



# VOICE4

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**Acadia Theatre Company's Fall Performance:**



*MAGGIE RODGER*

## **The Threepenny Opera**

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## Acadia Theatre Company's Fall Performance: The Threepenny Opera

By Tessa Sheppard

On the evening of November 9th, a crowded Lower Denton Theatre was transformed into the stage for the opening night of the Acadia Theatre Company's exciting adaptation of Bertolt Brecht's *The Threepenny Opera*. Directed by Michael Devine, the performance was both humorous and disturbing, challenging the audience to question human nature and morality by offering a glimpse

into the lives of the underbelly of society.

Central to the play is Mac the Slash, played by Garrow Hill Stosky, a criminal who marries Polly Peachum, played by Mary Fay Coady, who is the daughter of an affluent yet corrupt businessman. Adding to the plot are bands of "thieves, whores, and beggars" who are all in some way connected to Mac the Slash and the Peachums. After a series of plot complications, including the appearance of Mac the



MAGGIE RODGER



MAGGIE RODGER

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Slash's other wife, Lucy Brown, and the intervention of Tiger Brown, a "copper" who is a friend of Mac's, the play ends on a happy note, with Mac the Slash being pardoned for his crimes and excused from execution.

Although *The Threepenny Opera* had an unusual set design, it was quite functional in allowing the movement of the various actors throughout their parts and musical performances, and also allowed for the audience to engage in the play in a unique way. Adding to this uniqueness was the projector that hung from a ceiling beam to create a type of scoreboard for the characters, which also flashed various satirical messages to the audience throughout the play.

The Acadia Theatre Company actors did a commendable job at depicting the rawness of the characters and plot while injecting humor and satire into their performances. All of the actors involved played their parts with the gritty spirit true to Brecht's musical play, and deserve credit for taking a risk with a play that, as Michael Devine noted, includes colourful language, violence, and sexuality. Looking around the theatre, it was apparent that Devine's intent to not offend anyone was achieved.

Most pleasing about Acadia's *The Threepenny Opera* was the teamwork evident in the overall performance. While all of the main characters did outstanding jobs, the beggars, thieves, and whores added their own excitement and humor to the play, and were not easily forgotten. Congratulations are extended to everyone who contributed to *The Threepenny Opera*. 🎭

## Byronic Bitchery

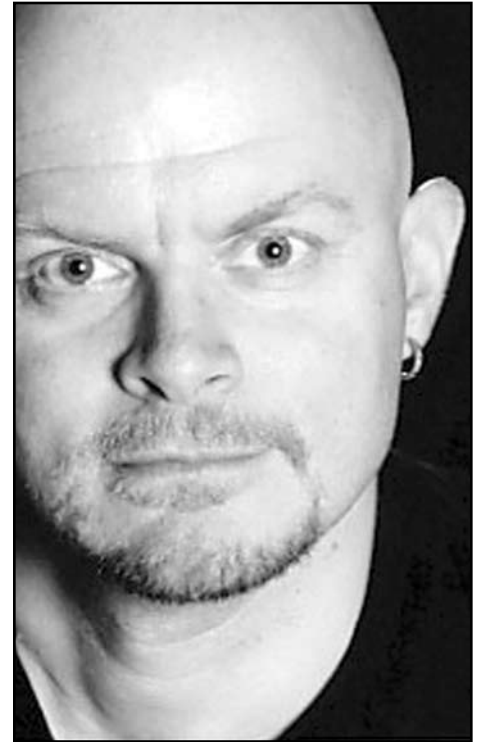
### "Byron and the Choreography of Queer Desire"

By Beth Lyons

December 1st, Steven Bruhm, Professor of English at Mount St. Vincent, entertained an audience of 20 with his lively lecture "Byron and the Choreography of Queer Desire." For an hour and a half Bruhm spoke on the complexities of Byron's *Don Juan*, largely from the perspective of queer theory and dance.

Bruhm was introduced by Acadia English Department professor, Dr. Stephen Ahern, who thanked Bruhm for coming and highlighted some of Bruhm's many academic achievements, which include the publication of numerous articles, books, editorships, and his recent appointment as incoming president of Association of Canadian College and University Teachers for English. Once introduced, Bruhm launched into an engaging lecture accompanied by an informative and entertaining PowerPoint presentation.

