

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

8:30 – 12:00	Registration Michael J. Adanti Student Center	Ballroom 313
8:30-9:00	Continental Breakfast Welcoming Remarks Sandra C. Holley, Ph.D. Dean, School of Graduate Studies, Southern Connecticut State University	Ballroom 313
9:15- 10:45	Session I	Various Rooms
10:45-11:15	Break	Ballroom 313
11:15-12:45	Session II	Various Rooms
12:45-2:00	Lunch and Keynote Address Keynote speaker: Dr. Thomas Mc Laughlin Professor of English Appalachian State University “The Reading Body: Reading as a Cultural Practice”	Ballroom 313
2:15-3:45	Session III	Various Rooms

PANEL ROOMS
Michael J. Adanti Student Center

<i>Session</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Room</i>
I-A	9:15 – 10:45	311
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I-C	308
I-D	306
I-E	305
I-F	303
I-G	326
I-H	233
I-I	229
I-J	212
I-K	301
II-A	11:15 – 12:45	311
II-B	309
II-C	308
II-D	306
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II-H	233
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II-K	SPECIAL EVENT	301
III-A	2:15 – 3:45	311
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ENCOUNTERING THE TEXT: READING, TEACHING, THEORIZING, WRITING

We would like to welcome all of you to the 10th Annual Graduate Student Conference of the Department of English at Southern Connecticut State University, held once again this year at the Michael J. Adanti Student Center.

This is our largest conferences ever, with over 85 presentations from participants representing six states and one foreign country. Subject areas range from literature (African American authors, women writers, modern American poetry, Crane, Dickens, Modernism, etc.) to film, to composition, to critical theory, to linguistics, and, finally, to issues facing the high school educator. This year we are having a significant series of papers on the **graphic novel** and hope to continue presentations in this area as a subset of the conference in the future. Also of note are **two special presentations**, a display of African American painting and sculpture by Deborah McDuff, and a showing by Professor Lawrence Benaquist of the only known copy of the silent film *When Lincoln Paid*.

The English Department Graduate Conference was created by Professor Vara Neverow, editor of the *Virginia Woolf Miscellany* and former Chair of the English Department. Originally intended as an exercise in scholarship for Southern students only, it quickly grew to include the other state universities, finally becoming a national conference five years ago, with international participation. We hope to continue our growth, serving as a forum for graduate students throughout the country to present quality scholarship.

As is always the case, this conference could not be a success without the aid and tireless work of many people and several organizations. We would like to thank especially Dr. Sandra Holley, Dean of the Graduate School, for her constant support of scholarship throughout the University and for underwriting some of the costs of the Conference, the Graduate Student Affairs Committee for help in defraying additional expenses, Dr. Ronald Herron, Vice President for Student and University Affairs, for his much appreciated contributions, the Full and Part-time Faculty of the English Department, who have helped out so generously with their time and suggestions, Dr. Edith Kostka, recruiter extraordinaire, Dr. Vara Neverow, for developing this Conference ten years ago and for providing consistent aid and a lending ear, Dr. Paul Petrie and his students of American Poetry for their contributions, Dr. Michael Shea, English Department Chair, for his tireless encouragement of students and for his valuable suggestions, Michael Sivak, who organized the graphic novel portion of this program, and finally, Ms. Susan Devoe, for her enormous contributions that ensured that this Conference would, indeed, reach the goals that we had set.

Kenneth Florey
Conference Chair

**Session I-A
Room: 311**

Moderator: Marika Georgiou **Southern Connecticut State University**

Session Name: Disillusion and Despair: How Modern British Writers Attempt to Define an Indefinable Word

Melissa Wisner Southern Connecticut State University
"A Pink Gold-Domed Place": Seeing Constantinople from Dods Hill

Alice Kelly Linacre College, Oxford University
"New Expressions, New Moulds": Death and the Great War in Virginia Woolf and Katherine Mansfield.

