

Department of Classics
Monmouth College
Annual Report
1985/86

The Department of Classics underwent several significant transitions during the 1985/86 academic year. With the filling of the Minnie Billings Capron Chair of Classics by Dr. Thomas J. Sienkewicz, the department can now reasonably look forward to many years of stable staffing and of growing involvement in the life of the college.

This was also the year that the new Classics curriculum, passed by the college faculty in February, 1985, went in effect. Three sets of Triad courses were offered in 1985/86. In the fall term, an epic course (Classics 210g Ancient Literary Genres) was taught to three students for Classics credit and to one student for Latin credit. In the winter term Classical Mythology was taught to 23 students for Classics credit and to one student for Latin credit. In the spring term Classics 210g was taught again, this time with tragedy as the topic, and enrollments were more balanced: three students for Classics credit and three students for Latin credit. In all three terms the triad arrangement appeared to work well. Latin students unquestionably came out of their courses with much more background than they would have in a traditional Latin course focusing on textual analysis and translation. Only in the spring term, when the number of Classics students and of Latin students was equal did the presence of Latin students in the class have a significant positive effect on the Classics students. Classics enrollment in Ancient Literary Genres was disappointingly low this year, perhaps because it was a new course. Enrollments will hopefully increase in the future, as the course becomes more well-known. While Latin enrollments in these Triad courses cannot be expected to increase over their present numbers, it is hoped that at least a few students will enroll in advanced Latin courses every term.

Enrollment in Elementary Latin was about the same as last year: 12 in fall term and 7 in winter term. The retention rate, also about the same as last year, reflects the national average. Most students who drop Latin after one semester do so because they lack the motivation to do the daily work necessary for satisfactory performance. The department continues to use the Latin computer courseware purchased last year, but it has been difficult to persuade many students to use it as conscientiously as they ought. The few who used it regularly found the program extremely useful in working through the course material. The location of the courseware in the computer center probably is one reason for the low usage. If the courseware were closer to

the instructor's office, there would be greater opportunity for assistance and supervision by the instructor. One student in the Latin 101/2 sequence this year chose to take an additional credit of Latin in the spring term of 1985/86. This student, Chestyna McMillan, was also the recipient of the departmental award at Honors Convocation in May.

Enrollment in Greek courses was stable this year: two students were enrolled in Elementary Greek and two in Biblical Greek 212. A highlight of the Greek class was a visit by Dean Amy to talk about exegesis of the New Testament. The student was so excited by his visit that she has arranged an individualized study in the fall to continue this work. This student can also be expected to enroll in Biblical Greek next spring; the other, a French major, is withdrawing from the college. It is hoped that in future years more students will enroll in Greek and will choose to pursue further study in the Greek section of Triad courses.

In Word Elements (Classics 224) 13 students were enrolled for academic credit and two for audit. This enrollment is up slightly from last year when 11 students were enrolled. The department foresees an increase in enrollment in this course during the next few years. A feature added to the course this year was oral reports by students. Several of these reports were particularly successful, especially two by Japanese students on the Japanese alphabet and on the use of English words in Japanese, and one by a Latvian-American on the introduction of English words into Latvian. One minor problem connected with Word Elements is that most students currently enrolling are graduating seniors whose response after the course is always "I wish I had taken this course earlier in my career at Monmouth." Yet few Monmouth students have room for an elective, even a useful one, before senior year.

This was also the first year that Dr. Sienkewicz taught Freshman Seminar. Participation in this program was very rewarding and it is to be hoped that the department will continue to be represented in this crucial part of the college curriculum. Given the many curricular interests of the department, however, this cannot be done more than every other year.

The Department of Classics currently has two majors, both of whom intend to earn Teaching Certificates in Latin. There is a great need both in Illinois and nationally for qualified high school teachers of Latin, so the department is somewhat hopeful that the number of Latin majors will increase in the next few years. This will be a slow process as the college begins again to attract the type of student interested in teaching Latin.

Continuing contact by the department with high school programs in the state is crucial to this effort. For this reason Dr. Sienkewicz has given presentations at several high schools this year. On October 4, 1985, he spoke at Highland Park High School. On January 8, 1986, he spoke at Pekin High School, and on March 7 at Spoon River High School. On March 21 he spoke at three schools in the Chicago area: Downers Grove High School, Nazareth Academy and Lyons Township High School in La Grange. Over the long run, it is hoped that these visitations will attract good students to the college and, perhaps, to the Classics Program. Dr. Sienkewicz is committed to making these visitations a regular occurrence during the academic year.

