Notes from the Chair

Welcome again to English at CSULB!

In the past year, we have won accolades from inside and outside the University. CSULB recognized the English department for having among the three highest average graduation rates among all departments at the University, and the website graduateprograms.com declared our MA program the sixth-best graduate program in the entire US.

Of course, these accolades come as no surprise since we are committed to helping students make the most of their college experience. Our Literature option produces some of the smartest, most well-read, and strongest writers such as Cera Smith (see p.6). In our Rhetoric and Composition option, which can include a highly valued Technical and Professional Communication certificate program, students learn ‘real world writing’ as well as digital media and gain professional experience (see pp.2 and 13). Our very successful English Education option, with graduates such as Shay Ruiz Sharp (see p.5), continues to place students in secondary schools in the area. In addition, we have one of the strongest and most popular Creative Writing options in the state. With award-winning, highly published writers such as Patty Seyburn (see p.14) for teachers, our students workshop their creative pieces with a realizable goal to graduate into publishing careers.

This newsletter showcases these and many other talented faculty, staff, and students, both current and former. In a specially designed internship program, Professors Norbert Schürer and Rusty Rust teamed with four highly motivated English majors to produce and record our successes this year. Our student writers and editors were Elizabeth Diesel, Megan LaPointe, Jessica Mendoza, and Amy Yang.

Participation does not end with graduation. You continue to represent the English department, and you can stay connected through our website and Facebook page, so that we can share in your successes and celebrate with all of you who have kept in touch. We love hearing from you!

IN THIS ISSUE:

- Alum Profile: Elizabeth Harvey
- Alum Profile: Nathan Tourtellotte
- Student Profile: Shay Ruiz Sharp
- Sigma Tau Delta
- Helena María Viramontes Event
- 2015 Re/Inventions Conference
- Huntington Library Visit
- Recommended Readings
- Hippoetics: Visiting Writers
- ENGL 683H: “Current Issues in Rhetoric and Composition”
- ENGL 587: “Comics and Graphic Narratives”
- Patty Seyburn’s Perfecta

SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL OF THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STAFF, FACULTY, AND STUDENTS WHO CONTRIBUTED TO OUR 2015 NEWSLETTER.

CHIEF EDITOR: NORBERT SCHÜRER  DESIGN AND LAYOUT: CHRIS KNIGHT & RUSTY RUST
What was your degree and option at CSULB?

I graduated with a BA English emphasis in Rhetoric and Composition with a Technical and Professional Communication certificate.

What did you do after graduating?

I accepted a job as a Technical Writer for a Southern California entertainment technology company.

In what ways did your TPC certificate prepare you for the corporate world?

The technical writing courses required for the TPC certificate prepared me for the corporate world more than my English degree. Those classes required innovation and creativity in ways that I had not experienced in previous courses. The assignments were geared toward real world situations and were graded by how an employer would view the work I submitted. The practical approach to grades and assignments prepared me for my current job.

Is there one course or professor that has directly affected you in the “real world”?

Professor Michael Opsteegh taught Technical Writing and Manual Writing. In both classes, he required students to attend one meeting at the Orange County chapter of the Society of Technical Communicators. At these meetings, I not only learned practical information about the technical writing industry, but I also networked with technical writers in the field. This is how I met my current boss. We struck up a conversation at one of the meetings, and she recommended I send her my resume. Prof. Opsteegh’s courses also equipped me for the interview process. During one of the interviews, I was asked about em dashes and serial commas. I would not have been able to answer those questions with ease if it had not been for Professor Opsteegh’s thorough and relevant courses. His classes inspired me to become a technical writer.

What is your biggest professional accomplishment?

I wrote an 80-page software document in six weeks. I met with software engineers and technical support to create a document that will help customers.

What are you working on currently?

I just completed my first quarter as a technical writer. In three months, I wrote, edited, and updated ten different operation guides. I am also improving my Adobe InDesign and Illustrator skills.

What advice would you give to English students at CSULB?

I would recommend exploring all emphases in the English program. I started out as a literature major and did not discover rhetoric and composition until my senior year. I would also advise picking a minor or getting a certificate. There are many jobs for English students that have specific focuses, so if you already have a focus or an interest, you’re a better candidate for the job.
Nathan Tourtellotte is co-founder of Rose Park Roasters in Long Beach, which runs a tasting room at 795 Long Beach Boulevard and a coffee bar at 3044 East 4th Street. He hasn’t quite finished his MA yet, but hopes to return to the English Department soon.

