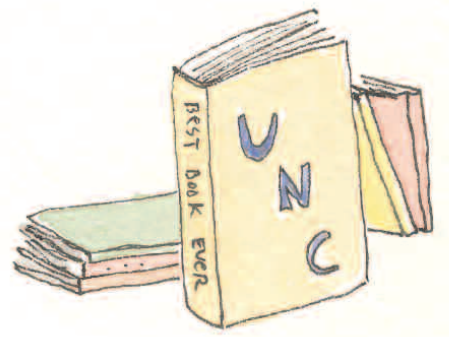


Chapter & Verse

NEWSLETTER OF THE CREATIVE WRITING PROGRAM AT UNC CHAPEL HILL



spring 2010

Daphne Athas Is Alive and Well and Living in Carrboro, North Carolina

Daphne Athas lives in an old wooden cabin two miles from campus, on some of the last remaining undeveloped acreage in Carrboro. It's not the easiest place to find: the driveway is unmarked and unpaved, almost hidden between two of the newer neighborhoods that have sprung up around her. She's lived on this same land for a very long time, even since before she started teaching at the University of North Carolina, in 1968. So, while some things seem as though they never change, at least one momentous thing has: after 40 years of teaching and mentoring at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, as of Fall semester 2009, Daphne Athas has officially retired.

That being said, Daphne Athas has never had much use for anything strictly official. "I'm still a player," she says. "I'm keeping my hand in." She continues to be in touch with a range of students, who, over the years, have become her friends. And she would much rather talk to them, she says, than most people her own age. "They have so much more to say," she says. "They are so much more alive." Smiling now because, while the pun was unintentional, she's not going to take it back. Even through her cataracts, her eyes spark mischievously. It's her ears and her eyes that keep her from the classroom now; it's certainly not her spirit or her desire.

Daphne began teaching at UNC-CH along with Max Steele and Doris Betts; together they took a fledgling creative writing program and helped turn it into arguably the leading undergraduate program in the nation. As Doris Betts

I could never capture the full voltage of her exquisite literary luminescence. A weak abridgment of all I could say: she is broad-minded to the point that you can sail around the globe on what she knows, and it all floats; she is funny, curious, outrageous, surprising, zigzaggerish amazing as the Great Wall of China in her thinking; she inspires; she argues; she flatters; she rebels; she teaches as much by how she lives as what she pontificates; she originates and sticks to it; she may be the most slyly truthful person I've ever known. —Marianne Gingher.

says, "Jessie Rehder was the entire Creative Writing program when she died in 1967, and it took three people to succeed—not replace—her: Max, Daphne and me. Max was director of the program and his guiding hand rested lightly, allowing a lively and original writer and teacher like Daphne to develop her classroom style and vivid reputation."

She is also a prolific writer. *Entering Ephesus* (a novel) was included on TIME's Ten Best Fiction List in 1971. *Cora* (a novel) won the Sir Raleigh Award. She has been Fulbright Professor of American Literature at the University of Tehran, has published both fiction and non fiction including travel, poetry, drama and literary criticism, and received the University's Mentor Award for Lifetime Achievement in 2003. Her work has appeared in a number of journals and periodicals including *South Atlantic Quarterly*, *Frank*, *New World Writing*, *Botteghe Oscure*, *Shenandoah*, *American Letters and Commentary*, *Chicago Tribune Book World*, *Transatlantic Review*, *Hudson Review*, *College English*, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *The World and I*, and others.

In 2007 the maverick grammar text, *Gram-o-Rama: Breaking the Rules*, edited by Marianne Gingher, was published. This book addresses the

gap between classic grammar and cyber sound-byte-language through hearing, word-play, and performance art (see article on page 5).

Daphne, of course, continues to write. A book of her collected essays, *Chapel Hill in Plain Sight: Views From the Other Side of the Tracks*, is scheduled to appear later this year. It's a collection of essays about Chapel Hill and Carrboro, from the Depression, World War II, and the McCarthy years, to the present. Daphne observes people and place through the decades, giving the reader an understanding of everything from race and class to the creative and idiosyncratic characters she knew and loved. She writes about Betty Smith, Junius Scales, Horace Williams, Miss Crook (of Crook's Corner), Ab Abernathy (original owner of the Intimate Bookshop), Paul Green, Max Steele, Hal Prince, and Gimgoul Castle, with cameos of Gertrude Stein, Alice B. Toklas, and Faulkner. Woven throughout are threads of Daphne's own life as a writer, a daughter, a friend.

It is difficult to imagine our creative writing program without Daphne Athas. She did not contribute to it, so much as she helped create it, and for that all of us will be forever grateful.



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Faculty and Alumni News,
Prize-Winning Authors
and More!

Chapter and Verse

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Director's Report

1.

In my second year as director of Creative Writing, I continue to be amazed by the range and depth of this expansive undergraduate program, and inspired by the energy and ability demonstrated by our hard-working faculty, students, and staff. It's a privilege to be part of such a wonderful community of writers.

In 2009-2010, Creative Writing at Carolina offered a total of 51 classes, 31 of prose (fiction, non-fiction, creative non-fiction, children's literature, stylistics, and playwriting) and 20 of poetry. We served 751 UNC undergraduates—a record number. By “we,” I mean the teachers, of course, but also our diligent administrative assistant, **Anita Braxton**, who deftly coordinates the registration of hundreds of Creative Writing minors every semester, an exhaustive and exhausting task. Several dozen different courses, from the freshman to the senior level, were available to students, including a number of new classes—Pam Durban's “Living Writers,” Bland Simpson's “Lyrics and Lyricists,” Randall Kenan's “Food Writing,” and Marianne Gingher's “Short-Short Fiction.”

2.

Abiding support for the Creative Writing Program comes from all across campus—from Department of English and Comparative Literature Chair **Beverly Taylor** and her administrative board; from our many friends and counselors in South Building, particularly Chancellor **Holden Thorp**, College of Arts & Sciences Dean **Karen Gil**, Senior Associate Dean **William Andrews**, Director of Communications **Dee Reid** and Assistant Director of Communications **Kim Spurr**; and from Executive Director **Jamie May**, Associate Director **Rob Parker**, Associate Director of Capital Gifts **Margaret V. Costley**, and all the staff of the Arts & Sciences Foundation. We are very thankful for such friends.

As announced in last year's letter, **Sallie Shuping-Russell** ('77) of Chapel Hill made a \$666,000 gift to UNC which would fund an innovative new course in the Creative Writing Program featuring the work of some of the nation's most notable writers. That course—organized and taught by Professor **Pam Durban**, Doris Betts Distinguished Professor of English—was offered for the first time in fall 2009, and was a tremendous success. Four major American fiction writers came to campus during the semester to participate in the “Living Writers” course and to give public readings for the University community: they were **Tobias Wolff** in mid-September, **Cary Holladay** later that month, **Stuart Dybek** in October, and **Andrea Barrett** in November. “Living Writers” is our program's first and only semester-length class arranged entirely around a series of visiting writers and their works: we hope that this kind of close contact with authors, especially when students have read and studied and imitated their fiction, will give young writers the chance to have extended conversations with those practicing the art and craft to which they aspire.



The support of **James Kenan III** ('68) has, during the past decade, made possible the Kenan Visiting Writer Program. For the 2009-2010 academic year, **Wilmer Mills**, a poet from Tennessee, served his second term as Kenan Visiting Writer, which proved beneficial both to the program and the writer. **Lori Ostlund**—whose story collection *The Bigness of the World* won the Flannery O'Connor Award for Short Fiction—will be our tenth Kenan Writer, beginning

this coming fall.