The lecture focused on the dance in Byron's *Don Juan* and the interaction that occurs between observer and dancer. Issues that were addressed were the complex gender performance required of the dancer (at which point Bruhm likened Juan to a "Mick Jagger, Bette Midler"-esque drag queen), the "bitchy" nature of the observer commenting on the dance taking place, and



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the overall homosocial bonding and "discursively bitchy queerness" taking place in the text.

The dynamic lecture often moved beyond the bounds of literary discussion, as Bruhm engaged in explaining the cultural shifts that have occurred in dance, rendering it a particularly female-focused art. As well, humor abounded during the presentation as Bruhm included pictures of cantankerous muppets Waldorf and Statler in his slide show and frequently offered such quipping remarks as "Juan puts the crotch back in crotchet." After a series of questions from the audience, the lecture ended with Bruhm heading to the local pub with a number of audience members. 🍷

# Hockey Night in B.A.C.

## Matt Robinson's Hockey Poetry

By Julie Veinot

No need for academics and athletics to be opposing teammates.

Matt Robinson's new collection of hockey poems, published by ECW Press, combines his love of sport with his love of syntax: *no cage contains a stare that well*. The title refers to the stare from a net minder's mask, perhaps a stare Robinson has perfected himself during his time between the posts.

Robinson does not mention his affinity for poetry in the locker room. Rather, teammates "usually find out of their own volition" about his writing, he says.

To a group of thirteen gathered in Acadia's Beveridge Arts Centre, Robinson read his award-winning poetry. A Halifax native, he received an MA in Creative Writing at the University of New Brunswick, where he now works in Residential Life, sometimes flooding outdoor hockey rinks for the students.

His hockey experiences have sharpened his work, though as any student of English poetry knows, it is important to separate author from speaker. One of his poems, dealing with father and son tensions, was mentioned in the *National Post*, and people began calling Robinson's father to hear about the rift described in the poem. Even his father was surprised to hear it and Robinson had to explain the poem was just that: a poem.

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MATTHEW CARSWELL

Though his poetry does not depict his own life, his speakers face things he himself has encountered. While one would expect a collection of hockey poetry to be upbeat, his poems reflect a dark view of hockey. It is evident from the dark cover, which actually features Robinson playing in goal.

From childhood, he recalls waiting impatiently for the Zamboni driver to finish the ice. When writing, he asked himself how it must feel to be that man. "Everyone's waiting for you to leave," he says. One of the first lines of the poem called the "Zamboni Driver's Lament" depicts that feeling all too well: "I know hate."


His poems talk of equipment problems, minor in comparison with other events. Another poem recalls a childhood incident in which a fellow player had a hockey blade speared through his cheek. Then there is the urban legend of a coach losing his fingertips to an errant skate. The recent paralysis of Moncton varsity player Sebastien Savage attests to the bleaker side of sport. This side is captured in these poems. Often, one cannot tell if

Robinson is speaking about life or hockey or both.

In keeping with his own experiences, Robinson speaks several times of the goaltender, hidden behind his mask.

The last poem he read to the audience featured an old goalie finishing his last game; it is a wistful poem, heartbreaking because the final horn is about to blow. It differs from a previous poem he read – "Shutout" which details an ode to the "pinnacle of achievement" for any goalie. The words hearken to more than just hockey, for a shutout is "everything and nothing all at once," he reads.

While his material hinted at the bleak, Robinson was anything but. A devout UNB Varsity Reds fan, he quipped he was disappointed UNB lost to Acadia in a shutout the previous weekend and expected they would win the next night in Fredericton (and they did).

When asked if there is any relationship between this book and being hit with too many pucks, Robinson jokes and says he had been hit "fairly substantially" during the research of his poetry. 

## Toronto-Based Playwright Leanna Brodie Visits Acadia

By Maggie Rodger

Members of the Wolfville community as well as several Acadia students turned out to see Canadian author Leanna Brodie's play reading on Tuesday, October 4th in the Beverage Arts Centre.

The reading was supported by the Canadian Council for the Arts and the Playwrights Guild of Canada and focused on Brodie's latest endeavor, *For Home and Country*. The play, which was described by the author as being about "women's friendships, the Women's Institutes and...bees," exemplifies Brodie's admiration of Canadian history and the women who were a part of it.

