When we think of “undergraduate research projects,” most of us picture campus scenes of students asking questions in class, pulling books off library shelves, studying test tubes, staring at computer screens, writing papers, and we would be correct. But sometimes this is just the beginning. Sometimes the questions a student is eager to understand about their field of study require traveling cross-country or abroad or even beyond the reaches of known science.

“How responsible are we to literature, as writers, readers, and subjects?”

Anton DiSclafani, who graduated this spring with a bachelor’s degree in English/creative writing, attended “Contemporary Native American Literature” taught by Assistant Professor of English Michael Elliott in her sophomore year. By the summer after her junior year, Disclafani was traveling alone across the US and Canada with the help of grants from the Center for International Study Abroad (CIPA), the Office of the Dean, and the Department of English to interview fiction and poetry writers she had studied in Elliott’s course from the Anishnaabe, Cherokee, Acoma Pueblo, and Dogrib tribes.

Native American literature is written by Native American authors in English (the “oppressor’s language”) for a white American audience (the “oppressor”) about Native American communities (the “oppressed”). This creates a triangular relationship between author, audience, and subject that is fraught with tension and complexity. “There’s a big ethical debate that goes on within Native American literature about who can write it, who can read it, and what you can write about,” explains Disclafani. “For instance, when N. Scott Momaday writes about the Kiowa, he acts as a representative of the Kiowa people to a larger American culture, which has a history of misinterpretation. There’s the danger that someone like you or I will read that and come to think that that stands for Native life everywhere when it’s just one person’s rendition of Native life.”

Disclafani talked to Native American authors about how they handle being at the center of this debate and what level of responsibility they accept for their writing. The authors’ answers varied. Most feel deeply responsible for representing their culture well and for transforming some of the damaging misconceptions. On the other hand, Anishnaabe writer and critic Gerald Vizenor, according to Disclafani, believes that “fiction is an imaginative act and that therefore there are no real responsibilities.” “I disagree with that completely,” Disclafani argues. “I think that the reason Native American literature is so compelling is that what you write carries with it other than imaginary consequences.”

Are creative writers responsible to their subjects? Can the subjects of creative writing censor their own representation? Is an audience, once moved by literature based on real circumstances, compelled to act? After months spent transcribing her inter-
views, DiSclafani will continue examining these and other difficult questions after graduation by writing a non-fiction piece for publication.

“**What is the effect of religion on ethnic identity among ethnic minorities in the former Soviet USSR?**”

For Yumi Gabrielle Yi, questions of ethnic identity began as a child. Yi’s parents emigrated from South Korea to America when she was eight months old. Growing up Korean-American in Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia, Yi was surprised when she did not “fit in” during her sophomore year spent studying in South Korea. “I realized there was a tremendous amount of identity conflict within me. Am I American? Am I Korean? Because it’s my native culture, yet there’s no way I could actually fit in no matter how much I attempted to talk and resemble the people around me,” says Yi, who graduated in December 2002 with a bachelor’s degree in religion and a minor in Russian.

A CIPA grant allowed Yi to spend three months doing ethnographic research in the Korean-Russian agricultural community of Mozdok, Russia. During the mid-1930’s, 180,000 Koreans living in the Soviet Far East were abruptly moved 3,000 miles inside the Soviet Union by Joseph Stalin under the pretense of preventing Japanese espionage among Korean settlers. After complete isolation from their native culture, the Korean-Russian community received an influx of South Korean Christian missionaries in 1984. Yi had visited Mozdok during a church mission trip her freshman year and was interested in studying the influence of the missionaries who shared her “religious calling.” The results disappointed her.

According to Yi, the missionaries’ rigid blend of Christianity and cultural nationalism did not provide the flexibility required for a diasporic population that identifies itself in multiple ways: Korean, Russian, Korean-Russian, Christian, non-Christian, etc. “After two or three years, that marriage of ethnicity and religion—they polluted each other,” explains Yi. “The Korean missionaries began abusing the cultural sentiments, the cultural nationalism in order to convert people.”

