Congratulations to our Spring 2018 graduates!

**Bachelor of Arts**
Isaiah Paul Apfel
John Martin Dendinger
Amanda Emilia Dobrov
Robert Higgs
Jacqueline F. Horwitz
Cheyenne Casey Millard
Massimo Alessandro Navarretta
Viktor Y. Palenyy
Ryan Rasmussen
Ariana Rose Rutledge
Athena Astrid Schlereth
Anjali Suresh
Samuel Swayze
Minette Cynann Tsang

**AHMA Master of Arts**
Natalie Gleason
Jesse Obert

**AHMA Doctor of Philosophy**
Caroline Cheung
Melissa S. Gradic
Eric Wesley Driscoll

**Classics and Classical Archaeology Master of Arts**
Sophie Cushman
Lauren Miller
David Youd

**Classics Doctor of Philosophy**
Daniel Esses

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*Notes from the Chair*

by Ellen Oliensis

When I tell someone I’m department chair, the response invariably takes one of two forms: those outside the academy offer congratulations, those inside condolences. It’s true that being chair can be exhausting and stressful. But as I always tell those who stand ready to commiserate, I don’t really deserve their sympathy, since being chair of this department is an (almost) unalloyed pleasure and about as stress-free as a chairship can be. Why is that, you may ask? Because I have the most responsible, generous, hardworking colleagues imaginable; because our graduate students are as good-spirited as they are brilliant; because our undergraduates are in love with what they do (after all, why else would they do it?). Berkeley Classics is a happy place to be.

Embracing Berkeley’s ethos of individualism and decentralization, I will let the members of this marvelous community speak for themselves and in their own (generally very recognizable) voices. But I can’t refrain from tooting the departmental horn just a little. Many good things have been achieved by Berkeley Classics over the past year or two. For example: **Mark Griffith** was Martin Meyerson Berkeley Faculty Research Lecturer in 2016; this is a high honor, conferred on two faculty members selected each year from the entire campus. (It is typical of Mark, whose chatty entry I reproduce in full below, to have “forgotten” this honor altogether.) **Todd Hickey** and **Nikolaos Papazarkadas** have both achieved presidential status: Todd is President of
Notes from the Chair, continued

the American Society of Papyrologists and Nikolaos of the American Society of Greek and Latin Epigraphy, Jim Porter won the 2017 Goodwin Award of the Society for Classical Studies for his magisterial 2016 book *The Sublime in Antiquity* (Cambridge University Press), joining an ever-lengthening list of Berkeley Goodwin Awardees (Donald Mastronarde, Kathleen McCarthy, Leslie Kurke, Susanna Elm; we might add Emily Mackil of History); while I haven’t done the math, it does appear that in recent years Berkeley has produced more seminal works of scholarship (at least in the eyes of our national organization) than any other single institution. On the (current and former) graduate student front, Elizabeth Wueste (PhD 2016) has accepted a tenure-track position at the American University of Rome, Sarah Olsen (PhD 2016) has accepted a tenure-track position at Williams College; Margaret Foster (PhD 2010) has received tenure at Indiana University; and Nandini Pandey (PhD 2011) has received tenure at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. We are also proud to report on some important initiatives by current and former students that extend beyond the academy: Curtis Dozier (PhD 2008) has launched two new projects during the past year: the podcast “The Mirror of Antiquity,” where classical scholars talk about how their research informs their understanding of the contemporary world and their own lives, and the website “Pharos: Doing Justice to the Classics,” which documents and responds to appropriations of Greco-Roman antiquity by hate groups. Meanwhile, Stefani Echeverría-Fenn has not been idle during her break from our program: she has created a site, The Sportula, that channels micro-grants to economically marginalized students of Classics; you can read her Eidolon essay (with Djesika Bel Watson) introducing The Sportula here. Finally, Lauren Miller (just starting her fourth year in our program) traveled to Nashville last spring to work with choreographer Rebecca Allen and composer George Miller on a piece she created for the collaborative project Third Voice; her piece, entitled “Lighthouse,” puts a 21st-century spin on the myth of Echo and Pan.