An actor as well as a writer, the author was able to give her audience an energetic and enthusiastic reading of several scenes of the play. The evening was even interactive, allowing audience members to participate and be a part of the performance: "I loved that she really allowed for listeners to be involved in her play," said Julia MacIntosh, a third year English and Theatre Studies major.

Not only did Brodie captivate her audience with the play itself, but also with her words of wisdom. "She was beautiful and inspiring," MacIntosh said. "She was really very real in her approach to giving advice to aspiring writers. You could tell there was a genuine hope of encouraging people to do what she was doing because she had such a passion for it."

Voted by *NOW* Magazine

as one of the Top Ten Toronto Theatre Artists in 2001, Brodie has moved into the Canadian limelight, and seems to continue to climb the ladder of success. The artist is headed for great things with her next project already underway, and Acadia was lucky to be a part of the action.



## Greg Cook on Alden Nowlan

By Tessa Sheppard

On the evening of September 28th, an interested crowd came to the BAC to hear Greg Cook read from his new biography on Alden Nowlan, *One Heart, One Way*, as part of the Authors @ Acadia series. In addition to reading passages from his book, Cook read some of his own poetry, shared Nowlan anecdotes and also spoke of his time at Acadia as both a student and lecturer.

Cook explained to the




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audience that his intention for the evening was to share Nowlan with us as he knows him. He read three different passages from the book to do this, one reflecting Nowlan's life in Hartland, New Brunswick, where he worked at *The Observer*; one concerning Nowlan's hospital stay after being diagnosed with a thyroid

carcinoma, where Cook met with him on a number of occasions; and another accounting the humorous meeting of Nowlan with Johnny Cash and Prince Charles in 1975. Cook also gave the audience insight into Nowlan's humble beginnings in rural Nova Scotia.

In addition to the Nowlan biography, Cook has published a number of works of poetry, his latest being 2004's *Songs of the Wounded*. Cook explained that he, like Nowlan, is inspired to write about where he is from, and what he knows in life. Cook read a poem from each of his six books, on subjects including love, war, and family relations. The selections Cook read nicely showcased his ability to use detail and imagery to convey often simple ideas, and showed his interest in playing with a poem's structure in terms of timing and rhythm.

Cook explained that writing a biography is a difficult task. He was discouraged in the beginning by the politics of publishing, but persevered after having a number of dreams about Nowlan and the book. He said that *One Heart, One Way* is not a typical biography, and is part memoir. He relied on his memories of Nowlan and letters sent back and forth between himself and the poet to complete this "historical and dramatic document" on Nowlan's life. Cook stressed that having respect for your subject is the most important factor in creating a biography, and he is careful in the book to never make it seem as though he is "bragging about a famous friend."

Greg Cook is currently working on a biography of Ernest Buckler, and continues to both write and edit poetry himself. 

# Alberto Manguel

## Year of Favorite Books

By Kaitlyn MacPhee

On October 19th, renowned author Alberto Manguel graced the KCIC auditorium with a reading of his newest book *A Reading Diary: A Year of Favorite Books*. The concept alone is one incredibly attractive to readers and writers alike. Alberto takes us on a written journey of past favorite books and muses on them as he goes about his daily life for a year. Written in the fashion of a diary, he records daily events and reactions to the books he is reading at the time. Dressed in the typical black suit, a bespectacled Alberto stood completely at ease at the podium. The reading was packed with people, and well into the evening stragglers were slipping through the door, their faces bright with anticipation.

After a brief introduction by Bruce Matthews, the Dean of Arts, Manguel took centre stage. In his soft, accented voice he explained that in his new book he wanted to show what happens when someone reads: to try and describe the experience of reading a moving piece of literature. He said that unlike writing, reading was a comfortable and sensuous experience, something that a person can enjoy and relax with. What better topic to write about then, than reading!

In his December chapter, Manguel covered *The Wind in the Willows*, a classic favorite of many Canadians, and one that elicited happy sighs of contentment throughout the audience. Through a re-reading of this book, he focuses on the central theme of “home” and how it

applies to his life. His book is full of reflections and joyful memories elicited by the books he reads, as well as the sadder moments he is reminded of. It is an intimate novel that draws the reader closely into Manguel’s life. As he read excerpts aloud, the KCIC crowd was silent. The soothing sound of his voice reflecting on old favorite books induced a contented, almost dreamlike feeling in the listener.