Amy Mayrhofer Southern Connecticut State University
A Matter of Perspective: Poetic Mindset in Keats' "Ode to a Nightingale" and Hardy's "Darkling Thrush"

**Session I-B
Room: 309**

Moderator: Dr. Paul Petrie **Southern Connecticut State University**

Session Name: Modern American and British Poetry and Sexuality

Julia Cooper Southern Connecticut State University
Glorious Muse: What it Means to Be a Mother, Lover, Woman in Allen Ginsburg's "Kadish"

Patricia Mottola Southern Connecticut State University
Edna St. Vincent Millay's Poetic Feminism

Emily Fiskio Southern Connecticut State University
Emily Dickinson and Sexuality

**Session I-C
Room: 308**

Moderator: Dr. Lawrence Benaquist **Keene State**

Session Name: Reading and Deconstructing Images of Women and Minorities

Valerie Franco SUNY-Stony Brook
Miss-Representations: Stereotypes of Italian-American Women in the Media

Shannon Ortiz Southern Connecticut State University
Sexual Objectification of Afro-Puerto-Rican Women

Nancy Leaman Southern Connecticut State University
Damn Braces: Bless Relaxes—William Blake's Little Girls Lost and the Path to Womanhood

**Session II-G
Room: 326**

Moderator: Michael Sivak **Southern Connecticut State University**

**Session Name: Subcultures, Semiotics, Sexualities, and Superheroes:
Textual/Pictorial Methodologies in Graphic Narrative Media**

Howard Cruse Unaffiliated

Inviting Emotions Through the Back Door

A "backstage" look, illustrated by slides, at one cartoonist's strategies for coaxing readers into caring about the inner lives and struggles of inked lines on paper.

Tim Fish Unaffiliated

Out: a Historic Look at LGBT Representation in Comics.

Comic book writer/artist Tim Fish (known for gay comics and graphic novels such as "Love is the Reason") discusses the evolution of comics with gay and lesbian content, both domestically and internationally, and the influences on his own work.

Dr. Mark John Isola Wentworth Institute of Technology

Professor William Foster Naugatuck Valley Community College

"Sunflower Street": A Shining Positive Example in the Midst of Numerous Negative Stereotypes

**Session II-H
Room: 233**

Moderator: Dr. Nicole Fluhr **Southern Connecticut State University**

Session Name: Modernism and Influences in American Poetry

Marika Georgiou Southern Connecticut State University

T.S. Eliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" and the Victorian Dramatic Monologue

Brian Medina Southern Connecticut State University

Allen Ginsberg's "Howl" and Walt Whitman

James Randall Southern Connecticut State University

William Carlos Williams and Objectivism

**Session III-D
Room: 306**

Moderator: Andrea Beaudin **Southern Connecticut State University**

Session Name: Women's Voices

Jennifer Marie Wiley Southern Connecticut State University
A Feminist Awakening

Alison Corbett Southern Connecticut State University
Women's Voices: Wine From Water Glasses

Sarah Rizzuto Southern Connecticut State University
People With Disabilities and Poetic Power

**Session III-E
Room: 305**

Moderator: Dr. Jane Splawn **University of Wisconsin**

Session Name: The African American Novel: Famous and Undiscovered

(Professor Splawn has graciously agreed to substitute for Professor Sharleen Dickenson, who was originally scheduled to moderate this panel. Professor Dickinson, a long-time instructor in the English Department, passed away on Friday, March 20, 2009. An alumna of the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee, Professor Dickinson earned graduate degrees in literature and creative writing. At Southern, she worked as a tutor in the Writing Center as well as an instructor in the LINKS program. She also contributed her time and talent to the New Student Orientation Program and the Summer Educational Opportunity Program. She was also a participant at the English Graduate Conference last year where she spoke about nineteenth-century African American women's narratives. A published poet, her work has appeared in a number of poetry journals. At the time of her death, she held a full-time position in the English Department where she was much admired and where she found many friends.)

Katie Kollar Central Connecticut State University
Black & White Performances in Johnson's Autobiography of an Ex-Coloured Man

Greg Feeley Southern Connecticut State University
Vanished Town, Forgotten Novel: Excavating a 1905 Black American Author and His Work

Nilofar Syed Southern Connecticut State University
Probing Richard Wright's Outcast: A Psychoanalytic Approach to Bigger Thomas

**Session III-F
Room: 303**

Moderator: Dr. Edith Kostka

University of Rhode Island

Session Name: Something Completely Different

Marialuisa Sapienza

Southern Connecticut State University

How Does Communism Express Itself in American Culture?

