

The Finkwell

Spring 2007

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Volume 1

Issue 2

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Reading Between the Lines with Dr. Starner

By: Shannon Curtin

All of the professors at Wilkes, regardless of what some students might think, are involved with multiple school functions, class work, and personal research, which is especially the case for Dr. Janet Starner. Dr. Starner is not only a full-time faculty member in the Wilkes University English Department but also is responsible for the previous growth and development of the Writing Center. She is now



involved in co-editing a collection of essays on "anonymity" in "the early modern period." Throughout the following interview, Dr. Starner explains her research, offers advice for future teachers or professors, and provides some of her personal feelings towards the subject we all love: literature.

How long have you been teaching at Wilkes? What do you like about it?

I have been at Wilkes since the fall semester of 1999. I like lots of things about my job: I love the class discussions I have with my students; I love learning new things as I prepare to teach them to my students; I love learning from my colleagues about good teaching practices; I love being paid to read books and talk about them; and I like sharing my research findings with interested listeners.

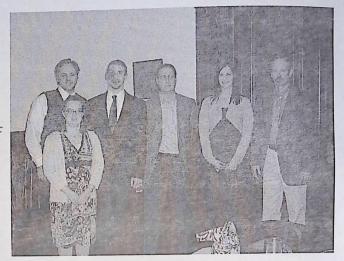
What are you currently working on? What have you found thus far? Can you explain your findings? Could you explain your research; what is "A Manuscript Miscellany?"

The big project that I am currently at work on is co-editing a collection of essays centered on the topic of "anonymity" in the early modern period. My chapter in the volume is titled "Jack on Both Sides: Appropriating Equivocation." In this essay I focus on a 10-line poem that I discovered in a 400-year-old manuscript several years ago. This poem equivocates. Read horizontally, it affirms loyalty to the doctrine of the Church of England; read contrarily as a twenty-line poem in two vertical columns, it vehemently rejects Protestant practices. Interesting-but the poem is transcribed in at least two dozen different manuscripts. But in several of those manuscripts, the compiler has changed the

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Faculty Blurbs

Larry Kuhar organized and facilitated the 2nd annual "Writers at Work" panel discussion on December 11, 2006, in the Kirby Salon (photo at right). The event offered our students, faculty, and local community the opportunity to hear career stories and learn about communication practices from professionals working in business and industry. Panel guests shared their career stories and answered questions on careerrelated topics, including technology, leadership, organizational culture, gender, and diversity. Additionally, over the January break, Dr. Kuhar completed a Leadership Communications program at a local business.



- Last October, Marcia Farrell participated in the 2006 Modernist Studies Association conference in Tulsa, OK, where she presented the short paper "(Re)fashioning Utopia in Stella Gibbons' Cold Comfort Farm" as part of the seminar: Modernism and the Utopian. The paper examined the roles of the marketplace and consumer culture in developing seemingly utopian societies. Also, Dr. Farrell completed a bibliography project on the Anglo-Irish writer, Elizabeth Bowen, which will be published as a selected bibliography in an upcoming special issue of Modern Fiction Studies.
- Phyllis Weliver will co-convene "Words and Notes in the Nineteenth Century," an interdisciplinary conference on musical writing jointly hosted by the Institute of Germanic and Romance Studies and the Institute of Musical Research at the University of London School of Advanced Study. The School of Advanced Study acts as a hub, nationally, for researchers in the ten disciplines which it represents, and also runs research programs of international caliber. The conference will take place on July 2-3, 2007, and is organized on a theme devised by Dr. Weliver. In addition to her many responsibilities, Dr. Weliver will also chair the final plenary and the session on women and fiction.

Conference Link: http://music.sas.ac.uk/imr-events/imr-conferences-colloquia-performance-events/words-notes-19c.html#1241

• Agnes Cardoni, author of Women's Ethical Coming-of-Age: Adolescent Female Characters in the Prose Fiction of Tillie Olsen, wrote a memorial piece, at the request of Olsen's daughter, Julie Olsen Edwards, celebrating the writer's life that was shared on February 17, in Oakland, California. Tillie Olsen passed away on January 1, 2007, just a few days shy of her 95th birthday, a loss that Dr. Cardoni is still mourning. For interested readers, Dr. Cardoni's book is located in the Farley Library.