How did you get Rose Park Roasters started?

I moved to Long Beach in 2005 with a college friend (Andrew Phillips). He had a long history in the coffee industry as a barista and as a store manager. I had absolute no coffee background. My interest was in building and running a small business—which I conceived originally as a fun side hobby. After years of talking we founded Rose Park Roasters in 2008, selling coffee to friends and family mostly. Sometime around the beginning of 2010 we began roasting in larger quantities and selling online and in a couple local wholesale spots like the Greenhouse and Scratch Baked Goods. We thought of ourselves as exclusively dedicated to coffee roasting and had no interest in running a coffee shop until just about six months ago, when the opportunity came along to take over the coffee shop at 4th Street and Freeman Avenue.

Have you always wanted to own your own business?

Yes, I have always wanted to run a business, since being very young. However, I’m not sure I would have ever done it if it weren’t for the years Andrew and I lived together, which gave the coffee idea long enough to lay down roots. I love numbers and strategy and risk-taking.

How have you used the skills you acquired in the English MA program?

Books and literary discussion have been the fodder for honing my critical thought, which is incredibly important in building a business. Knowing how to communicate nuances of feeling and thought are great for connecting with customers, resolving conflict, and negotiating with other business owners. Constructing cohesive narratives that have wide appeal to people’s lives is what the best kind of marketing does. And I think understanding the structures of novels, how novels take a seed of thought or sentiment and then grow it organically into a complex organism of dynamic liveliness that engages people deeply and inexplicably, has a lot of applicability to how I approach business-building. We use words like core product, scaling, and value proposition only in the business world—but the best business practice tends to be very literary and symphonic.

What are your plans for the future?

We’re still currently roasting our coffee at a sublease location, but we’re hoping to open a second location in Long Beach in 2015 where we’ll do all our roasting and production as well as offer another place for people to grab a cup of coffee and sit. We’re busy and have lots of plans for doing what we do better and better. I really think Long Beach as a whole is entering a really fun phase of maturing in its coffee culture. In some ways, the coffee you find in Long Beach is more locally driven and more compelling in terms of culinary quality than much of what you might find in Los Angeles. We’re not there yet, but I think as a city there is momentum for supporting a level of coffee you can’t find in many other place in the world. That’s something that’s really exciting for us to try to be a part of.

Hopefully we can get there—and then I can find time to come back to the CSULB English Department and finish up that Master’s degree!
RALPH CLARE (MA, 2001; MFA, 2003) has published *Fictions, Inc: The Corporation in Postmodern American Fiction, Film, and Popular Culture* (Rutgers University Press, 2014). He is completing his fourth year as an assistant professor of English at Boise State University.

VIRGINIA CLIFFORD (MA, 2014) is teaching full-time at St. John Bosco High School.

MEGAN GRANT (BA, 2014) will be attending the MFA program in Poetry at University of California, Irvine in Fall 2015.

CORTNEY KIMOTO (MA, 2013) has accepted a job as a technical writer for Facebook.

ZACH MANN (MFA, 2014) will be attending the PhD program in Digital Humanities at the University of Southern California in Fall 2015.

MARK OLAGUE (MA, 2012) has accepted a tenure-track position at Cerritos College.

KAYLEIGH SEVI (MA, 2012) has accepted a tenure-track position at Orange Coast College.

DEAN TSUYUKI (BA, 2009; Teaching Credential, 2010) is now teaching middle school for the Duarte Unified School District.

MICHAEL BENITEZ (MA) will be attending the the PhD program in English Literature at the University of Southern California in Fall 2015.

SARA CRISS (BA; TPC) has accepted a full-time position at CraneMorley. This instructional design firm develops training materials for businesses. She was offered employment while completing her internship for the TPC program.

COURTNEY SCURO (MA) will be attending the PhD program in English Literature at the University of California, Riverside in Fall 2015. She won the Graduate Student Paper Prize for her paper “Placing and Playing the Past: History, Politics, and Spatial Ambiguity in Richard Mulcaster’s *The Queen’s Majesty’s Passage*,” which she presented at the annual conference of the M/MLA in Detroit, MI in November 2014 and will publish (as part of the prize) in the *Journal of the Midwest Modern Language Association*.