Involvement in the Illinois Classical Conference is also important to the department's high profile among high school teachers. The college was well-represented this year at the Illinois Classical Conference's annual meeting, held at the University of Illinois in Urbana. Dr. Sienkewicz gave a lecture entitled "Attending the First Antigone". Miss Bernice L. Fox, Professor Emerita of Classics, presided at a luncheon in honor of retired members of ICC. Mrs. Lea Ann A. (nee Smoley) Osburn, MC '72 and vice-president of ICC, presented a program on "Second-Language Acquisition Transfer Learning." Miss Mary R. Ryder, MC '72, was a member of a panel on "Cooperation Between Colleges and High Schools in Illinois." Miss Marcene Holverson, MC '84, was a member of the local committee for the convention. Karen Swank, a MC sophomore, also attended the convention. The college can be proud that it has made such a strong mark on this important Illinois professional organization.

Next year the department looks forward to hosting the ICC Latin Tournament for high school students. This event, which the college has sponsored several times in the past, will bring over one hundred outstanding high school Latin students to the campus. Another development which may insure Monmouth College exposure among Latin teachers in Illinois is that Dr. Sienkewicz has also agreed to accept nomination to serve as vice-president of ICC.

The Classical Association of the Middle West and South is another important professional organization in which the department must maintain visibility. This spring, Dr. Sienkewicz read a paper at the annual meeting of CAMWS in Tampa, Florida. The title of this paper was "The Homeric Audience as a Social Control: A Glimpse in the Odyssey". The current secretary-treasurer of CAMWS is Roy Lindahl, '84, whom the Department is planning to invite as a speaker in the near future.

During the summer of 1985 Dr. Sienkewicz spent a

very productive summer at Harvard University as a member of a NEH seminar under Dr. Gregory Nagy. Dr. Sienkewicz devoted this period to a study of a West African oral epic, Sundiata, which has many interesting affinities with the Homeric epics.

In October Dr. Sienkewicz also attended a meeting of ACM-GLCA Classicists at Lake Forest, Illinois. This meeting was an excellent occasion to meet colleagues at sister institutions and to develop some perspective about the Monmouth Classics program. Dr. Sienkewicz came away from the meeting with the conviction that the college's program is comparable to those at similar institutions and is faring very well in a period of widespread financial austerity in academia. This is clearly due to strong institutional commitment to the importance of Classics at a liberal arts college.

One development stemming from the ACM-GLCA meeting was a survey of Classics departments concerning use of the computer, especially in regard to the use of machine-readable texts in Latin and Greek. It is likely that in a short time ACM-GLCA schools may be asked to participate in a Classics computer consortium--a concept which the Classics Department supports enthusiastically.

A generous gift from Mr Keith B. Capron last summer enabled the department to complete the collections of Loeb Classical Texts in Hewes Library. This set of books represents the basic texts in Greek and Latin which any good liberal arts college should have. This gift goes a long way toward improving the quality of the college's library holdings in the area of Classical studies.

The department continues to remain indebted to Bernice L. Fox, who has been an invaluable resource and counselor during the year. In the spring term Miss Fox twice visited Dr. Sienkewicz' Word Elements class and met with an enthusiastic reception by the students, who used her books as course texts. The students enjoyed their contact with a very special and dynamic teacher who has not lost her enthusiasm and talent for teaching in the five years since her retirement. By her involvement in the Illinois State Latin Contest and in its Sigma Phi, the National Classics Honor Society Miss Fox makes significant efforts to keep Monmouth College an important center of Classics in the state and in the nation. Isla Charlotte, her recently-completed Latin translation of E. B. White's Charlotte's Web, represents the culmination of a long career of Latin translations by Miss Fox.

Professor William Urban of the Department of History has also been a constant academic support for the

department. His course on the History of Greece, offered this year, had good enrollment, and included a weekly unit on lyric poetry taught by Prof. Sienkewicz. Professors Urban and Sienkewicz have continued working this year on a grant proposal to the Illinois Humanities Council for a summer seminar in Classics for high school teachers in 1987. They remain confident that the proposal, denied funding last year, will receive more favorable review this year, following a state-wide survey of Latin teachers and significant revision of the original proposal.

The department was pleased that there was sufficient student interest this year to establish a Classics Club, approved by the faculty at the April meeting. The Classics Club will serve as an organization for students who are interested in the Classics but who are not qualified for membership in Eta Sigma Phi, the Classics honorary society.

The department's two essay contests were successfully conducted this year. The second Harold J. Ralston Classics Essay Contest, open to all Monmouth College students, was won this year by Bret Brown '86 with an essay entitled "The Liberation of Socrates." This contest, recently made permanent through a generous endowment by Dr. Ralston's widow, Mrs. Faith Ralston, has the potential to encourage interest in Classical studies in the student body at large, not just in students enrolled in Classics courses. Thusfar, while the contest has served to recognize good writing, it has not yet caught the imagination of the students. The number of entries remains extremely low, despite the use of topics linked with readings in the Freshman Seminar. The department needs to reflect on this problem and search for ways to encourage more participation by students in this contest.

