

SSAIS CURRENTS

Readings at Ramapo: Joyce Carol Oates

By James Hoch



Photo courtesy of Carolyn Herring

Joyce Carol Oates in conversation with Prof. Monika Giacompe

On Monday, November 12, the legendary **Joyce Carol Oates** spoke and gave a reading on campus. Joyce Carol Oates is one of America's most acclaimed and productive writers. She published her first book in 1963 and has since published over fifty novels, as well as many volumes of short stories, poetry, and nonfiction. She's been nominated for the Pulitzer Prize and has won the National Book Award and the PEN/Malamud Award for

Excellence in Short Fiction. Oates is the Roger S. Berlind '52 Professor in the Humanities with the Program in Creative Writing at Princeton University, where she has taught since 1978.

continued on page 2

Model UN Dinner

By Dean Chen

As a new faculty in Political Science, I have had the pleasure and honor to engage in and help out with Ramapo's Model UN Club since September 2012. Having a long history at Ramapo College, the club

has attended at least two conferences each year in the last three decades. The student delegates have registered impressive and

continued on page 2

This issue of *SAIS CURRENTS* was produced and edited by Professors Todd Barnes, Keisha Heywood, Rebecca Root, and Natalia Santamaria Laorden.

New Jersey's Public Liberal Arts College

Introducing Dean Chen, Assistant Professor of Political Science

By Jeremy Teigen

Professor **Dean Chen** came to us



Photo courtesy Carolyn Herring

from the University of California Santa Barbara, where he finished his

Ph.D. in Political Science in 2010 and served as a lecturer there for two years. His role in the political science major is largely centered on teaching International Relations

continued on page 2

Inside This Issue

- 1 Readings at Ramapo: Joyce Carol Oates
- 1 Introducing Dean Chen
- 1 Model UN Dinner
- 3 AIS Faculty Updates
- 3 Student News
- 4 AIS Film Series
- 5 Gumpert Teachers' Workshop
- 6 SSAIS Essay Contest
- 6 Student Clubs
- 7 Juliette Wells Presents 'Everybody's Jane'
- 8 Instructional Design Center



Readings at Ramapo

continued from page 1

On Monday, September 24, poet **Beth Ann Fennelly** and fiction writer **Tom Franklin** visited campus to read from their recent work. A husband and wife team currently teaching at the University of Mississippi, Fennelly and Franklin have won numerous awards for their works. Fennelly's often humorous and dramatic work focuses on the role of women in inherited traditions and uninherited roles and places. Franklin's novels and short stories mine the violent, mysterious, comical and absurd deep south of his childhood.

On Monday, November 5, poet and editor **Wayne Miller** gave a reading in the Salameno Spiritual Center. Miller is the author of several volumes of poetry and is the editor of *Pleiades: A Journal of New Writing*. □

Model UN Dinner

continued from page 1

stellar achievements in conferences held in New York City, Washington D.C., and other parts of the world such as Ecuador, France, and the Czech Republic. These model UN conferences are simulations of real-life UN meetings and conventions, in which students from around the world represent a selected country and participate in policy deliberations and discussions in various UN committees, including the General Assembly, Security Council, and others. This international conference event thoroughly covers the four pillars of Ramapo: (1) international; (2) intercultural; (3) interdisciplinary; and (4) experiential. Students not only learn and practice the important

continued on page 5

Introducing Dean Chen

continued from page 1

and Foreign policy, as well as politics within mainland China.

In addition to being a great teacher, Dean has published some impressive work this academic year. His largest project, an extension of his dissertation work, is a book on the trilateral and complex relations between the United States, Taiwan, and mainland China. *US Taiwan Strait Policy: The Origins of Strategic Ambiguity* (Lynne Rienner, 2012) explores the ambiguities in the Truman administration's Taiwan policy stances by deep research on Harry Truman and other principals, such as John Foster Dulles, Livingston Merchant, and Dean Rusk. With external funding, he did intensive primary and secondary research at the Truman library for the book to better understand American foreign policy in the mid-20th century.

