Oberlin Classics

Newsletter of the Oberlin College Department of Classics
Oberlin, OH 44074
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L-R: Wayne Rupp, Tom Van Nortwick, Karen Barnes, Ben Lee, Kirk Ormand, Elizabeth Colantoni, Drew Wilburn
A Note From the Editor

This edition of the newsletter heralds the advent of a new and exciting era for the Oberlin Classics Department. After many (many!) years of asking, we were authorized in the spring of 2005 to hire a permanent fourth member of the Classics faculty. This past academic year, 2005-2006, we conducted a national search, and we are delighted that Andrew Wilburn, who holds the Ph.D in Classical Archaeology from the University of Michigan, has joined us. When Drew applied for the permanent position, he was already teaching for us in a one-year post-doctoral position in 2005-06, so we already know him and his considerable talents.

Our other new faculty member for this year is Wayne Rupp, who is finishing up his Ph.D. in Classical Archaeology at Florida State. Wayne will be with us for the first semester, replacing Ben Lee, who is on research leave. We are also happy that Elizabeth Colantoni will be with us for the second year of her two-year Charles Beebe Martin Postdoctoral Fellowship. This means that when Ben Lee, Nate Greenberg, and Jim Helm are in town, we could have a dinner with eight Classicists at the table. The riches!!!

Finally, we are grateful to Thomas Cooper, ’78, for his generosity in endowing an endowed fund to support Classics Department faculty teaching and research abroad. Tom has been a generous supporter of the department for many years, and we are in his debt once again.

It’s always a great pleasure for us to see you, so please come for a visit. Meanwhile, thank you all so much for your support of the Classics Department. We are blessed in our alumni.

Tom Van Nortwick

**Students** Seventeen students graduated with majors or minors in Classics this spring—three with double majors=20!:

**Classical Civilization**
Marcus Boston
Chloe Liotta-Jones
Carly Machado
Ethan Witkowsky

**Greek**
Jennifer Chiko
Brian Coover
Todd Foley
Keith Griffith
Arthur Jones
Maxwell Teitel-Paule

**Latin**
Georgia Blume
Krishni Burns
Jennifer Chiko
Arthur Jones
Andrew Hall
Chloe Liotta-Jones
Duncan Richards
Rebecca Schugar
Maxwell Teitel-Paule

**Latin Minor**
Hilary Close
Mae Gackstetter
Ethan Witkowsky has decided to postpone his study in Israel for a year, due to the uncertain political situation there. Instead, he will begin in seminary in New York City. Jennie Chiko is beginning an M.A.T. program at Earlham this fall. Todd Foley will begin the M.A. program in Comparative Literature at Dartmouth. Keith Griffith is living in Cleveland, and writing children’s stories. Arthur Jones is beginning the Ph.D program in Classics at Penn. Max Teitel-Paule is beginning the Ph.D program in Classics at Ohio State. Georgia Blume spent three weeks in China this summer, and is currently working as a trader for Bank of America Securities. Krishni Burns will begin the Ph.D program in Classical Archaeology at SUNY Buffalo in the fall of 2007. This year, she’s in Columbus, taking courses at Ohio State. Andy Hall has just moved to Cambridge, where he will be living with fellow Obies, and looking for work. Duncan Richards, after a short stint as a graphic designer in Palm Springs, has settled in Atlanta, where he is working for a framing shop. Rebecca Schugar was in Oberlin for Labor Day weekend, to play in the alumni field hickey game. She is doing research at Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh on muscle-derived stem cells, and plans to pursue graduate studies in two years. Hilary Close is beginning the Ph.D program in Earth Sciences at Harvard. Chloe Liotta-Jones is living in New York City, and working as a researcher for EMarketer. She surprised us with a quick but welcome visit in mid-September.

We have not yet heard from our other graduates about their plans, but we hope to know more soon!