KATHERINE STEELMAN (MA) will be attending the PhD program in Ethnic Studies at the University of California, San Diego. She was also awarded the San Diego Fellowship and the Summer Competitive Edge Fellowship.

SHOUEI TANAKA (MA) won the Best Thesis award in the College of Liberal Arts for the 2015 Commencement ceremony.
What is your degree at CSULB?

I will be graduating in Fall 2015 with a major in English Education (with the option in Communication Studies) and a minor in Religious Studies.

Will you attend a graduate program or teaching credential program?

I am applying to the MA and single subject credential program at the University of California, Irvine. It’s a one-year program in which students complete the MA in Teaching during the summer sessions and the credential during fall, winter, and spring quarters.

How was your experience at CSULB?

Being from South Orange County, I didn’t encounter much diversity in the high school or the community college that I attended. I was happily surprised at the racial and socio-economic diversity in the classroom at CSULB. In my classes, there are students who represent a diversity of ages, races, religions, and socio-economic classes. The diversity has made for interesting, in-depth, and serious discussions in the classroom. When students from all walks of life come together to discuss prominent issues, a thought-provoking discussion always ensues.

More specifically, what was your experience in the English Department?

I specifically came to CSULB because of the English Education program. When I was looking at English programs at other universities, I didn’t find an English program that was comparable to CSULB. As a future educator, I firmly believe that the English curriculum that we teach in high schools should be comprised not only of literature but also grammar and writing. The English Education program at CSULB is unique because it covers the different aspects of the English language; the emphasis is not only placed on literature. My experience at CSULB and in the English Department has been a unique one because the English Education program is preparing me to become a well-rounded, knowledgeable English teacher.

You won the English Department’s 2015 Bill Jaquith Scholarship for the best scholarly essay. What was your topic?

For the scholarship essay, I discussed how Sylvia Plath’s poem “Mirror” reflects the elements of the literary movement of confessionalism. I asserted that through her use of literary devices in “Mirror,” Plath creates a distinctly “confessional” poem that not only relates her own personal distress but also relates the stress of her society.

Is there any particular course that has influenced or changed your educational experience?

One such class I am currently taking is English 310—Applied Composition—with Dr. Ron Strahl. Dr. Strahl’s course is challenging and necessary. Every writing assignment has a purpose and prepares me for my teaching career. I’m not going to spoil the surprise; just take the class.

What are you doing outside of undergraduate studies?

Outside of my studies, I work as a tutor for high school students in the subjects of English, Spanish, Science, History, Economics, and Religion.
Where can you find a niche, a haven where people will understand you and you understand them? For students majoring in English, that niche is Sigma Tau Delta, the International English Honor Society with over 600 chapters in the United States and abroad that “strives to confer distinction upon outstanding students of the English language and literature” (according to its web site at www.csulb.edu/english/sigmataudelta).

The Iota Pi Chapter at CSULB was activated in 2011 thanks to the efforts of its current president, Cera Smith, and its faculty advisor, Prof. Neil Hultgren. The chapter meets regularly to discuss professional opportunities, social events, and internships. Members are heavily involved in conferences sponsored by CSULB, where they present papers and volunteer. This allows members to network, build their resumes, and most importantly bond with people who share the same interests and goals.

But it’s not just all work. When asked to choose one experience a member might cherish, Cera Smith reflects, “The induction bonfires. It’s not serious at all. We eat, have fun. It’s cool to see people outside of school because it takes us away from the academic setting and gives us an opportunity to bond.” Sohn Cook, another member, adds, “Sigma Tau Delta helped build my interpersonal skills and gave me a chance to meet different English majors.”

So, if you are an English major and you’re looking for your niche, try Sigma Tau Delta! In addition to checking out the web site, you can contact Cera Smith, Iota Pi Chapter President, at cerasmith24@gmail.com or Prof. Neil Hultgren at neil.hultgren@csulb.edu.
Editor-in-Chief:
Casandra Hernández Ríos

Art Director/Graphic Designer:
Christian Romo

Poetry Editors:
David Diaz, AJ Urquidi

Nonfiction Editors:
Marcus Clayton, Taylor Mims

Fiction Editors:
Kylee Hoelscher, Cory Wilson

Short Fiction Editor:
Chase Selby

Contributing Readers:

Events Coordinator: Marcus Clayton

Cover Image: Kathy Rudin  Cover Design: Christian Romo

Faculty Adviser: Rafael Zepeda
On March 12, 2015, author Helena María Viramontes talked to a crowd of over 300 in the University Theater at CSULB. Earlier that day, she had worked with a small group of about twenty Creative Writing students in a workshop setting, attended a reception in her honor, and sat for an interview with students. Summarizing her advice for young writers, Viramontes said: “The four things young writers need to do is sit down and do the work; never write for money or publication; read as much as you can; and have a lot of patience.”