Sarah MacDonald

Kent State

The Angry Mob in Gothic Literature

Elizabeth Russolesi

Southern Connecticut State University

Questioning Imperialism: Re-Evaluating the Perspectives of Empire in Elizabeth Bishop's Poetry

**Session III-G
Room: 326**

Moderator: Dr. Corinne Blackmer

Southern Connecticut State University

**Session Name: Subcultures, Semiotics, Sexualities, and Superheroes:
Textual/Pictorial Methodologies in Graphic Narrative Media**

Shannon Wheeler

Unaffiliated

Michael Sivak

Southern Connecticut State University

The Archetypal Dream-Logic of Jim Woodring's Frank

Gabrielle Bell

Unaffiliated

A Discussion of Semi-Autobiographical Comics, and a Slide Show Presentation of My Story "My Affliction," A Semi-Autobiographical Surrealist Folktale.

Abby Denson

Unaffiliated

Dolls in Love: Identity Exploration

Abby Denson discusses themes of identity in her work and inspirations for her graphic novels Tough Love and Dolltopia (out this Fall from Green Candy Press) with an accompanying slideshow.

**Session III-H
Room: 233**

Moderator: Dr. Michael Shea

Southern Connecticut State University

Session Name: Comic Theory

Patrick Moody

Southern Connecticut State University

Judeo-Comedy

Tanya Kimball Adametz

Southern Connecticut State University

Funny Food

Michael DeSantis

Southern Connecticut State University

**Session III-I
Room: 233**

Moderator: Meaghan Doss

SUNY New Paltz

Session Name: Literary Excursions

Joseph Mangino

Southern Connecticut State University

Marxism, Art, and 'Ode on a Grecian Urn'

Justin Short

Southern Connecticut State University

The Adequate Malediction for the Indefinite Cause: Multivocality and a Rhetoric of Comparison in Stephan Crane's The Red Badge of Courage

Erica Carrano

Southern Connecticut State University

Shakespeare's Uninspired Language in Sonnet 145

**Session III-K
Room: 301**

SPECIAL SESSION

Moderator: Dr. Lawrence Benaquist

Keene State

Please Note—This Special Session, Featuring a Viewing of the Only Known Copy of the 1913 Silent Film *When Lincoln Paid* by Pioneer Director Francis Ford, Will Take Place in Room 301 A & B

Responding Panelists—Valerie Franco, Daniela Ragusa, and Pat LaFyllve

Biographies of Guest Presenters and Speakers

Gabrielle Bell: In 1998 Gabrielle Bell began to collect her "Book of" miniseries (*Book of Sleep*, *Book of Insomnia*, *Book of Black*, etc), which resulted in *When I'm Old and Other Stories*, published by Alternative Comics. 2001 released her autobiographical series *Lucky*, published by Drawn and Quarterly. Bell has contributed to many acclaimed anthologies including *Mome*, *Kramers Ergot* and *The Drawn and Quarterly Showcase*. Her work has been selected for the 2007 and 2009 Best American Comics and the Yale Anthology of Graphic Fiction. Bell's comic "Cecil and Jordan in New York" has been adapted for the film anthology *Tokyo!* by Michel Gondry, to be released in March 2009. Her latest collection, also titled *Cecil and Jordan in New York*, will be published at the same time. She lives in Brooklyn, New York and is working on a second volume of *Lucky*.

Dr. Lawrence Benaquist, who is showing the rare 1913 silent film *When Lincoln Paid*, was the founder of the Film Studies Program at Keene State College in New Hampshire, which has become the largest major in the college with 10 faculty and over 150 students. Many of his graduates have gone on to Hollywood, where they have worked on a number of Academy Award films ranging from *The Lord of the Rings* to the *Aviator*; moreover, they have contributed to virtually all of Ken Burns' television documentaries since the 1990's.

