

# Alumni Notes

News from the English Department of Tufts University

## IN THIS ISSUE:

Meet Virginia Jackson 1

What are they Doing Now? 4

On Being an English Major 6

Faculty News 8

Faculty Book and Movie Recommendations 5

## Notes from the Chair

Someone is sitting in your chair—or in the chair that used to be yours. As the academic year gets under way, the classrooms of Eaton and Braker and Tisch are filled with a new crop of English majors as eager to plunge into coursework this term as you were when you walked the Hill. Though you may not have a seat in the class, you can still be part of the East Hall community; you can still have access to the provocative ideas and the powerful thinking that keeps the classes of the English Department full. That's why we're initiating this newsletter: to keep you in touch with the English Department and the people—faculty, students, and staff—who make it what it is.

Over the summer more than a thousand of you received an email message asking for suggestions about what you'd like us

to include in a departmental newsletter like this. We heard back from a surprisingly large number of alums (and we still hope to hear from many more) with a host of wonderful ideas. You'll find, as a result, a section devoted to what some of you have been up to since graduation and another section containing short recollections by alums of their experiences as English majors at Tufts.

But there are countless other directions in which this fledgling enterprise can go. Possibilities for the future, if there is interest out there, include bulletin boards for people seeking to contact alums or former teachers; a forum for alums and faculty to share their thoughts on books and films; a regular listing of noteworthy alum achievements (books, screenplays, films, essays, poetry, promotions,

*Continued on page 3*



Lee Edelman,  
Chair of the English Department

## Meet Virginia Jackson, New Associate Professor

This fall, Associate Professor Virginia Jackson will join the Tufts English Department. A specialist in nineteenth-century poetry and in the history and theory of the lyric, Professor Jackson will also be teaching early American literature and culture starting from the first contact of English settlers in the New World. Arriving from her most recent position at the New School University, Professor Jackson has also taught at NYU, Rutgers, Boston University,

Middlebury College, and Princeton, where she received her PhD in comparative literature. Her 2005 book, *Dickinson's Misery: A Theory of Lyric Reading*, uses Emily Dickinson's work and reception as a case study for charting shifts in the circulation and reading of lyric poetry. Professor Jackson also serves as the co-editor of the American Section of "The Poetess Archive," and *The Poetess Archive Journal*, online at <http://www.orgs.muohio.edu/womenpoets/poetess/>.

*Continued on page 2*

English Department  
210 East Hall  
Tufts University  
Medford, MA 02155  
617-627-3459  
[ase.tufts.edu/english](http://ase.tufts.edu/english)  
[english@tufts.edu](mailto:english@tufts.edu)

October 2006

**Jackson** *continued from page 1*

Though some might expect that eighteenth and nineteenth century literature would be a hard sell to students, Professor Jackson maintains that in fact students find it irresistible and extremely relevant. “In my experience,” she says, “nineteenth-century American literature tends to naturally attract students. Obviously, novels like *Moby Dick* and *The Scarlet Letter* and *Uncle Tom's Cabin* are favorites often before students enter the class. But it's not difficult for students to become engaged with nineteenth-century American history, and once they do, so much of the literature seems so relevant to our concerns now: women's rights, slavery, abolition, racism, Indian rights, war, pacifism, political dissent, sex. Douglass's Fourth of July speech or Emerson's "Experience" just *are* absorbing—I don't think that students can resist texts like that. Recently, I've been teaching Melville's Civil War poems, asking students to think about the rhetoric of war and peace.”

Current political relevance, however, is not the only reason for studying the literature Professor Jackson teaches, some of which requires specific historical contextualization: “I love the sentimental and political and occasional poetry of the nineteenth century,” she says, “and in the classroom, those context-dependent poems really come alive, because we can talk about them. We also have a lot of fun memorizing and reciting (a very nineteenth-century practice).”

