

O Wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing.

— Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822)

GETTING INVOLVED

Despite the wet start of the semester, it seems like everyone here at SUNY New Paltz has settled into their fall routines. We hope that your classes are challenging you with thought-provoking texts and inspiring lively discussions. However, if you're still looking for a creative outlet, there are several opportunities to get involved on campus.

The Poetry Association, also known as The New Paltz Slam Team, gives student poets a chance to vocalize their written verse in a competitive, but supportive, environment. The team competes with other colleges, orchestrates their own slams, holds on-campus events, and often invites successful poets to perform at the school.

The defending New York State Slam Champions are ranked sixth in the nation and hold try-out slams throughout the year. Check their Facebook page for information on opportunities to join or participate in events.

If you're interested in sharing your own work without the pressures of competition, Rap Poetry Music (RPM), a community of artists, meets every Wednesday at 9 p.m. in Bliss Hall and all students are welcome.

The Little Rebellion is an online publication produced by Nancy Meyer-Heiz's Advanced Editing Class. Representing a

convergence of the journalism and other media programs, *The Little Rebellion* accepts submissions from anyone, and offers a chance to showcase students' work and develop professional portfolios. Email your submissions to thelittle rebellion@gmail.com. Visit their website, www.thelittle rebellion.com, for more specific submission guidelines.

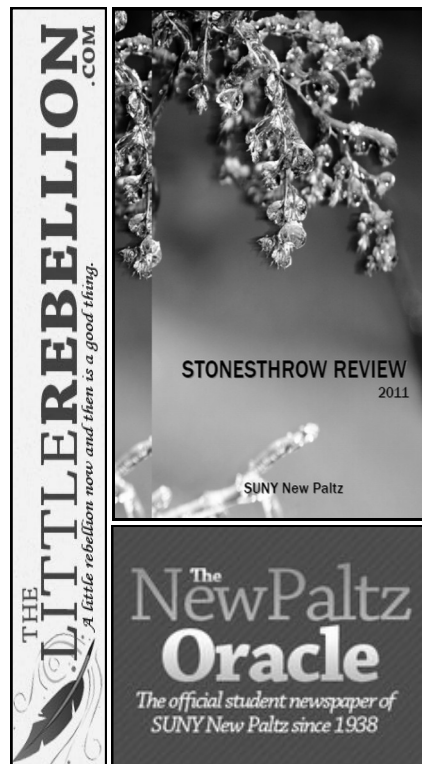
The New Paltz

Oracle, our student-run newspaper, has been in print since 1938. The publication won the "Mark of Excellence" Award for Best Affiliated Website at the 2010 Society of Professional Journalists. Stop by their story meetings in SUB 403 every Sunday at 7 p.m. for more information.

The Stonestrow Review is a literary journal for New Paltz students published annually by the English Department. Submission deadlines for

the 2012 issue will not be until next semester, but keep it in mind if you would like to submit something by next year.

If none of these opportunities interest you, submit a charter to the Student Association and establish your own book club or weekly writing workshop. Just keep reading and writing, and don't be afraid to get involved!



Faculty Profile: Douglas McQueen-Thomson

A new adjunct professor in the English Department, Douglas McQueen-Thomson, did not receive the warmest welcome when he moved to New Paltz this summer. An Australian native, McQueen-Thomson traveled to London in early August to retrieve his visa and was caught amidst the violent rioting that broke out in the streets there. Since then, his recent arrival in town was darkened by a blackout, he felt the earth tremble under his feet in an earthquake, Hurricane Irene blew through and postponed his first classes, he was surrounded by flooding, and he had to boil his drinking water for almost an entire week.

McQueen-Thomson jokes that he'd been on a "summer tour of natural catastrophes," as he took inventory of these events with a lighthearted acceptance. He says that he relates his experiences to Oscar Wilde's famous line, "to lose one parent may be regarded as a misfortune; to lose both looks like carelessness."

Douglas McQueen-Thomson grew up in Melbourne, Australia. He received his BA in English and Philosophy at the University of Melbourne, and his MA in English at Monash University. He then came to the States to earn his second MA in English and to pursue his PhD at Cornell University. He is currently finishing his dissertation entitled "Figurations of Fortune: Writing Contingency in Early Modern England."