FACULTY UPDATES

Donald Mastronarde started a term as Vice-President for Publications and Research of the Society for Classical Studies, entailing many committee meetings at the annual gatherings in frigid Toronto and equally frigid, but snowier, Boston. In 2017 his open-access publication project California Classical Studies produced volumes 5 and 6 in the series, volume 6 being his own Preliminary Studies on the Scholia to Euripides, a medley of studies in ancient scholarship, the tradition of Euripidean scholia, Byzantine teaching, and medieval palaeography. He organized a panel for the 2017 Classical Association conference in Canterbury, England, combining that trip with his third extended visit to the Vatican Library in five years. He was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in a ceremony in Cambridge in October. On the way there, Joan and he stopped off in St. Catharines, Ontario, to play with their 3-year-old grandson and help their granddaughter practice walking. This practice paid off when, on the day before her first birthday, just before their departure, she made her first few independent steps. He was recalled last year to teach Advanced Greek Prose Composition (to ten students) and looks forward to doing the proseminar in the fall.

Leslie Kurke reports that this past spring, she brought to completion two major long-term collaborative projects. Since 2013, she has been working with Richard Neer of the University of Chicago on a co-authored book on Pindar, topography, and the built environment (titled *Pindar, Song and Space: Towards a Lyric Archaeology*). The book is forthcoming from Johns Hopkins University Press in the new series on the Ancient World co-edited by James Ker and Berkeley’s own Emily Mackil. The second project is a collection of essays co-edited with Margaret Foster of Indiana University and Naomi Weiss of Harvard, based on a conference held at Berkeley in September 2015. The co-editors have submitted the volume, entitled *The Genres of Archaic and Classical Greek Poetry: Theories and Models*, to Brill for their “Studies in Archaic and Classical Greek Song” Series. With these projects completed, Leslie looks forward to turning to some additional Pindar projects, as well as some essays she wants to write on Sappho and Alcaeus.
Mark Griffith reports that he has experienced over the last couple of years the shock of becoming an “elder statesman” of the Department (along with Andy Stewart), as various distinguished colleagues have retired all around him. He doubts that he will ever become accustomed to that role, though of course it does provide an excuse for his long-winded comments and reminiscences (à la Nestor) on any and all occasions. Unexpectedly, but to his great pleasure, he has found that his earlier double-life (1960s-1980s), as Classicist and as musician, a life which used to involve two separate realms of existence, has in recent years returned (transmogrified) in more unified form, as on the one hand his current research into the sociology of the ancient Greek music scene is significantly helped and informed by his own experience of having played music in different contexts and having observed the competing music scenes of different social groups, while on the other hand occasions for playing music with other members of the Classics Department have grown more frequent — and highly enjoyable.

Thus on the first front, Mark has published or has in press chapters and articles on “The Music of War in Aeschylus' Seven against Thebes,” “Music and Dance [in post-5th century Greek tragedy],” “Korybantic and Trance Performance as a Lyric Genre,” “From Local to Global: Regional Difference in Ancient Greek Music,” and “Towards a Sociology of Ancient Greek Music,” — and hopes to have his book *Music and Difference* completed within the next year or so — while on the other hand he has been delighted to find himself invited from time to time to perform with others within our Department at various festive occasions. He is at heart an accompanist (in all realms of activity), and his limited keyboard chops equip him better for that role than for virtuoso solo attempts. So he says it has been fun to accompany last year’s winner of the Departmental Undergraduate Citation in Classics, Sierra Schiano, as she sang “Unforgettable” at Commencement, and then at the Christmas party to join Professor Carlos Noreña (synthesizer) on a version of “Lady Madonna,” and to back up first ChrisWaldo (alto sax) on “Have you met Miss Jones?” and then Yasmin Syed on “As Time Goes By,” before switching into more of a folk idiom as Marissa Henry sang two of her own wonderful compositions based on ancient Greek mythology (one of which, “Lullaby Theory”, she generously reprised — solo — as a guest visitor in Mark’s Classical Myth lecture class this semester). The musical talents of our Department have only recently begun to be tapped, and we look forward to more in the months and years ahead.