Chen's research can illuminate America's current relations with China, too: these intricate relations continue to vex policy makers even today as President Obama hopes to "engage" the People's Republic of China while maintaining historical commitments to allies in Taiwan. The book is not the only thing Dean has gotten out this year. He has also contributed to a coauthored chapter in a Routledge published volume and has a peer-reviewed article in the *Southwestern Journal of International Studies* on the China-US-Taiwan triangle under the Clinton, Bush, and Obama presidencies. □

Photo courtesy of Ben Hymson



From Left to right: Brazilian Percussion Ensemble: Paula Straile-Costa, Andrew Krygoski, Dan Scarpa, Marc Gidal, Michael Castiglia, Mikhail Kaler, and Amarildo Santos Costa (Director)

AIS FACULTY UPDATES

Roark Atkinson's article, "Satan in the Pulpit: Popular Christianity during the Scottish Great Awakening, 1680-1750," will be published in the Winter 2013 (47:2) issue of *The Journal of Social History*.

Todd Barnes was invited to present his current research at the Rutgers English Department's Medieval-Renaissance Colloquium in October. His lecture, entitled "Barack Obama's 'Hamlet-like Indecision'," examines how the figure of Hamlet has been used in twentieth century political discourses.

Lisa Cassidy will present her paper "Doing 'CSI' in Critical Thinking Class" at a joint meeting of the American Association of Philosophy Teachers and the Association for Informal Logic and Critical Thinking, to be held during the American Philosophical Association's Midwest conference in New Orleans in February.

Paul H. Elovitz, Associate Professor of History, Psychohistory, and Interdisciplinary Studies, organized three panels and made four professional presentations since the end of the Spring Semester. Three were at international conferences at NYU and Rutgers, and his main topic was the 2012 presidential election. He also published 11 articles, 10

continued on page 4

Student News

Three Literature majors presented their work at the COPLAC Northeast Regional Undergraduate Research Conference October 26-27 at Eastern Connecticut State University. **Jacqueline Thomas** presented a paper titled "Desire, Semiotics, and the Constitutive Lack in Robert Hass' 'Meditation at Lagunitas'." Prof. **Todd Barnes** is her faculty advisor. The paper focuses on the lack that is central to human interaction both in communication and sexuality (what is, essentially, an inability to ever connect with the Other). **Caitlin Vogel's** paper was the product of her postmodern Literature Seminar class with Prof. **Val Flenga**. It was her final paper and is about feminist translation theory regarding the politics of translation and *écriture féminine*. Caitlin examines these themes closely in Nicole Brossard's novel *Mauve Desert/Le Desert Mauve*. The title of the paper is "Let's Talk About Translation: A Body of Translation Theory and Female Desire in Brossard's *Mauve Desert*." Caitlin commented that "It was one of the most meaningful papers I have written in my undergraduate career, and I learned so much from the research." **Robin Netanel's** paper is "Weighing Metaphors: Analyzing Christina Rossetti's 'Goblin Market' through Queer Theory, Ecocriticism, Marxist Structuralism, and

Psychoanalytical Theory," an essay she wrote in Prof. **Todd Barnes's** Literary Theory course.

Jacqueline Thomas has had a poem, "Nineteen in London," published by the online literary journal *Burning Word*.

In October, Literature majors **Julia Horniacek** and **Jessica Laurita** attended the Jane Austen Society of North America conference with Literature Prof. **Patricia Ard**. The conference took place in Brooklyn, New York. The students heard numerous speakers on academic and popular aspects of Austen's life and works, including Cornel West and Sandy Lerner.

Liberal Studies major **James Vasko** presented his paper on "Socrates and Social Media" at William Paterson's Phi Sigma Tau Philosophy Honor Society Undergraduate Conference in November. The paper is based on James' independent study research this term with Prof. **Lisa Cassidy**.