In fact, Professor Jackson tries in a number of different ways to reconstruct some of the reading practices of the nineteenth century for her students. “After I finished my book on Dickinson,” she says, “I found it more difficult to teach Dickinson. Because part of what I argue in that book is that Dickinson wrote very different sorts of poems than the poems we now read, I found it hard to reconstruct a way of reading poetry that would be appropriate for the nineteenth century. As I have learned to do that, an enormous range of historical poetic genres has opened up. Now, I love teaching those genres. It's like teaching a foreign language; students really learn something.”

Asked why she has chosen poetry in particular to focus on in her career, she says, “I have always been fascinated with the intellectual tradition of thinking about poetry. It's a funny thing to do, when you think about it. Why have thinkers as important as Plato, Hegel, or Heidegger or Adorno thought so much about poetry? What is it about poetry that seems to produce thought? On a less highfalutin way, I'm interested in nineteenth-century American poetry because until recently hardly anyone



else was. Recently, a few of us have been going back and reading and researching a discussing this material, and it is thrilling to feel as if we are 'discovering' a literature that has been largely unread for several decades. I also have a perverse interest in things like meter and rhythm, but I won't bore you with that...”

She sees herself as fortunate for having been able to work in a variety of different types of institutions and locations, each of which has offered its

**“...so much of the literature seems so relevant to our concerns now: women's rights, slavery, abolition, racism, Indian rights, war, pacifism, political dissent, sex.”**

own benefits: room to grow as a teacher, supportive and inspiring colleagues, specialized centers for broadening the cultural perspective of her project, and opportunities to explore how public forums have shaped poetry. But Boston still holds a special fascination

for Professor Jackson. “Boston is a great place to [teach nineteenth-century poetry], since so much nineteenth-century American poetry was written in or refers to the city,” she says. “I'm looking forward to coming back to Boston, where nineteenth-century American poetry is in some ways still very much part of the landscape.”

## 2006 Writing Prizes

### The Morse Hamilton Fiction Prize

1<sup>st</sup> Place: Jyhjong Hwang

### The Ginny Brereton prize for First-Year Writing

1<sup>st</sup> Place: Laura Fong

### The Academy of American Poets Prize

1<sup>st</sup> Place: Sheena Harris, Lu Xia

*Honorable Mention:* Christian Eager, Thomas Keidel

# Professor Alan Lebowitz Retires After 38 Years



After 38 years in the Tufts English Department, Professor Emeritus Alan Lebowitz announced his official retirement from teaching this past spring. Professor Lebowitz arrived at Tufts in 1968 to teach American literature and run the creative writing program, both of which he continued to do until the end of the 2005-2006 academic year. Professor Lebowitz taught

Advanced Fiction Writing; Poe, Hawthorne, Melville; Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Faulkner; and the Twentieth-Century Novel, as well as related

courses. He also served as department chair for five years, from 1982 to 1987. While having officially retired from full professorship, Professor Lebowitz will not be leaving Tufts behind completely: he will continue to teach on a part-time basis, starting with Hemingway and Faulkner this fall.

“What I liked most about teaching WAS teaching, the

action of the classroom—the vital interaction of me, my students and the writers I was teaching” said Professor Lebowitz of the favorite moments in his career. “And I’ll miss the students,

many of whom I’m still in touch with, some going all the way back to my first years at Tufts.” To celebrate his retirement, Professor Lebowitz’s wife, Nan Levinson (who also teaches creative writing at Tufts), surprised him by setting up a blog in honor of his teaching career, where colleagues and

former students have written about their memories of him. You can read their reminiscences or add your own by going to <http://proflebowitz.blogspot.com>. Professor Lebowitz also encourages his former students to drop him a line at [alanlebowitz@comcast.net](mailto:alanlebowitz@comcast.net).

## Notes from the Chair *continued from page 1*

new jobs, awards) and a series of in-depth articles profiling individual alums. Would you like to hear more from or about our faculty (perhaps about their books, their classes, their current areas of interest)? More about fellow graduates (perhaps including short essays or think pieces that alums might care to send in)? We’ll certainly have a letters column where people can write in on anything appropriate. Tell us what you’d like this newsletter to be. And then sit down and contribute something to make that idea a reality. All you have to do is email your contribution to [English@tufts.edu](mailto:English@tufts.edu).