Professor Benaquist has produced several documentaries himself for PBS, including *Here Am I: Send Me: The Journey of Jonathan Daniels*, the life and death story of a martyr to the Civil Rights movement that was narrated by Sam Waterston of *Law and Order* fame. His collaboration on another film led to the awarding from the State of Israel of the distinction of "Righteous Among Nations" to Martha Sharp and her husband, the Reverend Waitstill Sharp--the first American woman and the second American man to be so honored. This distinction is given to those Gentiles, such as Oskar Schindler, who assisted in rescuing Jews during WWII.

He is a frequent spokesperson for film and has appeared often on New Hampshire's National Public Radio station, and in other media. His work and his discoveries have been covered by NPR, the *Boston Globe*, and the *Washington Post*. The recipient of numerous awards and grants, he has also been honored by his home college, Keene State, with its Distinguished Teacher Award.

Howard Cruse is the creator of *Wendel*, the 1980s comic strip about a circle of gay friends that was collected in its entirety in 2001 in a book called *Wendel All Together*. His 1995 graphic novel, *Stuck Rubber Baby*, won both Eisner and Harvey Awards in 1996, and has since won awards in England and Germany. An Italian translation of SRB has also been published and Spanish translations of both SRB and *Wendel All Together* are now in production. *Stuck Rubber Baby*'s French edition won the Prix de la critique at the Angouleme comics festival in 2002. Many of Howard's underground comix were compiled more than a decade ago in the books *Early Barefootz* and *Dancin' Nekkid With the Angels*. Cruse's newest book, *The Swimmer With a Rope in His Teeth*, an

illustrated adaptation of a fable by Jeanne Shaffer, was published by Prometheus Press in April of 2004. Many of his comic strips, both old and recently drawn, are archived on his extensive website, Howard Cruse Central. Recently completed projects are new comics created for inclusion in future edition's of Jennifer Camper's Juicy Mother series and the second Robert Kirby-David Kelly Boy Trouble book collection plus a five-page gay webcomic drawn for Tim Fish's *Young Bottoms In Love*. He is also self-publishing a new edition of his 1983 fable *Felix's Friends*.

Andrew Bonia is a writer for graphic novels. He has written for *Tales of the TMNT* (Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles).

Abby Denson released her first self published mini-comic in 1996. Entitled *Tough Love*, it was influenced by both Japanese Manga and punk and told the story of the coming out of two gay teenagers in high school. In 2006, the series was reprinted as a graphic novel by Manic D Press, entitled *Tough Love: High School Confidential*. In 2007, Abby Denson won the '2007 Lulu of the Year' Award from the comics organization Friends of Lulu.

She has also worked on several newsstand comics, such as *Josie and the Pussycats*, *The Powerpuff Girls*, *Sabrina The Teenage Witch*, and others. At the same time, she has continued to release her own self published comics which include the titles *Dolltopia*, *Jamie Starr Teen Drag Queen*, *Deadsy Cat & Kissy Kitty*, *Cute Boys of the 80's*, and others. Abby is a contributor to the *Friends of Lulu* published anthology, *The Girls' Guide To Guy's Stuff*; Robert Kirby and David Kelly's anthology, *The Book of Boy Trouble 2*; and Tim Fish's anthology, **Young Bottoms In Love**.

Tim Fish has worked on several, mostly gay-themed, titles, including the web comic anthology *Young Bottoms in Love*, published by Poison Press in graphic novel form in 2006, featuring work by comic artists such as Howard Cruse, Paige Braddock, Abby Denson, Robert Kirby and Jack Lawrence. He is probably best known for his slice-of-life/romance print comic, *Cavalcade of Boys*, which has been released in trade paperback format. Boston LGBT newspaper Bay Windows started running all new Cavalcade material as a half-page weekly in 2007. Fish also wrote the graphic novel, *Strugglers*, which originally ran at Modern Tales as "Meet Me in Saint Louie."

Fish wrote and drew a Cannonball/Lila Cheney story for Marvel Comics romance special *"I ♥ MARVEL: MY MUTANT HEART*. He is also a contributor to the Boy Trouble anthologies, edited by Robert Kirby and David Kelly.