On Saturday, November 17th, literature students enrolled in Prof. **Todd Barnes's** Shakespeare's Plays and British Literature courses attended an exciting theatrical event at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. Forty students participated in "Roman Tragedies," a six-hour, interactive, Dutch performance of Shakespeare's *Coriolanus*, *Julius Caesar*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*. The plays were performed by Amsterdam's

continued on page 4

AIS FACULTY UPDATES
continued from page 3

of which were refereed and two of which were co-authored with former students. His topics included Ayn Rand and modern conservatism, human-animal relations, nature's fury, the reduction of violence in contemporary history, Mitt Romney, and two historians. Under his editorial leadership the double-blind refereed journal *Clio's Psyche* published three issues with numerous articles by authors from three continents. The two editors of the forthcoming Cambridge University Press book, *Psychology and History: Interdisciplinary Explorations*, are quite positive about his chapter, "The Successes and Obstacles to the Interdisciplinary Marriage of Psychology and History."

Susan Hangen published a co-edited volume (with Mahendra Lawoti), *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict in Nepal: Identities and Mobilization Since 1990* (Routledge, 2013). In July 2012, she presented a paper at Oxford University at a workshop called *Nepalis in Diaspora*, and a paper on Affirmative Action and Education at a conference in Kathmandu. In September, she presented a paper called "Consuming Dhido in Diaspora: Shifting Notions of Nepali Food in New York" at the ANHS Conference on Himalayan Studies, Western Michigan University. In November, she presented a co-authored paper (with Ruma Sen,

Ramapo College) called "Contradictory Concepts of Time on a Study Abroad Program in South India" at the American Anthropological Association 2012 Annual Meeting.

Yvette Kisor's essay "There's Magic in the Web of It: Desdemona's Handkerchief and the 'Magic' Cloths of Emaré and Le Fresne" appeared in the collection *Translating the Past: Essays on Medieval Literature in Honor of Marijane Osborn*, ed. Jane Beal and Brad Busbee and published by ACMRS Press. In addition, she has been invited to speak as part of "A Roundtable Discussion of Peter Jackson's *The Hobbit*" by the J. R. R. Tolkien Collection at Marquette University in February 2013. Finally, her paper "Peter Jackson's *The Hobbit*: From Children's Story to Epic Film" has been accepted to the session on Art and Music of *The Hobbit* at the Forty-eighth International Congress on Medieval Studies at Western Michigan University, May 2012.

Based on his course on Comics and American Culture, **Ed Shannon** published the article "Art and Commerce in the Classroom: Teaching an American Studies Course in Comics" in *Critical Approaches to Teaching Graphic Novels* (McFarlane Publishing, 2012). He also published "Shameful, Impure Art: Robert Crumb's Autobiographical Comics and the Confessional Poets" in *Biography* (35.3, Fall 2012).

Jeremy Teigen published the results of an experiment investigating voter preferences and how they are stimulated by campaign advertising and candidate biography. The results will appear forthcoming in *Armed Forces & Society*.

Michael A. Unger's article entitled "Investigating How Voters Weigh Issues and Partisanship in Judicial Elections" (with Mark J. McKenzie and Cynthia Rugeley) was accepted for publication by the *American Review of Politics*. □

Student News
continued from page 3

Toneelgroep and directed by Ivo Van Hove. Audience members were invited onstage to eat, drink and tweet about the event. Support for the trip was generously provided through Platinum funding offered through the Center for Student Involvement.

On Saturday 1 December three students from Prof. **Yvette Kisor's** Senior Seminar in Arthurian Literature presented papers at the 7th Annual Medieval and Early Modern Studies Undergraduate Conference at Moravian College in Bethlehem, PA: **Lauren Santaniello**: "Sir Kay: From Warrior to Seneschal" **Kimberly Eskin**: "Merlin's Ascendance in Arthurian Legend" **Christina Sielski**: "Mordred: A History and Analysis" All three students did an excellent job and were fine ambassadors for Literature at Ramapo. □

Model UN Dinner

continued from page 2

skills of writing policy papers, communication, and discussion, but also receive the invaluable and hands-on experience in understanding and analyzing international political and economic events and issues that are extremely important to us in this increasingly interdependent and globalized world.