The Frew Prize went to Arthur Jones, for his excellent work in Greek and Latin. The Swearingen Prize, awarded to the junior who demonstrates the greatest aptitude for teaching Latin on the secondary school level, went to Alice Nordquist, a rising senior major in Latin. The Gilbert Lawall Prize, awarded to the student who demonstrates the greatest aptitude for teaching Greek at the secondary school level, went to Michael Pelch, a rising senior Latin major. The Matthew B. Smith Prize was awarded to Ben Reitz, a rising senior Greek major, and Josh Curtis, a rising junior Greek major, to support their attendance at College Year in Athens, and to Danny Kane, a rising senior, to support his participation in the Sangro Valley excavations. James Helin Research Awards were given to Neville McFerrin, a rising junior Classical Civilization major, and Noah Mlotek, a rising junior Greek major, to support their participation in the Sangro Valley Excavations. Classics Department Alumni Awards for excellent work in Greek and/or Latin went to Krishni Burns, Andrew Hall, and Max Teitel-Paule. The Book Prizes, for excellence in beginning Greek and beginning Latin, were awarded to Eush Tayco (Greek), and Chris Boyd (Latin).

Graduating seniors: (l-r) front: Lindsey Baruffa, Chloe Liotta-Jones, Krishni Burns, Arthur Jones; rear: Max Teitel-Paule, Hilary Close, Todd Foley, Brian Coover, Ethan Witkowsky, Jenny Chiko, (Missing: Georgia Blume, Marcus Boston, Mae Gackstetter, Keith Griffith, Andy Hall, Carly Machado, Duncan Richards, Rebecca Schugar

Faculty
As I have mentioned above, we are delighted to welcome Andrew (Drew) Wilburn as a regular member of our Classics faculty, and Wayne Rupp for the fall semester, as replacement for Ben Lee. We are delighted also that Elizabeth Colantoni
will be our colleague for another year, finishing her two-year appointment as Charles Beebe Martin Postdoctoral Fellow. **Drew** taught two highly successful new courses last year, during his postdoctoral appointment, “Magic and Mystery in the Ancient World,” and “Caligula, Claudius, and Nero,” fondly known around here as “Crazy Emperors.” This year, he is teaching Greek history, and Greek and Latin language, and next year will begin the long-awaited expansion of our ancient history curriculum. He is currently negotiating with a major university press to publish his book on the archaeology of magic in Egypt, Spain, and Cyprus. **Wayne** is teaching elementary and advanced Latin, plus a course of his own devising, “Games, Festivals, and Leisure in the Greco-Roman World.” His dissertation defense will be this November. **Liz** taught Roman history to sell-out crowds last fall, then gave another popular course in the spring, “Ethnic Identities in the Ancient World,” which she designed to build on Erik Gruen’s Martin Lectures. She worked in July and August on the excavations and mapping of Hellenistic-period Scythian burial mounds with the American-Ukrainian Scythian Kurhan Project near Dnipropetrovsk, Ukraine. This September, she gave a lecture at Wooster on “Est Honor et Tumulis: Ancestor Cult and Social Structure in Earliest Rome.” She is also working on a paper to be delivered at CAMWS Southern Section in Memphis on November 4: “Sacrificing on Time: The Early Years of the Roman Religious Calendar.” To cover for the loss of courses due to Tom’s sabbatical leave, Liz has kindly agreed to teach both of her courses this spring, Cicero in Latin, and yet another new course, “The Idea of Rome.”

**Ben Lee** is on sabbatical leave this fall. Last year, he taught elementary and advanced Latin courses both semesters, once again inspiring cadres of intelligent and devoted students for our department. He will be back in action in the spring, teaching Greek, Latin, and a course on the Ancient and Modern Novel. Last spring, he delivered a paper, “Roman Ruins and Ruined Texts,” at a conference sponsored by the Allen Art Museum, “The Splendor of Ruins in French Landscape Painting.” His article on that topic is forthcoming in *Art Bulletin*. He has another article, “Moods of Representation: The Rhetoric of the Subjective in Tibullus,” forthcoming in an edited volume on Latin Love Elegy, due out next year from Ohio State University Press. His next book, which he is working on this fall, will be on subjectivity in all three Latin Love elegists. 