“The four things young writers need to do is sit down and do the work; never write for money or publication; read as much as you can; and have a lot of patience.”

- Helena María Viramontes

Viramontes, a Chicana and American author, has had a huge influence not only in the world of Chican@ writing, but in the world of writing in general. She is the author of two novels, Under the Feet of Jesus (1994) and Their Dogs Came with Them (2007), and a collection of short stories, The Moths and Other Stories (1985). All of her works have received praise from critics and are taught in classrooms nationwide. Viramontes continues to write today while teaching English at Cornell University.

Here at CSULB, Viramontes read from her three major publications as well as work in progress before answering questions from students. She explained that her inspiration comes from everywhere, from the people she meets and the places she goes. However, she is still most influenced by East Los Angeles, where she grew up and where most of her stories take place. Viramontes also talked about her drive for social justice and why she chooses to put it into her writing: “When I travel throughout the world doing these kind of gigs, one of the things I have to say that astonishes me is that we’re in 2015 and people think of our [ethnic and Chican@] literature as marginalized, so can you imagine what they think of us as people! Those are the things I try to connect and get to talking about.”
Viramontes described an experience at Washington and Lee University: “One of the students got up and said, ‘What do you think about the lack of diversity as you can see in this hall? What do you think about the lack of diversity?’ And I turned the question back to him and I said, ‘No, the question is what do you think about the lack of diversity?’ I said, ‘Do you think this hall here really encapsulates the world? You’re not living in the world you think you live in. If you think you’re being prepared by this education, by this institution to be a citizen of the world, I’ll tell you right now you’re not. And that is your argument for demanding diversity both in faculty and in student body. For you. Because it’s essential that you know that there’s diversity out there.’”

In the Q&A after her talk, Viramontes went into depth about some of her well-known characters and gave anecdotes about how they were created. When asked about her personal writing process, she responded: “Since I only have so many hours in a day, and since I work and teach full time, I have to take time off to write. And so what I do is I clear everything out when I get to my computer. Go through emails, clear out notifications, anything that can be a distraction. And then I just sit there and write. I like to do what Toni Morrison says and be in the company of my own mind. I refocus, I refresh my imagination. I do these writing exercises. I sit with my slips of paper and my phrases and my sentences and see if anything pops out to me. I am a slow writer, and I have a capacity for curiosity.”

Viramontes’s talk, which was organized by Drs. Araceli Esparza, Dennis López (both English), Maythee Rojas (Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies), Anna Sandoval, and Griselda Suarez (both Chicano and Latino Studies), was clearly met with excitement from the audience. Students left the event beaming from ear to ear, explaining that Viramontes was the reason they write. Others stated that her novels got them through difficult times, and some were even brought to tears just meeting her because of how much her work meant to them.

At the close of the evening, the organizers announced the inauguration of a new annual lecture series that will bring in US ethnic writers to CSULB. The event will be known as the Helena María Viramontes Lecture Series.

Please get in touch and tell us about your current activities, future plans, and professional or personal accomplishments. Send an email to Prof. Norbert Schürer at norbert.schurer@csulb.edu. In your email, please include your name, your CSULB degrees and when they were conferred, and your address. Let us know if we can include your activities and accomplishments in a future newsletter.
On April 9, 2015, CSULB’s English Graduate Student Association (EGSA) hosted its fourth annual Re/Inventions conference at the Karl Anatol Center. The theme of this year’s event was consumption. Specifically, the conference aimed to explore topics such as how our society consumes food, whether literal and figurative forms of consumption are similar or different, what role ethics play in consumption, and how literature addresses our absorption of politics, media, food, marketing, music, art, and fashion.

In her keynote presentation at the conference, Dr. Susan Zieger (University of California, Riverside) talked about “The Pleasures of Temperance.” In the nineteenth century, Zieger explained, the media of print and theatre were used to rally support for the temperance movement backing heavy social and legal restrictions on alcohol. One branch of this movement, teetotalism, even advocated not just moderation in the consumption of alcohol but a complete ban. Zieger examined humanity’s fundamental need to think of itself in terms of ethical ideologies and explored how this contributed to the rise and persistence of the temperance movement.

