

# Footnotes<sup>1</sup>

## English Department News and Notes

1. Produced by the Wittenberg University Department of English.  
Fall 2010. This is the first issue for the 2010-2011 academic year.

### Award-winning Author Visits Wittenberg



Jonathan Safran Foer speaking at the Wittenberg Series on September 23.

To watch a video recording of his speech, visit <http://www4.wittenberg.edu/features/foer/>

On September 23, Jonathan Safran Foer (award winning author of *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*, *Everything is Illuminated*, and *Eating Animals*) was the guest speaker for this year's first Wittenberg Series event. He also conducted an English Department colloquium prior to his Wittenberg Series speech.

Foer showed humor, compassion, intelligence, wisdom, and humility throughout his presentations, answering questions with just-enough biting wit to keep students on their toes.

He spoke in defense of art and literature, describing literature as a "vehicle, always in the service of helping us figure out and share what it's like to be human." Foer conveyed his belief in literature, that it can bring healing, change, reconciliation. At one point he posed a question: "Can books change the world? It's hard to say "yes," and it's hard to say "no." But maybe there's another way of posing the question, so the answer is more clear: Would the *absence* of books change the world? We might be able to live without the stories, but could we live without the conversation?" For the English department, this question is vitally important.

### Journalism Institute Takes Off

The Summer Journalism Institute was launched last June when seven students accompanied Prof. D'Arcy Fallon to Chicago for a week of intensive reporting. There, they also met with four media savvy Witt alums, Fred Mitchell of the *Chicago Tribune*; Keith Phipps of *The Onion's* A.V. Club; freelancer Anne Ford; and magazine editor Debbie Cassell. The idea for the month-long class was for the students to write feature stories that would be profiled in a magazine that they produced themselves. The students took pictures, interviewed sources, came up with themes for the magazine, and designed the pages themselves, with the help of a professional page designer hired to teach them how to use new design software.

The result? A 48-page color magazine called "Speakeasy: Stories From Chi-town." It profiles stories about neighborhoods, parks, food, music festivals, sports, a school for psychics, and of course, people. The students stayed in a youth hostel located in The Loop, and were reporting around the clock. They were fortunate enough to be in town the week the Chicago Blackhawks won the Stanley Cup. The story of the fans' frenzy is featured in the magazine. That same week, students covered the Chicago Blues Festival and the Printer's Row Lit Fest. Another Summer Journalism Institute is scheduled for 2011. Destination: Washington, D.C.



Please send news and notes to Dr. McClelland, at [mmcclelland@wittenberg.edu](mailto:mmcclelland@wittenberg.edu), or mail to Patti Birt, English Department, Wittenberg University, P.O. Box 720, Springfield, OH 45501. This issue of Footnotes was written by Michael McClelland and Caleb Murray ('13), with contributions from faculty, staff, and alumni. Layout and design by Caleb Murray.



Professor Jody Rambo

## Professor Rambo Wins Poetry Prize

Jody Rambo's collection of poems, *Tethering World*, was selected winner of the 2009 Wick Poetry Chapbook Competition and will be published by the Kent State University Press in Spring 2011. Dr. Richards celebrated the accomplishment: "This award affirms what both faculty and students already knew — that professor Rambo is a fabulous poet and that we are so fortunate to have her in the Department."

**For more information, up-to-date news and notes, upcoming events, or general Department happenings, visit**

<http://www5.wittenberg.edu/academics/english/index.html>

## Not Your Average Summer Reading

Nineteen English majors have picked up the gauntlet thrown down by English faculty and signed on to the Reading List Challenge. Those students will attempt to read the entire 70-book "favorite books" list assembled by faculty members last spring. The list, ranging from ancient epics to postmodern comedy, is an informal compilation of books faculty members wish all their students had the time and dedication to enjoy.

Signees, including 14 who signed on at the English Department Awards Ceremony last spring, have until graduation to complete as many of the books as possible and have a brief discussion with the professor who added the book to the list. Any student who finishes 50 of the books will receive a book of his or her choice signed by the English faculty; students who complete the entire list will be allowed to add a book of their own choosing to the list for future readers.