**Kirk Ormand** began his tenure as department chair last year, to great acclaim from his colleagues. He taught a full load of courses, Greek, Latin, and Classical Civilization, the latter category represented by perennial favorite, Classical Mythology, for which the department will have to find a bigger room the next time it’s taught. His scholarship continues apace, with “Impossible Lesbians in Ovid’s Metamorphoses,” a book chapter published in *Gendered Dynamics in Latin Love Poetry*, eds. R. Ancona and E. Greene. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005, 79-112, two reviews, and several works in progress, including two book chapters and two books, *Structures of Marriage in the Hesiodic Catalogue of Women*, and *Erotics Uncovered: Sexuality in Ancient Greece and Rome*, which is under contract with Praeger Press. In addition to his teaching and scholarship, Kirk has also been an active and effective member on various college committees, including the Educational Plans and Policies committee, his favorite. He will get some well-deserved rest next year, when he is on sabbatical leave.

**Tom Van Nortwick** has been having fun watching all of his excellent new colleagues take charge of the department. He is enjoying his first five-course teaching load this year. His article, “Achilles at Work,” was published in *North Dakota Quarterly*.73.3 (2006) 8-20. In the past year, he served on the search committee to select a new Dean for the College of Arts and Sciences, a challenging but rewarding assignment. He will be on sabbatical leave for the second semester of this year, and plans to work on a book, *Imagining Men: Ancient Masculinity and the Meaning of Life*, which is under contract with Praeger Press.

**Nate Greenberg** continues to enjoy his retirement...
at Kendal with Eva. He has been a frequent and welcome attendee at most Classics Department visiting lectures, where he has spread wisdom in his inimitable way. 

Jim Helm has been busy traveling with Anne, visiting grandchildren and working on development for Lady Doak College is Madurai, India. 

Speakers

Winkler Lecturer: Oberlin hosts each fall a lecture by the winner of the John J. Winkler Memorial Prize, given to the undergraduate or graduate student who writes the best essay in a “risky or marginal area of Classics.” This prize, established in 1991 to honor the memory of John Winkler, a brilliantly inventive scholar in Classics, is administered by Kirk Ormand, who himself the first winner of the prize while a graduate student at Stanford. This year’s lecturer was Marianne Hopman, now an Assistant Professor of Classics at Northwestern University. She spoke on “The Maiden and the Straits: Scylla from Homer to Roman Mythography,” on Oct. 17.

Distinguished Oberlin Alumni in Classics: We have begun a yearly lecture series that features Oberlin Classics Alumni/ae. This year, Molly Pasco-Pranger delivered a lecture titled “’Cato’ and the Rhetorics of Decadence” on Oct. 3.

Other invited Lecturers: Alex Purves of UCLA visited in the fall and spoke on “Dead Weights: Homer’s Heavy Gods” on Nov. 14.

Annual Bardic Reading

Continuing a glorious Classics Department tradition, students and faculty in February read together Ovid’s Metamorphoses, accompanied by the usual gustatory delights and smart-aleck commentary from the audience. Plans are underway as we write for this year’s extravaganza. Stay tuned.

Martin Classical Lectures

This year’s Martin Classical Lecturer was Erich Gruen, Professor of Classics and History at the University of California-Berkeley. He delivered four lectures on the topic of “Identity Theft: Cultural Appropriations and Collective Identity in Classical Antiquity,” February 27-March 3, 2006. Gruen is the 69th lecturer in the series.

The Martin Lectures, which began in 1925, is one of the two most prestigious Classical lectureships in the world, most often compared to the Sather Lectures at Berkeley. There are 37 published volumes of the lectures, the first 30 by Harvard University Press, the last 7 by Princeton University Press. Michael Putnam’s 2004 lectures, Poetic Interplay: Catullus and Horace, are just out. We are now eagerly anticipating Julia Haig Gaiser’s Transformations of Apuleius, which is with the Press reader.

Alumni Classicists

Donors: The Classics Department is most grateful for the generous contributions made by the following alums and friends this past year: Mark P. Adams (Class. CDiv. ‘82) Todd and Christine (Nelson) Baker (Latin ’90) Howard Berlowitz and Jessica Rowe (parents of Michael Berkowitz, Latin ’08) Tom Cooper (Latin minor ’78) Cynthia Dessen (English ‘60) Diane Drew (Class. Civ. ‘72) William Hall in memoriam (late father of Andy Hall, Latin ‘06) Paul Harvey (Latin ‘67) Melissa Hunter-Kilmer (Greek ‘82) Gilbert Lawall (Greek ‘57) Aaron Levin (Hist. ‘68) Abigail Moller (Class. Civ. ‘04) Coleen O’Mara (Latin ‘94) Kate Rousmaniere (Class. Civ. ‘80) Margaret Spencer (Latin ‘81) Ted Tarkow (Latin ‘66) Kathryn and Michael Thompson (parents of Becky Thompson, Latin ‘03)

Thank you all for your steady and generous support. It’s wonderful to have such loyal friends.