I have had a great time working and interacting with students such as **Christina Long** (the president of the club), **Dan Loughrey**, **Gianna Casola**, **David Resnick**, and others. In every meeting, their enthusiastic attitudes and eagerness in talking about and debating pressing international affairs impressed me tremendously. Students frequently talked about Iran’s nuclear programs and humanitarian violations in Syria’s civil war. Many showed interests to work for the IGOs or NGOs in the future. In Fall 2012, our student delegates originally were heading to Xian, China from November 18 to 24, to participate at the Model UN Conference, representing Pakistan. Unfortunately, the meeting was cancelled due to China’s leadership transition. We were deeply disappointed and saddened by the announcement especially the delegates were fully-prepared for their task. On December 3, 2012, the club organized and held its 29th annual Model UN Club Dinner at the Trustee Pavilion. In addition to students’ reading the UN Charter

in different languages (English, Russian, Arabic, Chinese, and French), international food and entertainments were also served. Prof. **Paula Straile-Costa** (SSAIS) also performed with the Brazilian Percussion Ensemble. Prof. **Ashwani Vasishth** (Environmental Studies, TAS) was invited to be our guest speaker. Recently chairing the Rio+20 Conference at Ramapo, he shared his research on climate changes and talked about progress made at the Rio+20 summit and prospects and challenges of sustainable developments. □

Teaching about the Experiences of Children Focus of Gumpert Teachers’ Workshop

On November 17, 2012, the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies in cooperation with the New Jersey State Commission on Holocaust Education and with funding from the Gumpert Foundation and the New Jersey State Department of Education sponsored a Gumpert Teachers’ Workshop, “In Their Own Words: Diaries as a Window into the World of Children in the Holocaust.” Held at Ramapo College, it was attended by 42 educators from New Jersey and New York.

As noted in Center Director **Michael Riff**’s welcoming remarks, the workshop was intended to help teachers raise with their students issues relating to the treatment and behavior of children in the Holocaust and other genocides.

Speaking on behalf of the New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education, Executive Director Dr. **Paul Winkler** took the matter further by indicating how discussing the experiences of children and teenagers in the Holocaust could help educators to confront issues beyond genocide, including bullying and human rights with their students.

Author and scholar **Alexandra Zapruder** delivered an interactive

continued on page 7



Literature students visit the Brooklyn Academy of Music



Literature students Christina Sielski, Kimberly Eskin, and Lauren Santaniello present their research at the Early Modern Studies Undergraduate Conference at Moravian College

Fourth Annual SSAIS Best Essay Contest

Congratulations to the winners of the Fourth Annual SSAIS Best Essay Contest! First place went to **Devin McGinley** for his essay “Science and Assimilation in American Indian Policy 1877-1900,” written for Prof. **Carter Meyer**’s History Seminar in Fall 2011; second place went to **Jacqueline Thomas** for her essay “Incest and the Role of Father, Lord, and Lover in Hagiography and Romance,” written for Prof. **Yvette Kisor**’s British Medieval Literature course in Fall 2011; and third place went to **Erin Mulligan** for her essay “Slavery’s Superiority: How Slavery Defined Antebellum Southern Women” written for Prof. **Stacie Taranto**’s U.S. Women’s and Gender History course in Fall 2011. □



Photo courtesy of Carolyn Herring

Best Essay Contest winners Erin Mulligan, Devin McGinley, and Jacqueline Thomas with Dean Hassan Nejad



Photo courtesy of Patricia Ard

Students Jessica Laurita and Julia Horniacek join Prof. Patricia Ard at the Jane Austen Society of North America conference in Brooklyn