Professors Kent and Mimi Dixon combine two of their favorite hobbies: kayaking and gardening

## Fitz and Hester Welcome Their First Child

Although Professor Fitz Smith refers to the French Revolution in many of his classes, he wasn't entirely prepared for his recent summons to the Bastille on the 5th of April. Visiting Paris for the Easter holiday, Fitz's wife, Hester, went into labor three weeks early, and she delivered their first son, Edward Caspar Westley Smith, in Hopital Saint Antoine, one of Paris's many maternity wards founded just after the French Revolution. Passing a few days of learning baby basics in a faltering French, Fitz and Hester left with high hopes for Caspar's future writing prospects, since his birth ward was nestled right between the Rue Voltaire and the Rue Diderot. Once the new family was released from the hospital, they began the eventful process of securing a passport for young 'Teddy', a process that led to countless photographs of Teddy grimacing, smiling, and squirming against the required white passport background. With their return to the United States complicated by the eruption of an Icelandic volcano, the family spent the summer instructing Teddy in the first rule of a traveler: Pack lightly. They're back on terra firma now, and Teddy's thriving, each day adding another word to his vocabulary.



Edward Caspar Westley Smith

Please send news and notes to Dr. McClelland, at [mmcclelland@wittenberg.edu](mailto:mmcclelland@wittenberg.edu), or mail to Patti Birt, English Department, Wittenberg University, P.O. Box 720, Springfield, OH 45501.

## English Department Colloquium Schedule

### Thursday, September 9

Speakeasy: Magazine Launch  
Party  
Ness Auditorium 4 P.M.

### Thursday, September 23

Jonathan Safran Foer Q & A  
Ness Auditorium 4 P.M.

### Wednesday, October 6

Shannon Thomas: "Am I crazy  
to be thinking about Graduate  
School in English?"  
Hollenbeck 131 4 P.M.

### Thursday, November 11

SAGE presents "The List"  
Founder's Pub/ Time TBA

### Thursday, February 10

Patrick Johnson presents  
"Sweet Tea: An Oral History of  
Black Gay Men in the South"  
Springfield Art Museum 4 P.M.

### Thursday, February 17

Valena Rudolph performing  
Anna Julia Cooper: A Voice  
form the South"  
Ness Auditorium 4 P.M.

### Monday, March 21

Lisa Zunshine from the  
University of Kentucky: Bio-  
Humanities.  
Bayley Auditorium 4 P.M.

### Tuesday, April 26

Literary Awards  
Founder's Pub TBA

### Friday, April 29

Senior Symposium  
panels TBA

## Fitz and Hester Sculpt Art Book

Despite the international travel, full-time jobs, and birth of their first child, Fitz and Hester somehow found time to co-author a book of art criticism: *The Small Sculpture of Anthony Caro*. They wrote under the joint penname 'H.F. Westley Smith.' Their book is the fifth volume in a box set of studies on the sculpture of Anthony Caro, and is published by Lund Humphries. *The Small Sculpture of Anthony Caro* analyzes Caro's lesser-known works (which, somewhat humorously are literally his "smaller" works). Caro is more readily known for his large, abstract sculptures, but Fitz maintains that "These [small] sculptures are not maquettes or models for larger pieces; they possess the same formal integrity that [the] large sculpture possesses." *The Small Sculpture of Anthony Caro*, which explores the tremendous output of one of Britain's most important and prolific sculptors, is a major accomplishment for Fitz and Hester, and, consequently, a point of pride for the Department.

## Retirements and Recognitions

### Professor Emeritus Veler Honored

English Professor Emeritus Dick Veler was awarded the Wittenberg Medal of Honor, the highest non-academic award the university can offer, during the spring graduation ceremonies. Veler, who retired in 2000, was a respected and beloved member of the English Department for more than 35 years, and was named Wittenberg's Distinguished Teacher of the Year in 1975. He also served as university editor and general secretary of the university. According to Witt's website, Veler ... "embodies the mission of Wittenberg, having dedicated his life to teaching the liberal arts, encouraging a love of literature and even helping the university better understand its Lutheran heritage through his direction of the Commission on Wittenberg's Relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America."



### Goodbye Dr. Jones

Last year the Wittenberg English Department bade-farewell to now-Professor-Emeritus Mary Ellen Jones. Jones' 44 year-long career in the Department was celebrated, her accolades and accomplishments remembered.