Other private funds supporting Creative Writing activities include the Rankin Faculty Support Fund, established by **Alex Rankin** ('77); the Burrus Fund, established by **Ann Williams Burrus** ('52); the Froelich Family Fund, established to help increase our lecturers' stipends by **Henry** ('81) and **Molly Froelich** of Charlotte; and our Gift Fund. The **Walker Percy** ('37) Fund, an endowment helping underwrite our lecturers, was set in motion several years ago by **Frank Borden Hanes, Sr.** ('42). The Robert Ruark Award, for student non-fiction writing about North Carolina's natural world, receives support from the Ruark Society of Chapel Hill, led by retired attorney and author **James T. Cheatham III** ('57, '61 LLBJD).

The Thomas Wolfe Scholarship (founded in 2001 by author and philanthropist **Frank Borden Hanes, Sr.**, of Winston-Salem) held its ninth national competition this school year. Its reading committee members again were **Rebecca Morphis** ('01 MA), **Tara Powell** ('04 PhD), and **Courtney Jones** ('01, BA); and its four board of advisors members were poet **Alan Shapiro**, prizewinning novelist **David Payne** ('77), and Scholarship co-directors **Bland Simpson** ('73) and **Marianne Gingher**. We appreciate the ongoing counsel and help we receive from Morehead Foundation officers **Charles Lovelace** ('77) and **Megan Mazzocchi** ('82). As we say congratulations and farewell to our fifth Wolfe Scholar, **Nate Lumpkin** ('10), we announce with pleasure that our ninth Thomas Wolfe Scholar—**Sarah Jordan Castellote** of Asheville, N.C.—will enter Carolina's Class of 2014 this coming fall, joining current Scholars **Maria Devlin** ('11) and **Denise Rickman** ('11), **Jenna Hall** ('12), and **Maria Carlos** ('13).



3.

One of the pleasures of the Creative Writing community here at Carolina is the abundance of literary activity outside the classroom, spread throughout the year.

On October 6, **Roy Blount, Jr.**—popular humorist, novelist, biographer, journalist, and memoirist—was presented the **Thomas Wolfe** ('20) Award and Medal, made possible by University friend and benefactor **Ben Jones III** ('50) as part of the annual lecture series established by the Thomas Wolfe Society. Mr. Blount delivered the Wolfe Lecture to an overflow house in Carroll Hall auditorium, reading from his work and answering audience questions with thoughtful wit.

As usual, we enjoyed two Armfield Poetry Readings this year, sponsored by the Armfield Fund for Poetry, a bequest to us from the late poet **Blanche Britt Armfield** ('28 MA). Our excellent readers were **Gibbons Ruark**, recently retired from the University of Delaware, who read in Donovan Lounge on September 22, and **Beth Ann Fennelly** of the University of Mississippi, who read in the Pleasants Family Assembly Room in Wilson Library on January 28.

On December 8, another SRO crowd in Pleasants Family Assembly Room in Wilson Library cheered the lively performance by **Marianne Gingher's** “Gram-o-Rama” Stylistics class, this year called “BATTLESTAR GRAMMATICA.” Marianne accurately describes it as “the Cirque de Soleil of word-play! *The Saturday Night Live* of Language Arts! The grammar gymnast's Olympics!” “Take a jaunt to the creative writing wild side!” she invites. “You won't believe your EARS! Hear words fly beyond the gravitational pull of sense! Parodies, puns, tumbling verbals, modifiers dangling! You'll be dazzled and charmed! Your worldly wearies, disarmed!” A major feature article on this year's performance—called “Rocking Grammar,” which praised Gram-o-Rama as “the quirkiest creative writing course in America”—ran in the *Raleigh News & Observer*, and later in the *Charlotte Observer* and other newspapers: it's available online at <http://www.newsobserver.com/2009/12/20/247459/rocking-grammar.html>.

On March 24, this year's Morgan Writer-in-Residence—Pulitzer Prize-winning fiction-writer **Edward P. Jones**—read a selection of his work in Carroll Hall with great intensity, and answered questions from the crowd with great honesty. During his week on campus as Morgan Writer, Mr. Jones—a MacArthur Fellow best-known for his novel *The Known World*, which won the National Book Critics Circle Award as well as the Pulitzer—was a quietly powerful presence, in classes and in conversation and in other situations, always thoughtful and frank: we thoroughly enjoyed having him among us. As always, we are deeply grateful to our friends and Carolina alumni **Allen** ('65) and **Musette** ('76) Morgan, whose support started this writer-in-residence program nearly two decades ago. Every year, the entire University community looks forward to Morgan week, directed by **Susan Irons** (M.A. '79, Ph.D. '01), as the premier literary rite of Chapel Hill's spring.

Prize-Winning Writers

In addition to readings by our Morgan Writer and Armfield Poets, we also sponsored **Wilmer Mills'** farewell Kenan Visiting Writer reading on April 13, as well as several readings in Donovan Lounge by faculty members, poets **Rachel Richardson** and **Ross White** on November 17 and fiction-writer **Quinn Dalton** on March 2.

4.

Major congratulations to our 2010 seniors who wrote book-length theses, completed the year-long seminars in fiction- and poetry-writing, gave public readings in the spring, and graduated in May with honors. Taking honors or highest honors in **Daniel Wallace's** senior Honors fiction class were **Hannah Easley, Brock Faucette, Nate Lumpkin, John McIlwee, Delaney Nolan, Brittany Price, Ariel Rudolph**, and **Sarah Daughtry Symons**. Taking honors or highest honors in Michael McFee's senior Honors poetry class were **Hannah Bonner, Zena Cardman, Chris Castro-Rappl, Ryan Dowdy, Caroline Fisher, Michelle Hicks, Emily Hylton, Matt Poindexter, Henry Spelman**, and **Julia Trantham**.

All of our Creative Writing faculty members are dedicated teachers who are also deeply involved in their own creative work, and they are ambassadors for literature to North Carolina and the nation. I can't thank them enough for all they do. Here's the roll call of our 2009-2010 faculty, 17 in all, most of whom have detailed individual entries about their activities elsewhere in this newsletter: **Michael Chitwood, Quinn Dalton, Pam Durban, Marianne Gingham, Evan Gurney, Randall Kenan, Michael McFee, Wilmer Mills, Ruth Moose, Travis Mulhauser, Lawrence Naumoff, Rachel Richardson, James Seay, Alan Shapiro, Bland Simpson, Daniel Wallace**, and **Ross White**.

As I've said before and as I'll say again, I feel mighty lucky to be in this position at this place. Creative Writing at Carolina has such terrific students, such dedicated teachers, such a helpful administrative assistant, such outstanding alumni, and such loyal friends: especially in strapped times like these, we are very fortunate to be able to continue expanding and improving our program, which is—I still believe—the finest undergraduate Creative Writing Program anywhere.

— **Michael McFee**, Director,
Creative Writing at Carolina

P.S. And if you're interested in contributing to our **Doris Betts/Jessie Rehder** Creative Writing Fund or to our Max Steele Fund, established to honor these great author-teachers and intended to support these great author-teachers and intended to support through innovations and enhancements the continued vitality of the program, please contact Mr. James May, The Arts & Sciences Foundation, CB# 6115, Chapel Hill, N.C. 27599.

We honor and celebrate our writing award and prize winners for 2009 and 2010, and we express our appreciation to our judges.