On a different front, Mark also reports that his experience of researching and writing up two invited chapters for a Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Ancient Education, in which he dealt with early systems of education in and around Greece and the Near East, brought home to him just how lucky he has been to be based at UC Berkeley for these last 40+ years. Being able to consult and receive expert, generous advice from colleagues in neighboring departments (Professors Niek Veldhuis, Ann Kilmer, and Ron Hendel for Mesopotamian and Canaanite/Biblical material; Alexander von Rospatt for scholarship on the Indian gurukula system; Kim Shelton for Minoan and Mycenaean...) was a blessing. And then, within Classics, not only do current colleagues help each other out constantly in their research, but former students — now launched into their own successful careers — can be counted on to provide acute critiques and editorial advice, often including, e.g., crucial help in making sure that an old fogey doesn’t babble on too long in hyper-Nestorian mode. Of course, it doesn’t always work, and Mark acknowledges that sometimes the good advice has not been fully taken. But without these local and distant colleagues, he is well aware that most of his publications would look a lot worse or, in some cases, would never even have been completed. There is, quite simply, nowhere better to be a Classics scholar than at Berkeley.

In addition to serving as President of the American Society of Papyrologists, Todd Hickey organized and is co-directing this year’s ASP Summer Institute in Papyrology at Washington University in St. Louis — for more information, visit the website here.

Sara Magrin writes: I joined the department in 2014 and, since then, I have been happily teaching a variety of courses in both classical languages and ancient philosophy. I am a philosopher by training, but I grew up in Italy at a time when a classical education was still an integral part of that training. I am interested in all aspects of ancient philosophy, but I work especially on the late Platonist Plotinus. An extremely important figure for the history of both Latin and Arabic philosophy, in the last century Plotinus has fallen from the philosophers’ canon in most North American Universities. I believe this marginalization is due only to a misinterpretation of his work as fundamentally at odds with the previous philosophical tradition. My research aims to show that, in contrast, Plotinus was deeply engaged with that tradition and with the philosophical questions we have inherited from it. In Fall 2018 I will be offering a seminar on Plotinus’ psychology at Princeton as a Fellow of the Council of the Humanities.

Ted Peña delivered a paper at the annual Oxford Roman Economy Project conference held at the University of Oxford on September 26 and 27, 2017. This year the conference was dedicated to the theme of recycling in the
Roman world. Ted’s paper, which was the conference’s leadoff presentation, was titled “Recycling in the Roman world: definitions, materials, and organization.” An expanded version of his talk will appear in the conference’s proceedings volume.

Most summers Ted organizes a study season in Italy for each of two research projects that he directs, the Palatine East Pottery Project (PEPP), in Rome, and the Pompeii Artifact Life History Project (PALHIP), at Pompeii. Both projects typically involve a small team of researchers that include graduate and undergraduate students from UC Berkeley Classics, the Graduate Group in Ancient History and Mediterranean Archaeology, and History of Art. During the summer of 2017 he directed a study season for PEPP but not for PALHIP so that he could remain in the USA to attend his son Oscar’s graduation from UCLA with a major in art. He has both projects out in the field this summer. For more on these two research initiatives, see RES ROMANAЕ, the website of the UC Berkeley Roman Material Culture Laboratory.

**Mario Telò** writes: I very much enjoyed my year of sabbatical, working on completing a draft of my new book, Archival Feelings in Greek Tragedy. I also finished a co-edited volume on tragedy and the new materialism, which is coming out this June. I gave papers based on the tragedy book and new ideas on Aristophanes, in Edinburgh, London, Oxford, and Canterbury (UK), and at the convention of the American Comparative Literature Association in Los Angeles.

I also started writing for the cultural section of the Italian newspaper Il Sole 24 Ore—it has been a lot of fun to review new Classics books and interview this year’s Pulitzer Prize winner for fiction.

