



Literature is the expression of a feeling of deprivation, a recourse against a sense of something missing. But the contrary is also true: language is what makes us human. It is a recourse against the meaningless noise and silence of nature and history.

Octavio Paz (1914-1998)

### Back . . . and Forth

A warm welcome back from Spring Break—the pause that always refreshes. If winter comes (and we hope, now has come and gone), can spring be far behind?

The second half of the spring semester always seems to run at about twice the speed and twice the excitement of the rest of the year, and this year promises to be no different. For one thing, pre-registration for the fall semester is pretty much around the corner (see page 3). March and April will also be busy with literary and cultural events. Sojourner Truth Library is hosting an English Department-organized exhibit on graphic literature for National Library Week (see the feature article on page 3), and on Thursday, April 17 we are co-sponsoring a lecture and reading by Francine Prose (see page 4).

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By now I think word has gotten around that Old Main will be closed for a multi-year renovation (taking away some twenty classrooms). As a result, the fall class schedule will use a completely different grid. Classes will begin at 8:00 a.m. and some evening classes will end at 10:25 p.m. Most twice-weekly classes will meet on either Mondays and Thursdays or Tuesdays and Fridays. Most of our survey courses will meet on either a

Monday-Wednesday-Thursday or Tuesday-Wednesday-Thursday schedule. Be prepared to take your share of morning classes and classes on Friday because everyone else on campus will be doing the same starting this fall. And please be careful about requesting back-to-back meetings—the new schedule allows only ten minutes between classes.

Finally, I would like to share some good news and another invitation. In the last few weeks we have finalized our last faculty hire of the school year. Matthew Newcomb, a graduate of Penn State University, will be joining us in the fall. Professor Newcomb is a specialist in the field of Rhetoric and Composition. He will be teaching courses in theories of writing, composition, and the history and practice of rhetoric. Professor Erin Newcomb will also be joining our faculty for the 2008-09 academic year. She specializes in composition theory, American literature, and Women’s Studies.

Here’s to a mud-luscious and puddle-wonderful spring! (A free copy of the new book *Shakespeare and Film* by Samuel Crowl awaits the first student to identify that allusion. Come by JFT 714 with the right answer and ask for Ethel.) Welcome back, everyone—and all best going forth!

—Thomas G. Olsen, Chair of English

#### Upcoming Events

- Celebration of Writing on April 24 at the Honors Center
- *Our Town* at McKenna Theatre opens April 24
- Graduate Symposium, April 28

W O R K S C I T I E D  
 C U L T H I S S T R I P

## New Faculty Introduction: Professor Vicki Tromanhauser

Having grown up in Minnesota, where marshmallows are considered a key salad ingredient, Professor Vicki Tromanhauser developed an interest in bizarre human rituals and a fascination with the anthropological dimensions of literature. Her courses in early twentieth-century British literature discover stories of scapegoating and human sacrifice lurking in some of the best-known works of writers like Virginia Woolf, D. H. Lawrence, and T. S. Eliot. Yet if such discussions reveal a less cheerful side of humanity, Professor Tromanhauser finds the congeniality of the SUNY New Paltz community and the lively exchange of ideas with students in the classroom an encouraging affirmation of the humanities. Outside of the twentieth century, her research and teaching interests extend more broadly to include the classical antecedents and literary traditions that helped shape her favorite modern texts. In courses like Great Books Western and Women in Literature



Professor Tromanhauser delights showing that delicious villainesses like Clytemnestra enjoy a prosperous afterlife in current film and media.

Prior to moving to New Paltz, Professor Tromanhauser had long been a resident of New York, having received her B. A. in English from Cornell University and earned her Ph.D. at Columbia. One summer in Manhattan, she engineered a scheme to spend the night in Central Park in a ticket line for an all-star performance of Chekhov's "The Seagull" put on as part of the Shakespeare in the Park series. Armed with a flashlight, blanket, and some mace, Professor Tromanhauser and her husband observed an ample range of anthropological oddities. When she's not writing about herself in the third person, Professor Tromanhauser likes hiking in the Mohonk Preserve with her son Gabriel (1 year) and her husband, while they discuss Woolf's wry parodies of Milton scholars.