BLANCHE BRITT ARMFIELD PRIZE
IN POETRY 2009
Henry Lawlor Spellman

SUZANNE BOLCH LITERARY AWARD
Skylor Gudas

WILLIE LAVONSA MOORE PRIZE
IN CREATIVE NON-FICTION
Erin Rebecca Stoneking
Megan Allison Hannay, Runner Up

GEORGE B. WYNNE AWARD FOR FICTION
Ariel Elyse Rudolph

ROBERT RUARK AWARD IN CREATIVE
NON-FICTION
Laura Rose DeMaria
Rachel Jin Bloom, 1st Runner Up
Adam Blake Wright, 2nd Runner Up

ROBERT B. HOUSE MEMORIAL PRIZE
IN POETRY
Juliana Kathryn Daugherty

LOUIS D. RUBIN, JR., PRIZE IN
CREATIVE WRITING
Samuel J. Need

MAX STEELE PRIZE IN FICTION
Rebecca Danielle Bernstein

ANN WILLIAMS BURRUS PRIZE
Michael Guion Pratt

MINI-MAX SHORT-SHORT FICTION PRIZE
Susannah Long
Ariel Elyse Rudolph, 2nd Place
Angela Tchou, 3rd Place

BLANCHE BRITT ARMFIELD PRIZE
IN POETRY 2010
David Andrew Hutcheson

SUZANNE BOLCH LITERARY AWARD
Matthew Scott Poindexter

WILLIE LAVONSA MOORE PRIZE
IN CREATIVE NON-FICTION
Rebecca Lee Clay
Evan Kershaw Rose, Runner Up

GEORGE B. WYNNE AWARD FOR FICTION
Catya Shaina McMullen

ROBERT RUARK AWARD IN CREATIVE
NON-FICTION
John Timanus McElwee
Jesse Blake Addison, 1st Runner Up
Bryce Elliot Butner, 2nd Runner Up

ROBERT B. HOUSE MEMORIAL PRIZE
IN POETRY
Matthew Scott Poindexter

LOUIS D. RUBIN, JR., PRIZE IN
CREATIVE WRITING
Hannah Karen Easley

MAX STEELE PRIZE IN FICTION
Sarah Daughtry Symons

ANN WILLIAMS BURRUS PRIZE
Michelle Renee Hicks
Honorable Mention: **Emily Marshall Hylton**

MINI-MAX SHORT-SHORT FICTION PRIZE
Susannah Jeanette Long
Ariel Elyse Rudolph, 2nd Place
Wei Xiang Tchou, 3rd Place

WILLIAM H. HOOKS AWARDS FOR
CHILDREN'S LITERATURE
Best Young Adult Novel:
Katherine Rose Hanna
Honorable Mention:
Alexandra Diane Mussorici

Best Middle Grade Novel:
Jennifer Katlyn Morgan
Honorable Mention:
Michael Joseph Smith

Best Picture Book: **Cameron Van Iderstine** and **Katherine Fleming Galloway**



An Interview with Dan Kois

Dan Kois ('96) has recently published his first book, *Facing Future*, with 33 1/3 Press. It's about Iz Kamakawiwo'ole, a Hawaiian singer and songwriter best known for his rendition of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow/What a Wonderful World." *Chapter and Verse* asked Dan about the book, about his experience at Carolina and his career as a professional writer.

Chapter and Verse: How did you come to write this book? What attracted you to the project?

Dan Kois: My wife (a fellow UNC grad; we met the first day of freshman year on the Ehringhaus beach-volleyball court) and I lived in Honolulu for a year after grad school, while she clerked for a federal judge and I finished my MFA thesis. I really fell in love with the islands and particularly with their culture—not just the laid-back aloha spirit, or the traditional hula/ukulele/luau of it all, but also the pop culture of the state: the cheap-sounding island reggae and the other ways that contemporary Hawaiians asserted their separateness from mainland and mainstream America.

We moved to New York, where I worked a number of jobs before finally landing, happily, on writing about culture. I was a fan of the 33 1/3 series (33third.blogspot.com), and when the editor of the series announced an open call for proposals, I decided that a 33 1/3 would be an ideal first book: slim, low-pressure, and with a subject completely up to me. I was a fan of Israel's music and I knew his life story, a bit; more to the point, I knew that if I could get Continuum to agree to let me write about Iz, it meant I could justify a long research trip to Hawai'i.

CV: How long did it take you to write? Was it arduous?

Dan: The long research trip to Hawai'i wasn't arduous, that's for sure. I went for almost a month in the fall of 2007, joined for much of the trip by my wife and daughters and in-laws. I had pitched the book to Continuum as part biography, part humorous travelogue—i.e. that the spine of the book would come from my journeys through Hawai'i, trying to get reclusive, outsider-shunning Native Hawaiians to talk to some stupid haoles from the mainland about their hero. You know, hilarity would ensue. Imagine my surprise when it turned out that everyone was incredibly nice, welcoming, and forthcoming, shooting my idea for the book all to hell. The result, I'm happy to say, is a far more satisfying read, but it definitely threw me for a loop at first.

Luckily, I had over a year and a half to sit on the material before I could find time to write the book. I was working full-time as a blogger and editor for *New*

York magazine, plus raising two children, and writing a book seemed out of the question. My editors at Continuum were nice enough to let me push my deadline back twice, but as the July 2009 deadline approached, I realized I needed to just write the damn thing. I'd quit my job to freelance full-time, and we'd moved to the Washington, DC area, so in the end I just turned down all freelance assignments for May and June. May I spent re-acquainting myself with the interviews I'd conducted 19 months before; June I spent writing the entire book. Thank God 33 1/3 books are short.

CV: Is this the sort of thing you've always wanted to do, or do you have other ambitions as a writer as well?

Dan: At Carolina I definitely thought of myself as a fiction writer, and during my fiction MFA at George Mason I thought the same. And I hope that I might still be. But I've found I really like writing about culture—music, movies, books, comics, theater, TV—and I really like reporting and telling stories, and so this book—a combination of the two—turned out to be just about perfect.

CV: Who did you study with at UNC?

Dan: I took a freshman poetry writing class with the wonderful Dr. Kirkpatrick, and then studied fiction

with Bland Simpson, Marianne Gingher, and of course Doris Betts. I also took some great playwriting classes with Tom Huey, where my classmates included future real-life writers Sarah Dessen, Mac Rogers, and Catherine Trieschmann.

CV: What influence do you think the undergraduate writing program at UNC had on your career?

Dan: Plenty! The writing program was my first experience of a community of like-minded writers: people who cared about, and got excited about, the same things I did. The teachers, and the fellow students, made me a better writer, but also—maybe just as importantly—convinced me that good writing was something worth pursuing. I was really proud to be part of that community, and have always tried since then to follow what seemed to me to be the Carolina way of helping your friends and classmates succeed just as you yourself try to succeed. I worked at the Bull's Head through college, and I'm proud that my main contribution to the writing program—founding the Youth Angst Society—still seems to be alive and kicking today.

Oh, and without my undergrad writing-workshop experience, I never could have written this: http://nymag.com/daily/entertainment/2008/03/our_undergrad_fiction_workshop.html



Gram-o-Rama

Marianne Gingher's stylistics class, Gram-o-Rama, staged their annual performance this year in the Pleasants Family Assembly Room at Wilson Library. It was, as always, a diverting romp through the intricacies of the English language. Pam Kelley was inspired to write an article about it, which appeared in the *Raleigh News and Observer* and the *Charlotte Observer*. The article is re-printed her, with her permission, in its entirety.

ROCKING GRAMMAR

by Pam Kelley, News & Observer / Charlotte Observer
Sunday, Dec 20, 2009

UNC-Chapel Hill's Marianne Gingher, a creative writing professor, begins her stylistics course each August with a grammar test. Most students fail it.

By now, Gingher expects this. In fact, she awards a prize for the funniest failure.

This year, the prize went to Jillian Vogel, a sophomore from New York City. "Words such as 'Holey Moley!' and 'Cowabunga!' are examples of what?" one test question asked.