**Duncan MacRae** writes: I am delighted to have joined the Department of Classics at Berkeley in the summer of 2016. Northern California is the culmination of a long journey westwards: I started out in suburban London, where I grew up and encountered an enthusiastic Latin teacher (sine qua non); then I crossed the sea, to Trinity College Dublin for an undergraduate degree, and then the ocean, to Harvard for my doctorate. I found more brilliant teachers and mentors at each place, became a Classicist and then a Roman historian, and eventually became especially fascinated by the history of religion in the Roman world, including the “pagan” Roman religion, the (familiar to us) religions of Judaism and Christianity, and many other intriguing and exotic ways that individuals and groups in the Roman world related to the divine. I found myself hanging out in the Harvard Semitic Museum and Divinity School more than Classicists normally do. All this eventually led to a book that came out recently: *Legible Religion: Books, Gods and Rituals in Roman Culture*.

My next moves westward were across the continent: I was an Assistant Professor at the University of Cincinnati and now I’ve made it to “Classics Shangri-La” at Berkeley. I’m extremely happy to be part of such an incredibly engaged and lively community of Classicists. I’ve already had the chance to teach Latin and Classical Myth to brilliant Berkeley undergraduates and to do some hard thinking about Roman polytheism with an excellent group of graduate students; some sabbatical leave in the 2017-18 academic year has provided me the opportunity to write on Jewish and Christian experiences of Roman imperial culture and power and to start the research for a new book project on how the Romans predicted, managed and imagined the future.
Josh Benjamins writes: Thanks to a generous grant from the Department, I had the great pleasure of spending two weeks in Rome in January as a participant in the inaugural instantiation of the Winter School of Paleography and Codicology at the American Academy. The course was taught by Dr. David Gura, a former professor of mine at the University of Notre Dame, and attracted a cosmopolitan body of students. The most memorable part of the Winter School was a week of original research at the venerable Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, working with an early-fourteenth-century French manuscript of Pseudo-Dionysian texts and commentaries. The course gave me a solid grasp of Gothic scripts in their great variety, and I also spent many delightful hours at the Colosseum, Forum, Palatine, Pantheon, Domus Aurea, San Clemente, and other sites in and around Rome.

Dylan Kenny writes: I edited a small volume of the Victorian polymath Vernon Lee’s writings on aesthetics for David Zwirner Books in New York; the book, with my foreword, was published in May 2018. (A good bit of the foreword was also published by the Paris Review).

Lauren Miller writes: I have been continuing to mix artistic work with my studies in the department, and am excited to serve as the creative director/dramaturge for an operatic adaptation of Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein, which is being produced by Nashville-based art collective Intermission for Spring 2019. Before that happens, though, I will be presenting my first paper (on the water-clock in Apuleius’ Apology) at the SCS this January!

Justin Hudak writes: I have found myself nel mezzo del cammin—at least of my life as a graduate student. The forest of academe has at times been obscure, the road to a degree at times indirect. And yet, what bright light, what wonderful company this department has at all times provided! The highlights of this past year include two conference papers (one delivered in Toronto, the other in Boston), two publications (one on Ovid and James Joyce, the other on Horace and Wallace Stevens), and two rather different but equally stimulating teaching experiences (one in this department’s summer Latin workshop, the other serving as GSI in a Comparative Literature course called “From Heroes to Superheroes”). I would say that I look forward to seeing the stars again, but the truth is that they shine even in the midst of my preparation for Greek and German exams!

Dan Esses writes: I have been living with my partner, Liz, in Charleston, SC for the past year and a half. We adopted a retired racing greyhound in October; her name is Maisie. Having finished my Ph.D. this May, I will be attending Yale Law School. I’m excited for the future and look forward to putting my Classics knowledge to work in unexpected ways.

