

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH NEWSLETTER

Winter 2016



English Department bursary announcement event. See page 5. (Nick Pearce photos)

THE WINTER OF OUR MISSED CONTENT

I'm sure you're wondering about this being the "Winter" issue of the journal. Well, production was slowed down a little because the Department of English has been just so busy this year! As you'll see below in our "Accomplishments" section, the English Department family has been hard at work on scholarship, teaching, public work, and a wide variety of other efforts. (Your intrepid editor was also a bit slowed down on the newsletter front because of work with the Association of Canadian College and University Teachers of English (ACCUTE), though colleagues Lyn Bennett and Lynne Evans—who worked with him on that task—may not let him get away with this excuse!) And we were far from the only ones hard at work: of special note are Ronald Huebert and Marjorie Stone, both recently celebrated for their immense contributions both to Dalhousie and to the wider scholarly world.

These celebrations are added to by our continuing thanks to Marjorie, Ron, and others of our colleagues who are moving on to new developments. As many of our alumni will know, the English department is on the verge of some change: several colleagues are retiring, and we are celebrating their past and continued work, as well as their collegial efforts to

make this department one of the best in the country. We hope the future will see new colleagues who can bring the same levels of energy and collegiality that they have dedicated to our department.

My colleagues and our students and alumni speak more eloquently about our department than I can, as you'll see below. Would you like to tell us about what the English department means to you? Please contact us to let us know! And now let's turn to our "Winter" Newsletter, albeit one with more than a touch of Spring in its step.

—Jason Haslam

P.S. I am pleased to note that our last issue was a hit: our anniversary essay by Sharon Hamilton was even discussed in the [York Museums Trust](#) email newsletter, *Trust Talk*.

Table of Contents

Editor's Message	1
CSRS Lifetime Achievement Award	2
Dal Service Award	3
Book Launch: <i>In the Pressure of the Moment</i>	4
New English Bursary	5
MA Colloquium	6
Atlantic Undergrad English Conference	7
Alumni Profiles	8
Accomplishments	10
Contributors	11

CANADIAN SOCIETY FOR RENAISSANCE STUDIES LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

On a convivial evening during the annual Congress of the Social Sciences and Humanities in Calgary in late May, the Canadian Society for Renaissance Studies presented its highest honour, a Lifetime Achievement Award, to Ronald Huebert, who has been a Professor in the Department of English at Dalhousie for almost 40 years. The award marks an outstanding career full of accomplishments: two monographs (John Ford: Baroque English Dramatist (1977) and The Performance of Pleasure in English Renaissance Drama (2003), a major Revels edition of James Shirley's *Lady of Pleasure* (1986), and many important essays on subjects ranging from the female breast in Reformation culture, to privacy in the works of Thomas Browne, John Donne, and John Milton, not to mention seminal pieces on dramatists Thomas Middleton and Ben Jonson. But Ron Huebert is not content to rest on even these flourishing laurels: at the stimulating conference panel he organized and addressed, his third major monograph, *Privacy in the Age of Shakespeare*, published by University of Toronto Press, was prominently on display, and a collection of essays on

early modern spectatorship (co-edited with our own Professor David McNeil) is forthcoming with McGill-Queen's University Press. Recognizing these extraordinary achievements, CSRS President Helene Cazes invited the crowd of conference goers to raise a toast in his honour. In response, Ron Huebert gave a speech that, in typical fashion, deflected attention from his own accomplishments to those of his former students and younger colleagues, five of whom (including myself) were in attendance. Displaying a generosity and largeness of vision that characterizes not only his mentorship role in the profession but also his thoughtful and inquiring scholarly work, Ron Huebert continues to give back to the community of Renaissance and early modern specialists in Canada and beyond. The celebratory evening that also included a musical interlude by Ralph Maier on the vihuela, an early modern Spanish version of the lute, will be long remembered by those who attended. Congratulations Professor Huebert!

—Christina Luckyj



FASS AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE

(On 11 May 2016, the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) gathered to recognize upcoming retirements, but also to celebrate Marjorie Stone being named this year's winner of the FASS Award for Excellence in Service. Below are excerpts from Chair Carrie Dawson's nomination letter. —Ed.)

Dedicated, tireless, and deeply motivated by an enduring commitment to questions of equity and justice, Professor Marjorie Stone is an extraordinarily generous citizen of the Department of English, the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, and of Dalhousie University. In her 33 years of service at Dalhousie, she has been a model citizen, and in this, her last year before retiring, she continues to demonstrate an exemplary commitment to collegial processes. As such, we are writing to nominate her for the FASS award for Excellence in Service.