The exchanges that go on in the classrooms at Tufts are challenging, enlivening, transformative. Graduation doesn’t have to mean that you’re exiled from those discussions. With this first edition of *Alumni Notes: The English Department Newsletter* we welcome you anew to the East Hall community and invite you to participate in a conversation as vital, various, and wide-ranging as those that fill the department’s classes. Take a few minutes to write us a letter: tell us about what you’re

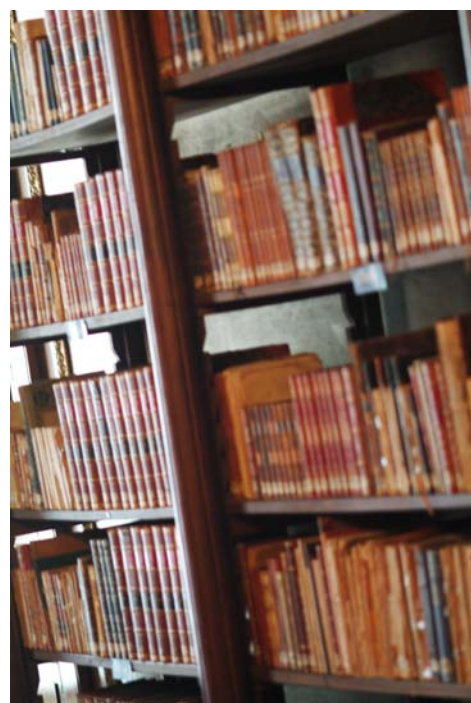
doing now, what you’re reading, thinking, concerned about; or write an article about an important experience at Tufts or since graduation. Send us suggestions, feedback, queries. This newsletter, unlike *Tinkerbelle*, won’t come to life just because you applaud. Give us a hand in a different sense. Put your hand to the work of writing, and help us to carry the light from the Hill to the chair that you’re sitting in now. ✍



# What Are They Doing Now?

So...what do you do with an English major? As you will see from other alums, the answer is just about anything. While many are involved in writing and teaching, others have found their way into medicine, law, politics, and much more.