FROM OUR RECENT UNDERGRADUATES

Kamille Delgado (BA 2015) writes: Since graduating from UC Berkeley and completing the Paideia Institute’s Living Latin in Rome program in 2015, I have been working on making the career transition into Software Engineering while contending with myriad health problems. I did a coding bootcamp in early 2016 and since then have been working for the Stanford University School of Medicine as a full-stack Software Engineer. In 2017 I finally had the chance to give back to the Paideia Institute by building for them the Online Public Classics Archive from the ground up, which we unveiled at SCS 2018 in Boston. It has turned out to be a really cool little curated archival tool for modern scholarship about the Classics, and now we are even getting institutions to partner with us to keep it constantly updated across its site, Facebook, and Twitter accounts.
I have enjoyed coding so much that I recently decided to go back to school for a formal B.S. in Computer Science from Oregon State University. As I find myself bed-bound, the online coursework has been an awesome way to keep my morale up and my brain challenged. While I have taken a completely different turn in life since graduating from the department, I wouldn't have done it any other way. The critical thinking skills, broad vision, and even the Latin (!) I learned at Cal are useful every single day of my life. I'm always looking for new ways to expand the digital humanities and I can be contacted through my website.

**Nathaniel Solley** (BA 2017) writes: Last year I taught Latin at Pacific Boychoir Academy in Oakland, and I am looking forward to starting the Classical Studies PhD program at University of Pennsylvania in the fall!

**Amy Ling** (BA 2017) writes: After graduation, I had a difficult job search, until I found a part-time job tutoring kids in reading (January - late March 2018). The job was with BookNook, a startup that has invented an e-learning app. My role was to use their app “in the field,” tutoring kids in a couple of elementary schools in Oakland (4-8 sessions a day with 1-4 kids per session). I appreciated the job because it gave me an insider's glimpse of the field of education, literacy, and the inner city, but unfortunately I had to resign because I was running out of money.

I am now working full-time for UC Berkeley Campus Shared Services on Fourth St, as a payroll specialist. I'm new to the world of HR and accounting — and to the office workplace, for that matter — but it's interesting to see all the attention and labor that goes into calculating an employee's final pay. The things we do are fun, in that we keep busy making lots of little calculations and entering data into systems, but it's also scary and empowering to be given such responsibility: at the click of a button, I can terminate anyone who works for UC Berkeley. There's a lot to learn, from accounting to basic professionalism, and I plan to learn it all.

That job will end at the end of October and I am looking into graduate school for fall 2019. I was impacted by my time with BookNook and want to go into behavior intervention or speech pathology for kids. I see now how supporting children in behavior and confidence is very important because it affects the trajectory of the rest of their lives.

**Olivia Graves** (BA 2017) writes: I have just finished my first year in the MPhil in Archaeology program at the University of Oxford! It has been absolutely wonderful thus far and I am grateful for the preparation that UCB Classics gave me throughout my undergraduate years.

**Sierra Schiano** (BA 2017) writes: I'm excited to say that I finished up the UC Davis Post-Baccalaureate program in Classics this past June, and will be heading to the University of Colorado, Boulder in the fall to start their Master's program in Classics! Meanwhile, this summer I returned to the Agora excavations.

**Nemea Center News**

Over the last four years, the Nemea Center for Classical Archaeology, under its Director, Professor Kim Shelton, has been engaged in exciting and very fruitful ways on three separate fronts -- i.e. three separate sites, all within a radius of 20 kilometers from Nemea itself, that have been providing opportunities for Berkeley undergraduates and graduate students (both in Classics and in AHMA) to develop their hands-on excavating and conservation skills while also assisting in the pursuit of major new avenues of research and publication.