### Writing Tip: Sentence Variety

Alongside improving your skills of argumentation and literary analysis, you might also consider how you can improve your writing style, while you have years of feedback from professional writers—that is, your professors—to help in your endeavors. One of the easiest ways to add flow, nuance, and complexity to your writing style is to pay attention to the *kinds of sentences* that you write:

#### 1. Sentence beginnings

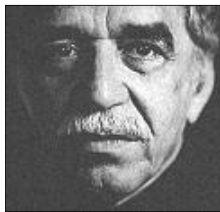
Don't begin every sentence with its subject! Try leading with these types of phrases:

- prepositional            Ex: *On a busy street in Tokyo*, the traveler was lost.
- infinitive                Ex: *To prove his point*, he turned to the encyclopedia.
- participial (word ending in *-ing* or *-ed* and acting as an adjective)  
Ex: *Waiting for the movie to begin*, my friends ate popcorn.  
*Forced to work late*, they ordered pizza with mushrooms.
- appositive (short, descriptive word or group of words)  
Ex: *A skilled thief at the age of ten*, I took pride in my daring and expertise.

#### 2. Sentence types

Avoid using the same types of sentences repeatedly. Mix up your use of simple (one subject and verb) and compound (two sentences joined by a coordinating conjunction) sentences. Also, add dependent clauses (using subordinating conjunctions like *although*, *because*, and *while*) to create complex sentences. Remember that your *independent* clauses will carry more emphasis than dependent ones, so place your information carefully.

## Authors' Birthdays in March



6 Gabriel Garcia Marquez

- 1 Ralph Ellison
- 2 John Irving
- 8 Jeffrey Eugenides
- 12 Jack Kerouac
- 18 John Updike

- 19 Philip Roth
- 20 Henrik Ibsen
- 24 Dario Fo
- 26 Robert Frost
- 31 Octavio Paz



Flannery O'Connor 25

## Graphic Novel Show Opens National Library Week

For the seventh year running, the Sojourner Truth Library will celebrate National Library Week, April 13-19, with a host of activities that will allow members of the SUNY community and beyond, of all ages, to revel in the pleasures that libraries afford us. Highlights will include performances by the SUNY Theatre Department and a reading for children. April will begin with a display of READ posters in the foyer, joined later by an illuminating installation of graphic novels.

*Graphic Novel Comes of Age* will feature contemporary texts in which words and images converge. Created and presented by Pauline Uchmanowicz along with current and former students in her Graphic Literature and Graphic Novel classes, the exhibit will showcase works by dozens of North American writer-artists and include a sampling of international publications, demonstrating the recent revolution of graphic novels—from comic-book pulp to auteur sequential art, from ephemeral to archival objects. Along with fiction of all kinds, nonfiction categories such as personal memoirs, biographies, history, comics journalism, cartooning theory, and visual essays also will be displayed. Featured graphic illustrators and writers whose works blur categories and span readership will include Will Eisner, Alan Moore, Art Spiegelman, Marjane Satrapi, F. C. Ware, Dan Clowes, Jessica Abel, Aline and R. Crumb, Scott McCloud, Seth, Alison Bechdel, Adrian Tomine, Gene Yang, Marisa Acocella Marchetto, Kim Deitch, and Megan Kelso.