## Faculty News

- **D'Arcy Fallon** (On sabbatical in the fall of 2010) planned to spend October at the Ucross Ranch, a 20,000-acre working cattle ranch near Sheridan, Wyo. The Ucross Foundation Residency Program offers time and space to a handful of competitively selected artists throughout the year. She was working on a series of essays and a novel. D'Arcy's essay "The Plot Thickens," was recently featured in the online literary magazine, *The Final Draft* (<http://www.the-final-draft.com>).
- **Bob Davis** was honored as Alpha Delta Pi's "Professor of the Month" (for February) and also chosen as an Honorary Class Member by the class of 2010. Bob is continuing work on his book, *Visions of Grace in American Poetry*. He has completed chapters on Anne Sexton and Thomas Merton and hopes to write a new chapter this summer on Mary Oliver. Bob is even more proud of the recent accomplishments of his daughters Hanna and Emily. Emily graduated with honors from Stanford in April 2009, and her honors project—"Bearing Witness: Voice and Spirituality in Early American Women Writers"—won the undergraduate research award from the Stanford English department. Hannah is finishing her first year at St. Olaf College in Northfield MN, where she's part of their "Great Conversations" seminar—an interdisciplinary honors program for first-year students.
- **Lori Askeland** gave a presentation entitled "Phillis Wheatley, Samson Occom and the Writings of Contemporary Transracial Adoptees: 'Outsiders Within' Resisting White Hegemony" at the 6th Black Atlantic Community Conference at Central State University, on April 8th, 2010, and she attended the 3rd Annual Adoption and Culture Conference at MIT. She continues directing the Women's Studies Program, and serving on several boards, including the Village Council for Yellow Springs, the Springfield Leadership Council for Planned Parenthood, as well as remaining the Wittenberg faculty representative to the Lilly Fellows Program (LFP). Lori urges any current Juniors or recent graduates who are thinking of returning to school for a PhD in the Humanities, with the hope of possibly teaching at a church-related school like Wittenberg, to contact her about the LFP (Lilly Fellows Program) Graduate Program Fellowship grants.
- **Rick Incorvati** is at work on the program for a British Studies conference that will land in Cleveland next October, and he's spending some time as interim book review editor for the *Keats-Shelley Journal*. In teaching, he'll be stretching himself next fall by teaching a course on literature by gay and lesbian writers (a first for him and for Wittenberg). In his leisure time, he's been happily swapping Steve Earle and Tom Petty cd's with Mike Mattison, and John Prine and Dave Alvin records with Mac McClelland.

## Alumni News and Notes

- **Elizabeth Eshelman Moes** is teaching composition at a local community college. She currently teaches on Tuesdays and Thursdays, which gives her time to balance writing and teaching. Elizabeth has an article in the current issue of *Writers Chronicle*, discussing the advantages and disadvantages of an MFA degree.
- **Mitchell Ayer**, '69, lives in Belton, Texas with his 182 pound Newfoundland, "Big Irish". When not training dogs Mitch is an oil and gas attorney in Houston Texas.
- **Lew Klatt**, '84, recently won the Iowa Poetry Prize for his second book, "Cloud of Ink." The book will be published by the University of Iowa Press in Spring 2011.
- **Aubrey Ludwig**, '00, earned her M.A. in English at the University of Maryland and now teaches high school in Langley, Virginia. She also consults widely with KIPP and other charter schools, aiding teachers in preparing AP courses and incorporating meaningful writing assignments into their classes. She and husband Felix Stump '00 enjoy home renovations and gardening.
- **Kristina Ackley Baumler**, '91, works as a Communications Director at Freddie Mac. She received her MA in PR Management from Univ. of MD (College Park) and has authored two books: *100 Top Internet Job Sites* and *Online Web Design*. An active volunteer for The American Cancer Society, Kristina co-chairs the 2010 Relay For Life of Reston, a \$300,000+ fundraising event. She also enjoys spending time with her husband and two little boys.
- **Melissa Barrett**, '05, is currently working with KSU's Wick Poetry Center. She serves area veterans through her work with poetry.
- **Bill Berry**, '83, founded BAM Advertising in 2004 after working at national and regional agencies since 1983. Although he is involved in the company's strategic planning and works with clients, Bill still greatly contributes to the creative output of BAM. He travels and runs into Witt alumni "pretty much everywhere."
- **Christy Lumm**, '72, has been teaching English for over 30 years (grades 6-12). She has also taught community college in the U.S. and overseas. She is now the English department chair at Hampton Roads Academy in Newport News, VA. Christy continues to write poetry and has been published in many small press journals.
- **Ashley Hyatt**, '10, is attending the NYU publishing institute.