At Nemea itself, the process of sorting, cleaning, cataloguing, repairing, and evaluating the pottery finds of previous years' excavations continues, along with analysis of the Medieval material in which the site is remarkably rich. At Mycenae (where Kim Shelton's position as chief excavator of “Petsas House,” adjacent to the Bronze Age citadel, positions her as one of the leading experts on the growth and operations of that whole, uniquely-famous site), investigations proceed on the role of this building in the processes of ceramics-manufacture and distribution during the hey-day of Mycenaen hegemony. And at Aidonia, just a few miles to the west of Nemea and about 20 miles from Mycenae, we are involved in a full-scale collaboration (in Greek, SYNERGASIA) with the Greek authorities, to protect and excavate a large-scale network of ca. 25 Late Bronze Age tombs -- a combination of large chamber tombs and smaller cist tombs, some previously looted by ancient and/or modern robbers, but others never disturbed since antiquity. These are yielding all kinds of exciting material: skeletons, armor, jewelry, and large amounts of pottery, some of it very fine and in good condition, from the period ca. 1500-1200 BCE. At all three sites, our Berkeley students are right there, assisting in the excavations and museum work every summer -- and several of our students also contribute crucially back at home as Undergraduate Research Apprentices (URAPs)
during the regular school year, working in the Nemea Archive in the midst of the Classics Department on Floor G of Dwinelle Hall, scanning, cataloguing, and generally assisting in the process of data analysis and preparation for eventual publication.

So it is no surprise that the Nemea Center's Summer Field School continues to be a great success, as students are able to spend time working at all three sites under Kim Shelton's direction, and developing hands-on experience in the various aspects of field archaeology such as few universities in the USA can offer. UC Berkeley has indeed been engaged with the sanctuary of Zeus at Nemea since the 1970s, and it has been very exciting to follow the expansion of our engagement there to include further aspects of ancient Greek settlements in the Nemea Valley, from Mycenaean times up into the Byzantine era. We warmly recommend that any of you who may have labored in the trenches with Steve Miller back in former decades, or more recently with Kim, make sure to re-visit Nemea -- and of course Mycenae too -- if you have any plans for vacationing in Greece. You can admire the restored columns of the Temple of Zeus, see the remarkable new Bronze Age finds from Aidonia exhibited in the Peterson Museum (Nemea), visit the newly redesigned and superbly informative museum at Mycenae (for which Kim Shelton deserves much of the credit), and of course enjoy the high-quality Nemean wine for which the region is famous.

Former UCB Classics majors are also in some cases continuing as key partners in the (always collaborative) processes of research and publication: notably Stephanie Kimmey (UCB Classics BA 2007, who completed her PhD at U Missouri in December 2017 with a dissertation on the changing ritual uses of the sanctuary of Zeus at Nemea during the Classical period); also Leslie Lemire (BA Classics 2008, MA Boston U), and of course Liz Langridge-Noti (another UCB Classics BA, then PhD Princeton, and now a professor at the American College of Greece).

Meanwhile, we are proud to announce that Volume IV of the splendid, blue Nemea publications was published in May 2018 by University of California Press: Jorge Bravo (PhD in AHMA from UCB, 2006) on the Hero Shrine of Opheltes. This is the last volume to appear in hard covers and in the “old style”: future publications in the Nemea series will appear in digital form, as is increasingly the norm in the world of archaeological scholarship.

Kim Shelton herself has been spending a well-earned year of research leave wrapping up Volume 1 of the final, full-scale excavation report from the excavations at Petsas House (first in the 1950s, and then by Kim herself from 2000-2013).

We hope that many of you may be able to join us for “Nemea Night” on Tuesday December 4th, 2018, when Kim Shelton will present the latest findings and activities of the Nemea Center, including whatever emerges from this summer's excavations and Field School. For further details on this and other Nemea activities, please visit our website.