"It addresses problems of chance and fortune

in early modern literature," he says. McQueen-Thomson has a particular interest in classical theatre and says he enjoys being an educator because sometimes he views teaching as being "a bit theatrical."

He has several active hobbies, one of which involves his love for music, which motivated him to join the New Paltz Community Chorale, a local choir group. He also enjoys cycling and skiing, and he claims to be one of the few people actually looking forward to winter. Travelling is a big part of his life. He has backpacked throughout Europe and Southeast Asia, but has a "special fondness or affection for Salamanca, Spain," where he was just recently made godfather to the son of a good friend of his who lives there. In all of his travels, McQueen-Thomson



has seen many towns and cities, but his impression of New Paltz is of a "charming and attractive town with a lively and dynamic center." He said he is "drawn to towns that have a feeling of community and shared space."

This semester McQueen-Thomson is teaching two sections of English Literature I and a Shakespeare class. He'll be teaching Shakespeare again next semester and a Studies in Drama class, pending some planning details.

"I take pride in my enthusiasm in teaching," he says. "I look forward to sharing lively and exciting classes with students."

Alumni Weekend Reading and Reception

In celebration of this semester's Alumni Weekend which took place on September 23-25, the English Department held a Reading and Happy Hour reception at 36 Main Restaurant and Wine Bar. The event was a pleasant success with a delicious array of appetizers and plenty of friendly conversation. Several returning alumni contributed to the evening by reading aloud. Thanks to

all who participated, including Anne Gorrick, Lynne Crockett, Kat Alexander-Chauncy, James Sherwood, Matt Nickel, Jack Foster, Joann Deudicibus and Jacqueline Ahl. The event was sponsored by The Alumni and Friends of the English Department; contributions are encouraged and can be made at www.newpaltz.edu/english/friends.

One Book One New Paltz

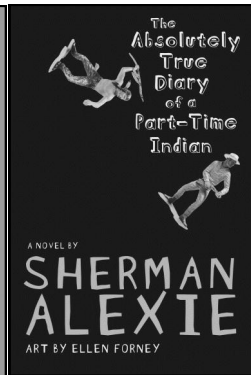
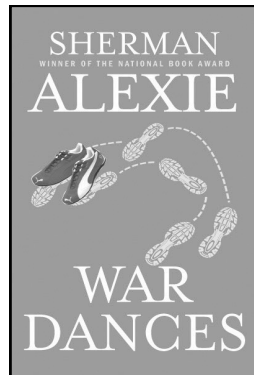
This year, in the hopes of fostering a literary dialogue between the students on campus and the residents of the surrounding village and town, the English Department's Common Summer Reading Program teamed up with One Book One New Paltz to participate in a series of events spread out over the month of October, all surrounding Sherman Alexie's book *War Dances*. Alexie, a Native American author, has published twenty-two books and *War Dances* is the winner of the 2010 PEN Faulkner Award. *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, Alexie's first young adult novel and winner of the 2007 National Book Award for Young People's Literature, will also be the focus of some "One Book" events and is a suggested secondary text for students in the Common Summer Reading Program. The One Book One New Paltz project was founded by Gerald Benjamin in 2005 but has not collaborated with the Composition Program since 2006.

Matt Newcomb, the Composition Coordinator, says that one of the main goals of this cooperative effort is "a greater connection between incoming students and the community." Encour-

aging diverse participation "creates spaces for discussion that have a little more variety in age and perspective."

Krista Feichtinger, an English major and Sigma Tau Delta member, is hosting an interactive book discussion with Linda Welles from "One Book" at the New Paltz Community Center on October 26 at 7 p.m..

Feichtinger's hope for this event is to "bridge the gap between Sigma Tau Delta, the New Paltz student body and the community." While *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* is a sustained narrative, *War Dances* is a collection of short prose, poetry, and experimental fiction that allows for the



discussion of several different writing styles. Newcomb and Joann Deudicibus, Composition Program Assistant, have acted as the two main liaisons between the college and the "One Book" committee. Luckily, *War Dances* was voted as the first choice for both the Composition faculty and the "One Book" committee, allowing for what Deudicibus refers to as a "unifying experience," where students have a wide range of subject matter to discuss in the classroom and "people outside the academia enter into that dialogue."