As well as the childhood favorite *The Wind in the Willows*, he re-read other books such as HG Wells’ *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, Rudyard Kipling’s *Kim*, and Arthur Conan Doyle’s *The Sign of Four*, to name a few. His choices are admittedly eclectic, which is part of what makes *A Reading Diary* so interesting. Alberto’s book jumps from discussing home to discussing his feelings about Canada, death, and government.

The peaceful aura that surrounds his new book is reflected in Alberto himself. He took part of the reading to discuss the concept of time. He said that as he got older, he became less restless and less anxious for new things to happen in his life. He has become content with what he has, and this nostalgic, fulfilled attitude is strongly apparent in his writing. As he finished the reading, the audience erupted into applause. With a modest smile and a twinkle in his eye, Alberto Manguel gracefully accepted the enthusiasm. A thoroughly enjoyable October night, everybody came away from the reading feeling a little more contented, and almost as though they had made a new friend. 🍷

# Poet Susan McMaster

## a woman of varying pitch and volume

By Zachary May

Poet Susan McMaster visited the English Department to an audience of roughly thirty students, faculty, and community members to read poems from many of her published works.

McMaster admits that she did not begin her work as a poet until “later in life,” although she speaks to a room with the confidence and individual voice of a writer thoroughly dedicated to her craft.

Her books of poetry, as she explained, “explore the page” and defy publishing conventions. Many lines contain a single word, sometimes scattered around the page.

This attempt to explore language and text resonates in McMaster’s performance of her poetry. She often closes her eyes in concentration as she changes the volume and pitch of the words printed on the page.

The effect is truly unique.

McMaster, according to her writing philosophy, believes that by exploring a single word in variation, both on the page and aurally, all meanings of the word are explored.

Many of the poems read on this September evening included a handful of repeated words or phrases, although the performance was anything but monotonous. 🍷