With an Institute for Comparative and International Studies scholarship, Yi traveled next to a Korean diaspora community in Tashkent, Uzbekistan for a more heartening experience. In Tashkent, a number of factors contributed to a clear separation between religion and nationalism—government restrictions against proselytizing, a diverse and urban environment, cultural education by South Korean businesses—that led to an acceptance of missionaries by the diaspora population. In the end, Yi discovered that religion had its most positive effect on Korean diaspora when divorced from cultural nationalism. Her findings were presented in a senior thesis, which received highest honors, and at the National Conference for Undergraduate Research in March.

“**How is information encoded and processed in the brain?**”

Spring graduate Alexander Shkolnik began working with computers at age six. By 12, he had his own computer consulting firm. In his sophomore year, Candler Professor of Psychology David Edwards’s “Brain and Behavior” course sparked another interest: neuroscience. Funded by a grant from the Summer Undergraduate Research at Emory program, Shkolnik assisted Edwards in his psychobiology experiments on mice. Through the yearlong project, he developed a love for the process of research.

Shkolnik’s interests expanded to the junction between neuroscience and computer science: artificial intelligence (AI). “Instead of being something you put information into and get information out of, I want the computer to be a really useful creative tool,” he says.

While pursuing his B.S./M.S. degree in mathematics and computer science as well as a second major (B.S.) in neuroscience and behavioral biology, Shkolnik worked under Steven Potter, assistant professor in the Laboratory for NeuroEngineering at the Georgia Institute of Technology. With a grant from Georgia Tech’s Laboratory for NeuroEngineering, Shkolnik and Potter performed behavioral experiments on mice using a robotic manipulator and video tracking software. Their work focused on understanding how the brain processes visual information to control movement. Shkolnik’s research culminated in a senior thesis and a presentation at the 2003 annual meeting of the Society for Neuroscience.

Alexander Shkolnik holding a robot in Georgia Tech’s Laboratory for NeuroEngineering
In his own experiment for his B.S./M.S. thesis, Shkolnik designed a neurally controlled simulated robot to demonstrate the computational ability of the lab's neural cultures and found that the neurons have the theoretical capacity of a computer. The simulated robot is able to track and follow a moving reference object, while maintaining a given distance from the object, similar to a car on autopilot. The distance the robot keeps is calculated by neurons in a glass dish. “This is 100% controlled by neural activity. I’m encoding sensory information, which is the relative information of the reference object compared to the robot, into patterns of stimulation onto the neurons. The neurons react to this stimulation in a complex way, and this reaction is decoded into a movement for the robot. The computer software has no information about where the object is. The neurons are actually doing the work here. It’s pretty successful,” says Shkolnik, who received highest honors for his thesis.

After graduation
Anton DiSclafani received highest honors for her senior thesis in creative

“Students” continued on next page
Robert A. Paul selected as Dean of Emory College

Following a national search, Emory University has selected Robert A. Paul as Dean of Emory College and the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. Paul has been serving as interim dean since the summer of 2001. Prior to that, he had been dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences since fall of 2000.

“Bobby Paul will bring immense experience at Emory, considerable understanding of the intellectual life of the academy, seasoned wisdom, and great dedication to his role at the University. I welcome him to his deanship, for I know he will honor it,” says Emory President William M. Chace.

“He is a scholar of international reputation, one of the most dedicated servants of Emory University, and a person with a grand vision of what Emory can become,” says Howard O. Hunter, interim provost. “It has been one of my great pleasures to know him for many years and to have worked with him as a fellow dean and as provost. I know that he will be a superb leader of Emory College.”

“We received a large number of applications for the position of Dean of Emory College,” states Elaine Walker, Samuel Candler Dobbs Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience and chair of the search committee. “Many were from individuals who had highly impressive credentials and significant administrative experience in higher education. There is no doubt that Dean Paul stood out as one of the most qualified candidates. I am convinced that he is the best person for the position at this time in the history of Emory College.”