The correct answer: Interjections. Vogel's answer? Surfer language.

Like many of Gingher's students, Vogel arrived at UNC without knowing formal grammar. "Not a lick," she says.

This is no surprise. High school grammar instruction fell out of favor in the 1960s and has never recovered.

Gingher is not dismayed. By the end of the course, her students will gain a new appreciation for grammar. They'll also give a public performance featuring - get this - the best of a semester's worth of grammar and language exercises.

When it's over, they'll post the show on YouTube. They'll marvel at how a playful grammar and language class made them better writers.

And years from now, after they've forgotten the content of entire college courses, they'll remember the night they elevated grammar to performance art.

Stylistics is the quirkiest course in UNC's Creative Writing Program. It may be the quirkiest creative writing course in America.

Officially, stylistics is the study of language elements such as sound, form and vocabulary. That's what UNC's course is, too, but filtered through the original mind of its creator, Chapel Hill writer Daphne Athas.

Athas, 86, a retired creative writing professor, grew up in an era when you learned grammar by parsing sentences—breaking them up and identifying each word by its part of speech. She didn't mind learning that way, but when she began teaching stylistics in 1976, she suspected contemporary students would balk.

"These days," she says, "you've got to beguile and delight."

So she concocted her own exercises: Write a story using a single verb combined with different prepositions. Create a poem with only conjunctions. Choose a piece of instrumental music, then write a story that fits the beat.

About halfway through the first semester, she decided to end the class with a public performance. Students loved it.

Stylistics went on hiatus in the mid-'80s, when Athas scaled back from full-time teaching. But in 2001, Gingher, a fervent fan, revived the course.



About the kazoos

Now, she teaches it each fall using Athas' textbook, "Gram-o-Rama: Breaking the Rules." Cover illustrations include examples of word play. "I'll show you my diphthong," one says, "if you show me yours." Along with the book, students must have kazoos, for exploring how sentence rhythm conveys meaning.

One of Gingher's first assignments this year was Athas' no-noun exercise: Create synonyms for nouns without using nouns. Cow became "black and white udderly milked." "Baby" morphed into "tiny cranky drooling."

Soon, Gingher's 14 students were rewriting songs and famous passages, turning perfectly lovely active sentences into deadly passive constructions. In this way, they learn to spot passive voice. "They learn grammar," Gingher says, "on the sly."

By mid-October, they had eased into parodies, nonsense language and malapropisms. Each class, they took turns reading their assignments.

As each student finished, Gingher critiqued. One piece sagged under the weight of excessive malapropisms. Another nonsense-language piece didn't convey enough meaning. "Nonsense should make sense, in a weird way," she explained.

What works

So if grammar can be such rollicking fun, why isn't it taught more?

In large part, says retired Penn State Professor Martha Kolln, because experts concluded that old-style grammar instruction was ineffective.

"It was a matter of classifying, parsing, learning groups of words," says Kolln, author of "Rhetorical Grammar." Teachers didn't relate exercises to writing, so the grammar instruction didn't help students become better writers.

Today, students learn much more about writing—crafting a thesis statement, organizing a paragraph, polishing through rewriting. But they often can't identify a predicate or misplaced modifier. Kolln argues that anti-grammar forces went too far. "Students don't know how to talk about their language," she says. "They don't have a common vocabulary."

On stage

On a rainy evening this month, 150 people—students, faculty, family members—packed a room in UNC's Wilson Library, eager to be entertained by grammar exercises.

Students titled this year's show "Battlestar Grammatica." Athas sat in front.

For more than an hour, the class performed chants, parodies, word play. They recited the Balloon Boy saga to the tune of "The Addams Family." They delivered a noun-free commercial for the Snuggie, the blanket with sleeves: "Ultra-soft and super baggy; move around and fits great!"

In one skit, a father and his son discussed sex—entirely in passive voice:

"It is not forgotten what was done by us in the back seat when it was told to our parents that the movies had been gone to."

"Aw, sick!" the son replied. "This is not needed to be heard."

"Protection must always be worn," the father counseled.

The son didn't want to discuss it. Tempers flared.

Then he stomped off: "It is wished that birth was never achieved by me!"

In many pieces, music, and especially rhythm, were integral. In "Hiya Gorgeous," women chanted lame male pick-up lines:

Damn girl. Ain't you fine?

I don't have a girlfriend. You can be mine.

I'll keep you at home so I know where you are.

Get out of my dreams, get into my car.

Then they chanted a reply:

Thank you, but I'd rather walk.

No. No. No. No.

I've got mace. I've got mace.

Reading the piece doesn't do it justice. You've got to hear it.

The same could be said of the entire stylistics course.

"Battlestar Grammatica" ended to enthusiastic applause. Classmates gave Gingher a bouquet. They hugged each other.

Vogel, the student who won the funniest failure award at the start of class, says knowing grammar rules has given her the confidence to play with them, break them and develop her own writing style.

Has her writing improved? She thinks so.

Certainly, her grammar knowledge has. A few days after the show, Vogel, along with the rest of the class, took Gingher's grammar test again. This time, she passed.

Thomas Wolfe Scholar



MARIA CARLOS '13

I could tell you about the all-nighters I've pulled, miraculously emerging from the library with a finished paper. I could tell you about the ridiculous number of cigarettes I smoked after my very first C on a test, trying to replace the feelings of disgust and disappointment with a nicotine buzz. I could tell you about the time my friends and I snuck onto the roof of the dorm, pointed to the water tower and laughed, as if to say You're next, or the time we accidentally set of an alarm in Wilson, or my secret spot in Davis that's perfect for naps. Or, I could tell you about the first poem I wrote in college, how I revised it throughout that whole semester, how I am revising it still. I could tell you about a professor who pushed me as a writer harder than anyone I've ever come across—how I'm learning to push myself even more than he did. I could tell you about the first rejection letter I got from an editor, and the sweet, perverse satisfaction of getting it over with. I could tell you about *Cellar Door* meetings, or the time I skipped a recitation to see Beth Ann Fennelly give a reading, or how, despite its ugly façade, Greenlaw is like home base in a game of tag, for when I feel like putting off the papers and exams and quizzes chasing me down, and just want to wander aimlessly through its halls.

There's another thing I could tell you. A confession, actually: I haven't yet read any of Thomas Wolfe's work. I know, I know, it's kind of blasphemous, considering the fact that I wouldn't be here if he hadn't...existed. I mean, I know I'm going to read it eventually. That's a given. But I'll make a pact with you, reader: I'll close my iTunes, shut off the television, lock my door, and read *Look Homeward, Angel* word for word right this second, if you can tell me the best way to reach the ladder at the base of the water tower.

Lydia Millet, Pulitzer Finalist



Lydia Millet—an alumna of the University and of our Creative Writing Program—was a finalist for the 2010 Pulitzer Prize in fiction this year, for her collection of short stories called “Love in Infant Monkeys,” published by Soft Skull Press. It is her seventh book, following six novels, quite an output for such a young writer. *Chapter and Verse* asked her about the experience, and this is what she said:

Chapter and Verse: Being recognized by the Pulitzer committee is a rare honor. Did it come as a shock when you found out you were short-listed?

Millet: I thought it was a prank, at first. This particular book of mine features a first story, about the pop star Madonna, that's fairly crude and I was impressed to discover that crudeness had been tolerated by such an institution as the Pulitzer. But even in institutions, committees are composed of people, of course. I had good readers; I was fortunate.

C and V: Creative writing teachers are barraged with the question, *Can creative writing be taught?* What's your answer?