## LUNCH AND LETTERS

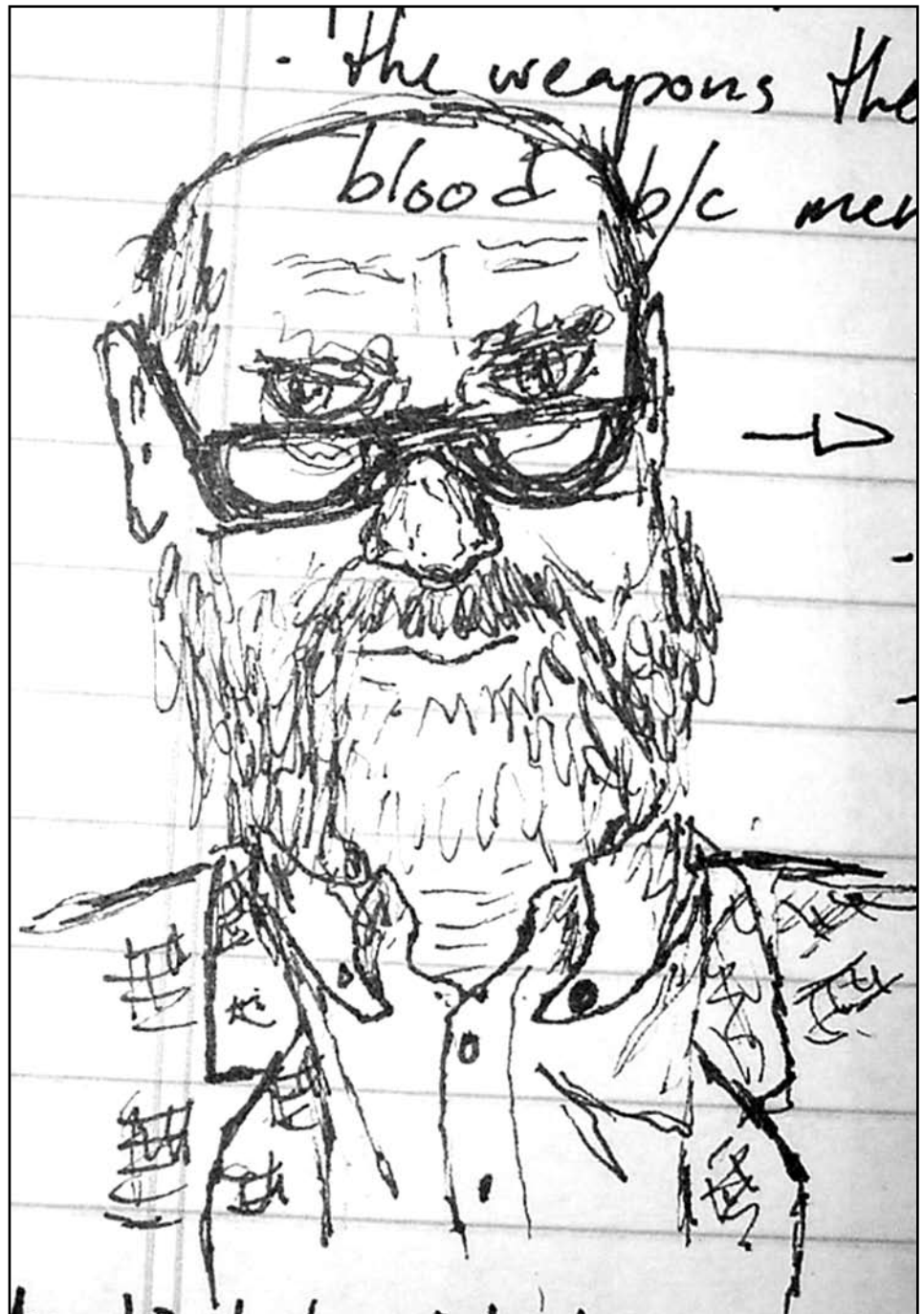
## Marginal Scholarship

### Lesser-known aspects of Presbyterian and Episcopalian relations in Scotland in the early 1690s by Ralph Stewart

Covered by Ralph Stewart

The second Lunch&Letters of the term, held on 18 October, was on “Marginal Scholarship”: the sub-title was “Lesser-known aspects of Presbyterian and Episcopalian relations in Scotland in the early 1690s—and do they matter at all?” Ralph Stewart explained gloomily that research in the Arts is held in low esteem at Acadia, one indication of which is the treatment it receives in the recent “Strategic Plan.” Within the Arts, English is perhaps the hardest subject to justify. (Philosophers can argue that some of the ideas they analyze can be used in practical contexts; historians that those who don’t study history are condemned to repeat it.) It had occurred to Stewart that his own research was probably the most useless in the entire Department, and he thought there was some logic in examining the most obscure and impractical work he had ever done. If the most useless article, by the most useless member, of the most useless Department in the Faculty of Arts—can be justified; then it follows that ALL research done elsewhere in the Faculty is worthwhile.

It is not very difficult to make the Scottish 1690s look significant as social history (last great fam-



ZACHARY MAY

ine), militarily (Jacobites repulsed), or ideologically (development of ideas on democracy). It is harder to justify studying the literature of the place and period. However the Episcopalian came up with an effective polemical-satirical book, *The Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence*, which mocked the Presbyterian ministers and their sermons, and the Presbyterians replied with reasoned debate, a well-written history of the past twenty

years, and counter-satire. The members of the L&L session went on to examine some passages from these books, to get a sense of their ideas, wit, and satirical techniques, and of the kind of world they reflect. The consensus was that such study was indeed interesting and illuminating, and therefore that all current research in Acadia’s Faculty of Arts must be worthwhile. QED. 🍷

## Meghan Johnston and Children's Theatre in Kosovo

By Erin Mullen

Recently at a Lunch and Letters talk Meghan Johnston, a 4th year Theatre Studies student, gave a talk relating to her experiences during her four month stay in Kosovo last summer. Meghan had the opportunity to organize a theatre group for young children in Kosovo and worked in conjunction with the Center for Children's Theatre Development. The role of this program was to introduce young children to the theatre and the methods of acting while also providing these children with a social role in post-war Kosovo.