EGSA created Re/Inventions as a forum for graduate and undergraduate students interested in sharing academic research within a conference setting. The event attracted scholars from local and international institutions and from various disciplines, and this year’s conference on consumption saw a record turn-out of over 50 attendees and 12 panelists. Michael Benitez, chair of the EGSA conference committee, commented that although organizing events such as the year’s conference requires large time investments, seeing the fruits of the work is rewarding. He hopes the program will continue for years to come and invites everyone to consider participating and volunteering. Michael reflected with some apprehension: “A lot of individuals are graduating and will leave vacant seats on EGSA, so I urge people to consider signing up to contribute to the program, whether for a position on the committee or simply to volunteer a few hours of their time.” Anyone interested in joining EGSA or volunteering for the Re/Inventions conference can contact the organization at egsa.csulb@gmail.com.

On March 15, 2015, EGSA organized a trip to the Huntington Library in Pasadena, one of the largest collections of original manuscripts and early printed books on the West coast. Doris Palomarez, EGSA treasurer, originally approached Dr. Lloyd Kermode, one of the English Department’s specialists in medieval and Renaissance literature, about a visit last year. According to Palomarez, “It took a while to arrange the date and details, but it was worth the effort.”

At the library, Dr. Vanessa Wilkie, Curator of Medieval and British Historical Manuscripts, showed the group several rare documents, talked about the history of the Huntington, and gave an overview of the vast operations of the institution. Everyone in the group was fascinated by the collection and learned first-hand how writing has changed over the centuries. One of Palomarez’s favorite moments was Wilkie’s description of traveling first class to deliver a manuscript, which the curator said felt like being a spy. After the transfer, however, Wilkie had to come home in coach: Only the articles fly first class. Palomarez called the trip to the Huntington Library “amazing” and “one of the highlights of my graduate studies.”
**GOOD SENSE & THE FAITHLESS** by Michelle T. Clinton

Clinton's poems reveal the streets inside of one's personal consciousness to be in constant dialogue with social critique.
- Dr. Bill Mohr

**GHOSTWRITTEN** by David Mitchell

Once you have read this first book by exciting and controversial British writer David Mitchell (author of *Cloud Atlas*) you will want to read his other five novels.
- Dr. Brian Finney

**THE PAYING GUESTS** by Sarah Waters

It's the most thrilling and captivating book I've read in recent memory.
- Dr. Neil Hultgren

**THE ROUND HOUSE** by Louise Erdrich

Her unforgettable prose allows readers to share in the redemptive power of storytelling.
- Dr. Carol Zitzer-Comfort

**CURRY: A TALE OF COOKS AND CONQUERORS** by Lizzie Collingham

Collingham narrates the history of India through its supposedly indigenous food.
- Dr. Norbert Schürer
ENGL 683H: “Current Issues in Rhetoric and Composition”

“ENGL 683H: Current Issues in Rhetoric and Compositions,” a new course in the English Department, offers graduate students the opportunity to learn about practical applications of English studies in higher education. Developed by Dr. Gary Griswold, the course not only examines the structure and funding of California community colleges, but also focuses on the teaching of writing within these two-year institutions. Rather than sticking to the more familiar terrain of the CSUs and UCs, students investigate specifically how community colleges teach reading, developmental writing, technical writing, English as a Second Language, and even develop online programs.

California community colleges try to be responsive to the specific needs of the community, including training students to meet local job market demands. As Dr. Griswold notes, “The community determines the student body and the learning outcomes for a two-year institution.” Many community college students have families and work full-time jobs, so balancing a busy schedule impedes them from committing to a full-time education. For that reason, the mission of a community college is vastly different from that of a four-year university. While some of the community college students end up transferring to a four-year university, many students at the former institutions take composition courses as a way to develop skills specific to their vocational certificates.

By inviting various guest speakers to “Current Issues in Rhetoric and Composition,” Griswold has created a course that prepares students hoping to teach in community colleges as well as four-year universities. One such guest speaker was Amy Loy, a graduate of our English Department who is currently a professor at Cypress College. Drawing on her first-hand experience in the instruction of composition, Loy offered students a look into the pros and cons of teaching in a two-year institution as well as the differences between community colleges and the CSU system in terms of the content taught within composition courses and the nature of reading and writing assignments. Loy walked students in ENGL 683H through one of her syllabi and elaborated on the learning outcomes within her English composition courses.