Millet: I think what writing teachers can really give is passion for reading and criticizing and thinking. And of course we improve with experience, as writers, so the more we read and write the better we get at both of them. When I studied at Carolina, I loved my teacher Daphne Athas, who gave me so much of her time and her love: she's a rare person, a truly inspiring and life-changing teacher. I liked all my other teachers there too, very much so—Elizabeth Spencer, who was my first teacher when I came in as a freshman, and later Jill McCorkle and Doris Betts—honestly, there was a great faculty for workshops then. This was between 1986 and 1990. They were all gentle and kind, but not too gentle and kind.

C and V: To quote the very favorable *New York Times* review: “Lydia Millet's stories uniformly begin with arresting lines, all of them guns on the wall, waiting to go off.” Are first lines in a story important to you? Why?

Millet: First and last lines are equally crucial—first lines to seduce, last lines to devastate. We hope. The stuff in the middle is to sustain the seduction, meanwhile slyly preparing for the devastation.

That's a best-case scenario, of course. Few writers strive for indifference.



Class of '14

Thomas Wolfe Scholar Jordan Castelloe

Read more about Jordan Castello here:

<http://college.unc.edu/features/april2010/article.2010-04-20.4043888034>

Faculty News

Michael Chitwood has work forthcoming in or in recent issues of *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Threepenny Review*, *Field*, *Smartish Pace*, *Southern Poetry Review*, *Crazy-horse*, *Oxford American*, *Now & Then* and *The Sun*. Tupelo Press will publish his new book, *Clamor*, this fall. This spring he was a Chapman Fellow at the IAH.

Pam Durban published a review of the novel *Mrs. Caliban* in *Books: The Essential Insider's Guide*, edited by Mark Strand, and a short-short story, "Island," in *Long Story Short*, edited by Marianne Gingher. She has recently completed a new novel, *The Hand of All*, and a collection of short stories, *Soon*. She designed and taught two new creative writing classes: a class in revision and the Living Writers class. This class, made possible by a generous endowment from Sallie Shuping-Russell, brought four well-known contemporary writers to campus to meet with students who had read their work. The four guest writers to visit the class were Tobias Wolff, Cary Holladay, Stuart Dybek and Andrea Barrett.

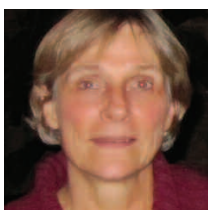
Marianne Gingher directed the fall Stylistics (Gram-o-Rama) Class performance, "Battlestar Grammatica," performed in Wilson Library to a full house. During the summer she attended the National Puppeteers of America Conference in Atlanta and with her collaborator, Deborah Seabrooke, designed and created seventeen puppets and wrote a play called *Fuzzy and Beej in Africa* which will premier in 2010. Her newest book is *Long Story Short: Flash Fiction by 65 of North Carolina's Finest Writers* (UNC Press, 2009), an anthology which she edited.

Michael McFee continues as Director of the Creative Writing Program at Carolina. He has published poems recently in the pages of the *Southern* and *Cincinnati Reviews*, and his poems have also appeared on the *Slate* and *Poetry Daily* websites in 2009. E-publishing still doesn't quite seem real to him, but he's a dinosaur and he's trying to learn lest he become extinct. His essay "Just As I Am Not," about the Billy Graham Library in Charlotte, will appear (in print) in the Summer 2010 issue of *Southern Cultures*.

Wilmer Mills has had poems included in *The Swallow Anthology of New American Poets*, edited by David Yezzi. Dick Davis has included him in an anthology of six American poets to be published by Anvil Poetry Press in England next year. His poems have been published recently by *The Southern Review* and *Measure*, and are now forthcoming from *Poetry*, *The Sewanee Review*, and *The Yale Review*.



Michael Chitwood



Pam Durban



Marianne Gingher



Michael McFee



Wilmer Mills



Ruth Moose



Lawrence Naumoff



James Seay



Bland Simpson



Rachel Richardson



Daniel Wallace



Ross White

Ruth Moose was honored by the North Carolina Writers Conference, an organization started 60 years ago by Inglis Fletcher and Paul Green. The organization recognizes one writer a year at an annual awards ceremony for their contributions to North Carolina literature. Moose also received a Chapman Fellowship for Fall 2009 to work on a teaching project. Her sixth collection of poetry, *The Librarian and Other Poems*, was published by Main Street Press in August.

Lawrence Naumoff appeared at East Carolina University as one of the two featured speakers and readers at an endowed lectureship in Spring of 2009, and has been reading from his short stories and a work-in-progress—about the man who pretends to be Walker Percy and wants to recreate his life with the wild-child-girlfriend from *The Second Coming*—throughout the state.

James Seay's poems were represented in the anthology *Don't Leave Hungry: Fifty Years of Southern Poetry Review*, and in the Australian Broadcasting Corporation's program "Poetica—Where Books Fall Open." How or why the Aussies chose his poem he hasn't a clue. He served as judge for the annual poetry award of the Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters. A profile of Seay is included in *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*.

Bland Simpson published "Adventures in Musicians' Theater" (*N.C. Literary Review*) and "The Cottage Mover" (*Long Story Short*); released songs on The Red Clay Ramblers' *Old North State*; enjoyed a Chicago revival of *Pump Boys & Dinettes* (the Broadway hit featuring his and Jim Wann's "Catfish"), a Georgia *King Mackerel*, two N.C. productions of *Kudzu* (Herrick-Marlette-Simpson), and another of *Hot Grog* (Simpson-Wann); lectured to UNC alumni aboard a Toronto-to-



Edward P. Jones, 2010 Morgan Writer-in-Residence. The Morgan Writer-in-Residence Program, established in 1993 by Allen and Musette Morgan of Memphis, brings writers of distinction to campus to teach courses, meet with students and faculty, and to give lectures, readings, and symposia.



Roy Blount received the 2009 Thomas Wolfe Prize. The Thomas Wolfe Prize and Lecture honor the memory of one of The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's most famous alumni, Thomas Clayton Wolfe (Class of 1920). Established in 1999 with an endowed gift to the Department of English, the program recognizes contemporary writers with distinguished bodies of work.

Excerpt

Duluth sail, and premiered “Elizabeth City,” his 7th statewide-broadcast waterways program (UNC-TV). Simpson received the N.C. Literary & Historical Association’s R. Hunt Parker Memorial Award for Significant Contributions to North Carolina Literature.

Rachel Richardson’s first book of poems, *Copperhead*, will be published in early 2011 by Carnegie Mellon University Press. In 2009 she won the Brenda L. Smart Prize in Poetry from North Carolina State University, received a Tennessee Williams Scholarship to attend the Sewanee Writers’ Conference, and was a finalist for the Emerging Women Writers’ Prize from Finishing Line Press. Her poems have recently appeared or are forthcoming in *Slate*, *Literary Imagination*, *Southern Cultures*, *Hunger Mountain*, *Memorious*, *Center*, *The Pinch*, and *New South*, and her poetry reviews have been published in the online culture magazine, *The Rumpus*.

Daniel Wallace has published stories, articles and reviews in *Glimmer Train*, *The Rome Review*, *Spirit Magazine*, *New York Times Book Review*, and other magazines. He also writes a monthly humor column for *Our State Magazine*. He won the 2010 Johnston Award for Teaching Excellence, and is working on a novel called *A Cure for Blindness*.

Ross White’s poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *Cortland Review*, *Tar River Poetry*, *Georgetown Review*, and *The Collagist*. He received a work-study scholarship to the 2009 Bread Loaf Writers Conference. His small press, Bull City Press, recently published Katie Bowler’s long poem *State Street*.