Paul joined the College faculty in 1977 and serves on the faculty of four departments or institutes at the University. Since 1986, he has been the Charles Howard Candler Professor of Anthropology and Interdisciplinary Studies. Paul is an associate professor in the School of Medicine’s Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences. He holds a joint faculty appointment in the anthropology department and the Graduate Institute of the Liberal Arts, previously serving each as chairman. And Paul is an associate teaching analyst at the Emory University Psychoanalytic Institute, where he also holds the position of training and supervising analyst.

“Ever since coming to Emory in 1977,” explains Paul, “I have experienced it as a place that combined the comfortable reliability of a stable and ongoing community with the heady excitement of an open-ended institution with tremendous potential moving rapidly to transform itself in new and unpredictable ways. In this context, anyone with good new ideas might have a chance to try them out and see them come to fruition, while still being able to count on a lasting commitment to core educational and scholarly values. I have benefited from this environment and enjoyed living out my scholarly career within it. I have sought to foster the same spirit in the departments, programs, and institutes I have played a role in while a faculty member here. And it is this unique quality of humane intellectual rigor combined with creativity and imagination that I hope and intend to allow to continue to flourish at Emory in my new capacity as Dean of the College.”

“Students” continued from page 3

writing. After a year’s concentration on writing, she will apply for an M.F.A. program in creative writing and may pursue a doctorate in Native American literature and a teaching career.

Yumi Gabrielle Yi plans to spend the next two to three years in Korea working for an American company in Seoul and studying the Korean language. Afterwards, she may apply to law school in the US to study international law and human rights.

Alexander Shkolnik was awarded a National Science Foundation graduate research fellowship for his Ph.D. studies this fall at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s Artificial Intelligence Laboratory.

—India Herndon

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Emory College congratulates its faculty, students, and staff who were recognized this year for their outstanding achievements.

National Awards

Faculty
Carnegie Scholarship
Carrie Wickham of political science
Guggenheim Fellowship
Natasha Trethewey of creative writing

Students
Beinecke Scholarship
Melanie Clouser
National Science Foundation Graduate Fellowship
Alexander Shkolnik (see page 2)
Rhodes Scholarship
John Henderson

University Awards

Faculty
Thomas Jefferson Award
Eleanor Main of educational studies
(see page 6)
Emory Williams Award for Distinguished Teaching
Joyce Flueckiger of religion, Emily Hamilton of mathematics and computer science, and Michelle Lampl of anthropology

Students
Marion Luther Brittain Service Award
Melissa Roberts
Boisfeuillet Jones Medal
Purvi Sanjay Patel
Robert T. Jones Jr. Scholarship
Dylan Bird, Joel Boggan, Melissa Roberts, and Kyle Wamstad

College Awards

Faculty
Center for Teaching and Curriculum Award for Excellence in Teaching
Leroy Davis of history, Nancy Marshall of visual arts, and José Soria of chemistry
George P. C. Cuttino Award for Excellence in Mentoring
Richard Rubinson of sociology
Samuel Candler Dobbs Professorship
Gay Robins of art history and Paul Rubin of economics
Winship Distinguished Research Professorship
Michele Benzi of mathematics and computer science, Laurie Patton of religion, and Christopher Zorn of political science

Staff
Dean’s Staff Travel Award
Nina Vestal of Schwartz Center for Performing Arts
Emory College Employee of the Year
Nick Fabian of Middle Eastern and South Asian studies

Students
Lucius Lamar McMillan Award
Christopher Richardson (see page 7)
Louis Sudler Prize in the Arts
Anton DiSclafani (see page 1)

Addendum

Cherry Logan Emerson ’38C-’39G would like to correct an “egregious omission” from his list of book recommendations in the Quadrangle’s Winter 2002 article entitled “Cherry Emerson’s Recommended Reading List.” Emerson would also like to highly recommend:

The Thomas Jefferson Award honors an Emory faculty member or administrator for significant service in the areas of teaching, scholarship, University advancement, community service, and work with students. With those criteria in mind, Eleanor Main, professor of political science and director of the Division of Educational Studies, is an ideal recipient of the 2003 award. “I was honored,” Main says, reflecting on being informed of the honor in May by President William M. Chace and interim Provost Howard O. Hunter. “I’ve been here since 1969, so I’ve known a lot of the people who have received the award and I’ve had a lot of respect for the recipients.”