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The Inkwell Staff

Faculty Advisors: Dr. Maria Hebert-Leiter & Dr. Marcia Farrell

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- Mischelle Anthony will present two essays of at this year's American Literature Association conference in Boston. "Teaching the Unpublished: Eighteenth-Century Women Autobiographers in New England" discusses her experience teaching in the ENG 397 memoir course last fall, and "'Innumerable Judgments': P.D. Manvill's Lucinda; Or, The Mountain Mourner" investigates how an 1807 letter collection complicates early nineteenth-century concerns about audience, purpose, and the publishing industry. Dr. Anthony's poem "Six-Foot Fetus" will appear in Mudfish 16 (2007), a Manhattan-based poetry magazine.
- On December 28, Maria Hebert-Leiter presented her paper "Cajuns Know What It Means to Miss More than New Orleans" for the Ethnicity and Literature Panel at the 2006 Modern Language Association Conference in Philadelphia. This panel focused on the consequences of Hurricane Katrina and the 2005 levee breaks on the ethnic makeup of New Orleans. Dr. Hebert-Leiter's work expanded this topic to address literary representations of hurricane and flood damage in Louisiana literature and such damage's effects on ethnic communities. As a native Louisianan with strong New Orleans ties, she would like to thank all of you in the Wilkes community who have reached out in any way to the people along the Gulf Coast who experienced the devastation in 2005.

Hear Yel: The Best of English 101 and 120 Contest

By: Dr. Chad Stanley & Dr. Marcia Farrell

The English program would like to announce the creation of a new-as yet unnamed-Best of English 101 and 120 publication. This publication will include exceptional pieces of student writing from ENG 101 and ENG 120 courses taught during the 2006-2007 academic year. Prizes will be awarded for the strongest work in a variety of categories.

All students enrolled in ENG 101 or ENG 120 at any time during the 2006-2007 academic year are encouraged to submit work. Submissions will be judged by a panel consisting of both Wilkes University faculty and students. The submission deadline will be May 12, 2007. Submissions may be of any length, but must be in the form of a hard copy, and will be collected in the English office on the 2nd floor of Kirby Hall. Contest winners will be notified over the summer. The publication will be distributed and prizes will be awarded at the start of the Fall 2007 semester.

At present, Drs. Farrell and Stanley are collecting your ideas for possible names for this publication. Please fill out a ballot form and deposit it in the box located on the 1st floor of Kirby Hall by March 19, 2007. Voting for the best contest name will take place by March 24, 2007.

Kudos To:

Shannon Curtin ('07) and Dr. Chad Stanley for being named "Vagina Warriors" at the February 16, 2007 presentation of *The Vagina Monologues*. This honor recognizes their continued efforts to raise awareness of social gender issues, especially those affecting women.

Student and Club Updates

On December 2, 2006, all thirteen members of Dr. Hamill's Chaucer class (ENG 340) presented papers at The Undergraduate Conference in Medieval and Early Modern Studies at Moravian College in Bethlehem, PA. The one-day conference featured presentations from more than 70 students from colleges and universities throughout the Northeastern United States, as well as Louisiana and Ohio. For ENG 340 students, the conference was the culmination of a nearly semester-long process during which they submitted paper proposals to the conference organizers and then worked to prepare their papers for public presentation at Moravian. The students produced first-rate papers, and they took their work to a public, and an intense, academic setting with great success. Dr. Hamill met several faculty members at the Conference who spoke directly to the quality of the work they saw from Wilkes that day, noting that the students should be proud of their accomplishments. Dr. Hamill could not agree more. Congratulations, class!

Conference Participants: Sam Chiarelli, Ashley Fiorucci, Jennifer Hameza, Meagan Harkness, Henry Hunsinger, Corrine Medvec, Maggie Merkle, Conrad Miller, Kacy Muir, Elisa Phillips, Mollie Rance, Brian Redmond, and Angelina Teutonico.