From *Chapel Hill in Plain Sight:*

Notes from the Other Side of the Tracks

by DAPHNE ATHAS

From the essay “The Spirit of Play”

The Chapel Hill [literary] tradition was always solidly common. *Folk* was flaunted for the first half of the twentieth century so successfully that later generations had no idea it didn’t come from over thar yon mountain. It came from the international movement sparked in Eastern Europe. Later generations believed Proff Koch invented *Folk* and put it on the map every Friday night of the summer in the Original Plays series. Yet the folk style sneaked into novels and music to such a degree that contemporary writers and musicians would laugh if they heard it had been an international political movement. They don’t acknowledge it, don’t think about it, don’t know what they come from, and don’t care.

Here is where Thomas Wolfe comes in. For he was the legacy Chapel Hill was claiming in 1940. He was newly dead and very famous. He had set out from Asheville, come to Chapel Hill, took classes from Proff [Professor Koch], and was determined to be a playwright. He failed at that of course, but the unabashed lyrical extravagance of his language, “A stone, a leaf, an unfound door—O Lost, and by the Wind Grieved, Ghost come back again,” formed the melody of the recognizably plebeian music of North Carolina.

The folk plays of the late Twenties and Thirties flaunted his combination of mountain illiteracy and lyrical English poetry. Historically, factually they were the same thing, for in the backwater of swamp and mountain the language of those centuries *kept* and *stayed*. The miracle is that the traces are there still; you find them in the language of John Ehle, Fred Chappell, Lee Smith, and others who come from and write about the Appalachian mountains.

Paul Green was the linchpin of this music. By 1940 he was sitting at the Round Table of North Carolina literature, having triumphed on Broadway, having won the Pulitzer for *In Abraham’s Bosom* in the late Twenties . . . In his latter days he allowed himself to be portrayed as the Tolstoy of Chapel Hill, his Yasnaya Polyana being that stretch of land now called Greenwood. But in that era, like Faulkner, he forayed into Hollywood, returning with loot and buying up land in Chapel Hill and in Johnston County. He was in his prime—money, success, and fame—and he was on the eve of leaving what we used to think of as his serious writing. He was switching to what he called his *symphonic dramas*.

Now in the twenty-first century he is remembered more for *The Lost Colony* and the Paul Green Theatre than for his plays. Back then it was as if he had used up his personal vision and was left with the rhythm and music alone, applying it to a public, social art—pageant, dialogue, dances, and music dedicated to history.

The question is: Is his history history, or is it myth?

The aesthetic judgment of the younger generation in those days was that the real writer makes a myth of himself and his experience as he is living it. Thomas Wolfe did that. He was prototypical in seeing his own legend while he was writing it. There is a relationship between the individual, perceptive world of a writer who sees his own experience from the inside as well as the outside, creating a reality which becomes the legend.” Seems to me it makes more sense this way: “There is a relationship between the individual, perceptive world of a writer who sees his own experience from the inside as well as the outside, AND creating a reality on paper which becomes the legend.”

Such thinking is still what drives people to try to write the great American novel. Thomas Wolfe was that kind of writer. Just when he died, Paul Green, sixteen years older, was consolidating what had always been his social, encompassing Christian vision, inclusive and tolerant of all races, into historical myth.

In the late Thirties when I came to Chapel Hill, Horace Williams, Howard Odum, Proff Koch, the late Thomas Wolfe, and Paul Green were the resident legends. All were Southern except Proff. Our high school generation breathed them in with little idea of what they were about. And since the death of Paul Green, they are fixed harder than ever in the firmament. But like all institutions they remain resistant to time while their meaning escapes us.

“Daphne and I have been having the same conversation since 1982, when she was my teacher in English 34 (intermediate fiction workshop.) We meet whenever we can, and discuss, not in any order and in varying degrees of detail, the theological implications of omniscience, the narrative sweep of Tolstoy, syntax, Tom Brokaw’s so-called Great Generation, the subversive history of Chapel Hill, Joseph Conrad’s notion that literature ought to aspire to the conditions of music, the limits of the present tense, the effect of technology on language and consciousness. I have learned so much from her about writing, about teaching, and finally about how vital it is to remain curious and engaged with the world, and with other people. I can’t imagine how limited my life would have been had I not stumbled dumbly into her classroom.”

—Michael Parker, writer and professor of writing at UNC-Greensboro



CLASS OF '77

Warren Rochelle's ('77) novel, *Harvest of Changelings*, came out in paperback in May 2008 and it looks like the sequel, *The Called*, will be out in 2010.

CLASS OF '82

Lois Lineberger Shepherd ('82) is associate professor of public health sciences and professor of law at the University of Virginia. She is coauthor of *Bioethics and the Law*.

CLASS OF '94

Dana Terebelski Bowen ('94) is now the executive editor of *Saveur* magazine in New York City. Her 20-page feature "Ham for the Holidays" ran in the December 2009 issue.

John Crutchfield ('94) won an award for Outstanding Solo Performance at the 2009 New York International Fringe Festival this past August for his verse-play, *The Songs of Robert*. This will soon appear in the anthology of new American plays, *Plays and Playwrights*. This show is written and performed by Mr. Crutchfield and directed by Steve Samuels. See his website at johncrutchfield.com.

Andy Young ('94) was recently published in *Best New Poets 2009*, *Callaloo* and *Guernica*, and had a poem featured in New York in a flamenco play about coal miners of Andalusia. She teaches in the Creative Writing Program at New Orleans Center for Creative Arts.

CLASS OF '95

Brian Blanchfield ('95) was the 2009 Richard Hugo Fellow at the University of Montana, in Missoula and continues to teach there in the graduate creative writing program as a visiting professor. New poems and essays are forthcoming in *Boston Review* and *Or: A Literary Tabloid*. His first book, *Not Even Then*, was published in 2004 by University of California Press. Italian translations of a few poems in it were recently included in *Nuova Poesia Americana: New York*, a dual-language anthology.

Jennifer Henderson ('95) manages the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Government's Legislative Reporting Service office in Raleigh during sessions of the North Carolina General Assembly.

Alumni News

CLASS OF '96

Michelle Jana Chan ('96) had a piece included in an anthology of travel writing which was published in December, 2009.

Dan Koils ('96) is a film critic for the *Washington Post* and is a contributing writer at *New York* magazine. He is also an editor of *At Length* (<http://www.atlengthmag.com>), an online journal of long-form poetry, fiction, nonfiction and music. His first book *Facing Future*—nonfiction about the Hawaiian musician Isreal "Iz" Kama-kawiwo'ole—came out in December 2009 from Continuum, as part of the 33 1/3 series of music criticism books. <http://www.dankois.com>

CLASS OF '97

Tara Powell's ('97) first chapbook, *Physical Science*, will be published by Finishing Line Press in fall 2010.

CLASS OF '98

Laura Harris Emerson ('98) is teaching short story writing at the Pacific Grove Adult School.

Shana Fulton ('98) married Tom Finigan, UNC Class of '97, and lives in Washington, DC with Cleo, the Rottweiler. She is currently a federal prosecutor with the US Attorney's Office. She is writing again and hopes to finish a novel this year.

Jennifer Young ('98) finished her PhD in Creative Writing at the University of Southampton in the UK. She has just been promoted to Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing at the University of Hertfordshire, where she taught poetry and fiction in the undergraduate Creative Writing program. She lives in London with her husband Joe.

Sheryl Mebane ('98) was a postdoctoral environmental researcher for the entire year of 2009 and helped to design, carry out and summarize a unique greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventory. Creative writing has meant penning and editing poems, starting and retiring a few new blogs intended to make money, submitting nonfiction book proposals to agents and publishers and delving into songwriting—her new passion.

