary Graciano** as book chapter coauthors. I'm happy to say that the work we produced is testimony to the rich possibilities in the collaboration between English and Education, to the blending of social science research and the humanities.

Working with Anne to further strengthen the program is a goal I relish. It's one our shared history with English education and national writing projects makes readily attainable. We have moved through similar professional spaces and speak compatible languages. I've taught high school English and University composition courses and administered a writing program and an English teacher education program. Teaching and mentoring remain the center of my work, in concert with my goal to bring research and practice together.

I thank you in advance for all you will do in word or deed to make our partnership more gratifying and productive. I look forward to serving the program for a good long time.



Anne Ruggles Gere

I'm delighted to welcome my good friend and colleague Lesley Rex as a co-chair of JPEE. We have worked closely together since she arrived, and her title simply articulates what she has already been doing as a member of the Program Committee and as an advisor to students. Together we will begin to develop plans for the future of JPEE, considering possibilities for growth, variations on requirements, additional sources of funding, and all the other issues that need to be reconsidered as part of the on-going life of the Program.

Meanwhile, of course, regular comings and goings continue apace. **Shari Steadman** finished her dissertation and took a position at Florida State University in September. Five new students, each of whom is introduced in these pages, joined us this fall. They have already proved the wisdom of the admissions committee by starting to collect awards including a Regents and a Spencer Fellowship. We have also had a departure and arrival in the JPEE office. After more than four years as our administrative assistant, **Jeannie Tramontin** decided to move on to an elementary school position. Fortunately we were able to find another Jeannie. **Jeannie Loughry** came to us from the English Department, where she had worked in the graduate office; needless to say, she already knew a great deal about the Program, so the transition has gone very smoothly.

I'm not going anywhere, but I have taken a new position by agreeing to help NCTE establish the Squire Office of Policy Research. It's a quarter-time job I can do mostly via electronic means, and I'm enjoying the opportunity to look

at our profession from this new angle as I try to figure out how we can make NCTE more visible in the policy world.

Rackham Graduate School continues to be very supportive of JPEE, and our two Humanities Research Fellowships have been renewed for another three years. These, in addition to our three One-term Dissertation Fellowships enable us to provide at least one term of fellowship support for most of our students. Of course, JPEE students continue to be highly successful in campus-wide fellowship competitions as well. **Lindsay Ellis** received a Rackham Pre-Doctoral Fellowship for the 2004-2005 academic year. In addition, **Rob Cosgrove** and **Krista Homicz** both received awards for their teaching.

Still, the cuts that have hit higher education are taking their toll, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to provide small forms of support—especially for travel and research costs—for our students. Contributions to the E&E Gift Account (see details on page 5) will help us address some of these need

A number of us will be participating in the annual convention of NCTE in Indianapolis, and we hope those in attendance there will gather with us in the lobby of the Marriott Hotel at 10:00 on Thursday evening.

Hope to see you there.

Anne

Fall 2004 Cohort



Jim Beitler is originally from the small town of Berne, a “friendly Swiss community” in Indiana. He joins the Joint Program in English and Education after completing a BA in English Literature and a Masters degree in Systematic and Historical Theology at Wheaton College.

In the summer of 2003, Jim designed and taught a course at Northwestern University through the Center For Talent Development. His academic interests include rhetorical theory and questions surrounding textual interpretation. Jim married last summer, and his wife, Brita, teaches 5th grade at a private school in Taylor, Michigan.



Amy Carpenter loves to teach, and she has come home to Michigan to teach teachers. After earning her Bachelors in Business Administration from the University of Michigan, Amy journeyed to California where she began her career in teaching. Amy taught English and business at Fremont High School in Oakland for four years. As Business Academy Co-Director, Amy and her amazing students earned international recognition with their entrepreneurship and community service projects. Drawing on her experiences with service and experiential learning, culturally relevant pedagogy, and authentic assessment, Amy participated in Oakland’s reform movement by serving on the design team for Youth Empowerment School, YES, a New Small Autonomous School. While teaching high school, Amy earned her secondary teaching credential from Cal State Hayward’s Oakland Partnership Program.