### 2017-18: SPECIAL LECTURES AND EVENTS

This year we have had a bounty of great guest lectures on a wide variety of topics. **Maurizio Bettini** from the University of Siena gave the 2018 Sather Lectures, a wonderfully provocative and wide-ranging exploration of the themes of orality, language, and sound in Roman culture. (The tradition of videotaping the Sather Lectures was launched with **M. M. McCabe’s** dazzling 2017 Sather Lectures.) **Brooke Holmes** from Princeton University explored cosmic sympathy in Stoic philosophy from the perspective of the posthumanist zeitgeist. **Emily Gowers** from Cambridge (who will be returning to Berkeley as our 2021–22 Sather Professor) offered a witty examination of the figure of the son-in-law in Cicero and Tacitus—with echoes of a famous son-in-law in current political news. **Richard Hunter**, the Regius Professor of Greek at Cambridge, investigated the absent presence of pre-Socratic
philosophy in Hellenistic poetry. Completing our trio of Cantabrigians was Gábor Betegh, Laurence Professor of Ancient Philosophy, who illuminatingly juxtaposed Plato’s political-spatial fantasies with the urbanistic utopia/dystopia of modern Brasilia. Jonathan Hall, from the University of Chicago, gave the prestigious Pritchett lecture on the archaeological fascination with Argos during the Ottoman Empire, while the annual Aleshire lecture on epigraphic topics was delivered by Paula Perlman (a UC Berkeley alumna) from UT, Austin, who spoke on the laws of Crete in the late Classical and Hellenistic period. Dan-el Padilla Peralta, from Princeton University, chosen by the graduate students to present this year’s Heller lecture, tracked the persistence of a problematic model of citizenship in Greece, Rome, and our own day. Classics also co-sponsored the French philosopher Jacques Rancière, who spoke on art, politics, and ethics. And last but definitely not least, this year's splendid commencement address was delivered by Jeffrey Brown of the PBS Newshour, a Berkeley Classics BA, who returned to campus with his wife Paula Crawford (Berkeley Comparative Literature BA; they met studying ancient Greek!). The two were endlessly tickled that Mark Griffith, whom they remembered from their student days, offered them drinks after the ceremony (“Mark Griffith brought us champagne!”). We were just as tickled, not to say honored, to have them with us for our commencement.

In Memoriam

Antonia Syson
February 23, 1973 – March 25, 2018

It is with terrible sadness that we report the passing of Antonia Syson, who succumbed, after some months of illness, to a very aggressive form of breast cancer shortly after her 45th birthday. Antonia’s wide-ranging scholarly interests in ancient and modern literature were never divided from her other passions—for art, music, film, friendship, the practice of pedagogy, and all other strivings of the human spirit that help make the world more beautiful and more livable.

Antonia was born in Botswana but raised in the UK, where her family returned when she was a month old. She earned her undergraduate degree at Magdalen College Oxford in 1995 and joined our graduate program that same year. She earned her PhD in 2003 with a dissertation (directed by Kathleen McCarthy) entitled “Reading for the Novel: Knowledge, Persuasion, and the Divine Narratives of Vergil’s Aeneid,” which would furnish the core of her scintillating and idiosyncratic study of Vergilian fiction-making, Fama and Fiction in Vergil’s Aeneid (Ohio State University Press, 2013). After a number of peripatetic years, in 2008 Antonia took up a position as Assistant Professor at Purdue University, where she earned tenure in 2014.

What always engaged Antonia, in her book and various essays, was the impact texts can produce on people: the ways texts can change us. In this sense her scholarship was intricately bound up with her commitment to pedagogy—and Antonia was a passionately dedicated and constantly innovating teacher, never content to settle for anything less than an authentic and potentially transformative connection with her students. She was the inaugural winner of Purdue’s newly established Antonia Syson Cornerstone Teaching Award, which recognizes “excellence in teaching and mentorship in Transformative Texts.”

—submitted by Nelly Oliensis

Robert Dobbin
December 16, 1958 – March 5, 2018

We have received the sad news that Rob Dobbin, who was awarded his PhD in Classics in 1989, passed away suddenly this past spring. Born in New York City, Rob entered our graduate program in 1980 at the tender age of twenty-one, after receiving his BA from Fordham University. While at Berkeley he explored a wide range of literary and philosophical authors within our joint program (with the Philosophy department) in Ancient Philosophy, and wrote his dissertation on “The Sense of Self in Epictetus: Prohairesis and Prosopon”, under the direction of Tony Long. After some years of teaching at Gonzaga University and other colleges, Rob settled on a life of writing and editing in the Bay Area. In 1998 he published Epictetus. Discourses Book 1, in the distinguished OUP series, Clarendon Later Ancient Philosophers. He extended his work on Epictetus with a best-selling translation for Penguin Books, Epictetus. Discourses and Selected Writings (2008), and followed that in 2013 with an equally acclaimed translation of Cynic writings, again for Penguin Books: The Cynic Philosophers: from Diogenes to Julian (2013). Rob also published articles on Virgil, including “Julius Caesar in Jupiter’s prophecy in the Aeneid” in Classical Antiquity (1995). At the time of his untimely death he was projecting a further Penguin Classics volume that would include three works from the Hellenistic era, by Callimachus, Herodas and Theophrastus.