Alum News Here’s what we’ve heard from you since the last newsletter. It’s always a pleasure to know what you’ve been doing, so please, if you haven’t been in touch for awhile, let us hear from you, by e-mail, snail mail, phone, private messenger, or, best of all, come see us.

William Johnson (Latin ’78) is Chair of Classics at the University of Cincinnati. On October 5, he delivered the annual “Distinguished Oberlin Alumni in Classics” lecture here, on the topic,
“Constructing Elite Reading Communities in the High Empire.”

**Raphael Golb** (Latin ‘81”) wrote to let us know that he is doing well in New York. His article on “Rumor, Knowledge and Politics in Giovanni Verga’s I Malavoglia”, featuring a new interpretation of this famous novel, appeared in the Winter-Spring 2005 issue of the *Italian Quarterly*. He is currently immersed in readings on the history of secular thought in 19th-century France for another projected article.

**Clara Hardy** (Latin ‘83) and **Rob Hardy** (Latin ‘86) are spending this year in England with their family. Clara has a research leave for the year from Carleton, where she is Professor of Classical Languages. She is affiliated with the University of Warwick, where she has lectured on Aristophanes. Her main research project is an interdisciplinary study of the year 415 BCE in Athenian art, literature and politics. Rob has been writing and publishing poems and essays, the latest in the (May 2006) issue of the *New England Classical Journal*. The title is “Girls Reading Vergil: Stories of Latin and Progressive Education.” He also taught in the Classics Department at Carleton this past spring. Both Clara and Rob are writing blogs during their time in England:

Clara: http://blogs.carleton.edu/Claras_Sabbatical_Blog/
Rob: http://robhardy.blogspot.com

**Elizabeth d’Anjou** (Latin ’89) was here in June with her partner Russell, on their way to an art show in Hudson, where Russell was displaying his work. The occasion led to a happy lunch with current and former faculty.

**Molly Pasco-Pranger** (Latin ‘92) accepted last spring a tenure-track position in the Department of Classics at the University of Mississippi. Drew Wilburn saw her this month at CAMWS in Memphis, and passed on the news that she and her family are happily settled in their new home.

**Ellen Craig** (Latin ‘95) recently performed a viola concerto on two consecutive nights of the main series of the Toledo Symphony Orchestra in the classically beautiful Peristyle hall in April 2006. The work, entitled “Two Paths; A Dedication to Mary and Martha” was composed by Russian composer Sofia Gubaidulina. This was the third ever perfor-

**Margaret Marshall and Karl Hillesland**

mance of the work, following the 1999 premiere by the New York Philharmonic and a subsequent performance by the Atlanta Symphony. The piece is based on a biblical passage of the sisters Mary and Martha, who choose separate ways, or paths, to show their love to Jesus. One path is earthly, represented by rich low notes on the viola, and one path is spiritual, represented by very high notes.

Ellen was honored to have many family and friends attend, including Tom and Mary Van Nortwick. The Sunday morning after both performances Ellen and her husband Michael threw a big brunch party for everyone who had come in from out of town. A good time was had by all.

**Tofa Borregaard** (Class. Arch. ‘98) was accepted to the Ph.D program in Archaeology at the university of California at Santa Cruz, begining this fall. Her response to the good news gave us pause: “Ah, the many young archeology freshmen I now get to corrupt.”

**Margaret Marshall** (Greek ‘98) was married to Karl Hillesland on May 20, 2006, in Santa Monica, California. Margaret and Karl now live in Menlo Park, CA. For further details on the wedding (and some beautiful photos), see margaretandkarl.weddingannouncer.com.