Griswold’s students work towards a final writing project that focuses on one specific community college and analyzes the particular features, English department composition, and program construction of that college. Griswold describes the course as one that “begins by covering the basics of composition” and added that “by the end of the semester the students should be able to understand the structure and funding that goes into community schools.” Thus, students in ENGL 683H are able to connect their course readings with practical applications in writing instruction at community colleges.

Hippoetics: Visiting Writers

Accomplished poet Ellen Bass published her newest collection, Like a Beggar (Copper Canyon Press), in 2014. Her previous books of poetry include The Human Line (2007), Mules of Love (2002), and I’m Not Your Laughing Daughter (1973). Among other recognitions, Bass has won the Elliston Book Award for Poetry from the University of Cincinnati, the Nimrod/Hardman’s Pablo Neruda Prize, and two Pushcart Prizes. She has also been praised for her non-fiction works Free Your Mind: The Book for Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Youth (1996) and I Never Told Anyone: Writings by Women Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse (1983). Currently on the faculty of the MFA program at Pacific University in Portland, Oregon, Bass also teaches creative writing and poetry in Santa Cruz.
ENGL 387: “Comics and Graphic Narratives”

“I wanted to create a class that would attract a lot of students,” says Dr. Tim Caron. Hired into the CSULB English department 17 years ago to teach 19th- and 20th-century American literature, Caron conceived his ENGL 387, “Comics and Graphic Narratives,” after noticing the increase in serious and popular academic courses devoted to the study of comics.

Originally, Caron partnered with his then colleague from the Department of Comparative World Literature and Classics, Dr. Nora Serrano, to teach a class on comics. “It was one of the best teaching experiences I’ve had,” Caron states in retrospect. The aim of the course was to challenge the prevalent idea that comics refer exclusively to the superhero genre, and to introduce the vast and rich diversity of the art form of graphic narrative. For instance, Caron elaborates, *City of Glass* by Paul Auster and *Julio’s Day* by Gilbert Hernandez are rich and complex, offering illustrative, playful, and self-reflexive perspectives.

Journalism major Alex Villaneda, who took ENGL 387 in Spring 2014, shares a similar view: “When we think of comic books, people think of super heroes. But in many of these stories characters are weak and have issues, they screw up. Just like life, things don’t always work out in the end.” English Education major Katelyn Catt, a student in the same class, also expressed appreciation for the content and pedagogy of the course: “Analyzing the comics was very engaging and it was enjoyable. I have read a lot of dry texts, so it was a nice break to read texts that were visually and literarily appealing.”

The title of the class, Caron acknowledges, might be misleading because of stereotypes associated with comics. Actually, though, he explains, the class is quite comprehensive: “ENGL 387 investigates socially constructed categories of difference such as gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, religion, and physical ability.” In addition, Caron integrated human diversity, writing-intensive, and vocabulary-building elements into ENGL 387, which is therefore also part of the GE curriculum.

One difference between a comic book and a graphic novel is that comics are referred to as “flop-pies” because they are cheaply produced, published in paperback, and offer self-contained narratives that are easy to follow. But on the other hand Caron warns against calling some of the personal and richly illustrated graphic narratives “novels” since that term suggests fiction. Instead, Caron emphasized that the works treated in ENGL 387 are unique and take a bit of both the “comic” and “novel” elements to tell stories that are many times autobiographical. All the assigned readings explore how words and images come together to form ideas.

Caron is quite engaged with words and images even at home. There, he is an avid follower of his seven-year-old son’s illustrations, strewn across the wall and hinting at the beginning of a longer story.

In his third collection of poetry, *Patter* (Red Hen Press, 2014), Douglas Kearney addresses parenthood and the journey to get there. His other works are *The Black Automaton* (2009) and *Fear, Same* (2006). A professor at the California Institute of the Arts in Valencia, Kearney has received the Whiting Writers Award (2008) and was featured in the National Poetry Series (2008). Known for his poetry performances and ekphrastic poetry—i.e., poetry describing a work of art—he has been commissioned to teach and create installation art at several institutions such as the Studio Museum in Harlem and the Getty Museum.

Dr. Stephen Cooper presented his paper “‘The Michelangelo of an Age to Come’? Szukalski, from Krakow to California” at the His Master’s Voice: Utopias and Dystopias in Audiovisual Culture conference, Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland in March 2015.