Writing Center News:

- The Writing Center is pleased to announce that staff and English faculty will be attending two writing center conferences in March of 2007. In conjunction with writing center staff and Writing Mentors, Dr. Chad Stanley will be leading a panel on the topic of the Wilkes University Writing Mentor program, given at the 2007 NEWCA (New England Writing Center Association) conference hosted by the University of Connecticut. Wilkes students will also lead a second panel at this conference. Dr. Mischelle Anthony will lead a panel session, in cooperation with Wilkes students, at the 2007 MAWCA (Middle-Atlantic Writing Center Association) conference in Philadelphia. The student participants are Jeremy Zuckero from English and Math, Sarah Doman from English and Elementary Education, and Michalene Davis from Psychology. Both conferences are scheduled for March 31, 2007. All panel proposals were quickly accepted and approved by the organizers of these two conferences.
- Spring 2007 Writing Center Hours: Monday 9-6, Tuesday 10-6, Wednesday 9-6, Thursday 9-6, Friday 9-1

The department encourage all students to make use of this wonderful service and thanks all of the students who work in the center.

Manuscript News:

- Don't forget to look for the new Manuscript, which will be unveiled on May 1,
 2007. Further information will be released later.
- Students interested in joining *The Manuscript* should come to meetings on Thursdays at llam in Kirby Hall. Also, save your materials for the fall issue.
- Future readings will be announced.

Sigma Tau Delta News:

• This semester will be an active one for Sigma Tau Delta. In addition to continuing its efforts to partner with both Barnes & Noble and ArtsYOUniverse for community literacy outreach projects for the spring and future semesters, members of Sigma Tau Delta will be working with Mrs. Barbara Welch, of The United Hebrew Institute in Kingston, PA, on a Writing Workshop with her fifth through eighth-grade students. Welch invited members of Sigma Tau Delta to lead the Workshop for her

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Student Services: At Wilker and on the Web

By: Catherine Gallagher

Wilkes University recently decided to make student life a bit easier. The Registrar, cashier, and recorder are now all in one place. Instead of walking all over campus and trying to get all that paperwork in order, students may now go to The One Stop Shop. While Margaret Zellner and Diane Milano encourage students to take advantage of the Student Services office, they also suggest that students acquaint themselves with the Registrar online.

Milano was kind enough to sit down and discuss some links that the online Student Services has to offer. One link that she particularly advocates is the Today at Wilkes page. "Students need to check their Today at Wilkes like they check their Myspace," Milano said. Today at Wilkes offers information on everything from tax information to campus events. This link can be accessed by first going to www.wilkes.edu and then clicking on the Current Students link.

Aside from the advantages of Today at Wilkes, Student Services also offers online links to:

- Student Enrollment & Registration
- Degree and Enrollment Verifications
- Assignment of Classroom Space
- Posting of Grade Reports
- Posting of Dean's List
- Historical Information about Wilkes
- Calendars and Schedules
- Maintenance of Academic Transcripts

The best way to learn about all the online services Wilkes has to offer is to simply go to www.wilkes.edu and browse around. The Wilkes web page has many links to sites such as Clearing House, Praxis, student health insurance, alumni services, name change online, tax information, FAFSA on the web, and much more. Also, the receptionists at Student Services are always more than willing to help Wilkes students with any questions. For additional information about Student Services, check out:

- Registrar information at http://www.wilkes.edu/pages/588.asp
- Student Services at 84 West South Street, Wilkes-Barre, PA 18766
- 1-800-WILKES-U
- Operations Manager Margaret Zellner at 408-4402

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UHI students when she was awarded a Language Arts Grant by Creative Communications, Inc. of Logan, UT. Sigma Tau Delta members will work with Mrs. Welch's students on various aspects of the writing process, as they create their own poems and short stories. The invitation to participate in this workshop is a great honor for Wilkes's chapter of Sigma Tau Delta—and a great opportunity for members to share their time, their talents, and their passion for literature with the community.

• Dr. Hamill will soon be contacting students eligible for membership in Sigma Tau Delta. More information on the 2007 induction ceremony (which will be sometime in mid-April) is forthcoming.

Senior Capstones News:

• We would like to remind all students that senior capstone presentations will be scheduled at the end of the semester. The specific dates and times will be published in the next issue.

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"Connecting with the Writing Utensil": Senior Spotlight on Mariane Ferrantino

By Kacy Muir



Many students hope to have a passionate and inspirational teacher. That teacher, with the utmost intellect, can make learning fun. Mariane Ferrantino, a senior English major and Secondary Education minor, spoke about her dreams of becoming that awe-inspiring teacher who is devoted to making her passion of education a lesson to all of her students.