The second Bernice L. Fox Classics Essay Contest, open to high school students in several states, was won by Albert Kerelis of Marist High School in Chicago. This title of Mr. Kerelis' paper was "Where Have All the Gods Gone?" Honorable mentions were awarded to Cindy Eckhardt of Fremd High School in Palatine, James R. Hall of LaSalle-Peru Township in Indianapolis, Albert Massa of Crown Point High School in Crown Point, Indiana, John Phebus of Culver Academy in Culver, Indiana, Laura Pollock of Boylan High School in Rockford, and Donald G. Porter, also of Culver Academy. The department received a total of 144 entries from 30 high school; this represents an increase of 50% over last year. The quick growth of this contest is very rewarding to the department and cannot help but to increase awareness of the college and its Classics Program among area high school students.

Another project undertaken by the department this

year has been the acquisition of photographs of former Monmouth Classics instructors to hang in the Classics classroom. Last summer the department received from Mrs. Ralston a handsome photograph of her late husband, Harold J. Ralston. Through the efforts of Alice Martin an impressive photograph of Emma Gibson was donated during the winter by her nephew Robert Work of Kirkwood. The department has also obtained an attractive photograph of Bernice L. Fox and it is hoped that eventually the department will be able to display pictures of all former teachers of Latin and Greek at Monmouth.

Another photograph recently donated to the department was that of Minnie Billings Capron, given by her son Keith. It is appropriate that this picture also hang in the Classics classroom, since the endowed chair in Classics is named in Mrs. Capron's honor.

The department, continually striving to maintain for Classics a high degree of visibility of Classics on the Monmouth College campus, sponsored during 1985/86 numerous lectures, programs, films, etc.

The highlight of a busy year was undoubtedly the inaugural Bernice L. Fox Classics Lecture on Saturday, October 19, 1985. The speaker was Bernice L. Fox whose topic was "Living Latin: Twentieth-Century Latin Literature. In this lecture, Miss Fox focused on her own work in Latin translation as well as that of others, such as Alexander Lenard, the Latin translator of Winnie The Pooh. Preceding the lecture, there was a special luncheon attended by several of Miss Fox' former students. In conjunction with the lecture, there was also a special exhibit on Latin translations in the Hewes Library.

The second Fox Lecturer will be Dr. Robert Ketterer of the University of Notre Dame. Dr. Ketterer, a former student of Miss Fox, will speak about Roman comedy on April 22, 1986, the day before the opening of a Crimson Masque production of a Roman comedy.

A second major event for the department and for the college was the celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of the founding of Gamma Omicron chapter of Eta Sigma Phi, Monmouth College's Classics honorary society. This anniversary was marked on April 12, 1986 by a special initiation ceremony, a private luncheon for present and past members of the chapter, and a public lecture entitled "Thera: The Minoan Pompeii?" by Professor John Fisher of Wabash College in Crawfordsville, Indiana.

In the spring the department also had a photographic exhibit in the library to celebrate the millionth day since

the founding of the city of Rome on April 21, 753 B.C.

Many of the public events sponsored by the department in 1985/86 were held in conjunction with the newly-founded Western Illinois chapter of the American Institute of Archaeology. While not a Monmouth College organization, this society, centered in Monmouth, serves to bring many good intellectual programs to the campus and contributes to the intellectual growth of the city and surrounding areas. The chapter currently has thirty-five members, mostly from Monmouth College, but with some members from Macomb, Galesburg, Peoria and the Quad Cities. Once it reached twenty-five members, the chapter became entitled to receive one visiting lecture from the national society. In fact, the chapter has already received two lecturers (with modest financial assistance of \$100.00 from the Department of Classics). The National Society has already committed itself to sending another two lecturers next year, with the expectation that the chapter will reach a minimum membership of fifty in the not-too-distant future. One of these visiting AIA lecturers will speak at Monmouth on April 29, 1987 and the other will speak at Western Illinois University on February 25, 1986. WIU has already agreed to pay the honorarium for this speaker, so the lecture at Monmouth will be at no cost to the college.

The following activities were sponsored by the department and the archaeological society: On September 27, 1985 there was an illustrated symposium on the history and archaeology of the city of London, England. At this symposium Dr. Thomas Watkins of Western Illinois University spoke about "Roman and Medieval London"; Dr. Douglas Spitz spoke on "Puritan London" and Dr. James De Young gave an illustrated presentation entitled "London: the Modern Waterfront". This symposium marked the opening of a photographic exhibit entitled "2000 Year Buried History of London" borrowed from the Archaeological Institute of America and made possible by funding from the Departments of Classics and Speech, Communication and Theatre Arts. The London Exhibit was open to the public in a newly-renovated academic McMichael Hall from September 27 until October 27, 1985.