In addition to high school, Amy loves teaching college composition. Inspired by the composition instructors in the Collaborative Academic Preparation Initiative, a high school/college articulation project, Amy chose to pursue her Master of Arts in English at Cal State Hayward. As a graduate student, she taught Basic Writing and served as a Graduate Writing Associate in the Writing Across the Curriculum Program, specializing in the fields of business and criminal justice.

Amy is also interested in literacy, multicultural education, and teacher education for urban schools, and she is honored and delighted to return to her alma mater as a teacher and student.



Christian Dallavis, originally from St. Louis, graduated from Notre Dame with a BA in English and Japanese in 1997. After college he joined the Alliance for Catholic Education (ACE), a two-year alternative teacher education program based at Notre Dame. In ACE, he taught middle school English and high school theater in Biloxi, Mississippi for two years. After finishing his Masters in teaching, he went to Bangladesh to teach English for a year before moving back to Notre Dame to become an associate director of ACE. As a member of the ACE staff for the past four years, he has worked to recruit, prepare, and support new teachers for under-resourced Catholic schools in the South, while also teaching a section of first-year composition at Notre Dame. He's interested in studying teaching writing, language acquisition, linguistics, multicultural education, and alternative teacher education.



Donna Scheidt is pleased to be joining JPEE after spending some years in rhetorical training as a practicing attorney. She is looking forward to putting her writing and argumentative practices to work as an undergraduate writing instructor. As best she can tell as a department newcomer, her primary academic interest is in how writing practices contributes to cognition and identity, particularly among women. Having worked most recently with Ann Arbor-based Student Advocacy Center, she also is concerned with how school discipline practices marginalize vulnerable students in the public schools.



Karen Morris comes to the JPEE after teaching in public school systems in Maryland and Pennsylvania. She earned her Bachelor's degree in Comparative Literature at Pennsylvania State University and then enrolled in Penn State's School of Education's Professional Development School where she earned her Master's in Education, focusing on technology use in the classroom. After being heavily influenced by the experiences and frustrations she had when teaching ninth grade students, Karen returns to the university to seek answers to questions that arose in her high school classrooms.

Specifically, Karen's interests lie in students' literary transitions from young adult literature to the classical high school canon, as well as the instruction/improvement of basic reading skills to adolescent students who have "slipped" through the system. Outside of academics, in theatre, Karen can often be found backstage sewing, making props, painting scenery or simply organizing the show. She is excited to be at the University of Michigan and to have the opportunity to pursue her goal of being a better teacher.



Alumni News

(86) **Virginia (Ginger) Monseau's** latest book, [A Curriculum of Peace: Selected Essays from English Journal](#), was published by NCTE in 2004.

She is also chairing the NCTE Hopkins Award Committee this year to select the most outstanding article published in EJ during the past two years by someone other than a high school teacher.

(91) **Margaret Marshall's** Response to Reform: Composition and the Professionalization of Teaching came out in Jan 2004 (Southern Illinois Press). The rest of her professional life continues as usual: She is still serving as an associate master for one of the residential colleges at University of Miami; still directing the composition program; and working collaboratively with NTT teachers on a textbook for first year programs focused on inquiry projects.

On the home front, her husband, Randall, remains litigation director for the Florida ACLU. Much of his time for the next several months will undoubtedly be follow up on the election. Caleb is still a Peace Corps volunteer in Kyrgyz Republic, though now working with a NGO targeting youth issues -- health, stds, aids, alcoholism, domestic violence, etc and teaching English literature and history at a local college. Kileen graduates from UM in May and has determined that she would like to live somewhere other than Miami and do something interesting. Her parents take this as progress given her many interests and inability to decide on much of anything future-related. With her majors in international studies, communication studies, religious studies and a minor in French, they think she'll end up in Washington D.C. or NYC doing something with a non-profit organization of some kind.

(93) **Sarah Robbins** was named the Kennesaw State University Foundation Distinguished Professor for 2004-05. She also won the Kennesaw State U award for outstanding faculty achievement in scholarship. Her book, Managing Literacy, Mothering America, is published by Pittsburgh U Press this month. Later this month, Teachers College Press will be publishing her co-edited volume, Writing America, with high school teacher and NWP teacher consultant Mimi Dyer as co-editor.