The language barrier between Meghan and her students presented an additional challenge though it did not stop her from getting her message across. She used several specific games which related to acting principles in order to teach these principles to the children without using language. In one exercise she conducted, she had her students analyze their city and the people in what they felt to be the important areas. With this, they acted out what they saw, giving them a strong understanding of their city and putting

it into their acting. Meghan also had the opportunity to work with the UN-funded program, Global Motion. This program used theatrical movement presentations to discuss the messages of drug use, sex, and other important topics for youth. While in Kosovo, Meghan also was asked to be an assistant director for a movie filmed there called "The Collector". She was able to audition the children from her own program



MEGHAN JOHNSTON

and help with the filming process.

Meghan left Kosovo feeling intensely inspired at these children's ability to live life to the fullest in spite of the state of post-war Kosovo, and Meghan's efforts and achievements with these children can be seen as inspirational for us. 🍷

## Richard Hennigar and David Mangle

### Discuss the GNP versus Genuine Progress Index

By Angus Smith

Thursday, 24th of November, David Mangle, a Wolfville town councilor, and Richard Hennigar, a member of the GPI Kings County Society, sat down with a small group to explain the advantages of the GPI over the GNP. They showed that while economic measures like the Gross Domestic Product and the Gross National Product give misleading results that benefit the mindless values of the corporate world, the GPI (Genuine Progress Index) is designed as a more holistic approach. Hennigar gave several examples. In the world of health care, the GDP would add up all the economic exchanges (equipment, administrative expenditures, hiring doctors and nurses) revolving around, say, heart surgeries. Each exchange registers positively for the economy, so that at the end of the day the more surgeries the better it looks. People have been buying and selling after all. Hennigar points out that such a measure can't account for waste (waste in the system would actually appear as growth) or preventative measures, like a healthier diet and exercise which might stave off heart disease in the first place: such preventative measures don't register on the GDP. Some members of the audience wondered how real change could take place given the prevalence of corporate influence in the world of politics. David Mangle agreed that, especially at the



federal and provincial levels, narrow corporate interests combined with absurd levels of influence tends to undermine holistic approaches to the economy. He held out hopes though at the municipal level where, he says, corporate influence is much less pervasive. Mangle encouraged people to get involved in issues at grass roots levels, where real change can be made. Over all, the presentation was enlightening and persuasive. For more information on the GPI Kings County Society please see [www.gpikings.org](http://www.gpikings.org).

## Camille Slights

### on Shakespeare's King John

By Tessa Sheppard

On September 27, as part of the Lunch and Letter series, Camille Slights spoke on the subject of character in Shakespeare's *King John* in a talk alternately titled, "When is a Bastard not a Bastard?" Slights noted that most character critiques are often rejected for embodying a repressive ideology, and explained that she finds examining character in the early modern concept of conscience the most beneficial method of critique.

Slights began by providing an act-by-act summary of *King John*, which she said has "a strange plot." She also underlined the idea of betrayal in the play, commenting that "everyone is violating oaths" of some sort. Slights then began her character analysis, explaining that in order to understand the actions of the characters in the play, the audience must employ a 16th century understanding of conscience, which

involves both self-reflexivity and moral judgment ("the voice of God internally.") Because the audience cannot access characters' consciences directly, it must look at their outward actions to determine how their behaviors are guided.

Slights focused on Philip Falconbridge, also known as the Bastard, to demonstrate her critique of character. She noted that he is the play's most interesting character because he is both "attractive and

disturbing." Slights argued that the Bastard's silent dialogue of "himself with himself" accounts for his character and his inconsistencies, and marks a transformation in both the play and in early modern England from a universal to an individualized conscience.

Camille Slights is Professor Emeritus at the University of Saskatchewan and has written two books and a number of articles on Shakespeare's works.

## EVENTS

### Don Quijote

#### 400 Years Later... Symposium

By Matthew J. MacDonald

This year Acadia University and The Atlantic Provinces Hispanists Association was host to a Symposium centered around the Spanish literary work *Don Quijote*, often translated as *Don Quixote* in English. 400 hundred years ago Miguel De Cervantes Saavedra wrote the first part of this classic story of Don Quixote (an elderly man obsessed with and caught up in perpetual delusions of chivalry and knight errantry) and his would-be squire, Sancho Panza, a simple minded man who is unable to see through Don Quix-

ote's delusions.

