



“The worst thing that being an artist could do to you would be that it would make you slightly unhappy constantly.”

— J.D. Salinger (1919 – 2010)

## CONGRATULATIONS OUTSTANDING GRADUATES!

This past December, undergraduates Krista Feichtinger, Arianna Caruso, and John Murray; and graduate students Jennifer Gutman and Lee Conell were named the Fall 2011 Outstanding Graduates of the English Department.

Jennifer Gutman graduated with a 4.0 GPA. As a Teaching Assistant (TA), she taught Composition I and II for five semesters and served on the Composition Committee. Currently, Gutman is applying to teach abroad and she says she hopes to spend the upcoming year traveling, reading, writing, and “gaining some perspective on how I want to implement what I believe is an invaluable degree.”

Lee Conell was also a TA, in addition to tutoring writing and Shakespeare studies at the Tutoring Center. She participated in the department’s graduate symposiums and attended several conferences outside of New Paltz. Her post-graduation plans include backpacking through Israel before pursuing further graduate studies.

As a member and representative of Sigma Tau Delta, Krista Feichtinger facilitated an event for One Book One New Paltz this past semester. She is also involved in a teen and middle school book club off campus. After graduation, Feichtinger says her plans are to read for leisure as well as to explore and develop

other skills outside of academia.

Arianna Caruso, another member of Sigma Tau Delta, studied English with a particular fascination in nineteenth-century British literature and Posthumanist studies. She says her plans are “to experience an unknown life beyond academia.”

She says she will be seeking employment while studying for the GREs, “in an attempt to market myself as a most appealing candidate for PhD programs in literature.”

John Murray commuted from his hometown in Walden, NY to study English at New Paltz so he says he didn’t have much time to get involved in any campus activities. Murray is still unsure about his post-graduation and career plans, but he says he does want to “pay off loans, continue reading through great books, and productively goof off with my friends.”

Department Chair Thomas Olsen says, “This is a truly remarkable group of high-achieving students: not only are their grades excellent, but the spirit with which they approached their learning here at New Paltz really distinguishes them. Both undergraduate and graduate honorees are certainly people to watch in the future as they make their next moves in life.”



## Faculty Profile: Fred Anderson

Fred Anderson has been an adjunct professor at SUNY New Paltz for 15 years. Born in Milton, NY, “which if you go down Route 9W and you close your eyes for one second, you’ll miss completely,” he says, Anderson grew up in the area and worked in the Engineering Management Department at Standard Gage in Poughkeepsie for 20 years before he started teaching at Marist College and SUNY New Paltz. Eventually, though, new management took over and Anderson decided to “break free.”

He decided to go back to school and in 1986 earned his Bachelor’s degree at SUNY New Paltz, and then went on to NYU for Graduate school and to earn his PhD. Anderson felt that the logical next step for someone with an English degree was to become a teacher, “and I found out that I liked it,” he says. “Well, I always more or less considered myself a teacher. Even when I was in managing engineering, a lot of what I was doing was teaching other people what to do and how to do it. So, in a way, this is just a continuum of what I’ve done before. Different material, different matter, but very much alike.”

More than 15 years later, Anderson says he doesn’t regret his decision to become a teacher.

“I still don’t know what I want to do when I grow up,” he jokes, “but I figure this one will be the last of my several careers.”

This semester, Anderson is teaching Composition and Great Books Western, but his favorite classes to teach are Nineteenth-Century American Fiction and Major Authors: Henry James, who also happens to be his favorite American

writer.

“He’s an acquired taste, and, frankly, the first time I read him I swore I’d never read him again,” he says, “but I changed my mind as I found out how to read Henry James: mainly, in the order in which he wrote.”

Anderson says that he tries to create a relaxed atmosphere in his classes which he thinks his students appreciate.



“I do value their opinions and I would really like to draw them out,” he says. “I always felt that my opinions, my ideas, my conclusions, they represent today. The students represent tomorrow, and they should be developing, building on what I have done or what

other people have done, and start coming up with their own ideas. You’re the ones who are going to rewrite the canon, or perpetuate it, or whatever, and that’s what I encourage in students.”

Anderson says he’ll be teaching at New Paltz indefinitely, and he has no plans for retiring.

“I’ll retire when they pull me out on a gurney,” he says.

He advises students that success in academia is all about persistence.

“If you want to succeed in education just keep on persisting. Or anything else for that matter, just keep on doing it,” he says. For those students studying creative writing, he says “the way you’ll learn about writing is to go out into the real world, roll up your sleeves, and get the dirt on your hands and under your fingernails. That’s the best way to learn about fiction.”

### Career Resource Center Events

The Career Resource Center offers services to students and organizes programs designed to help with career planning and preparation. The goal is to help students make the transition from college to the professional world. Here are a few upcoming events and deadlines that could be helpful for all students, including English majors:

- ◆ The Teach for America’s final deadline is Friday, February 10. TFA is the national corps of outstanding recent college graduates of all academic majors who commit two

years to teach in urban and rural public schools and become lifelong leaders in the effort to expand educational opportunity.

- ◆ Do you need a new business suit for a future internship or job interview? Apply for the Suit Yourself Stipend by Friday, February 10 and you can be awarded \$200 towards professional attire.
- ◆ This semester’s Networking Fair for Jobs and Internships will be held on Thursday, March 29 from 12 to 4 p.m. in SUB MPR.

## Alumnus Publishes Teacher's Companion

Bradley McDuffie earned his Master's degree in English at SUNY New Paltz in 2005. For seven years he's been teaching at Nyack college, where he completed his undergraduate studies.