In Tobyhanna, PA, her parents, John and Grace Ferrantino could not have raised a more positive and caring person. When asked to speak about teaching and its importance in her life, Ferrantino couldn't help but smile. Currently, she is student teaching at Crestwood High School. She is busy these days, as she writes lesson plans while trying to manage both her academic and social life.

Ferrantino, who was once a Musical Theater major before transferring to Wilkes, stays true to her theatrical beginnings.

As a participant in February's The Vagina Monologues, Ferrantino believes taking notice of the struggles of all women is important. Although she did not have the ability to double major in English and Musical Theater, she never stopped loving the stage, which is why she hopes to become involved in and give back to the drama program at the school where she will be teaching.

At Wilkes she has become accustomed to Kirby Hall and all of the people who make it such a wonderful little community. "Kirby Hall has a history behind it. I'm sure there are some fantastic urban legends," says Ferrantino, who along with her fellow Sigma Tau Delta members, helped decorate the hall for Haunted Wilkes last fall. It has proved to be the fondest memory yet for Ferrantino, who will miss all of the friends and faculty she has met here.

Ferrantino is also involved in many extra-curricular activities, but one will continue to stand out even after she graduates: the Kick Me campaign that stems from a presentation for Dr. Hebert-Leiter's Contemporary Drama course last fall. "It focused on the representation of AIDS in the media as it connected with Tony Kushner's play Angels in America. As I was doing research I stumbled across YouthAids.org and the Kick Me campaign. [It] basically asked for young people to become activists by forming teams and raising money. People would sponsor members from the team to wear a 'kick me' sign declaring facts about HIV and AIDS among the youth population. It was a great experience organizing it," says Ferrantino who hopes someone will carry the torch.

She professed that Dr. Cardoni, who we can't help but call "Mama" Cardoni, has been most influential during her time at Wilkes. "Dr. Cardoni gave us the opportunity to dive into works of literature of our cultural heritage," she said, speaking of American Literature II. Ferrantino adds that Dr. Cardoni has always been open to talking with her and has a great interest in all of her students. Although, without as much as a pause, she explains that all of the English professors have made an impact on her life.

In her spare time, Ferrantino writes poetry and short stories. She tries to write in her journal daily. "Writing should be a very big part of everyone's education. I think that a lot of people have forgotten what it's like to write with a pen and paper," says Ferrantino, who is a firm believer in the written word.

One day someone may commend Ferrantino for her teaching, and this is one aspect of her lessons that she is most grateful for: seeing the final product. At the end of this semester Ferrantino will graduate and have the certification to teach middle school through high school. She will place her blue and gold tassels in safe-keeping, her honor cords in a box, and remember the biggest lesson of all: the hard work is worth the effort if one student can leave class taking Ferrantino's lessons both about life and literature with them.

Guest Ruthor

University of Maryland Professor Dave Wyatt, author of nine books and a number of articles, will be the focus of several events on Thursday, March 22. He will discuss non-fiction writing and his latest book, And the War Came: An Accidental Memoir (University of Wisconsin Press 2004). Wyatt's memoir deals with the events of September 11, 2001. He will begin his visit with a discussion on the writing process in Dr. Kuhar's English 201 class at 9am. Professor Wyatt will meet and talk with students in the Kirby Salon from 3pm - 4pm. Finally, he will hold a public reading at 7pm in the Kirby Salon. Please plan to attend.

tino Kuhar's Corner

By: Dr. Larry Kuhar

Where English majors and minors ask the questions, and Dr. Kuhar provides the answers.

What is your favorite aspect of working in Kirby Hall?

My favorite aspect of working in Kirby Hall is the people-students, faculty, and staffwith whom I share these halls on a day-to-day basis. We focus on setting when we study literature but sometimes overlook the importance of place in our lives. Kirby Hall will stay with us as a prominent part of the stories we form together here. The story of Kirby Hall is not the story of the building's fascinating



origins and incredible history; it's the story of the people in it.

What is one of your favorite quotes from a book, literary piece, or song? "A screaming comes across the sky. It has happened before, but there is nothing to compare it to now. It is too late." These words open Thomas Pynchon's Gravity's Rainbow. The "screaming" is the supersonic blast of the German-built V-2 weapon. In the novel, this sound occurs after the V-2 has exploded on its target. I like these lines because of the playful reversal of cause and effect. This idea informs a problem with reading for the plot; that is, we should be careful as readers when we shape importance around every detail in a story. It also tells us something important about ourselves: The importance of our experiences, education, and relationships with professors, students, and friends is often available only well after our time shared together when we're able to shape stories around the experiences and people that help shape who we have become.