## Pre-registration Is Just Around the Corner!

At press time, just before the start of the vacation, the fall 2008 schedule was just about ready to go online, in plenty of time for you to plan your classes. Graduate pre-registration begins April 14 and undergraduate pre-registration opens a week later, on April 21. Make sure to check [mynewpaltz.edu](http://mynewpaltz.edu) for your personal registration time and to meet with your English advisor well before your slot, so that you have a clear game plan for requesting the courses you need and want. Registering as early as possible benefits everyone: you give yourself the best chance of getting your first-choice courses, but the English Department also gets an early picture of our staffing needs. Last semester we were forced to cancel several sections that might have run if some laggards had not delayed registering as long as they did. Please register early! The fall schedule has wonderful new offerings, by the way, from two new senior seminars, to a new course in Australasian literature, to exciting thematic courses in Romanticism, Victorian literature, and Post-colonial literature.

And don't forget that summer course registration also begins April 14, for everyone. The English Department is offering a great slate of courses: fourteen online sections, nine seated sections in Session I, and seven in Session II. Three graduate courses will be among these. Online and required classes in particular sometimes fill within hours, so be sure to register early if you want to be assured of a place in a course you are counting on.



## Francine Prose to Lecture on Her New Book



On Thursday, April 17, Francine Prose will lecture on her newest book, New York Times bestseller *Reading Like a Writer*, published in 2006 by HarperCollins. She is also the author of fourteen books of fiction, including *A Changed Man*, winner of the Dayton Literary Peace Prize, and *Blue Angel*, a satire

about sexual harassment on college campuses, which was a finalist for the National Book Award. She also wrote the novel *Household Saints*, which was made into a film starring Tracy Ullman and Lili Taylor. A distin-

guished critic and essayist, she has taught literature and writing for more than twenty years at major universities, and is currently a Visiting Professor of Literature at Bard College.

Free and open to the public, the event will be held in Lecture Center 102, here at SUNY New Paltz. It will begin with a book signing at 4:30, followed by the lecture at 5:00 p.m. From 6:30-8:00 p.m., members of the Friends of the Sojourner Truth Library, along with other invited guests, will attend a reception with Prose in the library. This event is sponsored by The Friends of the Sojourner Truth Library, Campus Auxiliary Services, and Sodexo Food Service.

## Around the Department

### Faculty Members Read Their Poetry

Here's a great opportunity to experience the creative sides of some of our own SUNY faculty members. The Poetry Board is hosting a reading by Andrew Higgins, Tad Richards, and Joann Deudicibus on March 27 at 7:30 p.m. in JFT 1010.

### Advisor Changes

Some students have been assigned a new advisor because of departmental staffing changes. Please check [mynewpaltz.edu](http://mynewpaltz.edu) for the name of your advisor before the advising and registration period begins. Undergraduate registration for the Fall Semester of 2008 begins Monday, April 21.

### Come Read Your Favorite Poem with Us!

What better way to celebrate poetry than to get together and read our favorite poems? On April 17 at 7:00 p.m., you can do just that. The Poetry Board will host "Read Your Favorite Poem Night" at the Honors Center, in honor of National Poetry Month.

### A Push in the "Write" Direction

Send e-mail to [np.wordplay@gmail.com](mailto:np.wordplay@gmail.com) to hear more!

### Final Hudson Valley Writing Project Event

On April 5, the HVWP will hold a seminar titled "Supporting English Language Learners as Writers." For more info, contact Jacqueline Denu at 257-2811.

## Footnotes

1. Graduate students: the Comprehensive Exam will be held Saturday, **April 5**, beginning at 9:00 a.m. in JFT 1010. Contact Professor Kempton immediately to register, if you have not already.
2. Fall registration begins **April 14** for graduate students and **April 21** for undergraduates.
3. Registration for summer classes begins for all students on **April 14**.
4. We will soon be **expanding and revising *Standards and Style***, our departmental style guide. Send suggestions for making the guide more usable and/or clear to Professor Mary Holland ([hollandm@newpaltz.edu](mailto:hollandm@newpaltz.edu)).

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For questions, ideas, and contributions, please contact Mary Holland at [workscited@newpaltz.edu](mailto:workscited@newpaltz.edu) or in JFT 206.

Next issue: April 21  
Submission deadline: April 14