As an award-winning teacher and internationally recognized researcher who currently holds the McCulloch Chair in English, Marjorie might have chosen to slow down, to rest on her laurels in her last year of full-time service. Instead, she is working harder than ever. An active and vocal Senator (her second term) concerned about the ways that the recent and pending spate of retirements will affect FASS, Marjorie recently introduced a successful motion requiring Deans to prepare summary reports for Senate on reductions or changes in faculty numbers over the past seven years. She is now lobbying to have these summary reports brought to Senate for review and discussion, and to have them made available to all faculty members, the DSU and DAGS. [. .]

That said, her service to our faculty also extends well beyond the boundaries of the university: she is a former Director of and Dalhousie Coordinator for the Atlantic Metropolis Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Diversity and she has served on a very wide array of SSHRC committees. [. .] She recently served on the nation-wide Distinguished Dissertation Award Adjudication Committee, and she regularly

offers guest lectures at the Humanities in the Community program at the North End Library.

Marjorie's record of service is so vast and varied that it cannot be sketched in a two-page letter. But it is also the case that a list of her committee assignments—however impressive—does little to capture the spirit or range of her contributions to collegial governance, many of which happen outside of her committee work. [. .] In September, when the refugee crisis first became a staple on the nightly news, Marjorie contacted President Florizone and suggested that the university set up a task force on refugee sponsorship. The President concurred, and in conjunction with a number of experts in refugee law and citizenship studies, Marjorie is now serving on Dalhousie's Taskforce on Refugee Sponsorship, which is working to increase student refugee placements on campus.

A deep and passionate believer in the transformative potential of education and the importance of collegial governance, Marjorie works extraordinarily hard in the service of her students and colleagues, and we are all the better for it. She has our highest regard and our most enthusiastic recommendation.

—Carrie Dawson



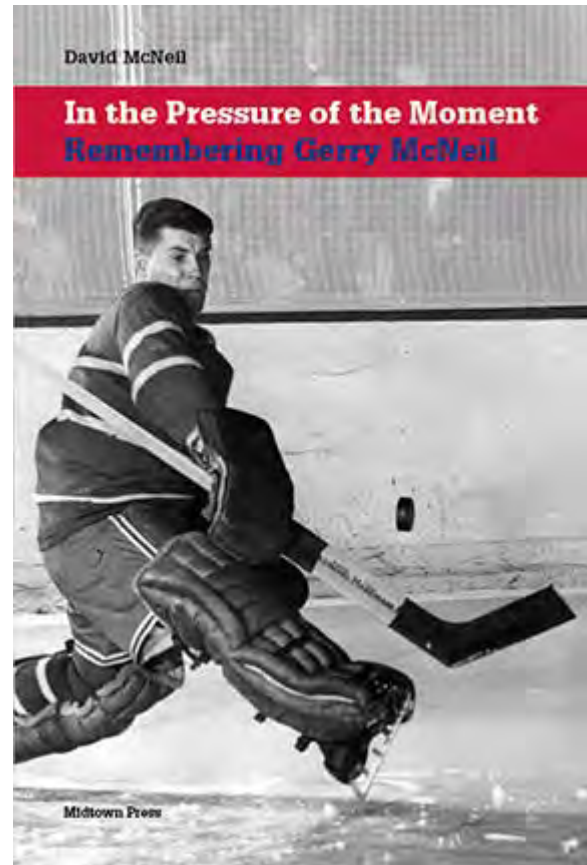
Congratulations, Professor Stone!

THE ICE-MAN COMETH

On March 28 in the Dalhousie Faculty Pub, Professor David McNeil (English) launched his book *In the Pressure of the Moment: Remembering Gerry McNeil*. It relates the story of his father's National Hockey League career as a goalie with the famed Montreal Canadiens of the early 1950s. But more than that, it is a meditation on the place of the goalie on any hockey team (no matter in first or last place, Stanley Cup winner or not) and on a son's relationship with his father after the fame.

