

WINTER 2016

# The English BROADSIDE

The English Department's Newsletter  
Kennesaw State University



Continuing a Legacy

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### **The English Broadside**

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### **Department Chair**

Dr. Sheila Smith McKoy

### **Editor**

Stevi Dinizio

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### **Kennesaw State University**

Department of English  
1000 Chastain Road  
Kennesaw, Georgia 30152  
(470) 578-6297

# The Art of Shameless Self-Promotion: Why English and Why Now?

**W**e have been very busy attending to our commitment to our students, our research and the engagement efforts that connect us to our communities, our professional organizations and the things that we are most passionate about in the world.

Perhaps the one thing that we can say about the Fall of 2016 is that it was a time of change and reflection. We are preparing for the construction of a new building, which will soon start. The English Department also welcomed our newest faculty members, associate professors Na-Rae Kim, Clarice Moran and Michelle Miles, and lecturers Sarah Creel and Laura Howard. As the new chair of the department, I have been welcomed into a department that is actively preparing our department to embrace the global, transformative aspects of contemporary English Studies.

It has been a great pleasure to serve as the chair of the department during this exciting time, especially since the department has taken the bold step of preparing for a curriculum revision that connects our students to the exciting fields encompassed by English Studies and that clearly articulates what we, as English scholars and thinkers, actually do. While our faculty contribute nationally, globally, and engage in interdisciplinary research and endeavors both as scholars and humanists, too often those outside of our disciplines have little understanding of what we do or how we engage with the world. As one of my favorite Akan proverbs states, "Until the Story of the hunt is told by the Lion, the tale of the hunt will always glorify the hunter."

The department has taken the necessary and bold step to tell our own tales about our discipline and the myriad ways in which we engage in it. We are emphasizing the hard skills that students learn as English majors including writing, research skills, textual analysis, clear communication skills and critical thinking skills, all of which provide our graduates with employment opportunities. We are already providing our students with greater job placements, internships, and career possibilities. We will continue to offer our students courses that require them to think about the language, national and international literatures, theory, creative writing and Digital Humanities. Throughout the year, our website will feature the wonderful accomplishments of our faculty, our majors and our alumni. All of these stories tell the tale of the lion: a major in English is a gateway to a multitude of exciting professional opportunities in the world.

Enjoy,  
Dr. Sheila Smith McKoy, Chair

# *Continuing a Legacy*

**Celebrating the 20th Anniversary of  
the Masters of Art in Professional Writing**

Stevi Dinizio



Photo credit: Rita Spisak





*"The MAPW allows for cross-mingling and community-making among all different types of writers."*

*Alumna Cheryl Stiles*

The MAPW program has seen plenty of growth in its twenty years of existence. Offering three disciplines of study, applied, creative, and rhetorical/composition, students in the program are given a quality education from top-notch faculty. Alumni have even gone on to successful careers in a variety of markets.

On September 22, 2016, faculty and alumni came together to celebrate these past twenty years of growth and excellence.

"The recent celebrations of the 20-year anniversary of the program, something Professor Grooms organized, was wonderful in that it focused on the ways in which the program has grown in addition to some of the interesting work that graduates of the program are doing. It is not often that you attend a writing program anniversary and hear a poet [alumna Cheryl Stiles] and a public relations expert

[alumna Melva Robertson] in the same evening," says Dr. William (Bill) Rice, creative writing teacher since 2014 and department chair 2006-2016.

The poet of the evening, alumna Cheryl Stiles, began the MAPW program in 200 when she heard that the new Creative Nonfiction teacher was Dr. Linda Niemann. Now working as a librarian in KSU's Sturgis Library and writing poetry, Stiles still looks back on her MAPW experience with delight.

"I think the reputation of the faculty has contributed to its growth. They are excellent.... I think people who graduate from the program feel very connected to it. We, as alum, would like to have ways to be involved," says Stiles.

Interim director of the MAPW, Tony Grooms, sees how the unique nature of the program has led to its longevity.

"[The MAPW's] approach is appealing because it prepares students for many different

kinds of writing tasks and multiple avenues into the professional writing world... and KSU is located in metro Atlanta, which is still wildly growing and has writing communities in all the genres we teach in. I guess we are the right program in the right place at the right time."