—submitted by Tony Long
Joanne C. Heffelfinger
June 2, 1931 – February 4, 2018

The Classics Department is deeply saddened to report the passing of Dr. Joanne Dawson Callery Heffelfinger, who died on February 4, 2018, surrounded by her family. Totton P. Heffelfinger, her beloved husband for 64 years, preceded her in death a year earlier.

Joanne graduated from Radcliffe College with honors in 1952. While there she met Totton Heffelfinger, a student at Harvard Law School, where Joanne would study for one year before marrying Totton and moving to Washington D.C. After they moved to San Francisco, she completed her law degree at USF in 1960 and went on to pass the California bar exam.

Joanne soon became active in the civil rights movement, working on voter registration, desegregating Marin City’s Manzanita School, preparing students for standardized employment tests, and developing a co-op preschool for the Raphael Weill Elementary School that later became one of four models for the Head Start Program.

In 1965, the family (which now included five children) moved to Athens, where Joanne promptly fell in love with Greece, learned modern Greek, and indulged her taste for adventure, touring the mainland and islands in a VW bus loaded with children while Totton was working. Returning to San Francisco in 1967, where her youngest son was born, she became deeply involved in the peace movement. Greece maintained its allure, however, prompting her to acquire a second BA in ancient Greek from SF State, an MA in Classics from UC Berkeley, and (in 1991) a PhD in Berkeley’s Graduate Group in Ancient History and Mediterranean Archaeology (AHMA), which she earned with a dissertation on the ancient Athenian law of treason or prodosia.

In the 1980s, the couple became surrogate parents for two young Nepalese girls, Bishnu Maya Dhungana and Durga Thapa; Durga later became a shared seventh child with her Nepalese family. Their far-flung travels included trekking in Nepal, kayaking in Alaska and in Siberia, boating down the Nile, and trips to Africa, Australia, the Mediterranean, and Antarctica. When in California, Joanne enjoyed gardening, swimming, walking, socializing with friends in Inverness (this writer included), and meeting with her Latin study group. Her quest for social justice never faded, guiding her throughout her life, and personally she was kindness itself. Aply described by her family as an academic, activist, adventurer, and advocate, she was greatly loved and is sorely missed.

Joanne is survived by her seven children, thirteen grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. A memorial is planned for late July.
—submitted by Andrew Stewart

Stay Tuned...

2018-19 looks to be an exciting year for the Department of Classics.

- The year will start with a bang with a major international conference mounted by Ancient History and Mediterranean Archaeology to celebrate the program’s 50th anniversary. The conference, which will run Sept. 6-8, will investigate the problem of revolution in the ancient Mediterranean world, with papers exploring several different domains of revolutionary (and evolutionary) change: political, cultural, religious, legal, artistic, and economic. As always, all are welcome to attend!
- In November, Classics is co-sponsoring a staged reading of Beth Piatote’s Antikoni, a powerful reimagining of Sophocles’ Antigone within a Native American context. The reading is scheduled for Weds. Nov. 7th at the Hearst Museum; more information will be available on our website as the date approaches.
- In spring 2019, Classics will be hosting the 105th Sather Professor of Classics, Jack Davis of the University of Cincinnati. Though the topic of Professor Davis’ lecture series has not yet been announced, we have reason to believe that it will include some of his recent sensational finds at Pylos—possibly including this summer’s fresh discoveries. Meanwhile, we look forward to hearing about Kim Shelton’s latest finds when Nemea Night returns on Dec. 4.

Don’t forget to visit our website for information about other upcoming departmental events!