Photo courtesy of Carolyn Herring

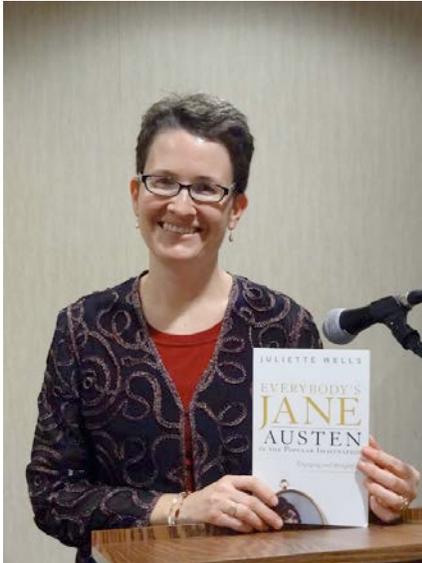
Joyce Carol Oates reads as part of the Readings at Ramapo Series

Student Clubs

The Philosophy Club welcomes new members! This semester we had three lunchtime meetings (from 1-2 p.m. in A105), with pizza and soda provided. The dates and topics were Oct. 26 Vigilantism, Nov. 20 Democracy, and Dec. 11 Leadership. These meetings are great enrichment activities for any humanities or social science course.

Our chapter of the Pi Sigma Alpha honor society for Political Science won a generous grant from the national Pi Sigma Alpha organization. This is the second year in a row the group has won such a grant. Kudos to this year’s president of Ramapo’s chapter, **Kaitlin McGuinness**. □

Photo courtesy of Carolyn Herring



Prof. Juliette Wells (Goucher College) presents her work as part of the Salameno Center for British Studies' inaugural event

**Prof. Juliette Wells
(Goucher College)
Presents *Everybody's
Jane: Austen in the
Popular Imagination***

On November 19, 2012 Juliette Wells gave the first talk sponsored by the Salameno Center for British Studies. Professor Wells spoke about her new book, *Everybody's Jane: Austen in the Popular Imagination*, in which she investigates how the British novelist's work is reimagined in contemporary culture. The Salameno Center seeks to further the study of all aspects of British culture in a broad, interdisciplinary fashion. Professor Wells's talk was sponsored by a generous grant from the Ramapo College Foundation. □

Gumpert Teachers' Workshop
continued from page 5

keynote lecture to introduce the topic in which she discussed with workshop participants how to use the diaries from her edited volume *Salvaged Pages: Young Writers' Diaries of the Holocaust*. In particular, she stressed how well students relate to the writing of people their own age. They are better able not only to learn and write about the Holocaust, but also to cope more effectively with adolescent behavior issues, stress and traumatic experiences in their own lives.

Published by Oxford University Press in 2005, *Salvaged Pages* was based on the work she did as a member of the curatorial and education team for *Remember The Children: Daniel's Story*, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum's exhibition for young visitors. Highly acclaimed by reviewers and scholars alike, it won the National Jewish Book Award in the Holocaust category. *Salvaged Pages* also spawned a documentary film for young audiences, *I'm Still Here*, which Zapruder wrote and co-produced for MTV. The film was awarded the Jewish Image Award for Best Television Special by the National Foundation for Jewish Culture and was nominated for two Emmy awards.

Also presenting at the workshop was **Colleen Tambuscio**, who shared her experiences when she

took students last year on a study tour of sites in Europe associated with the Holocaust. A Social Studies and Special Education teacher at New Milford High School, she stressed the transformative nature of the trips on student understanding of the Holocaust as well as involvement and engagement. She referred specifically to her students' visit last year to the Czech Republic town of Třsice and their participation in a dedication to a memorial to honor villagers who during WW II courageously hid a Jewish family from deportation by Nazi occupiers.