- ◆ Appellate attorney at Tonkon Torp law firm—Robyn Ridler Aoyagi '95
- ◆ Editor and Producer in television — Sharmila Ariathurai '93
- ◆ Writer on national politics for the *New York Times Magazine*—Matt Bai '90
- ◆ Attending Columbia University's program in Nutrition and Applied Physiology—Marissa Beck '05
- ◆ A.P. Language and Composition teacher—Stephanie (Bernstein) Nelson '98
- ◆ 8<sup>th</sup> grade teacher in Arlington Public schools, MFA in Creative Writing at Emerson—Melissa Brody '00
- ◆ Received a PhD in English in 2005 from the University of Maryland, specializing in Asian American literature—Tracy Chung '93
- ◆ Professor of Sports Administration and Department Chair at Lynn University—Ted Curtis '90
- ◆ News editor at *Publishers Weekly* — Rachel Deahl '99
- ◆ Assistant Professor of English and Chair of Women's Studies at Plymouth State University—Robin DeRosa '02
- ◆ English teacher at Indian Hills High School in Oakland, New Jersey—Dan Ferat '93
- ◆ Freelance film/video director and filmmaking teacher—Ian Fischer '94
- ◆ Previously worked in advertising, taught English, edited a newspaper, produced and reported cable television, and even “tried to do some writing ‘when I could.’” Currently works in film production.—Brooke Fogel, '90
- ◆ Took ordination with the Dalai Lami, learning Tibetan language —Venerable Tenzin Gache (Brian Roiter '05)
- ◆ Ophthalmologist with Kaiser Permanente—Gregory Gertner '96
- ◆ Running the national political organization Blue Tiger and funding progressive political businesses —Benjamin Geyerhahn '93
- ◆ Literary Coach in the Rochester City School District, earning PhD in Curriculum and Teaching at the University of Rochester—Laura Rebell Gross '94
- ◆ English teacher at Waltham High School—John Hacker '95
- ◆ Received a PhD in English from the University of Maryland, specializing in Asian American literature—Linnea Hasegawa '93
- ◆ Producer at *Dateline NBC*—Karen Epstein Israel '98
- ◆ Physician—Laura A. James '90
- ◆ Program Associate at Boston Plan for Excellence, a non-profit that supports Boston Public Schools in programming, professional development, and policy—Sarah Joslyn '05
- ◆ Editor and critic for a variety of magazines including *Wine News* and *South Florida* as well as a published poet—Jen Karetnick '90
- ◆ Freeland artist and producer for Spinshell Records and TV, a record label, production company, and ad web channel based in Tokyo—Rahnee Elizabeth Kelly '03
- ◆ Senior Graphic Designer, Publication Department, Museum of Fine Arts—Fanny Lau '02
- ◆ Attending PhD Program in the Department of Communications at Northwestern University—Elizabeth Lenaghan '02
- ◆ Clinical Therapist at a residential treatment facility for adolescent boys in Colorado—Kimberly Mack '00
- ◆ Novelist—Gregory Maguire '90
- ◆ English teacher at Arlington High School—William McCarthy '02
- ◆ Director of the Writing Center, instructor in the first year composition program, and Coordinator of the Writing Across the Curriculum program, Simmons College—Dawn Mendoza '00
- ◆ Managing editor of *Roll Call*—David Meyers '96
- ◆ Managing Editor, *Memphis* magazine—Frank Murtaugh '91
- ◆ Lived in Hong Kong for four years, visiting New Zealand, Tasmania, Vietnam, Thailand, China, the Philippines, and Malaysia. Currently a stay-at-home mom of two children.—Illysia Neumann-Loreck (nee Schindler) '90
- ◆ Publications—Don Orth '95
- ◆ Writing fiction and just completed a doctorate in education at UCLA—Jason Porter '92

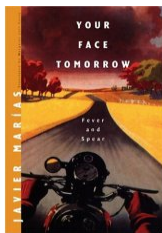


- ◆ Lawyer clerking for a federal judge in D.C.; will join Office of the Legal Advisor in the State Department in January.—Sabeena Rajpal, '00
- ◆ Reporter covering state politics on-air for *NY1*—Josh Robin '98
- ◆ Technical writer—Ben Ross '00
- ◆ 8<sup>th</sup> grade Humanities at East Side Middle School, doctoral student at CUNY Graduate Center in Urban Education—Rebecca Rufo '96
- ◆ Publishing for Penguin Group and freelance writing for clubplanet.com—Lauren Saft, '05
- ◆ Attending University of Miami School of Law—Tammy Savin '06
- ◆ Student at Atlantic Veterinary College in Prince Edward Island—Ahne Simonsen '97
- ◆ Attorney—Christina Sloan '00
- ◆ Editor—Jacqueline Smith '00
- ◆ Teaching high school in NYC, earning MA in English and Adolescent Education—Arielle Sprotzer '01
- ◆ Business Analyst in Information Technology with Keane, Inc., a software and business consulting firm—Shawn Stevens '95
- ◆ Editor for a Washington, D.C. thinktank—Sarah Swain '02
- ◆ Working at The Monitor Group, a management consulting firm—Hovig Tchalian '93
- ◆ Screenplay writer and writer/producer for reality and talk shows—Arrisen Towner '95
- ◆ Film writer—Michael Weiss '90
- ◆ Associate in the Corporate Department of Edwards Angell Palmer and Dodge—Lindsay Weissberg '99
- ◆ Language lecturer at New York University, lyricist for musical theatre—Amanda Yesnowitz '94

## Faculty Book and Movie Recommendations

### Linda Bamber:

—Author: Javier Marias. “Wonderful Spanish novelist sort of in the style of W. G. Sebald.”