In November 5, 1985 there was a presentation entitled "Excavations at the Orendorf (Fulton County) Site, 1971-1973" given by Professor Larry Conrad of the Western Illinois University Archaeological Research Laboratory.

In November 11 the department sponsored the showing of a film entitled "The Kyrrenia Ship Replica: An Ancient Ship will Sail Again". The film was introduced by Dr. Susan Holm of the Modern Foreign Language Dept., who has seen the ship in situ on the island of Cyprus. Dr. Holm

was also kind enough to introduce this film again for a special showing at Pekin Community High School in Pekin, Illinois on February 10, 1986.

On December 11, 1985, Dr. William Urban gave an illustrated presentation on "Pre-Conquest Mexico". On January 16, 1986 Dr. Charles Speel talked about "The Search for the Bones of St. Peter: Excavations beneath St. Peter's Basilica in Rome".

The first AIA visiting lecturer was Dr. Michael Werner of the State University of New York who spoke on March 12 about "Gold and Silver Production and the Defense of the Central Danubian Frontier." Dr. Werner's lecture was co-sponsored with the Department of History. The second AIA lecturer was Dr. David Romano of the University Museum at the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Romano's illustrated presentation entitled "Boycotts, Bribes, and Fines: The Ancient Olympic Games," was co-sponsored by the Department of Physical Education.

The last two archaeological events of the year were an artifact identification and site recording session on May 1 with Professor Larry Conrad of the Western Illinois University Archaeological Research Laboratory and an illustrated lecture on May 14 entitled "Mississippian Artifacts in the Putnam Museum Collection" presented by Ms. Janice Hall, Curator of Anthropology at the Putnam Museum in Davenport, Iowa. Ms. Hall's lecture was co-sponsored with the Department of Sociology.

Gamma Omicron chapter of Eta Sigma Phi, the Classics Honors Society, continued its tradition of excellence and fellowship during its thirtieth year at the college. In addition to the anniversary celebration mentioned above, the chapter has had several activities this year. On Vergil's birthday, October 15, 1985, the chapter initiated Craig Smith '86 into its ranks at a celebration at Dr. Sienkewicz' home.

On December 16, 1985 the chapter celebrated Saturnalia at the home of Miss Bernice L. Fox, who entertained Eta Sigma Phi members and students in Dr. Sienkewicz' Elementary Latin class with a reading in Latin from the Christmas Story in the Gospel of Luke, a history of the Roman feast of Saturnalia, and a discussion of Fabula de Quante Mago, her translation of "The Other Wise Man".

The following were initiated into the chapter at the 30th anniversary celebration on April 12, 1986: Karen Ernst '89, Monica Griewe '86, Michael Jones '89, Chestyna McMillan '86 and Donna Wenner '89. In addition Patricia Coendahl, Latin teacher at Woonmouth High School was inducted

Honoris causa. Two other students were initiated on May 21, 1986: William Norton '86 and Rose Van Drasek '83. Officers of Gamma Upsilon Chapter for 1985/86 were Karen Swank '83, prytanis, James Parker '83, hyperchos, David Kittell '83, chrysoptylax, and Katherine Roe '83, grammateus. Karen Swank attended the national convention in Richmond in April and was elected national secretary.

The department looks forward in the next academic year to a new location for the Classics classroom as a result of the renovation of Wallace Hall. In its renovated quarters, it is hoped that the department will have a computer terminal to facilitate the work of the chairman and offset the need for a better typewriter. Dr. Sienkewicz has elsewhere expressed his willingness to purchase this \$75.00 terminal out of his own funds in order to make this equipment a reality for the next academic year.

The department also looks forward next year to closer cooperation with the Department of Modern Foreign Languages. Responsibility for the teaching of methodology courses will be shared by both departments next year and discussions concerning the pedagogical goals of the elementary language courses are planned.

The department's activities during 1985/86 have aimed at several goals: The first goal, an increase in student interest in Classics courses, will hopefully be met by the new Classics curriculum. The second goal, diverse programming for college at-large, has been addressed through the many lectures, exhibits and events sponsored by the department. To meet its third goal, increased co-operation between the department and other units of the college, the department has arranged such lectures as those by Dr. Urban, Spitz, DeYoung and Speel and has co-sponsored events with other departments including History, Physical Education, Religious Studies, Sociology and Speech, Communication and Theatre Arts. Such activities have hopefully demonstrated to the college community that the study of Classics is multi-disciplinary and overlaps with the academic interests of most other departments in the college.

The department is grateful for the constant support it has received both psychologically and financially from the college and is open to suggestions as to how its job can be done even better in the future.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas J. Sienkewicz
 Capron Professor of Classics
 and Chair