In the spring of 2004, she published an article in American Literature--"Periodizing Authorship, Characterizing Genre: Catharine Maria Sedgwick's Benevolent Literacy Narratives."

(95) **Emily Nye** directs the writing and math center at CSU-Hayward. She is involved in the Northern California Writing Center Association.

(96) **Deborah Minter** has been coordinating the composition program at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Her big efforts in the early part of this year involved substantially revising the undergraduate writing curricula (including first year writing) and making major changes to their web page (www.unl.edu/english/compRhet/). Deborah worked with several graduate students and a colleague here

on a piece for the Fall 2003 journal, Pedagogy, entitled "Graduate Education as Education: The Pedagogical Arts of Institutional Critique," and she's currently revising a co-authored piece for College English on the scholarship of teaching. She'll be stepping down as Coordinator of Composition at the end of this academic year to begin work as Vice Chair of the English department. Several books by graduates of the E&E program are part of their curriculum and regular conversation at UNL. Deborah extends thanks for JPEE's good work and conversation that continues to support scholarly work in composition in so many forms (administration, teaching and research).

(98) **Carla L. Verderame** continues as the Coordinator of the English Education Program at West Chester University in PA. She has recently published "Reading and Writing on Flannery O'Connor as Social Practice: The Struggle for a Personal Pedagogy" in The English Record Journal.

(99) **James Inman** has published two books this year: Computers and Writing: The Cyborg Era and Electronic Collaboration in the Humanities: Issues and Options (with Cheryl Reed and Peter Sands). Both were published by Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Current EE Students

David Brown, Jennifer Buehler, and Kelly Sassi will be presenting at this year's NCTE annual convention in Indianapolis in November. The title of their session is "Breaching the Divide: Fostering the Development of Student Writers on the High School-College Continuum." Kelly and Jennifer are presenting this same session to the English Department at the Plymouth Canton Educational Park (that's Plymouth-Canton's high school campus) on Tuesday, November 2.

Jennifer Buehler presented on October 23, 2004 at the Eastern Michigan University Fall Rejuvenation Conference. The title of her session was "Reach Out to Readers With the Newest Young Adult Literature." The conference is for local area teachers and education students at Eastern.

Rob Cosgrove and **Krista Homicz** received 2004 Linda & David Moscow Prizes for Excellence in Teaching Composition.

Lindsay Ellis, Rebecca Ingalls, Jill Lambertson, and Suzanne Spring presented the panel: "Faithful Pedagogies: Negotiating Spirituality

in Composition," at the Conference on College Composition and Communication, March 25, 2003.

Krista Homicz received the 2004 Kairos/Lore Computers and Writing Award for Teaching.

Zandra Jordan will be presenting an article with Lesley Rex for the research strand at NCTE in November, "Why Low Achieving Black Students 'Do English' for Teachers Who are 'White-Black.'" They may present this work at AERA, as well. Zandra has submitted a proposal to present her dissertation work in progress at the Georgetown Linguistics Society Conference next term. Zandra is also a new member of the School of Education's Graduate Affairs Committee, a group of faculty and graduate students who make decisions about grant proposals and various other awards for student work.

Jill Lamberton received a Humanities Candidacy Fellowship from the Horace H. Rackham School of Graduate Studies, University of Michigan, for January-August 2004.

[Gift Account](#)

Traditionally this has been the source of funding for special events and, when monies are available, travel/research costs for students, and those needs continue. In the face of budget cuts, however, the Program is in desperate need of support to "top-up" the stipends of those who wish to teach in the School of Education because SOE stipends are less than those offered by the English Department.

Contributions of all sizes are most welcome. Write checks to the University of Michigan E&E Gift Account and send them to: Jeannie Loughry, School of Education, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1259.

[NCTE](#)

All current students and alumni of E&E who are at the annual convention in Indianapolis are invited to join Anne Gere and Lesley Rex in the lobby of the Marriott Hotel at 10:00 pm on Thursday night. From there the group will move to some convenient spot for refreshments and conversation.