Gerry McNeil and the Habs won the Cup in 1953 and McNeil played in three other final series, but he had the misfortune to come to the top of his game between two puck-stopping, attention-grabbing legends—Hall-of-Famers Bill Durnan (the epitome of old school) and Jacques Plante (the wanderer from the crease who wore a face mask)—and so never received the recognition he deserved. The book is filled with play-by-play details of important games and studied emphasis on the goalie's role as the last line of defence in the determination of victory or defeat. David McNeil never saw his father perform in an NHL game, but he has certainly done his homework on league history and the significance of players ranging from giants like Rocket Richard and Gordie Howe to the many lesser lights so vital to a team's success.

David McNeil has a considerable interest in the role of still photography in sport and particularly in those halcyon moments captured by quick shutter speed (for the day) and flash-bulbs, moments frozen in time like the one of his father's defeat by the Cup-winning shot of Toronto Maple Leaf Bill Barilko in 1951 (the goalie futilely throwing up his right arm and glove as the Leaf player hurls his horizontal body through the air with the puck flying into the net). It is fitting, given Gerry McNeil's unacknowledged greatness in NHL lore, that the cover of the book is graced with an unforgettable picture of his remarkable save off the stick of a young Gordie Howe.



But, as mentioned, this is also the story of a boy's relationship with his father after the fame, his growing up with the knowledge that the 'old man' was a figure of some note in Canadian sports whose contemporaries like Richard, Bernie Geoffrion, and Doug Harvey never stopped singing his praises as the years passed. David McNeil's inquiring mind prompted him to engage in memorable conversations with his retired father about his career and the demands of NHL success and failure that had their impact on family life. Certain passages of the book are paeans to physical grace and emotional survival under great pressure, and David McNeil is to be commended for standing back to tell his tale with as much objectivity as is necessary for an official biography and with a deeply-moving but always clear-headed subjectivity that all lasting personal memoirs provide.

—Andy Wainwright

NEW ENGLISH DEPARTMENT BURSARY

This year, the English department started a new bursary, funded by faculty and staff, specifically for Black Canadian and Indigenous students enrolled in our undergraduate or graduate programs. After the announcement of the bursary was made (see [here](#) for more information on the launch), the Dalhousie Association of Graduate Students in English (DAGSE), held a book sale to raise money for the bursary. Other departments and units across the university are now developing their own bursaries as a result. Below is the flyer developed to advertise the bursary initiative to other departments, which was made possible by Debbie McIntosh in the Office of Advancement.



WHAT IF....

THE DIVERSITY BURSARY OPPORTUNITY

In the summer of 2015, Dal English professors Leonard Diepeveen and Jason Haslam reached out to colleagues in their department asking "wouldn't it be cool if...?" The "if" was the beginning of a grassroots bursary fund to provide financial aid to Aboriginal and Black Canadian students majoring in English. The first bursary will be awarded in the Fall 2016.



YOU'RE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS OPPORTUNITY

Wouldn't it be cool if... faculty and staff in your department established a similar bursary to help students in your discipline?

Imagine the impact across the University if we could create 10, 15 or even 25 similar bursaries.

"If you're the first generation and you're having financial difficulties getting to university, needs-based bursaries are incredibly important,"

says **DR. DIEPEVEEN**

MAKING A UNIVERSITY-WIDE IMPACT

- Currently Aboriginal and Black/African-Canadian students make up only 2 per cent of the Dalhousie student body. Well below the 4-5 per cent that is seen in Canadian society.
- Many Aboriginal and Black/African-Canadian students continue to face financial barriers to continued education and many are the first in the family to attend PSE.
- A Report from the Committee on Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian Student Access and Retention recommends a 6 per cent increase in scholarship/bursary support for these groups.

"Bursaries are essential to providing initial opportunities to students of marginalized groups and keeping them at the university to complete their degrees,"

says **DR. HASLAM**

For more information on how your department can set up a bursary please contact:

Debbie McIntosh

Office of Advancement

494-6853 | d.mcintosh@dal.ca

MA COLLOQUIUM

On Thursday, May 12, the department hosted the annual Master's Thesis Colloquium, at which our current MA students presented the early stages of their MA thesis research. As you'll see below, we learned about a wide range of exciting topics at this event, and we're all excited to read the final versions of these theses!