—Movies: *My Architect*, *The Gleaners and I*.

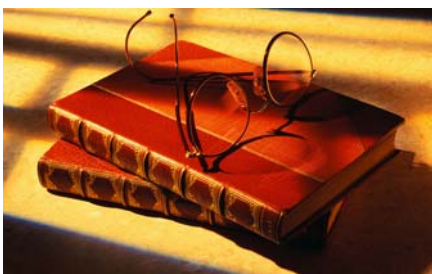
### Virginia Jackson:

—Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*: “I think that everyone should take Whitman literally and read *Leaves of Grass* every day, if possible while sitting in the sun. The problem is to decide what edition; I'd recommend the 1860.”

—Elizabeth Kolbert's *Field Notes from a Catastrophe* and Michael Pollan's *The Omnivore's Dilemma*.

“Everyone should read both books right away.”

—Anne Carson's *Deception*: “Gorgeous”



—Jonathan Safran Foer's *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*: “This last one surprised me, because I didn't think that I would like such a trendy writer, and because I have a very hard time reading anything about 9-11 (partially because I was a mile away that day; partially because of the appalling consequences of that day in this country and around the world). I found it very moving.”



### Lee Edelman:

—Almodóvar's *Bad Education* is one of the best films of the past quarter century, but you're all familiar with his films already. So I direct your attention to **Michael Haneke**. You may know him as the director of *Caché*, but he has an astonishing body of work beyond that. *The Piano Teacher*, starring the brilliant Isabelle Huppert, is deservedly famous. For those of you with a strong constitution, I also recommend three of his earlier works. But be warned: they brutally rub our faces in the sadism inherent in cinema. If that's something you can handle, have a look at *71 Fragments of a Chronology of Chance*, *Benny's Video*, and, most disturbing of all, *Funny Games*.

### Alumni Websites to Check Out:

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

website of Benjamin Geyerhahn's national political organization

<http://www.criticsforum.org>

Hovig Tchalian publishes bi-weekly articles on art and culture in the Armenian diaspora here.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gb9pSYs27wA>

examples of Rah-nee Elizabeth Kelly's work

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

Jen Karetnick (J90) created this poet-chef pairing event that benefits literary organizations

### Interested in Social Groups with Alums?

Melissa Brody ('00) would like help starting an alumni book club.

If you're interested in joining or organizing a book club, send an email to [melissabrody@hotmail.com](mailto:melissabrody@hotmail.com).

# On Being an English Major at Tufts

*Students reminisce about majoring in English, how they've used what they've learned, and the lasting impact of their professors.*

I send fond regards to the English Department faculty with whom I work—a list that includes, but isn't limited to, Lee Edelman, Joe Litvak, Sheila Emerson, and Judith Haber. In so many ways my motivation for continuing with my graduate work is a reflection of the passion and dedication that each of these scholars demonstrated for their craft. Both my work and my life were enriched for having studied with them, and I look forward to potentially cultivating similar relationships with students in the future. —Elizabeth Lenaghan '02

How did my majoring in English effect my life? Where do I start? Having taken Professor Edelman's Hitchcock class (as well as other film related classes and working for TUTV) I became interested in the film industry and worked as an independent location sound mixer in New York for nearly eight years from 1994–2001. When I decided to leave film for a steadier life, what did I go back to? My love of writing and literature, getting my Master's degree from Teachers College in the Teaching of English. Now I am in my third year as an English teacher at Indian Hills High School in Oakland, New Jersey and loving it. I use my English major nearly every day! —Dan Ferat '93

I majored in English not planning to actually pursue a career in the field, rather I thought it served as an appropriate complement to my Theatre studies. Little did I know that I would end up teaching English at NYU. —Amanda Yesnowitz '94

I am now a physician, but find that I use my English skills every day. —Laura A. James '90

Most people roll their eyes when they speak of majoring in literature or creative writing, but I think it was a great choice for me, practical or not. I look back on my time at Tufts as some of the richest intellectually and I owe a lot of that to my English courses. —Jason Porter '92

My favorite professor at Tufts was Joseph Litvak, and I ended up taking six or seven courses with him, which included Writers in

Hollywood, The Black Comedy, Advertising/Media, and Henry James & Gore Vidal. I always looked forward to class, just to hear what witty comment he would make next, either about the state of pop culture or the mindset of college students. As someone who loves classic movies and absorbs behind-the-scenes details like a sponge, I loved it when Professor Litvak would drop a little known tidbit about a star or author into the discussion.