Culminating the program was a panel discussion among three local residents who survived the Holocaust in hiding. **Lola Kaufman**, now of New City, New York, recounted how when the Gestapo killed her mother, she was sent by her grandmother to live in the home of a Ukrainian woman and, then, when threatened with exposure, she was forced to hide with another family in a dirt hole beneath a barn. Liberated by the Red Army, she finally found an uncle who survived as a Soviet soldier and with whom she eventually came to America. At the end, the only thing that she had left from her ordeal was a dress embroidered by her mother and now in the permanent collection of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

continued on page 8

Instructional Design Center

Prof. **Jennifer Mazza** assumed the directorship of the Instructional Design Center in July, and her goal has been to make technology more useful and available to faculty and staff. Prof. Mazza wants to highlight, for the unit, the upcoming spring workshops and events that are now scheduled, and she solicits any suggestions you all may have regarding workshops, new software, hardware, etc. Please note that we also have three Faculty Development Institutes planned, which will provide for more in-depth presentations and discussions of various technological resources. □

Gumpert Teachers' Workshop

continued from page 7

A different story of survival was told by Suffern, New York resident and retired filmmaker **Paul Galan**, who trekked with his mother to the relative safety in a partisan redoubt in the mountains of Slovakia, but not before they

were imprisoned in a labor camp and experienced several near brushes with German units combing the countryside for Jews and resistors. Miraculously, although separated along the way, after the liberation Paul and his mother were reunited with his father and sister.

No less an ordeal was faced by **Eric Mayer** of Wayne, New Jersey who in the aftermath of *Kristallnacht* (November 9/10, 1938) was first sent by his parents to stay with relatives in France, but then was forced to flee south where he eventually, although still in his early teens, joined a partisan group that interdicted a SS division heading to engage allied troops landing in Normandy. Like Mrs. Kaufman and Mr. Galan, the experience of war and hiding from the Germans forced Mayer to grow up quickly. Once the son of a prosperous wine grower and merchant in Worms, Germany at the end of the war he was an orphan, with his father dying in the Sobibor uprising. With the help of relatives, Mr. Mayer and his brother were eventually able to re-settle in Baltimore, Maryland. As has been the case for some time, evaluations completed by participants revealed that the workshop was a great success. They found all the presentations to be informative and helpful in enabling to develop their skills in teaching of the Holocaust and expressed special gratitude for being able to hear first-hand from survivors about their experiences. □

Technology Across Campus
TRAINING & WORKSHOPS

Workshops are scheduled from 1:2 pm in the Instructional Design Center in ASB-020 unless noted.

Moodle Grade Book Tues., January 29 or Thurs., February 7	Overview of Google Apps @ Ramapo Thursday, February 5
PowerPoint 2010 & the Ribbon Bar Tues., February 12 or Thurs., March 14	Google Calendar Thursday, February 14
Access 2010 & the Ribbon Bar Thurs., February 28 or Tues., March 5	Collaborative Document Editing Using Google Docs Thursday, March 7
Excel 2010 Topics Tues., March 26 or Thurs., April 11	Google Sites Tuesday, April 16
Word 2010 Topics Tuesday, April 23	Cyber Security Awareness Tues., February 26 or Thurs., April 25
Transitioning to Online Teaching Tuesday, March 12	Faculty Development Institutes* Wednesday, February 20
Qualtrics Online Surveys Thursday, March 28	Reward Your Presentations with Content Relay Adobe Connect Desktop Web Conferencing Introduction to Ramapo's New OpenOffice (e/Life)
Adobe Connect Thursday, May 2	Wednesday, April 10 Everything Moodle
QR Codes Thursday, April 4	Tuesday, May 7 Topic to be Announced
Prezi: A Better Tool for Presentations Thursday, April 18	*Dates and locations to be announced.

For more information and to register online visit:
<http://phobos.ramapo.edu/training>



Photo courtesy of Ashley Robin Netanel

Clockwise from the top: Students Ashley Robin Netanel, Caitlin Vogel, and Jacqueline Thomas presented their scholarship at the Counsel of Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC) Northeast Regional Undergraduate Research Conference at Eastern Connecticut State University



Photo courtesy of Caitlin Vogel



Photo courtesy of Jacqueline Thomas

Bottom right: Colleen Tambuscio presents at the Gumpert Teachers' Workshop, hosted by the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies



Photo courtesy of Michael Riff