Writing About Food From Farm to Table

As a student studying English, you may wonder how sustainable agriculture fits in with literature and writing. Kristin Kimball, a Harvard graduate, has successfully bridged the gap between farming and authorship in her book, *The Dirty Life: On Farming, Food, and Love*. Before Kimball married her husband, Mark, and took on all of the domestic duties of farm life, she was a New York City journalist and freelance writer, a writing teacher, and an assistant to a literary agent.

On Monday, October 17, Kimball is coming to New Paltz to host a student Writing Work-



shop entitled "Writing about Food, from Farm to Table" from 3 to 4:30 p.m. in JFT 1010. Registration for this event is required so call (845) 257-2720 in advance to reserve a spot.

Along with her husband, farmer Mark Kimball, she will deliver a lecture at 7 p.m. in the Coykendall Science Building, free and open to all. These events are sponsored by the Environmental Task Force, the Department of English, the Environmental Studies Program, the Department of Sociology, and with the generous support of the Office of the Provost.



Briefly Noted

A “Straight Talk About Grad School” information sessions will be on Wednesday, October 12 at 3 p.m. in CSB 110. Learn about graduate studies in English (here and elsewhere), the application process, expectations, and career options.



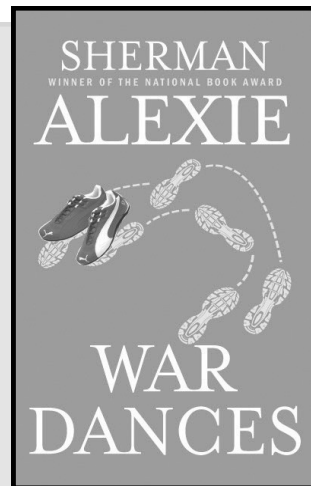
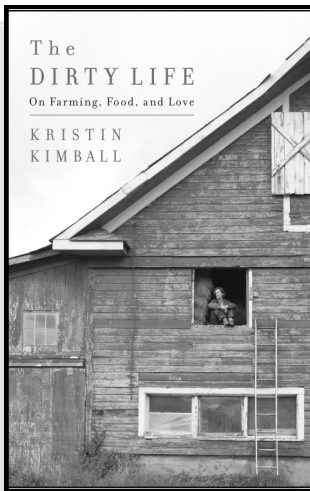
Check out the Fall 2011 Understanding Poetry Series. Readings and lectures will be held every Monday from October 3 to November 14 in LC 108 from 6-7:15 p. m. For more information contact Joann Dejudicibus at dejudicj@newpaltz.edu or (845) 257-2727.

The Creative Writing Program is holding an informal reading for both students and faculty on Thursday, October 6 at 7 p. m. in the Honors Center. They will also be hosting a Halloween Reading on Thursday, October 27 at 7 p.m. in the Honors Center. John Langan will be reading from his forthcoming novel, *The Fisherman*.



You can now follow the English Department on Twitter **@NPEnglish** for the most up-to-date information on local and campus events. Check it out!

“What I’m Reading”: Tom Olsen, Chair of the English Department



I am still somewhat in summer mode and working away at my late summer reading list: I have just finished Sherman Alexie’s *War Dances*, which is our One Book One New Paltz selection this year. And I have just started *The Dirty Life* by Kristin Kimball (see page 3).

I found Alexie’s book a really interesting technical achievement and a great choice for the “One Book” initiative because he does many interesting things with generic conventions. Early in the summer I thumbed through *The Dirty Life* when considering inviting Kimball to come to campus, and I really liked what I saw. I am so pleased that plans worked out and that she will be here for a writing workshop and lecture on October 17.

Footnotes

1. October 6: Deregistration for non-payment Fall 2011.
2. October 7: Yom Kippur. No classes after 3 p.m.
3. October 10: Columbus Day. No Classes.
4. October 11: No Tuesday Classes. Monday classes meet.
5. October 17: Mid-point of Fall 2011

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