Dr. Gerald Egan completed The Image of the Poet in the Long Eighteenth Century, which was contracted for publication by Palgrave MacMillan and is forthcoming Spring 2016.

Patricia Loughrey wrote the play Dear Harvey, which opened April 23, 2015 in rural Pennsylvania at Clarion University. The play, based on interviews Loughrey conducted with friends and family of slain San Francisco city supervisor Harvey Milk, has received more than 25 productions nationwide since it premiered in 2009 at Diversionary Theatre in San Diego. Dear Harvey is published by Playscripts Inc. and features music composed by Thomas Hodges.

Dr. Dianne Vipond presented her paper “Form as Content in Lawrence Durrell’s Avignon Quintet” at the Louisville Conference on Literature & Culture since 1900 at the University of Louisville, Kentucky in February 2015.

Dr. Neil Hultgren presented papers at the 2014 conferences of the North American Victorian Studies Association and the Victorian Interdisciplinary Studies Association of the Western US. In 2015, he shared his research at the Aestheticism and Decadence in the Age of Modernism conference in London. In October 2014, he was elected to the board of the Victorian Interdisciplinary Studies Association of the Western US.

Perfecta

Dr. Patty Seyburn, professor of creative writing in the English Department, published her fourth collection of poetry this past October. Perfecta (What Books Press, 2014), the title, comes from a term often used in horse racing to describe wagering on the ability to determine the first- and second-place winners. Although not a gambler, Seyburn addresses the bigger gambles in life in her poems. On March 5, 2015, Seyburn celebrated her new collection at Gatsby Books in Long Beach with a standing room only crowd.

During the Perfecta book launch, Seyburn presented several poems from her new book, including “Perfecta,” “House Brand,” “Salton Sea,” “The Pain of Produce,” and “The Case for Free Will.” Originally published in the Arroyo Literary Review, “The Case for Free Will,” one of Seyburn’s favorites, won the 2011 Pushcart Prize, a prestigious award for publications from small presses. The poem addresses Seyburn’s own obsession with agency and control of destiny and asserts (in her words) that “the idea of free will is thrilling.”

Seyburn highlighted her work with lively and humorous transitions full of personal anecdotes. In introducing her poem “Circus,” Seyburn noted that she once believed that “if you liked the circus something is wrong with you.” And with her move into the reading of “House Brand,” Seyburn talked about her life in the city and her fascination with the feature sections of the New York Times, especially the wedding announcements. Using names copied right out of an original article, Seyburn’s poem begins, “Yesterday, a man named Stephen Alternative/wed a nice girl with the last name, Smith/She became Barbra Alternative.” Discussing the nature of her poetry, Seyburn explained that the poems in Perfecta “have the veneer of being more user-friendly than they are.”

Unlike Seyburn’s other work, the poems of Perfecta make use of prose to appear simple, but in reality they take the readers through digressive journeys that are quite thought-provoking. Finally, Seyburn articulated another major theme in her collection: “One of our goals on this earth is to try to become better people. The idea that part of our journey is designed towards self-improvement and the idea of a person’s perfectibility come
**Dr. Susan Carlile**


**Dr. Brian Finney**


**Lisa Glatt**


**Robert Guffey**


**Dr. George Hart**


**Dr. Bill Mohr**

“Imperial Beach.” *San Pedro River Review,* Spring 2015.


**Rusty Rust**


**Dr. Norbert Schürer**


**Dr. Patty Seyburn**


**Dr. Dianne Vipond**


**Dr. Charles Webb**


**Dr. Mark Williams**

You can help us fund scholarships and student activities, bring writers and lecturers to campus, and continue our outreach efforts by making a tax-deductible donation to the Department of English.

Making a gift is easier than ever! We accept gifts by cash, checks, and credit cards in annual, quarterly, or monthly payments.

You or your spouse may be eligible for a matching gift from your employer. This is an easy way to double or triple the impact of your giving to CSULB. Please contact your human resources office to see if you qualify.

If you would like to make a donation, you can make your check payable to CSULB Foundation Friends of English and send it to the following address, or you can contact Mr. Fitzgerald directly.

Howie Fitzgerald, Director of Development
College of Liberal Arts / CSULB
1250 Bellflower Blvd, MHB-209B
Long Beach, CA 90840-2401