Most importantly, he made it possible for me to see connections across difference mediums like books, movies, and advertising. In the Writers in Hollywood course, I remember reading or watching a wide variety of books or films that I never would have linked in terms of themes, messages, or characters. The discussions about HUAC, as well as the Jewish role in the rise of Hollywood, were particularly fascinating because I, at least, had previously thought of the film industry as operating in a vacuum and not connected to the rest of the country. —Sarah Swain '02

**“I am now a physician, but find that I use my English skills every day.”**

—**Laura A. James '90** In 20th-Century Lit, all of my loneliness and bravado dissolved under the influence of Professor Edelman's curious energy and open perspective. No one was ever “wrong” in their interpretation of a poem. Everything was open for discussion. He made Yeats leap right off the page and into the room with us. We, the blasé, over-privileged, narcissistic English majors in his classroom, were collectively humbled and inspired.

The Hitchcock course offered my senior year was superb. I work in film production in Hollywood now, and still I cannot enter a discussion about Alfred E. without reference to Professor Edelman's “eating and secreting” lecture and Hitchcock's obsession with lavatory sanitation.

In the late '80's, English was considered a “lazy major” at Tufts. Serious upperclassmen talked about Masters Degrees and Law School. What they didn't get was the subtext, the code an English major learns to decipher, and that scope of information and perspective we gain from literature is vast. Ours is a very liberal art indeed! This sort of open territory can be frightening, but it can also afford adventurous English majors like myself the flexibility and range to live life all over the map. —Brooke Fogel '90

When I first started working in residential treatment (while still a senior at Tufts) people asked me all the time what an English major was doing in social work. I still get funny looks and raised

eyebrows when I proclaim that I majored in English. The truth is that majoring in English has helped me in every facet of work, and it made furthering my education a lot easier as well. Not only do I have a fantastic lending library running out of my office for residents, but I am able to suggest literature that might appeal to a particular individual's interests and emotional needs. Additionally, my writing skills are put to use in a multitude of ways on a daily basis. For me, an English degree turned out to be a fantastic precursor to my chosen profession! —Kimberly Mack '00

I graduated from Tufts as an English major in 1998, and I definitely took many unforgettable classes there, including Twentieth-Century American Fiction and Creative Writing with Jonathan Wilson.

These experiences have served me well in my career choice as a high school English teacher. This is my seventh year teaching, and I have taught 9th through 12th grade. I am now in my third year of teaching AP Language and Composition and while I love every single aspect of my job (maybe not the paper grading so much), one of the things that most impresses my students is that I have a B.A. in English from Tufts. [They especially come to talk to me when they're applying to college and want a letter of recommendation. Not only do they seem to want my connection to the university, but I am also known as someone who puts a (sometimes insane) amount of effort into writing for them.] Those who have seen some of my writing also seem to think that Tufts can teach them a lot too. One thing is for sure, all of my students say my writing and analytical skills make my career choice an incredibly obvious one. —Stephanie (Bernstein) Nelson '98

The Tufts English course that most affected my everyday life was my Hitchcock class. I was definitely more of a literature person rather than a film person, but took this course thinking it would be a fun change. Well not only was it a fun change, but it completely changed my way of thinking in looking at film. I find myself thinking about something I learned in that class at least once a week, and I don't think I watch movies in the same way. It was a challenging course to take as a freshman but it confirmed my interest in majoring in English! —Sabeena Rajpal, '00