Does being a professor of English lead you to have superpowers? Funny question to ask because I've researched this question for nearly 20 years at Wilkes and feel awkwardly authorized to share my findings: Unfortunately, I'm compelled to report that being an English professor does not produce superpowers; however, all hope is not lost. I saw recently that superpower can be purchased for roughly 20% more than natural powers cost. Moreover, who would want to be a "superpower" now?

Remember...

Any English majors or minors with questions for the department chair, Dr. Kuhar, can send in their questions to The Inkwell, care of Dr. Farrell or Dr. Hebert-Leiter.

Tuesday Morning By: Stefanie McHugh

Tuesday morning Snuck up from behind Came in with the sun rays, Peeking through the blinds My hand reached, Tried so hard to find Just a piece of Monday night In my mind

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Celebrating V.Day at Wilkes

By: Catherine Gallagher



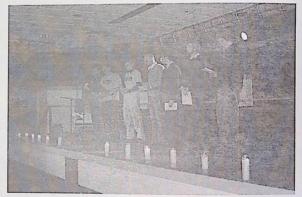
February 16, 2007, kicked off a two-day presentation of Eve Ensler's The Vagina Monologues at Wilkes University. Co-coordinators Lauren Carey and Nicole Leader did an excellent job of organizing the event. The performances, overseen by faculty advisor Dr. Mischelle Anthony, were held in the Henry Student Center Ballroom. Aside from watching the monologues, students were able to purchase lollipops and t-shirts. The Comic Book Club also showed their support by selling homemade cookies, while the WISEUP club sold soda. The Commuter Council also had a table.

Carey and Leader made this year's performance a holistic one by opening the two-hour presentation with "Ten Things Men can do to Prevent Gender Violence," which was read by some of Wilkes's male population, including student, Drs. Thomas Hamill and Chad Stanley, and personnel from Wilkes's Public Safety.

Monologue performers included: Raychil Arndt, Amanda Baronowski, Lauren Carey, Shannon Curtin, Sarah Doman, Gerry DuBoice, Mariane Ferrantino, Shelley Hydock, Nicole Leader, Dana Manning, Kristen Potsko, Kimberly Sarosky, Erica Swatho, Tory Tomassetti, and Valerie Martinez. Shelley Hydock was named most valuable performer (MVP) and will shadow Carey and Leader next year before taking over directorial duties in the future.

Dr. Chad Stanley and Shannon Curtin were presented with Vagina Warrior awards for their support of Women's studies on campus. Curtin was additionally recognized for her organization of WISEUP, the only women's studies club on campus. Additionally, Curtin served as one of this year's readers. She, along with her fellow castmates, delivered the monologues in a way which made the audience both laugh and cry. The whole experience was very moving.

Thanks to Wilkes's Student Government, Wilkes students were able to attend this event free of charge. Non-students paid \$10.00 to attend. Additionally, audience members had the opportunity to purchase t-shirts designed by Baronowski and Tomassetti for \$10.00 each.



All the proceeds from this event were sent to charity in an effort to prevent violence against women. According to Carey, 10% of the proceeds went directly to the V-Day Foundation. The rest of the proceeds was split between the Victim's Resource Center, Domestic Violence Service Center, NEPA Women's Health Alliance, and Planned Parenthood.

To make contributions to *The Inkwell*, please contact:
Dr. Marcia Farrell (marcia.farrell@wilkes.edu)

Dr. Maria Hebert-Leiter (maria.hebertleiter@wilkes.edu) for details.

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wording of the poem, sometimes significantly: leaving out lines, adding extra stanzas, or translating the poem into a different language. In the essay, I explore the potential reasons for those changes. I am particularly interested in questions like: How did early modern compiler/readers conceptualize the copying they did? What audience response, if any, did they imagine as they composed? How did early modern readers "use" poetry?