CLASS OF '99

Holly Phillips Levent ('99) spent several years in publishing and education in London. She recently spent some time teaching creative writing in Hong Kong at the Kelly Yang Project, an after school writing program for children and teens. The Kelly Yang Project in Hong Kong offers a summer internship for English majors. For more information, please write to info@kellyyang.com.

Luke Meisner ('99) and his wife, Toolsi, recently welcomed a baby boy into the world. Kavi Luca Meisner was born at 12:28 am on December 2, 2009. His name, Kavi, means "poet" in ancient Sanskrit.

CLASS OF '00

Skip Matheny ('00) and **Timshel Matheny** ('01) are in a rock and roll band called *Roman Candle*. They live in Nashville, TN.

Elizabeth Phillips ('00) chronicles life as a Mom, her struggles with infertility, and her wrestling matches with God on her blog "Elizabethtown" at www.henryandgrace.com.

CLASS OF '01

Stuart Albright ('01) published *Sidelines: A North Carolina Story of Race, Community and High School Football* in August, 2009. This is his second book, following *Blessed Returns*, which was published in 2005 (both books are through McKinnon Press). See www.stuartalbright.com.

Oliver Carter ('01) joined Carter & Carter Attorneys-at-Law in July 2009, making Oliver the third generation of his family to practice with the firm in Wilmington and Southeastern North Carolina. In November, Oliver was elected co-Chair of the New Hanover County Young Lawyers, and he serves as a co-Chair of the NC Bar Association's Young Lawyers Division's Education Committee. He contributes regularly to several political blogs and is preparing contributions to the website smallwander.com featuring walkable towns in Southeastern NC.

Kimberly O'Connor ('01) graduated from the University of Maryland's MFA program in poetry in May and was awarded the 2009 Academy of American Poets Prize, as well as a Distinguished Teaching Assistant Award. Her poem "Thrush" was a winner in AWP's 2008 *Intro* contest and was published in this fall's *Colorado Review*, and her poem "Rereading Leaves of Grass" won second place in *Two Review's* 2009 poetry contest. She also had poems published or are forthcoming in *Cloudbank* and *South Carolina Review*.

CLASS OF '02

Jenny Han ('02) just published her second young adult novel with Simon & Schuster. She has two more due out this fall.

Joanna Pearson's ('02) first novel for young adults, *The Anthropologist's Guide to High School*, will be published in spring 2011 by Arthur A. Levine Books, an imprint of Scholastic, Inc. She completed her MFA in poetry at the Johns Hopkins University Writing Seminars in 2009 and has been invited to Yaddo in May 2010 to work on her poetry manuscript.

Wendy Spitzer ('02) will be releasing the first album of her avant-pop chamber ensemble, Felix Obelix, in spring 2010. Entitled "The Tick of the Clock, the Beat in the Chest," the album will be released by the Pox World Empire record label. The album will be available for purchase on both the Felix Obelix and Pox World Empire websites. In 2009, Wendy received grants from the Durham Arts Council, the Orange County Arts Commission and the Strowd Roses Foundation, for her work with Felix Obelix.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU.

At Carolina, we realize writing is a pursuit that takes place over the course of lifetime. We want to hear about it. If you have some news you'd like to share with your Carolina friends, family and former teachers, please send it our way, at C&V@unc.edu. Whether you're making books, making babies, or simply making a life, we'd love to hear from you.



CLASS OF '03

Atinuke (Tinu) Akintola ('03) completed law school at UNC (2006), got married (also in 2006) and is currently working as an attorney in Boston for the United States Department of Transportation. He volunteers with a number of youth organizations in the city and serves as a Board Director for ZUMIX, Inc, a youth arts organization based in East Boston.

He still makes time to write and have a couple of projects in the hopper including articles/short stories/memoir pieces/scripts/screenplays on the topics of race and racial identity, "first-generation Americanism," interracial/inter-cultural marriage, divorce, and in-law relationships.

Kerri French ('03) held the Larry Franklin and Mei Dwong Fellowship from the Writers' Room of Boston in 2009 and has poems forthcoming in *The Southeast Review* and *Barrellhouse*. She spent the past three years in Boston, where she taught in the Writing Program at Boston University and in the English Department at Mount Ida College. She recently graduated from Boston University's Master of Education program in Higher Education Administration and has moved to Cambridge, England, where she serves as Administrator for the University of Cambridge's AHRC Research Centre for Musical Performance as Creative Practice.

Geoff Wessel ('03) and his wife Bongsu (Jang) of Gimcheon, Korea, are now making their home in Copenhagen, Denmark. Geoff is a Foreign Service Officer with the US Department of State.

CLASS OF '04

Rebecca Brunstetter ('04) received an MFA from the New School for Drama in NYC. She just had her off-Broadway debut with her play *Oobrah!* at the Atlantic Theater. She is currently resident playwright at Ars Nova, a member of the Women's Project Playwright's Lab and will be the 2010 resident playwright at the Finborough Theater in London.

Matthew Salesses ('04) has earned his MFA from Emerson College, where he was the Presidential Fellow, and is currently editor of the graduate literary magazine, *Redivider*. His nonfiction chapbook, *We Will Take What We Can Get*, was published in the summer of 2009 by Publishing Genius Press. He has stories forthcoming in *Glimmer Train* and *Witness*, among others. Past stories have appeared in *Mid-American Review*, *Pleiades*, *American Short Fiction*, *The Literary Review*, and over twenty other publications. He is working on a novel.

Teresa Stabelton Cooper ('04) is a Special Education teacher in Carteret County and lives on the Crystal Coast. She was married March 5, 2005, and had a son October 31, 2006.

CLASS OF '05

Dianna Calareso ('05) earned her MFA in Creative Nonfiction from Lesley University in 2007 and lives in the Boston area. She is an editor and freelance writer and adjunct writing professor. Her essay "What I Think My Grandmother Is Thinking" is published in the current issue of *Paradigm Journal* (www.paradigmjournal.com) and her essay "Mt Auburn" has been accepted for publication in the upcoming issue of *Falling-Apart.net* (www.falling-apart.net), an online human interest magazine. Her

memoir *At Ease* is currently under agency review and she has been writing short essays on her blog, www.dcalareso.blogspot.com.

Joseph Chapman ('05)'s poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *Gulf Coast*, *Main Street Rag*, *The Portland Review*, and *BOMBLOG*. His honors include The Ann Williams Burrus Prize in Poetry (2005), the Henry Hoyns Fellowship (2005-2006), and an Academy of American Poets prize (2007). He teaches in the Interdisciplinary Studies Program at the University of Virginia.

Charlotte Hagood ('05) completed her MA in '06 from Vanderbilt University's English department and is currently working on a doctoral thesis titled "The Domestication of Environmentalism: Science, Democracy and the Ideological Origins of the U.S. Environmental Movement." She is also enjoying working in Nashville's growing food security movement by helping to run an urban agriculture initiative called Nashville Urban Harvest.

Matthew Hofer ('05) currently works in southern Japan as an English conversation teacher. He has worked as a contributor on two textbooks/workbooks on English idioms and hopes to write a dictionary of sorts on the local Japanese dialect this year.

Erika Kranz ('05) is now Clerk at the U.S. Court of Federal Claims.

CLASS OF '06

Selena Beckman-Harned ('06) earned her Master of Arts in Professional Writing at Carnegie Mellon University. She works for the Town of Chapel Hill as a Program Assistant and for TeaGschwendner, a tea shop in Raleigh. She is also a freelance writer, editor and designer. See her website at www.selenacreative.com.