William H. Foster III is long-time comic book collector and researcher. Professor Foster has been an expert commentator for both CNN News and National Public Radio. He was a consultant on the historical image of Blacks in both comic strips and comic books for the Words and Pictures Museum of Fine Sequential Art in Northampton, MA. He was also a consultant to the 2004 exhibit, "*Heroes, Heartthrobs, and Horrors: Celebrating Connecticut's Invention of the American Comic Book*" presented by the Connecticut Historical Society. His exhibit on the "Changing Image of Blacks in Comics" has been displayed at a number of venues across the country, including Temple University's

Paley Library, The 1998 Comic-Con International Comic Arts Conference, and the 2000 Festival of Arts and Ideas. He also has presented his research at the 2001 bi-annual conference of *The International Association for Media and History* in Leipzig, Germany and at the *2002 Conference on Analyzing Series & Serial Narrative* at John Moores University in Liverpool, England. He is the author of "Looking for a Face like Mine" published in 2005 by Fine Tooth Press. In 2006 Professor Foster was an invited panelist for both the Harlem Book Fair and the Studio Museum of Harlem. In 2007 Professor Foster's exhibit was displayed at both the Geppi Entertainment Museum in Baltimore, Maryland and at the Museum of Comic and Cartoon Art in New York, New York. He was also an invited speaker to the 2007 International Symposium on Langston Hughes at Central China Normal University in Wuhan, China.

Mark John Isola has been selected over the past several years to chair panels and present papers at several national level conferences, including MLA, ALA, and PCA/ACA. Additionally, he has produced journal articles for the *Nordic Journal of English Studies*, *Bad Subjects*, and *eSharp*. Dr. Isola has also contributed nearly a dozen reference articles to two multi-volume collections on GLBTQ literary culture, including critical essays on the Violet Quill, the gay graphic novel, and the impact of AIDS on literature. Professor Isola is currently working on book chapters related to Japanese manga and AIDS writing.

Deborah McDuff, mask maker, sculptor, painter and poet, received her liberal arts degree from Antioch University. She has exhibited in many national and local galleries including Artspace, City Gallery, Go Red, Healthnet, Mills Pond Gallery and the American Heart Association. This is her second major exhibit at Southern Connecticut State University, the first being a mixed-media production in 2007 entitled "Catch a Spirit Masks." Her masks are an educational tool created in part to bring about social change. While the voice within each of her masks provides an opportunity for dialogue and discussion, they also serve as a vehicle for self-reflection and discovery. McDuff hopes that the masks will help people "go within themselves and address the things they need to address." One woman, after seeing one of her masks, told McDuff that she had been a victim of sexual assault, something that she had never told anyone else about. Another spoke of his experiences with cancer after seeing one of her pieces. McDuff is also an accomplished poet, and her poems often coordinate with her paintings and masks.

Thomas Mc Laughlin, our **Keynote Speaker**, is a Professor in the Department of English at Appalachian State University in North Carolina, where he teaches courses on literary theory and cultural studies. He is the author of *Street Smarts and Critical Theory: Listening to the Vernacular* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1996) and *Give and Go: Basketball as a Cultural Practice* (SUNY Press, 2008), and the co-editor with Frank Lentricchia of *Critical Terms for Literary Study* (University of Chicago Press, 1990). He is currently working on a book on reading and the body and a textbook on the analysis of cultural practices.

Shannon Wheeler is the creator of the comic strip *Too Much Coffee Man*, and is the recipient of multiple awards including the Hatch Broadcasting Award and an Eisner Award. Shannon also published a humor magazine for a number of years. *Too Much Coffee Man* has appeared internationally in newspapers, magazines and comic books. Dark Horse Comics has published five graphic novels that collect most of the work. His weekly strip Postage Stamp Funnies appears in print edition of The Onion. 2006 saw the production of a "Too Much Coffee Man Opera" at the Portland Center of Performing Arts, the first opera to have been based on a comic book. A sequel, "Too Much Coffee Man Opera: the Refill," opens this April.