Having taught J.D. Salinger's *Nine Stories*, McDuffie always believed the book was even better than *Catcher in the Rye* and yet there was no good criticism available on it. He was inspired to change that.

McDuffie and William Boyle, another New Paltz alumnus, developed the concept of a book that was a teacher's companion and also a collection of critical essays. McDuffie describes it as "a self-contained teacher's companion where students can do research in the book and also have a companion to the text."

In 2010, McDuffie started looking into publishing houses and was referred to New Street Communications. That is when he decided to teach Salinger in all his classes and dedicate himself wholeheartedly to the project.

McDuffie was teaching what he was writing, showing his students chapter revisions, and voicing his frustrations with the text.

"A lot of students responded to that afterwards," he says. His students would say things

like "we really appreciated how you were going through this writing process with us, how it made you vulnerable because your frustrations and our frustrations were one in the same. We were trying to write essays on *Nine Stories* and you were doing the same thing."

Never having written a book before, at times McDuffie felt overwhelmed while writing chapters, editing contributor's essays, and teaching five classes.

"Writing a book, I can't tell you how thrilling it was," McDuffie says. "But publishing the book was terrifying. It's just there and people can rip it apart. I wanted to put it out there, but then I wanted to take it back."

McDuffie doesn't take full credit for any success the book may have.

He says, "if someone were to come back to me and say 'that's a really good book, I enjoyed that' then the best I can do is say... 'it's only good because I had really good teachers.' It's because all these people took the time to show me how to do it. That's very humbling in itself."

*Teaching Salinger's Nine Stories* was published in November by New Street Communications and has been released as an Amazon Kindle e-book.



## Recent Graduates Develop Literary Newsletter

Three New Paltz alumni have teamed together to develop a collaborative literary magazine in the form of a monthly digital newsletter called *Watchtower Monthly*. Bryan Tunick, Alok Joddha Hernandez, and Vern Dolginko have already published the first two issues of *Watchtower Monthly*, which are available for free when you subscribe online at [www.watchtowermonthly.com](http://www.watchtowermonthly.com).

Tunick describes the project as a "mailing list for fiction," and says the project has helped him keep motivated to write regimentally while working in Manhattan. Hernandez is a blogger and novelist living in Albany whose most recent novel *In The Smoky Air* was published last year.

Dolginko is also a published author of *No Man's Land* and *Corpus*, and is currently working as a radio personality at Mutiny Radio in San Francisco.

The three writers workshop their short stories over e-mails and conference calls, what Tunick refers to as a "community collaborative," before anything is

included in the publication. As recent graduates with English degrees, Tunick, Hernandez, and Dolginko were interested in the growing trend of new media publishing and online submissions by emerging writers. Currently, the trio are looking to grow a subscription base and they encourage writers to submit their work to [writers@watchtowermonthly.com](mailto:writers@watchtowermonthly.com).



## Briefly Noted

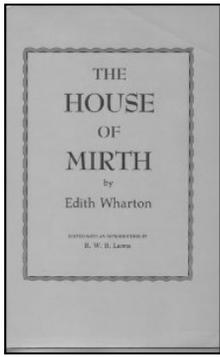
The Sojourner Truth Library now has extended hours. The Library will now be open from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Fridays and from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Saturdays.



Summer 2012 Expanded Course Descriptions are now available on the English Department website, [www.newpaltz.edu/english](http://www.newpaltz.edu/english), under the “Current Courses” tab. Please use this resource if you plan to register for summer classes, but keep in mind that the schedule may change between now and April.

The 24th Annual Graduate Symposium will take place on Wednesday, April 11, on the topic “Traditions and Innovations in Postmodernism.” Students will present papers Wednesday afternoon at the College Terrace, followed by a keynote speech at 7 p.m. in CSB 110 by Stephen Burn, Associate Professor of American and European literature at Northern Michigan University. Dr. Burn is a prominent critic of postmodern American literature. Abstracts for papers are due in Professor Holland’s mailbox in JFT 714 by **Monday, February 6.**

### “What I’m Reading”: Susan Kraat

	
<p>Susan Kraat is the Sojourner Truth Library Instruction Coordinator and the English Department Library Liaison. She is available to help faculty, staff, and students with research assistance, library instruction, collection development, and library resources and services.</p>	

I read Edith Wharton’s *House of Mirth* while on vacation in Florida because it was lighter (in ounces) than Ron Chernow’s biography of George Washington, and because it appears on several best 100 novels lists. Observing high society in action at the turn of the twentieth-century and its dictates about how a bright and beautiful, but poor young woman must conduct herself, Wharton writes,

*She had been bored all the afternoon by Percy Gryce – the mere thought seemed to waken an echo of his droning voice – but she could not ignore him on the morrow, she must follow up her success, must submit to more boredom, must be ready with fresh compliances and adaptabilities, and all on the bare chance that he might ultimately decide to do her the honour of boring her for life.*

*House of Mirth* is a riveting read about choice and consequence, self-knowledge and ultimately, redemption. I do regret reading the introduction by R. W. B. Lewis in my 1963 edition because the ending was revealed before I ever got started. Of course I pretty much know what happens to George Washington, too, so I should not complain.

#### Footnotes

1. February 1: Graduation Applications due
2. February 6-10: Late Registration/Add (\$40 late fee/\$20 course change fee)
3. February 10: Spring 2012 registration ends
4. February 20: Presidents’ Day/No Classes.

**Works Cited** is published approximately four times per semester by the

English Department  
SUNY New Paltz  
JFT 714  
600 Hawk Drive  
New Paltz, NY 12561

Editor: Ashley Mirabile

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