Since coming to Emory 34 years ago, Main has made her presence felt in a variety of ways. She created the political science internship program and led it for 16 years. She has chaired the political science department and served in administrative positions both in Emory College and the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. In 2001, she took over as director of the Division of Educational Studies. She has served on dozens of University governance bodies and committees, including the Emory Women’s Caucus, which became the President’s Commission on the Status of Women. Off campus, she is a founding member of the state’s Department of Juvenile Justice, having been appointed by former Governor Zell Miller. Over the last 28 years, Main has served many governmental committees, commissions, and task forces.

“In wide-ranging activities for more than three decades, you have touched nearly every seam of the fabric of Emory’s community,” Chace said in his Commencement remarks when presenting the Jefferson Award to Main. “Shouldering more than your share of University and public citizenship, you have often sacrificed personal interests for the sake of others,” Chace continued. “You have served as confidant, counselor, and friend to hundreds from the humble to the powerful. Above all you have manifested intense honesty and passionate conviction whose name is always to ensure the excellence and integrity of Emory University.” “Those words were very nice and very meaningful,” Main says. As research has become more prominent at universities, Main says service has suffered. She, in fact, doesn’t like the term “service,” preferring “professional responsibility.”

The end of the school year isn’t bringing Main a lot of rest. Over the summer, she will work on a funding proposal for a conference next spring titled “From Brown To Bollinger.” The Brown v. Board of Education case ended segregation in public schools, and the 50th anniversary of that decision is 2004. Lee Bollinger is the former president of the University of Michigan and current president of Columbia University. He is listed as the defendant in two cases to be heard by the Supreme Court this summer that will determine the constitutionality of Michigan’s affirmative action policy. Main said both cases deal with access to education. She wants the conference to explore Brown’s successes, failures, and unintended consequences as well as the fallout from the Michigan decision, which will have repercussions across the country’s educational system no matter what the verdict.

Also this summer, over the last half of June, Main will travel to Dublin, Ireland, with her twin sister Jeannie for the Special Olympics World Summer Games. Main’s sister works for Special Olympics, and this is the fourth time Main has worked as her assistant. “It’s different from what I do here,” Main says. “And it’s an incredible feeling when you see all those young people walk into the stadium.” It’s also another way Main gives back to her community.

—Eric Rangus
Former US President Harry Truman once said, “We can never tell what is in store for us.” Christopher Richardson’s young life certainly illustrates the meaning of his hero’s quotation. Richardson, who graduated this spring with a bachelor’s in political science and history, describes his childhood as a “fairly troubled life.” “Born to a low-income mother and abandoned by my father,” he says, “I knew the harshness of life early on.” At the age of 15, he was diagnosed with bone cancer. Richardson then spent months in chemotherapy, becoming gravely ill and losing hope. “When I was first diagnosed with cancer, I was really upset. I was angry with God. I was angry with the world. I didn’t feel as if it was really fair,” explains Richardson in his quiet, steady voice. “And then it hit me that it doesn’t have to be fair—life isn’t fair. You’re not always going to get everything you want out of life. Many times you’re going to be given the worst of circumstances. But as a human being, you have to be strong enough to construe those circumstances to your benefit.”

Richardson says he stopped “sulking” in his hospital bed and began traveling by wheelchair to visit with other cancer patients. Then an organization called Happy Days and Special Times sent him on a trip to Disney World, which renewed his spirit enough to survive many more months of chemotherapy. He lost a knee and part of a lung but made a full recovery from cancer. In return, he has spent every summer since 1996 working with children with cancer at Camp Happy Days. He is also a spokesperson and promoter for the American Cancer Society.

During his four years at Emory, Richardson held two presidencies. As president of the Undergraduate College Council his junior year, he concentrated on social issues by creating a computer donation program for Atlanta’s inner-city youth and planning an appreciation day for the student cafeteria staff. As Student Government Association president his senior year, Richardson focused his efforts on policy issues like student financial aid. His thoroughly researched financial-services report to the University has effected discussion and change in the financial aid office.