## Alumni Notes Continued

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- **Brad Folta**, '10, is serving with the Peace Corps in Kazakhstan, teaching English classes at a secondary school .
- **Matt Wickiser**, '10, has been hired by Book Travelers West to cover the Rocky Mountain region.
- **Pamela Deselem** is the proud mother of Baylor Deselem. He won a steer in the Clark County Fair Calf Scramble (Baylor is the fourth in their family to participate and receive a calf in this grueling event). The event involves putting the halter on the steer correctly, then bringing it to the winner's circle. The steer, named Rambo, is now being raised on Deselem Family Farms.
- **Jeremy Glazier** is a regular music critic, writing about contemporary classical music for an interdisciplinary Spanish-language arts and culture magazine called *La Tempestad*. He was also the recipient of the "individual artist award," given by the Ohio Arts Council.
- **Ronald R. Janke**, '69, has been practicing environmental law since he graduated from the Duke Law School. Throughout his studies and law practices, he continues to appreciate his Liberal Arts background and Witt.
- **Ronnie Ross** is currently teaching English at a private school outside Washington D.C. Inspired by the Wittenberg English Department's "list," his school has adopted their own list.
- **Tara Failey**, '04, is attending Johns Hopkins where she is working on an M.A. in Communications.
- **Whitney Yount** is attending the University of Akron's Masters of History program.
- **Rachel E. Kaufman**, '10, is in Zambia for a year working with college students and orphans.
- **Belinda Waters Brown**, is married and has a child. Belinda is working as an adjunct instructor at Kaplan College in Columbus (teaching College Composition and Academic Strategies), and is also freelance copy editing for Monarch magazine, The Women's Book-Columbus, The Women's Book-Cincinnati, and for Women magazine
- **Rebekah Bell**, is married to Witt Alum Eric Bell. They have two children. She is a Deputy County Attorney with the Maricopa County Attorney's Office in Phoenix, AZ. She prosecutes high-level felony vehicular crimes such as vehicular homicides, aggravated assaults, DUIs, etc; Rebekah has been practicing since 2007.

## English Major Jim Johnson, '78, Shares Perspective

For the past 25-odd years, I've earned quite a nice living as an advertising copywriter and creative director. While I haven't written any poems, novels, short stories or books, I've written direct mail packages, print ads, TV spots and infomercials for companies as diverse as Time Life, National Geographic, UNICEF, the Smile Train, Disney, Rodale, Rolling Stone, Christian Children's Fund, the Motley Fool, Principal Secret cosmetics, and thousands more.

I've sat in Jann Wenner's office at Rolling Stone while he watched a rough cut of the Rolling Stone infomercial and opened David Bowie's Christmas present (a painting). I've shot TV spots in Malibu on expense account. I've worn short pants and Birkenstocks to meetings at Fortune 50 companies. Had offices in cool lofts in hip, trendy neighborhoods and big, fancy glass skyscrapers in Buckhead, Atlanta. I've helped Rodale publications launch a music business, Time Life launch a "Great Classics" book business, helped launch Nat Geo Adventure, helped market AOL and brought Thomas the Tank Engine and Barney to kids across the country. And last year alone, my agency raised more than \$750 million to help not-for-profits like (such as) UNICEF and the Smile Train save the lives of hundreds of thousands of children who would have perished without the food and meds and immunizations that junk mail provided.

When you consider the path that most English majors take, the "starving artist" myth looms tall. But there are other paths that allow you to use the same writing and thinking and creative skills to earn a significant mid-six-figure income that buys big houses, small German convertibles and maybe, just maybe, send your kid to Wittenberg at a time when tuition is a littler steeper than it was back in the early '70s.

My point is this: I couldn't have done this if I hadn't received such a great education at Wittenberg University (and then an MA in English at Ohio University, too). The professors I had pushed me. The books I read inspired me. (The party nights in Myers hall befuddled me.) And the writing and thinking skills I developed propelled me to a career in writing that has fulfilled me.

So, for those of you who are grappling with the "What the hell can you do with an English major?" Dark night of the soul. Rest easy, open your eyes, and think outside the box.