I've been teaching since September of 2000 and could not imagine doing anything more fun. I am also finishing my MFA degree in Creative Writing at Emerson, where I have taken classes with Joe Hurka. We often talk about how much we love Tufts and tell stories about our favorite people. In fact, I am fairly certain that it was Jonathan Wilson's recommendation was what got me into my graduate program, and have never forgotten his willingness to help me out after I'd been out of touch for almost five years. —Melissa Brody '00

Currently, I'm working in the publicity department at Penguin Group (USA) in New York, specifically under SVP Marilyn

Duckworth, who happens to be a Tufts Alum! I also can't fail to mention that this job was actually referred to me by Melissa Broder ('01), who happens to be yet another product of the Tufts English department....I guess we take care of our own!

All in all, the English department at Tufts and my experience there seems to have shaped and put me on the path to what is slowly becoming my adult life. I love being a part of a literary community, and feel at home and comfortable among the fellow English majors of the world, whom I now call my co-workers!

—Lauren Saft '05

**“Majoring in English has helped me in every facet of work, and it made furthering my education a lot easier as well.”**

**—Kimberly Mack '00**

I am proud of my degree in English, and I still remain involved in literary interests by taking part in reading groups and planning trips to see Shakespeare performances in the Berkshires. And maybe one day I'll find the courage to write that great American novel. —Shawn Stevens '95

Classmate Linnea Hasegawa ('93) and I both earned PhDs in English at the University of Maryland. We both specialized in Asian American literature.

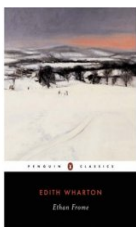
Many years ago (2001?), we attended an Association for Asian American Studies conference in Phoenix, Arizona. There we ran into Ms. Linell Yugawa (Director of the Asian American Center at Tufts), Dr. Ruth Hsaio (retired lecturer of English at Tufts), and now Dr. Yoonmee Change J'92 (then PhD student at UPenn). We had all taken Ruth's seminar in Asian American lit. at some point, and she was very proud to see that we had gone on to graduate study in English. I can speak for Linnea and me in saying that doctoral study in English was a very difficult path and often not enjoyable. But we do not have regrets and will always love literature! —Tracy Chung '93

I credit and thank Lee Edelman for setting me on my career path....Back in the early nineties, I was a student lost. Passionless, with no direction. I had just come to grips with the fact that I wouldn't make it as a Pre-med student and felt that uncomfortable disconnect when a perfectly envisioned future goes up in flames. I changed my major to English, took Lee's film class on Alfred Hitchcock, and was hooked. He showed me another way to view movies and his critical analysis opened up a new world for me.

Movies could be more than simplistic entertainment. They could be road maps into a director's inner neurosis. Wow! His class was a life raft back to some kind of future goal. To this day, I can't watch an Alfred Hitchcock movie without remembering Lee's intelligent and insightful words.

I eventually made my way to Columbia University's Film Program. Now I freelance in New York as a film/video director and teach (what else?) filmmaking. As a teacher, I try to inspire my students the way Lee inspired me....With passion. Thanks Lee! —Ian Fischer '94

# Faculty Publications and News



**Elizabeth Ammons**, Harriet H. Fay Professor of Literature in the English Department, gave an invited lecture on Harriet Beecher Stowe and Activism at the inauguration of the Wilberforce Institute for

the Study of Slavery and Emancipation, WISE, at the University of Hull in England in July. She also delivered a paper at the American Literature Conference in San Francisco in May on "American Literature and Social Activism." She recently edited the new Penguin paperback edition of Edith Wharton's *Ethan Frome*.

**Linda Bamber** is writing her fourth and final story based on one or more Shakespeare plays. This one is an adaptation of three of the history plays, *Richard II*, *I Henry IV* and *II Henry IV*. Of the others, one each was based on *The Tempest* (*Michigan Quarterly Review*), *As You Like It* (*The Kenyon Review*) and *Othello* (*Southwest Review*). (In the *Othello* story Desdemona is the Chair of an English Department engaged in an affirmative action search, Othello being the only member of the Department who brings some diversity to it.) When finished, this group of stories will include one from each genre Shakespeare worked in: comedy, tragedy, history and romance.