Part of the 2002 inaugural class of the Kenneth Cole Fellowship in Community Building and Social Change, Richardson praises the intensive 12-month program as one of his “most enlightening experiences” at Emory. “The Kenneth Cole Fellowship opened my eyes to this world and brought me to a point where I wanted to look back and examine my own life and my own roots in poverty. It gave me an understanding of why I was poor and what can be done in a practical and structured way to solve issues of low-income neighborhoods and poverty,” says Richardson.

Richardson received highest honors for his senior thesis in history which examines lynching of African-Americans in Georgia and the South. By studying newspapers, census records, deeds, and books, he investigated the historical strains that caused lynching, the regional variations and ideology that promoted it, and the stigma that caused its downfall.

The Lucius Lamar McMullan Award, endowed by alumnus William L. Matheson ‘47G in honor of his uncle, awards $20,000 to a graduating College senior who has demonstrated outstanding citizenship and exceptional leadership. With the gift, Richardson plans to pay off loans, do some traveling, and buy a new china cabinet for his mother. Although what Truman said is true, we never can tell what’s in store for us, all evidence points to Richardson continuing to meet his life head on and helping others to do the same. He will spend the next year in Atlanta developing an outreach program to provide legal services to cancer patients. His future plans include law school, the state department, and foreign service.

—India Herndon
For the last 15 years of Peter Dowell’s 40-year career as Professor of English, he has been known to generations of students as Senior Associate Dean of Student Academic Affairs, a.k.a. “Dean Dowell.” Retiring this summer from his position in the dean’s office, Dowell will ease into full retirement over the next two years by continuing to teach. “I’m not retiring cold turkey, as it were,” explains Dowell. “I look forward to going back into the teaching role. I like working with the students in the dean’s office, but there wouldn’t be a dean’s office except to be in support of faculty teaching students. The whole enterprise is about teaching and learning. So to bring things to closure, I wanted to teach again before I retired altogether.”

In spring of 2004, Dowell will teach his popular, interdisciplinary course entitled “Baseball in American Culture.” “Deciding to take baseball—my avocation since childhood, bring it into the classroom, and make an academic subject of it has been one of my most enjoyable teaching experiences,” says Dowell of the course he teaches jointly with friend and colleague Dana White, Goodrich C. White Professor of the Graduate Institute of the Liberal Arts. Though tenured in the Department of English, Dowell has enjoyed decades of crossing disciplines by teaching courses for the American studies program and the African American studies program. In the

1960’s, Dowell became the first Emory faculty member to teach an African American literature course.

Appointed to the College Office in 1988, Dowell cites the growth and enhancement of the Emory Scholars Program as one of his most rewarding accomplishments as dean. The program provides merit-based awards to students who have established strong academic records and been actively involved in their school and community during either high school or the early part of their college career. Dowell poetically describes the positive influence of Emory Scholars upon their peers as the “little leaven that leavens the whole lump” of the undergraduate student body.

The students, says Dowell, are one of the things he will miss most about his position as dean. “When I look back at things, I think that 40 years at Emory have been a wonderful life. I’m glad to have had a career that has kept me in touch with 18-, 19-, and 20-year-olds. It’s one of the distinctive things about this particular profession. The college age is a constant in your life in academics. Your everyday world and life is colored by the perspective that 18-, 19-, and 20-year-olds have on things. Their perspective can change over generations, but there’s a constant: an element of enthusiasm that has not been tempered by the impact of succeeding adult experience, an idealism, and a tendency to go off in unexpected directions that older people may sort of … curb,” he says, smiling.

With retirement from the dean’s office freeing up his schedule this summer, Dowell will begin a new seasonal timetable. He and his wife, Valerie, will spend each summer and fall exploring Maine from their summer place on the coast and will return to Atlanta for winter and spring. “It will be a nice, new lifestyle,” says Dowell. “I don’t want to leave Atlanta altogether and just retire to someplace else. This, I think, will be the best of both worlds.”