**Jeremy Kucholtz** (Class. Civ. ‘99) sent us the following important news last April: After very thorough consideration, as some of you may know, I have resigned from my position as Webser & Promotions Designer at the University of Pennsylvania Museum. During my (nearly) six years here at the Museum, I
have been blessed with exciting challenges, learning opportunities, and so many friends and colleagues.

I came to the Museum as a baby, in professional terms; it was my first full-time permanent position. The Museum took a chance on me and provided me with training to assume the role of a graphic designer. I am leaving the Museum to continue that process of creative growth and I thank the Museum for supporting me along the way. Beginning May 8, 2006, I will assume my new position as Art Director / Interactive Designer at Splat Productions (http://www.splatworld.tv/), a multimedia design firm that offers 3D animation, interactive web design, print design and motion graphics. This is, to say the least, a very exciting opportunity for me.

I am very sincere when I say that I hope you all will not become strangers. I still live right across the bridge from the Museum and Splat Productions is located a block away from my house (another perk). I’ll stop by for lunch now and then if you’ll stop by for a brew in my local corner pub.

My contact info is as follows:

Jeremy Kucholtz
2110 Kater Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104
h: 215-546-1171
c: 267-977-1031
e: kucholtz@gmail.com

This is not a goodbye, but a big thanks to all of you.

Sarah Biber (Greek ‘03) wrote recently with this excellent update: “So many things to tell you, I’m not sure how to begin. I had a wonderful and adventurous 2 years in Sydney. I played with the Sydney Symphony in the opera house many times, was principal of their chamber orchestra the sydney sinfonia. I played a bunch with a quartet down there and then moved to Chicago in August of 2005. I’m freelancing here and living with one of my triplet sisters. I am a tenured (insert sheepish grin) member of the illinois philharmonic and south bend symphonies. I hope to get better and better playing as time goes on. My friends and I from Oberlin started a chamber music collective called Till by Turning, which I am especially proud. (check out tillbyturning.com) We have a concert at wesleyan and boduin (how do you spell that) and NY in January. Meanwhile, I spent the summer at Tanglewood and since I am back have been taking EVERY audition that comes up. I’ve been in the finals for a few big ones, so although the process is grueling, I have hopes of someday being fully employed by a big orchestra. oh, I forgot: I have 24 little students of varying ages. They provide me a lot entertainment (as well as frustration.)

As you know, Lael and I have recently moved to sunny old Seattle WA and as such, we have a whole lotta new info to impart to you all!

Here we go:
Mailing Address- 10765 14th Ave. SW
Apt. B10
Seattle, WA 98146
Phone Number- 206-248-7067
No answering machine yet, call our cells to leave a voicemail if need be.
Cell-Dan 802-999-7599
Cell-Lael 802-999-7991
Email- dgblackburn@msn.com
I will be killing off my earthlink account at the end of August, so this will be the only email address I will have from that point on. Lael will be getting an msn email account soon as well, and I’ll update you about that when it happens.
Thats all I got so far, and I will keep people posted as to what is going on out here.

-Dan and Lael

Sarah Biber (Greek ‘03) wrote recently with this excellent update: “So many things to tell you, I’m not sure how to begin. I had a wonderful and adventurous 2 years in Sydney. I played with the Sydney Symphony in the opera house many times, was principal of their chamber orchestra the sydney sinfonia. I played a bunch with a quartet down there and then moved to Chicago in August of 2005. I’m freelancing here and living with one of my triplet sisters. I am a tenured (insert sheepish grin) member of the illinois philharmonic and south bend symphonies. I hope to get better and better playing as time goes on. My friends and I from Oberlin started a chamber music collective called Till by Turning, which I am especially proud. (check out tillbyturning.com) We have a concert at wesleyan and boduin (how do you spell that) and NY in January. Meanwhile, I spent the summer at Tanglewood and since I am back have been taking EVERY audition that comes up. I’ve been in the finals for a few big ones, so although the process is grueling, I have hopes of someday being fully employed by a big orchestra. oh, I forgot: I have 24 little students of varying ages. They provide me a lot entertainment (as well as frustration.)

-Vicky Gyori (Greek/Latin ‘01) is doing graduate work in Classics at the University of Reading, and hopes to study in Rome this spring.