I argue that the various transcriptions of this poem lend weight to the new scholarly sense that early modern readers thought of the act of reading very differently than we do in the 21st century. They believed they should be "active readers" and as such could make meaning on their own. Not only was it acceptable to change a text, but also readers were enjoined to add bits of prose and verse to their "paper books" for later use in conversation and reflection. Since "Jack on Both Sides" is both equivocal and playful, I suggest that the poem offers each compiler a performance opportunity. If this manuscript verse is in communion with readers—and I believe it is—then it has the power to engage with them, in particular private, cloistered, spaces. "Jacke" is inviting his audience into a liminal, "no-space," perhaps only possible in the chirographic (part oral, part aural, part written) medium.

What do you love about early British literature?

The answer to that comes in two parts: I love it for its complexity. Each text rewards multiple readings, and like an onion, can be peeled apart to reveal more and more hidden meanings. On the other hand, meaning resides in the mind of the reader not in the text, so the challenge that these older pieces present is in understanding what was in the mind of an early modern reader. I love reading history, and the clear understanding of how these texts worked in their historical time is essential to understanding them as literature.

What's next for you, either with your research or your academic career in general? I want to continue to study early modern manuscripts. I've spent the last four years teaching myself the fundamentals of manuscript study. Now I want to use those skills to branch out into areas I've not yet explored.

What are a few of your all time favorite works (poetry or prose) /authors?

Of course it won't surprise you to know that I love Shakespeare. But I also love Tolkien's trilogy, The Lord of the Rings. I love reading science fiction and fantasy. Most recently, I read Philip Pullman's series His Dark Materials and loved it. Influenced by Milton's Paradise Lost, it is fantasy for adult readers. I also love modern poetry, writers like Billy Collins, Donald Hall, and Adrienne Rich.

If you could interview any author from any time period who would it be, and what would you ask them?

Shakespeare. I'd ask him who the dark lady of the sonnets is, and then I'd want to know all about his life, and then I'd say to him, "About Pericles, what were you thinking?"

A good number of English majors want to teach, either at the high school or college level; what kind of advice would you offer these individuals, knowing what you do know about the field?

Have as many different experiences as you can while you're an undergraduate. Read as many different kinds of books, in as many different periods, as you possibly can. Talk to your fellow students about what you read; never again will you have so willing an audience or be surrounded by so many people who are as excited about books as you are. If you plan to teach, remember how your good teachers helped you learn. If you plan to teach at the college level, know that you will need to commit to obtaining a Ph.D. Above all, enjoy the journey.

What do you feel is your biggest accomplishment thus far in your career?

That would have to be two things, which are related: my vision for the Writing Center while I was its Director and my role in getting the faculty and administration to think about Writing Across the Curriculum. I began my career at Wilkes as the Director of the Writing Center, and when I arrived, my predecessor had thrown out all the files and erased the computer hard drives, so I had to start from scratch. In the years that followed, the Writing Center evolved into a place where students and faculty collaborated on writing and research and mentored each other. That energetic and stimulating environment continues under the expert direction of Dr. Chad Stanley, and Writing Across the Curriculum is now a universitywide concern. I am very proud that the seeds I planted have grown into programs that make such a big difference in students' lives.

In the Next Issue...

- Kuhar's Corner
- New faculty game
- Capstone information
- Senior Spotlight
- Review of David Wyatt's visit
- Unveiling of Essay Contest title
- Information on 300-level Fall courses
- Answers to Teacher's Pet

Description

A) Dr. Stanley: "Between the four of us, two feline and two canine, we have political, literal, and cultural connections."

B) Dr. Hebert-Leiter: "We are a Frenchie and a Bullmastiff; mom says we snore loudly and are odoriferous... whatever that means."

C) Deb Archavage: "I like to play with a piece of my ball."

D) Dr. Farrell: "I'm a pink and white fish; I have my own sunken ship, and grandma calls me 'Lardy'"

E) Dr. Cardoni: "I am a 'Tuxedo' cat from a litter that Brian Dewey's cat had."

F) Dr. Weliver: "My
favorite food is tuna, and
I would love to meet
Abelard."

G) Dr. Hamill: "I am constantly confronted with the gravitational burdens of my own centrality."

H) Dr. Kuhar: "One of us has a PHD in 'Human Training,' and the other is 'a wonderful addition' to our owner's 'story.' Our names both start with the same letter."

TEACHER'S PET

Directions:

Match the staff/faculty member's name with the name of his/her pet(s) in the fishbowl below. Answers will appear in the next issue of *The Inkwell*.