MA Thesis Colloquium 2015/2016

Papers and Panels

Writing Gender

11:00 AM - 12:15 PM

Chair: Dr. Kathy Cawsey

Lisa Baker

Droogs and Linguists: How Gender Shapes Resistance and Control in Anthony Burgess's *A Clockwork Orange* and Suzette Haden Elgin's *Native Tongue*

Emily Gaudet

Morgaine Speaks for Trotula: Women's Medicine in Arthurian Legend

Cheryl Hann

"If Only I Had a Girlfriend!": Towards a Queer Reading of *The Diary of a Young Girl*

Coffee Break

12:15 PM - 12:30 PM

Resisting Disaster

12:30 PM - 1:45 PM

Chair: Dr. David Evans

Linda Little

Risky Business: the Communal Effects of Industrial Disaster in Lisa Moore's *February* and Leo McKay's *Twenty-six*

Vanessa Rachael Marsden

Embodied Female Resistance to Genetically-Engineered Food in Larissa Lai's *Salt Fish Girl*

Liz Tetzlaff

Radical Pacifism and The Great War in Dame Rose Macaulay's *Three Days*

Coffee Break

1:45 PM - 2:00 PM



The Life Eternal

2:00 PM - 3:30 PM

Chair: Dr. Bruce Greenfield

Carrie Deleskie

Decreation as Self-Production: A Weillian Reading of *Priscilla Becker's Internal West*

Maggie Gilchrist

Mirror to the Soul: The Undead in Medieval Romance

Krista Hill

If You Go Down to the Woods Today: The Rise of the Monstrous Child and the "Save the Child" Discourse in *The Walking Dead*

Shilo Pearle

Imagining Peter Pan

Reception to follow in the English Department Lounge



Department of English

READING THE *WRITE* STUFF AT AAUEC 2016

One might say that, in the depths of the fourth month of an eternal winter, five students and one professor undertook a harrowing journey to face fear itself. One might also say that, on March 18th, 2016, Dr. Greenfield drove five Dalhousie students to the University of New Brunswick to present at the Atlantic Undergraduate English Conference.

Hannah Ascough, Helen Pinsent, Taylor Lemaire, Julia Schabas, and I all had the pleasure of attending the conference, a gathering that included students from universities throughout the Maritimes. Some students – Julia, Taylor, and me included – presented academic papers, while others – like Hannah and Helen – presented original creative works.

Julia’s presentation, titled “Life, Writing, and Art: O’Hara and Jackson Pollock” examined the similarities between Pollock’s abstract impressionist painting style and O’Hara’s poetry. Taylor delivered a paper called “Moral Contagion and Defamiliarization in William Blake’s *The Book of Urizen*” that explored morality and decay. Helen’s story “Tuesday” about two men on a train had listeners on the edge of their seats. Hannah’s non-fiction piece “What Kind of Person Are You?” about her Varsity running coach was engaging and inspiring. And I, for my part, lived out a lifelong dream of delivering an inspiring battlefield speech at an academic conference when I presented my paper “The Bravest Thing: Tolkien’s Transformed Northern Heroism.”

Unlike in previous years, presentations were grouped in panels thematically, regardless of whether the piece was academic or creative. This unusual organization made question periods lively as presenters and audience members attempted to draw connections between all of the presentations in the panel.



Photo Courtesy Bradley Parker Photography and the Dept. of English, UNB

As always, the atmosphere at AAUEC was relaxed, supportive, and festive. The most charming aspect of the whole weekend was, in my opinion, that it was impossible to walk down a hallway or into a room without overhearing a spirited discussion about narrative voice, or dramatic irony – there’s nothing quite like an English conference to bring out the geek in all of us (not that it takes much).

After a day of panels (and nerves leading up to each of our presentations) the conference was rounded off on Saturday evening with a banquet and a keynote by Dr. Robert Gray. Dr. Gray shared one of his short films, aptly tying up a weekend of collaborative learning with a discussion of innovative storytelling and filmmaking.

By the next morning, barely thirty-six hours after arriving, we were on our way home to sunny Halifax – well, it was March, so it wasn’t that sunny, but allow me some artistic license – or, in other words, we were returning home in a blaze of glory as self-declared conference champions having bravely slain public speaking nerves and salted the ground so none would ever grow again.

—Shannon Payne

ALUMNI PROFILES

Christine Handley
(BA honours 2009; MA 2010)

Newsletter: What do you remember as being best /most rewarding / most memorable / most fun about English at Dal?

Christine Handley: I really enjoyed the collegial atmosphere of the department—everyone was very friendly and encouraging, and no one took themselves too seriously. It was a large part of my decision to stay at Dalhousie for my MA. Now that I visit a range of campuses across Canada and the US, I know how rare that atmosphere can be.

What do you do now?