Stefan Kamola (Greek/Latin ‘01) has been traveling in exotic places, as usual. He wrote us last from,(in his words) “Bishkek (that’s in Kyrgyzstan, sandwiched somewhere between Russia, China, and Iran, homeland of the walnut, which Alexander the Great introduced to Europe).” He plans to return to Seattle to begin the Ph.D program in History in 2007.

Dan Blackburn (Class. Civ. ‘02) wrote in August with an update: Hi Folks!
I’m also teaching at Valparaiso University, it just outside of Chicago in Indiana. I found teaching a torturous way of making money last year, BUT, I’ve found the better you are as a teacher the more fun it becomes. ha. Who knew. I now look forward to my lessons with all of my various twerps (as I call them affectionately) and I especially enjoy taking my own lessons with the Principal of the Chicago Lyric Opera. He has taken me on and is indoctrinating me in his own particular cello heresies and mostly he is the source of all good things for me in Chicago. He published last year a cello technique/pedagogy book AND he would like to edit the bass lines I wrote for the first 3 Bach suites (masters thesis) and publish them in his next book, making it a joint project!!!!”

Elena Krell (Greek ‘03) sent us a new e-mail address: massagewithelena@gmail.com, which reflects the fact that she has received a certificate in Massage Therapy. She is contemplating graduate school in Comparative Literature beginning in 2009, and is meanwhile singing in various productions in the Bay Area.

Rebecca Fulop (Class. Civ. ‘04) is doing graduate work in Music Theory at the University of Michigan. Eliza Rosenberg (Latin Minor ‘04) is working on her Ph.D in Medieval Studies at McGill University. We were happy to see her at the annual meeting of the American Philological Association in Montreal last January.

Patrick Schwemmer (Greek/Latin ‘04) has been in Japan teaching English for the past two years. He is applying to graduate programs in East Asian Studies for next year. He came through Oberlin in September, and we had a fine visit.

Sandy McNaught (Greek ‘04) is continuing to serve as a Shansi Rep in India. She sent us this lovely update in September:”India has been my most challenging mentor, after you of course, and I am learning and growing here in all dimensions. I feel blessed with good fortune, and I am trying to keep it by giving back as much as possible. I laugh often, and some days I am maddeningly frustrated, but its always interesting. This year I have shifted down south to the infamous Lady Doak College in the hot but glorious temple city of Madurai in Tamil Nadu. I am currently teaching English literature, but next semester I will co-teach the Classical Literature course for the first year students! I have big plans for
these innocent students and at the end of the year I hope to have a few budding Classicists on campus. After spending my first year working with some of the sweetest, but naughtiest, little children in the ancient city of Varanasi, this is a fabulous opportunity to return to my beloved major and share what I have learned. I’m reading a lot, studying a hundred things at once, travelling whenever possible, and always drinking too much chai. I am also taking Indian classical dance classes, riding around on a scooter—once I raced a cobra on a scooter, and generally I get lost and then found again everyday.”

Tessa Shanks (Greek ‘04) was in town last June with Amanda Joshi for an “Obie wedding.” Tom and Kirk had coffee with them, and found them both thriving. Amanda is working with her own theater company in NYC (sorry to say I don’t have the name), and Tessa is working at Knopf.

Ian Pocock (Latin Minor ‘05) has recently moved to St. Louis, and is applying to graduate programs in Urban Planning.

Lizzie Ehrenhalt (Latin ‘05) has started the Ph.D program at the School of Information at the University of Michigan. She was awarded a Friends of the Oberlin College Library Graduate School Fellowship to support her study.
CLASSICS ALUMNI QUESTIONNAIRE

[Fall 2006]
If you haven’t yet responded to our plea for information about what you have been doing since you left Oberlin, please tell us about yourself (further schooling, career developments, family details, news of other Oberlin Classics graduates and reflections on your Oberlin education, etc.) Include your photo for our photograph album. Please correct your Name and Mailing Address below and return to the Editor:
Thomas Van Nortwick, Department of Classics, Oberlin College, Oberlin, OH 44074 — Many thanks!

Check, if applicable:  [ ] Please don’t forward this news to the Alumni Magazine.
E-Mail address: ________________________________________________________________

My news is (feel free to attach another sheet):