One of the program's founders, Dr. Robert Barrier, has seen the MAPW's growth from its beginning in 1996, and witnessed the program's alumni going on to careers in writing.

"Early on, the success of the first graduates, obtaining positions in teaching and in business and in publication, attracted people in the area looking for something different and promising. And of course, the expertise and the commitment of the faculty were essential elements. Dr. Susan Hunter's knowledge and innovation as founding director made the program successful from the start."

# Giving Alumni a Home

A look at the new digital magazine, MAPWriting

Stevi Dinizio

In the Fall of 2016, the MAPW program welcomed a student-created digital magazine called MAPWriting. Designed with alumni and potential students in mind, the magazine highlights the accomplishments and activities of MAPW alumni.

I had the pleasure of speaking with Estefany Palacio and Dr. Sergio Figueiredo about the magazine. Palacio is the managing editor and founder of MAPWriting, as well as a student in the MAPW program. Figueiredo is an MAPW faculty member who contributes to the production and direction of the magazine.

*Why did you decide to start this project?*

Estefany Palacio:

Before this project even began to take shape, I had created a digital magazine for my technical writing class. The title was *Perspectives in Writing*, and the content dealt with different approaches to the writing process. As the semester went on, my class instructor, Dr.

Sergio Figueiredo, and I discussed how a project like the one I had created could be shaped around the MAPW. After several conversations and meetings with Mr. Tony Grooms, the MAPWriting came about....



## *Why did you decide to get involved with a project like this?*



Sergio Figueiredo:

I... want to be an active participant in the communities of which I am a part, and I especially want to support the work of our students. Estefany put in a lot of good work to pilot the publication, and I thought it would be a valuable project for the program

in general... Also, when I first saw Estefany's project and the potential it had, I remembered my experience working on a program-sponsored publication as a student in my MA program, and how that work influenced me during my studies in and beyond the program.

## *What is the purpose behind the magazine?*

Palacio:

This magazine is an alumni magazine. It is a place where we will highlight alumnus of the MAPW program and share what they are up to with their careers. We will also highlight other alumnus accomplishments, faculty and alumni publications, and possibly other articles. The magazine will be informative and very helpful to those

who are looking to apply to a masters program, current MAPW students who are wondering what types of jobs are available, faculty who want to learn about their alumni and anyone else who is interested in the MAPW program.

Figueiredo:

The magazine provides students in the program an opportunity to work on a

publication from an editor's perspective: collecting articles, copyediting, design and production, and writing articles on writing. Each of these opportunities, in my view, are invaluable whether students plan to go into industry, nonprofit, or government work, and even for students who plan to continue beyond the MA program by applying to doctoral programs.

## *How do you hope to impact the MAPW program with this magazine?*

Palacio:

I truly hope that the magazine brings a diverse readership together. While it is an alumni magazine, the stories told in MAPWriting serve as great examples of what goes on in the different fields of writing. When I say this, I am thinking of actual experiences that people can read, especially those that are currently in the MAPW program or that are interested in applying.



Figueiredo:

I hope that the magazine will encourage students in the program to organize a student organization to formalize the management structure of the magazine, and that the magazine will become a source of work experience in writing, publishing, and design work. The more opportunities that we, as faculty, can offer students to gain experience in the areas of study covered in the program, the more opportunities students will have available to them."

# MAPWritng

The Magazine of the MA in Professional Writing at KSU



## Aaron Levy

Aaron Levy is a professor of English at Kennesaw State University and the author of *Blood Don't Lie* and *Waisted*, both young adult novels. Levy's play for young adults, *Pizza with Shrimp on Top*, was nominated for the 2007 Distinguished National Play Award for the Middle and Secondary School Audiences.



## Melva Robertson

Melva Robertson is Assistant Director for Media Relations, Health Sciences Communications at Emory University and an MAPW alum. She is the author of *Congratulations! It's a Brand: The Entrepreneur's Guide to Birthing the Brand, Identifying the Target Audience, and Increasing Visibility*.