Peter Dowell can be best described, in my estimation, as the opposite—the complete opposite—of a jerk. There is no word in our language for such a noble and winning person, but he or she ought to be called a ‘Dowell.’ He is full of life in the best sense. He is a rare example of consistent fairness. If he has a mean or prejudiced bone in his body, my x-ray eyes have never detected it in the 40 years that I have observed and admired him.”

—William Dillingham, Charles Howard Candler Professor of American Literature, Emeritus

Best Wishes, Dean Dowell: After 40 years at Emory, Peter Dowell retires

Peter Dowell
Fond farewells for Peter Dowell

“Dean Dowell is a pillar in the Emory community. His commitment to service is matched only by his willingness to help young people grow and develop. I think of Dean Dowell as a great mentor, teacher, and a valuable friend. He is an incredible teacher inside of the classroom and outside. His spirit is contagious and his commitment to advancing the Emory community is endless. Thank you, Dean Peter Dowell, your selfless service has been greatly appreciated.”—Jonathan Butler ’96C

“I think Peter’s biggest contribution has been to embody, amid much Emory growth and change, the idea that the College’s truest business is still educating and caring for students. No one else has stood up for this so influentially. Peter has led College student affairs with a unique mix of energy, patience, good sense, and kindness.”—Irwin Hyatt, Senior Associate Dean of Faculty Development and Associate Professor of History, Emeritus

“A fleeting introduction to ‘Professor’ Dowell while he busily pecked away on an old Lanier word processor was my first contact with Peter. It was 1984, and I was interviewing for a position in the English department. Little did I realize that in a few years our paths would merge on a 15-year journey in the College Office. As I have observed his abundant skills and limitless energy, I can only underscore Peter’s incredible achievements. His fairness and understanding are legendary; his laughter and good humor are certain to brighten any day!”—Barbara Lawson, Office Manager, Student Academic Affairs

“Even for the most difficult decisions, Peter provides a reasoned, engaging, and sometimes humorous perspective. I will miss his daily presence in our office—but I’m glad to know he’ll still be teaching in the College. I plan to call him regularly—for his sound advice and also because of our friendship, which I value more than I can say.”—Rosemary Magee, Senior Associate Dean of Emory College

“Most of what I know about Peter Dowell must surely be clear to many members of the Emory community—his deep devotion to Emory and its faculty, staff, and students, his calm in times of tension and anxiety, and his care and concern have been a blessing to Emory for many years. A deep effective attention to the tasks at hand and a clear determination to get things done well without concern for who got credit for them defined his way of going through life day after day after day. These have always been rare virtues. To recognize and honor them is an honor and a privilege.”—David Minter, Bruce and Elizabeth Dunlevie Professor of English, Rice University, and former Dean of Emory College

“Peter Dowell is irreplaceable. Throughout his academic life, Peter has brought intelligence, ethics, knowledge, and compassion to the College. In another time, he would have played an Oscar-winning role as the dean of students at a fine, fictional Northeastern university. His picture should be next to the word mentor in the dictionary. He has been showered with awards; the one I remember most is having been designated by the Emory Wheel one of the 10 most important resources at Emory.”—Steven Sanderson, President and Chief Executive Officer, Wildlife Conservation Society, and former Dean of Emory College

“Peter Dowell is a singular presence on campus. He is known to most undergraduates—one has only to walk with him across the quad to witness and share their friendly smiles and greetings. Still his special attachment has been to the Emory Scholars Program, to which the good Dean has lent his support, devotion, and enthusiasm.”—Dana White, Professor of the Graduate Institute of the Liberal Arts

—India Hendon

Retiring Faculty

Along with Peter Dowell, the College bids farewell and acknowledges the exemplary service of three faculty members who will retire this year.

Judith Morgan, 25 years of service

“Judith Morgan has served for 25 years as director of the Introductory Biology Program at Emory. In this capacity, she took full responsibility in recruiting and managing the introductory laboratories, writing a highly successful laboratory manual, teaching our introductory course for non-majors, and developing and teaching an upper-level course in coastal biology.”