Caitlin Doyle (Thomas Wolfe Scholar '06) After completing her time as the St. Albans Writer-In-Residence, Caitlin received fellowships from the Edward F. Albee Foundation, the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts and others. Caitlin won a Dorothy Sargent Rosenberg Poetry Prize in

2009 and was selected as one of two poets representing New York State in the global Distant Voices Poetry Festival. She has been nominated for a 2011 Pushcart Prize. Her recent publication credits include *Best New Poets* 2009, *The Boston Review*, *Black Warrior Review*, *The Warwick Review*, *Measure*, and others.

Jared Fernley ('06) is living and working as an actor in Chicago. He has appeared in several productions since moving to the city two years ago and has also made two short films.

Emolyn Liden ('06) is traveling in Nicaragua and writing about the trip on gomadnomad.com under "Emolyn's Travel Snapshots."

CLASS OF '07

Elizabeth Basnight ('07) recently started a new position at UNC with the Minor in Entrepreneurship as Internship Director.

Carolina Hamilton ('07) is working in New York at the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts where she coordinates the Young Patrons program. She's also pursuing an MFA in Creative Writing at the New School.

Charles Hodges ('07) went to Virginia Commonwealth University and got his MS in Mass Communications from the VCU Brandcenter. While in Richmond, he won first place and runner up in the *Style Weekly* short fiction contest. He now lives in New York City and is working as a copywriter for an agency called Wieden + Kennedy. He continues to write fiction and work on various other creative projects.

Ashley Payne ('07) received her Master's Degree in Sport and Athletic Administration from Gonzaga University in May of 2009 and is currently working in Athletic Marketing at The University of Alabama. During her time at Gonzaga, she published two short stories in *Reflection*, Gonzaga's Journal of Art and Literature, and was recipient of the Jeanne Foster Warden Leadership Award as well as being named Outstanding Graduate Student by Gonzaga's faculty and staff.

Marielle Prince ('07) has been working at the UNC-CH School of Education program, LEARN NC. In her spare time she serves as the managing editor for Bull City Press. Last summer, she took some time off to live and teach at the NC Governor's School – West. She



Without Anita Braxton, the Creative Writing Program Assistant, none of this would be possible. Thank you!



will begin the MFA in Creative Writing at the University of Virginia this fall.

Sam Taylor ('07) moved to Boston and worked for an environmental justice group called Clean Water Action and for the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts. He is now in Iraq with his North Carolina National Guard unit, serving as a Chaplain Assistant. His essays about his life in Iraq appear regularly in the *Chapel Hill News*, and he recently finished the first draft of a novel, *The Eighth Continent*.

CLASS OF '08

David Hodges ('08) is living in Brooklyn and going to law school at New York University. He is a frequent volunteer with the Suspension Representation Project, working with students in the NYC public schools and their parents.

Katherine Meehan ('08) began the MFA program in fiction writing at Emerson College, Boston, fall of '09.

CLASS OF '09

Rebecca Bernstein ('09) is serving as the Artistic Intern at Chicago Dramatists for spring 2010.

Elizabeth DeOrnellas ('09) is currently teaching English I, Creative Writing and Journalism as a member of the Teach for America Charter Corps in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Her journalism students publish weekly in the *Tulsa County News* and also maintain their own Website. The site, which also features a monthly Creative Writing contest, can be viewed at <http://websterweekly.wordpress.com>.

Kendra Fish ('09) is currently working as an English teaching assistant in Bordeaux, France.

Lauren Petty Albritton ('09) is currently working as a research analyst for Tanglewood Research, Inc. in Greensboro, NC. She is also the editor of the most recent edition of the company's drug abuse prevention curriculum. She continues to contemplate pursuing an MFA in Creative Writing or a PhD in English, as well as trying to make her way into the publishing business. She married a fellow Tar Heel, Jordan Albritton, in July, 2008.

Guion Pratt ('09) is working for a beer distributor in Salisbury, NC. He will also begin the MFA in Creative Writing at the University of Virginia this fall.

Julie Teasdale ('09) is an English Major, CW and Hebrew Minor from Loiyangalani, Kenya. This year she will be going to sub-Saharan Africa with the Peace Corps as a secondary education volunteer, where she will be teaching adult literacy and finishing her first Africa novel, *Bakshishi*.

Gulf Coast Reverie

Oysters on the half shell.
Crabs are in the pot.
Tabasco has a sweet smell
And isn't all that hot.

The afternoon was made for beer.
Tonight is made for wine.
Tomorrow is still a blur from here,
And, really, that's just fine.

Wilmer Mills,
Kenan Visiting Writer, 2008-2010

In Memoriam

Jenna Nicole Seagraves, 1985-2008

Ristin Cooks, 1968-2009

Margaret Rabb, 1954-2010

MARGARET YARBOROUGH "PEGGY" RABB '74 ('83 JD) 1953-2010

Poet Found Her Award-Winning Voice Later In Life

Margaret Yarborough "Peggy" Rabb '74 got a late start in the world of full-time professional poetry, but she made her mark quickly.

As an undergraduate English and French major who also earned a law degree from UNC in 1983, Rabb spent her early career as a lawyer and design director, and for four years was communications director for a government-funded health-care program for women and children in the developing world.

Rabb, 56, who died Jan. 3 in Chapel Hill, returned to poetry when she was 40. She received the 1998 Charles B. Wood Award for Distinguished Writing from the Carolina Quarterly for her poem *Confedante Memorial: Graham, North Carolina*. She published her first book in 2000, *Granite Dives*, winning the Roanoke-Chowan Award for Poetry from the N.C. Literary and Historical Association. And in 2006, her poems were chosen for the initial Rumi Prize given by *Arts & Letters Journal of Contemporary Culture*, among many other awards and literary publications.

A poetry book, *Margaret Rabb: Greatest Hits*, is being published this year by Pudding House of Columbus, Ohio, as part of a national archive of signature works by noted poets.

In an obituary in *The News & Observer* of

Raleigh, written by friend and former Cobb-dorm roommate Eleanor Flagler Hardy '74, former state poet laureate Fred Chappell described Rabb's poetry as "strong and taut as a bowstring drawn to the archer's ear."

Rabb had said that her "oddball trajectory" into full-time poetry was an example for other artists. "It's important for people who want to concentrate on their art to know that it simply can't be too late," she said. "Ancient Chinese poets fulfilled their worldly obligations to family before they finally took to the hills to write poems on trees and rocks. I am grateful to be nearby."

Rabb, who earned a master of fine arts degree from the University of Washington, also loved teaching and was director of creative writing and an assistant professor at Wichita State University in Kansas at her death. Jeanine Hathaway, a professor of English at Wichita State whose office was near Rabb's, said in *The*



A former N.C. poet laureate said Peggy Rabb '74 wrote poetry as "strong and taut as a bowstring drawn to the archer's ear."

UNC NEWS SERVICES

NEO obituary that she could hear Rabb clapping out rhythms with her students. "She got them physically involved in rhythms, such as iambic pentameter, and rhyme," Hathaway said. "It was always about wisdom and delight."

Rabb had also taught creative writing at UNC. "It's that remarkable high that comes when someone suddenly gets it — the 'aha' moment, as some call it," Rabb told an interviewer at Wichita State in 2008 when she took the position there. "That's really what I'm here to do: to write my own

work and find this epiphany. To read others' work and recognize it."

As an undergraduate at UNC, Rabb was elected to Phi Beta Kappa, belonged to the Valkyries honor society and the *Cellar Door* campus literary magazine and was on the women's tennis team.

ONLINE: A sample of Rabb's poetry is available online at waywiser-press.com/margaretrabb.html.

in
memoriam

Describe the World

“There is a point at which honesty becomes mischief. That’s when your writing becomes irresistible.”

—Daphne Athas



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