I'm the Sales Manager for Broadview Press. In brief, that means overseeing the sales team, liaising with external accounts, and being the point person for any particularly thorny, book-related issues.

What's the best part of your job?

Travel generally, but visiting California every February is particularly enjoyable! I'm out of the office about two weeks of each month during the academic year. While I enjoy visiting campuses, my favourite trips are to conferences—it's nice to have professors approach me, instead of interrupting them during their lunch breaks!

How do your English degrees help you with this job?

A large part of my job is speaking with English professors about texts for their courses, so having a background in English is key—I have to be conversant with a wide range of literature in order to make appropriate text recommendations (thank you,

Dalhousie survey courses). Since I both learned and taught from texts over the course of my BA and MA, I can also bring a practical knowledge of how our texts work in courses to these discussions as well.

Read any good books lately?

Yes! I recently re-read the excellent Imperial Radch trilogy by Ann Leckie, and have moved on to *The Unbeatable Squirrel Girl*. On the Broadview side, I just finished Shannon Dea's *Beyond the Binary*, to keep with my feminist summer reading theme.

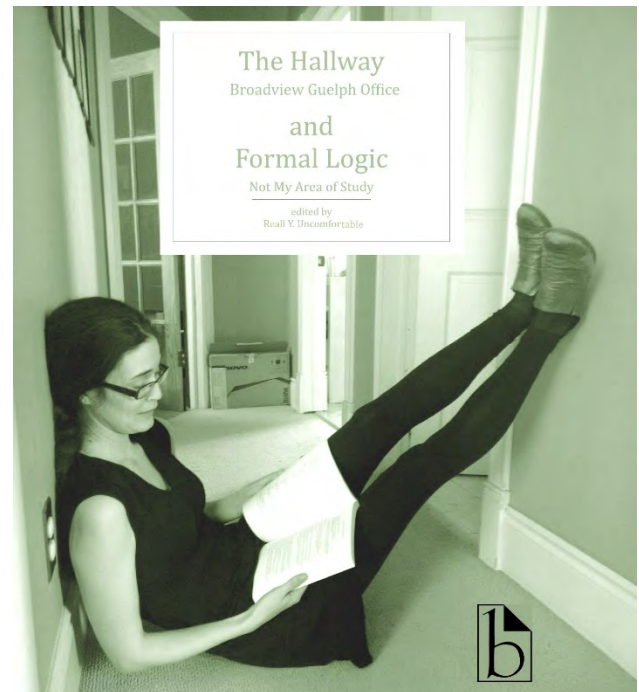


Photo Courtesy Christine Handley

Just a quick follow-up: could you explain the picture?

It is something of a spoiler! We're doing an inter-office competition of recreating BE covers, and are going to post some of them over the summer on Twitter and Facebook.

Ed note: you can vote on the best #notquiteBroadview cover until through Twitter, [@broadviewpress](https://twitter.com/broadviewpress). The contest started July 15, and will run for a few weeks.

Heather Meek
(PhD 2007)



Photo courtesy Heather Meek

Newsletter: What do you remember as being best /most rewarding / most memorable / most fun about English at Dal?

Heather Meek: In the early years of my program, there was a strong sense of community amongst my fellow grad students, due largely to the Friday afternoon speaker events (of which I hold many fond memories), and a shared office space in a big, old, run-down house on Le Marchant Street. On a memorable evening in September 2001, my cohort gathered in this house to vote on a name: “Bleak House” was the winner. Sadly, Bleak House is no longer standing.

What do you do now?

I’m an associate professor in the Department of Literatures and Languages of the World at Université de Montréal. I teach in a small English program and regularly give first-year composition and literary survey courses, as well as more advanced undergraduate and graduate courses in eighteenth-century women’s writing and the history of medicine. Because U de M is a large francophone university, most of my daily interactions and much of the administrative work I do are in French.

What did you learn during your time here that you bring to your own students?

In a conversation with my mom during the ABD phase of my degree, she suggested that I was beginning to sound like some of the eighteenth-century hysterical women who were the subjects of my dissertation, and that I should go out and have some fun. It was around this time that I began to understand the importance of offsetting the solitude that is so often the consequence of academic work by reaching out to fellow scholars – in the hallway, at conferences, at the pub – and by spending time with friends talking about matters unrelated to work.

Read any good books lately?