As discussed at the symposium, this story was revolutionary in literature. It symbolized the death of the then predominant form of fiction and gave birth to a new one: prose fiction. This gave rise to what we now consider the modern day novel. Dr. Davies, Head of the Acadia



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English Department, and a speaker at the symposium, recognizes how important *Don Quixote* is in literary history, which is perhaps why he has felt it necessary to compel his fourth year 18th Century Literature students to read this 1000 page plus volume. It is a daunting task, but a rewarding one.

The story of Don Quixote has been translated into numerous languages, and has also seen its influences spread throughout literature, music, art and culture. This is a classic story of an out-of-date knight errant, who fights giants that are windmills, has misadventures in castles that are inns, and is continuously being whacked in the head and beaten. Despite Don Quixote's inabilities, real world impotence, and apparent pathetic nature, readers have fallen in love with and sympathized with this character for four hundred years now. *Don Quixote* sparks the imagination and represents an idealism that everyone in some way shares, making him one of the most recognizable characters in literary history, and the most recognizable character in Spanish literature.

We still celebrate Cervantes contributions to literature and will continue to do so for perhaps another four hundred years. From this narrative, an era of fiction had its foundation laid. Its characters became household names and continue to entertain readers to this day. For these reasons, and many more, we have come to appreciate the story of Don Quixote, and have happily listed it as a classic. Acadia University is proud to have brought together scholars from different universities and academic backgrounds to celebrate this 400th anniversary of this timeless literary work, *Don Quijote*.




## Annual English Department Barbeque

By Jaclyn Stanfield

On the eve of Thursday, September 22nd, members of the Acadia English community gathered for the annual English Department Barbeque from 4:30 until 7 pm. The event, held behind the Huggins Science Building, offered varieties of delicious food for meat and vegetarian preferences alike. Professors and students gathered on the steps descending from the building, plates in hand or on laps, chatting amongst each other about various issues around campus and within the department. Varieties of burgers, dogs, soda, salads, and all the fixings were set up in front of the Faculty Club house; food was plentiful and the weather was sunny (for the most part) and warm. The evening turned out a modest crowd, with students and professors arriving as classes finished for the day. The event did not simply draw in English students, but also the young and perhaps future English-scholar children of professors Stephen Ahern and Jessica Slights – who enjoyed the food and crowd with delight and curiosity. When 5:30 came, Ralph Stewart arrived with several members of his fourth year seminar class, who carried on discussing the materials of the class while eating their salads and veggie burgers. I say veggie burgers because by 5:30, the meat varieties had been eaten up. Fourth year honours student Anna Galway was glad that there was anything left; in the previous year, more food had to be ordered for late-arriving, hungry English students. Likewise, the vege-

tarian selections were much appreciated by non-meat eaters. Luckily, the gathering this year brought quantity, variety, and quality in both the food and atmosphere. As plates were finished, English Department Head Dr. Richard Davies mingled amongst the crowd, discussing the infinite possibilities that a future with an English degree holds; Dr. Anne Quema could also be heard talking with senior students in regards to their future endeavours.

The evening came to a close relatively early; tables holding the food were cleared, and garbage was gathered from around the area by the willing and able staff. Although the crowd drawn to the event was not particularly large, the setting was relaxed and intimate; students and professors alike enjoyed the complimentary food and the warm, end-of-summer weather. Just as the sun went behind the clouds, the number of professors dwindled remarkably, and the remaining four English students (myself included) left with full bellies and satisfied minds. 

## Dr. Jon Saklofske

### A fresh face for Acadia's English Department

By Jaclyn Stanfield

The latest addition to the Acadia University Faculty, Jon Saklofske, is a breath of fresh air to the English Department. His background, interests, and approach to teaching embody the Acadia teaching spirit both technologically and academically.

Born in Calgary, Dr. Saklofske spent much of his life in the West. He completed his under-




LANCE LAROCQUE

graduate degree at the University of Saskatchewan, where he studied English Literature and Philosophy and completed his Master's. His passionate interests in Romanticism led him to Montreal, where he completed his PhD. The focus of his work at McGill remains of great interest to him; his research explores the writings of William Blake to the relationship of language and writing to other media. Recently, Dr. Saklofske presented a similar topic at MIT, where he argued that unlike today's media influences (i.e. video games like "Grand Theft Auto")

Blake's composite art does not impose a particular system or narrative upon its audience. In addition to teaching two English classes, Dr. Saklofske continues to research this relationship, saying that his concerns lie in the limited narrative of current media.