Photo Credit: Jabari Cain Photography



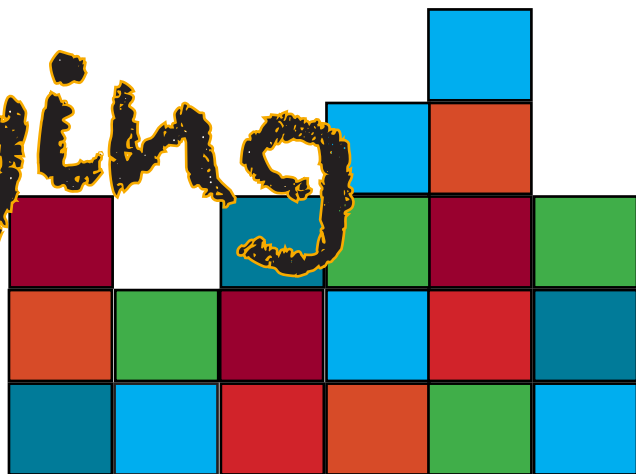
# Building the Dream

What Faculty and Alumni are doing with their writing skills

Click on the names to view video interviews with the writers!

# Just Playing Around

The Worldwide Day of Play



Molly Armstrong-Paschal

Arthur Molella, Director of the Lemelson Center once said, “Play is serious business. At stake for us are the ways we socialize and teach future generations of scientists, inventors, artists, explorers, and other individuals who will shape the work in which we live.” (“Invention at Play” *Creativity at Work Newsletter* July '02)

Kennesaw State University’s Learning Communities understand that education cannot be limited by university walls. On Saturday, September 24, 2016, Hillary Steiner and Yvonne Wichman, partners in the Learning Community called “The



Pursuit of Happiness,” took the education of play into the parks of Kennesaw. The “World Wide Day of Play,” sponsored by KSU’s Parks and Rec Department, encouraged students, as well as families, to leave their distractions behind and come outside to play.

“I have been teaching in a variety of learning communities since 2006 and have personally

developed a few of my own,” says Wichman, a part-time instructor in the Department of English since 1999. “I have former students who still stay in touch with me, ones who first met their best friends in my LC classrooms and have remained steadfast friends every since. Learning communities work! Students build long term relationships that



stick with them throughout their college years and beyond. Guess you can tell...I'm a big fan of KSU's learning communities program!"

Through a connection with the community, these students brought their smiles, energy, love of play, and of course, their skill set of bubble making to interact with younger children and teach them to have fun with a new community of friends.



Molly Armstrong-Paschal is an MAPW student, a Graduate Assistant in the Writing Center, and a Development Editor and Curriculum Writer for OnCourse Learning. She leads a quiet double life as a writer and the mom of a burgeoning rock star... because dreams happen.



Photo Credits: Hilary Steiner & Yvonne Wichman





# Recognizing Excellence

An alumnus and student are recognized for their hard work



Although an undergraduate, full-time English student Diana Kovalchuk participates in the Accelerated Bachelor's Masters (ABM) program while maintaining a 4.0 GPA. Because of Kovalchuk's work ethic and class engagement, she was nominated for a 2016 College of Humanities and Social Sciences Outstanding Student Award for the Department of English.

"[The ABM experience] has taught me that professional writing is important; the MAPW program has prepared me for a better future because my concentration is in composition and rhetoric, and I eventually want to become a professor."

Kovalchuk also presented her writing in the African Literature Association (ALA) conference in Atlanta during the Spring of 2015. She plans to graduate in May 2017.

Alumnus and part-time English instructor, Christopher Martin, was recently nominated for a 2016 Outstanding Alumnus of the English Department, presented by the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. Martin graduated from the MAPW in December 2013 and taught English at Georgia Highlands College before joining the KSU staff in August 2016.

"I'm humbled and honored to have been given the award. It's all the more special because it's rooted in the encouragement and support of people I respect and who have made a difference in my life, MAPW professors and colleagues alike."

In addition to teaching, Martin writes nonfiction and poetry. His debut full-length book, *This Gladdening Light*, won a Will D. Campbell award in Creative Nonfiction and will be published by Mercer University Press in July 2017.





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