I’ve recently re-read a couple of my eighteenth-century favourites: Eliza Haywood’s *The Distress’d Orphan, or Love in a Madhouse* and Mary Wollstonecraft’s *Maria, or The Wrongs of Woman*. I’ve lately been reading Elena Ferrante and intend to squeeze her *The Days of Abandonment* into my fall 2016 grad course, “Hysteria Across the Ages.”

A BRIEF SELECTION OF ENGLISH ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Emily Ballantyne: new permanent position as Instructional Designer, Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia; *Translocated Modernisms: Paris and Other Lost Generations* (U of Ottawa P, 2016), co-edited by Emily Ballantyne, Marta Dvorak, and Dean Irvine.

Brandi Estey-Burt: “Bidding the Animal Àdieu: Grace in J.M. Coetzee’s *The Lives of Animals and Disgrace*,” *Literature and Theology* (2015); won O’Brien Foundation Fellowship (2016) and Mushkat Memorial Essay Prize (2016); accepted to 2016 UCSIA Summer School on Religion, Culture and Society (Belgium).

Shauntay Grant: Writer in Residence, Writers’ Trust of Canada, *Berton House Retreat* (April – June 2016)

Shawna Guenther: “Roll a Hard Six: Losing Your Noodle in Raymond Federman’s *Double or Nothing*,” *Analyses/Rereadings/Theories* (2016); “Jane Sharp’s *The Midwives Book: Woman’s Experience, Authority, and Language*,” *Feminist Spaces* (2015); “Letters of Condolence,” *The Waggle* (2015; under the penname Jane Arsenault)

Jason Haslam: *Gender, Race, and American Science Fiction: Reflections on Fantastic Identities* (Routledge, 2015); *American Gothic Culture: An Edinburgh Companion*, edited by Joel Faflak and Jason Haslam (Edinburgh UP, 2016).

David Huebert: winner of the 2016 CBC Short Story Prize for “Enigma.”

Ronald Huebert: Lifetime Achievement Award, Canadian Society for Renaissance Studies (see p. 2).

Dean Irvine: *Editing as Cultural Practice in Canada*, edited by Dean Irvine and Smaro Kamboureli (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 2016); *Translocated Modernisms: Paris and Other Lost Generations* (U of Ottawa P, August 2016), co-edited by Emily Ballantyne, Marta Dvorak, and Dean Irvine.

Brittany Kraus: awarded a Killam Predoctoral Fellowship, a SSHRC Joseph-Armand Bombardier CGS Doctoral Scholarship, and the Malcolm Ross Thesis Award.

Carole Langille: artist in residence at Dalhousie Faculty of Medicine (2016).

Rohan Maitzen: read her ongoing blog at openlettersmonthly.com/novelreadings; “*Middlemarch* and the ‘Cry from Soul to Soul.’” *Berfrois* (2015); Review of Samantha Walton, *Guilty but Insane: Mind and Law in Golden Age Detective Fiction*, *Times Literary Supplement* (2015).

David McNeil: *In the Pressure of the Moment: Remembering Gerry McNeil* (Vancouver: Midtown Press, 2016; see p. 4).

Kaarina Mikalson: awarded both a Killam Predoctoral Scholarship and a SSHRC Joseph-Armand Bombardier CGS Doctoral Scholarship.

Donna Morrissey: *The Fortunate Brother* (Penguin, 2016).

Emily Pohl-Weary: Writer in Residence, Writers’ Trust of Canada, *Berton House Retreat* (July – Sept. 2015)

Marjorie Stone: Winner, Dalhousie FASS Excellence in Service Award (see p. 3); her article, “The Corporate University in Canada and the US: Markers and Oppositional Strategies” (*English Studies in Canada* 38.1 [2012]: 71-88) was, in 2015-16, the most downloaded article from *ESC*, (1200 times!) as reported at annual meeting of ACCUTE.

Bart Vautour: *Meet Me on the Barricades*, by Charles Yale Harrison, edited, with introduction, appendices, and notes, by Emily Robins Sharpe and Bart Vautour (Ottawa: U of Ottawa P, 2016).

Julia M. Wright: *Men with Stakes: Masculinity and the Gothic in US Television* (Manchester UP, 2016); also selected as one of five new University Research Professors at Dalhousie.

Erin Wunker: *Notes from a Feminist Killjoy: Essays on Everyday Life* (BookThug, 2016); *Barking & Biting: Selected Poetry of Sina Queyras*, edited and introduced by Erin Wunker (Laurier Poetry Series. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 2016).



(In the Halifax Public Gardens. Note: not Winter...)

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