Outside of his teaching and research interests, he spends most of his time with his wife and young son. "I will really do anything that [my son] does," Jon says. He also enjoys mountain biking, playing video games, listening to music, and collecting old toys and art.

When asked what brought him to Acadia, he spoke of the charming nature of small-town Wolfville and the various benefits at the University itself. "The Acadia spirit is really strong," he says, "[and] there is such a feeling of community." Although he does admit that the new on-campus wireless internet poses some problems in the classroom, Dr. Saklofske enjoys the small class sizes and the overall sense of community at Acadia.

New to the faculty this fall, Jon teaches the Romantics and the first year introduction to reading and writing critically. His teaching philosophy is simple, yet embodies much of what Acadia stands for academically. His approach facilitates a positive relationship between professor and student, and he continually encourages his students to find their individual voice. "I see myself as somebody who guides discussion rather than imposes [it]," he says of his approach in the classroom. "I ask students to explore...and try to transmit enthusiasm. I think we learn better than way". Indeed. 

## Words on Tap 3: One for the Road

By Zachary May

On an evening in early November, the Department of English and the English Society gathered in the Michener Lounge for an evening dedicated to "literary instances of intoxication."


Leading up to the evening there was concern among faculty that most available material had been exhausted, and that a change of literary topic might be in order.

Despite these worries a

strong student showing and spirited faculty readings breathed new life into the well-worn topic. Many members of the audience left without having read their pocketed selections, although few left disappointed.

The event drew a larger than expected crowd and ran well beyond the two-hour schedule. Success can certainly be attributed to a strong sense of community that has grown over the past two years within the English Society and in the Department at large.

By most accounts the student participants managed to lift the evening, which in the past has been heavily subsidised by faculty efforts.

The English Society is currently planning a second event on a different topic. The money raised was intended to help send students to the 26th annual Atlantic Undergraduate English Conference at UPEI in March, but because of the cost of bar staff the net profit is estimated at somewhere between \$4 and \$6. 

## First Axe Lounge Speaker's Series

### Students Praise Interdisciplinary Approach

By Ryan Dodington

On Wednesday, September 28th 2005, the co-ordinator of the Women's Studies program, Dr. Anne Quéma, opened the Axe Lounge Speaker series with an informal lecture on the topic of hypermedia. Approximately twenty five students sat at tables facing a free-standing


projector screen that was set up on the dance floor for the occasion.

Hypermedia (if it can actually be defined here) is an experimental medium that presents scholarly research in the form of web-pages. This format diversifies the academic approach by putting less emphasis on the traditional written essay. Hypermedia integrates information with images, trades plain text in for limitless colour combinations, and thereby reinvents the standardized essay with entirely new dimensions. Take a look at the Women's Centre website to understand how hypermedia enhances information... <http://plato.acadiau.ca/courses/ahha/engl3793/womens-studies/index.htm>.

Dr. Quéma presented student web pages that were designed for a Twentieth Century British Culture course last year. Those enrolled in this course were given a great deal of freedom when selecting topics for their research. For this reason, Dr. Quéma explained, the course was doubly challenging. Students had to "develop and refine skills of argumentation" in the new medium while also experiencing the kind of free reign usually reserved for those working at the grad level.

A few students from the Twentieth Century British Culture course were in attendance at the Axe and spoke up to share their opinions of the course and the medium. On the first point, the consensus was that student self-direction was very worthwhile. On the second, one student commented that hypermedia's value rests in the way that it "pries students out of the Arts convention of essay writing." All BA students who have begun grumbling about potential employability after their degree ought to listen up. In an increasingly computer-centric

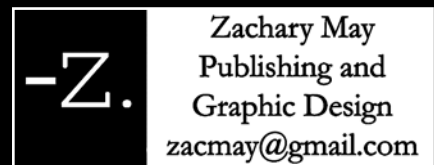
world, it will pay to be able to use these new tools to effectively express opinions. Students may as well diversify their skills of argumentation while the opportunity is available.

Although the venue and circumstances were not ideal for this event (Wednesday night, being wing-night, meant students were noshing and talking away at nearby tables while sound from the big-screen intruded from a distance), it was an interactive and detailed introduction to the value of hypermedia and its contribution to the Acadia classroom. 



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