**Jay Cantor**, Professor of English, has just signed a contract to have *The Death of Che Guevara* published in Chinese by Shanghai Sanhui Culture and Press, LTD. It will appear in two Chinese editions, one in "simplified characters and one (from Taiwan) in complex characters. The book has also appeared in Portuguese and Spanish, and is available in English from Vintage. Professor Cantor is currently enjoying his work on a graphic novel about Guantanamo for Vertigo Comics.

**Deborah Digges** has a new book of poems called *The Dance of the Seven Veils* forthcoming from Knopf next spring or fall. Her poem "Dancing With Emerson" recently appeared in the *New Yorker*, and

another called "The Birthing" will appear soon. Four new poems are forthcoming in *Kenyon Review*. She is also writing a historical novel on the life of Sarah Winchester. This past year (year off) she spent three months in Africa working at the Tumaini orphanage at the foot of Mount Kenya in Nyrie.

**Kevin Dunn** has just returned from a four-and-a-half year tour of duty serving as Dean of Academic Affairs for Arts and Sciences, a position in which he worked mostly on issues that affected faculty. He reports being "extremely happy to be back in East Hall, and enjoying [his] students." He is working with a junior faculty member in Political Science, Yannis Evrengis, on a collaborative piece of scholarship that deals with the poet and politician Fulke Greville. He is also working on a new book, *Figures of Speech: Dramatic Representations of Counsel in Shakespeare and his Contemporaries*, which he hopes to finish on his sabbatical in the spring.

**John Fyler** was onsite director for the Bread Loaf School of English at Lincoln College, Oxford, this past summer. He is a trustee of the New Chaucer Society, and attended its congress in New York, where he chaired a session on fabliaux.

**Lee Edelman**, Fletcher Professor of English Literature and Chair of the English Department, was jointly sponsored by the Research Cluster on Psychoanalysis and the Research Cluster on Queer Theory in March when he presented a public lecture and held a seminar at the University of California at Santa Cruz. His lecture, titled "Bad Education: Learning Nothing from Queers," presented material from his latest book in progress, while the seminar focused on the political ramifications of his recent book, *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive*. He was invited to deliver two more lectures on these materials in Helsinki, Finland where he was sponsored by the University of Helsinki, the School of Art



**The Department of English is pleased to announce that Christina Sharpe has been promoted to Associate Professor with tenure.**

and Design, the Christina Institute for Women's Studies, and the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies.

**Judith Haber**, Associate Professor of English, delivered a paper entitled "Old Men's Tales: Legacies of the Father in 'Tis Pity She's a Whore" at the annual meeting of the Renaissance Society of America in San Francisco. She participated in a seminar entitled "Tis Pity It's Not Shakespeare: Rethinking John Ford" at the annual meeting of the Shakespeare Association of America in Philadelphia. She was an invited participant in the fourth annual meeting of the Northeast Seminar in Early Modern Studies at Dartmouth College.

**Sonia Hofkosh** recently led a seminar on her work at the annual conference of the North American Society for the Study of Romanticism at Purdue University. Her paper "What Does a Fetish Want?" is part of her book-in-progress on the function of objects in conceptions of personhood in late Eighteenth- and early Nineteenth-Century British literary and visual culture. She is also writing an essay on Jane Austen and ventriloquism.

**Michael Ullman** is working on *The Vintage Guide to Jazz*, which is meant to be an accessible jazz history and listening guide published by Vintage Press. He also writes the bi-monthly Jazz Column for *Fanfare* magazine. "That and walking my dog," he says, "has been taking up most of my time."

**Jonathan Wilson** just finished a biography of Chagall which will be published in March 2007 by Schocken/Nextbook.

*Special thanks go to doctoral candidates Kristina Aikens and Abby Manzella for compiling, designing, and writing much of the material for the first edition of Alumni Notes.*