—John Lucchesi, Department of Biology

Clyde Partin, 51 and a half years of service

“Clyde is the consummate Emory professor who has been deeply immersed in Emory’s history throughout his fifty years of teaching students, interacting with colleagues, mentoring young teachers, and laying a foundation of programming and facilities that will be enjoyed for years to come. He is an extremely passionate professional, whose involvement, commitment, and love of sport and physical activity are possibly unmatched.”

—Darryl Neill, Department of Psychology

Howard Rollins, 35 years of service

“Howard spent his Emory career facilitating learning. In the classroom, he taught statistics and child development. In his research, he studied how the learning of schoolchildren can be enhanced. It was in his administrative roles as chair of the Department of Psychology, founding director of the Center for International Programs Abroad, and founding executive director of the Institute of Comparative and International Studies, however, where he affected the learning of literally thousands of Emory students.”

—Daryl Neill, Department of Psychology
The undergraduates who arrive at Emory today are the most computer-literate generation ever and they don't study the same way as their parents. Rather than working alone, they tend to work in groups and they pull materials from the web, TV, movies, and online databases, rather than just books (which they use as well). When the Information Technology Division (ITD) renovated the Cox Computing Lab last year, they had to grapple with how to design a computing facility that addressed the needs of these modern students and modern work styles.

The new Computing Center answers these challenges with a free-flowing space populated with movable furniture that houses specialized workstations—digital video machines with 23-inch monitors; typical PCs but with two flat panels and a scanner; and, collaborative workspaces where students and faculty can gather around a larger screen to review projects involving multiple media. A space whose aesthetics have been described by Emory Report as “warm-industrial” and “über-stylish,” Cox looks forward to a time when presentation and information technology merge and then fade into the background, becoming merely tools to support the analysis and synthesis of ideas.

Immediately popular with students and faculty, Cox has become an intellectual hub on campus. Although its environment is informal, the activities within are serious and quick trips reveal students working on papers with an outline on one screen and text on the other, using the big monitors to explore statistical problems, and studying anatomy as a group in front of a 50-inch plasma screen. Five unique collaboration areas function as anchor points in the 10,000 square foot room. “The Fishbowl” conference room houses a 50-inch plasma on a swivel arm for small group work. “The Gallery” allows for the display of artwork, including digital installations, by students in the College’s visual arts program. “The Pole” provides a space to hook up a laptop to a 50-inch plasma with a touch-sensitive overlay that allows you to review and edit documents simply by touching the screen. And the “Collaboration Corner” houses a rear projection interactive whiteboard that is also touch-driven. True to its academic mission, Cox also contains two experimental classrooms that feature the latest in presentation technology. This semester the spaces have housed classes in religion, English, journalism, nursing, German, and public health. Faculty welcome the innovative layouts and flexible furniture along with the modern presentation technology.

“Have it be like to teach old texts in Emory’s newest classroom?” ponders Gordon Newby, professor of Middle Eastern studies, who co-taught “Introduction to Sacred Texts” with Vernon Robbins of the religion department this past semester. “We could almost feel the teaching heritage of Plato’s Athenian streets in the Cox Hall classroom. The computers, the projection board, the movable desks and chairs, the outstanding technical support, all worked together to make it easy to be the best intellectual community we could be.”

Given the success of Cox, ITD plans to install additional spaces for collaborative work in residence halls and in the Student Activity and Academic Center on the Clairmont campus. “As we continue to receive feedback from faculty and students,” explains Don Harris, vice provost for information technology, “our goal is to better understand how space design and multimedia rich IT resources influence collaboration, both between faculty and students and among students. We can then use this knowledge to design inviting new spaces for intellectual exploration.”

—Carole Meyers
The following is an excerpt from Joseph Skibell’s second novel, The English Disease, published in May 2003 by Algonquin Books.

“What woman?” I say on the drive home. My voice, stilted and artificial, rings hollowly inside the car.

“Near the eggnog bowl. You know: with the hair.” Isabelle’s voice is equally numb. In fact, we sound like two acting students on the first day of class, our efforts to speak naturally in a scene naturally sabotaging the effect.

“What with the hair?” I say, hoping to sound completely befuddled.

“She’s attractive, isn’t she?” Isabelle asks with a counterfeit nonchalance.

“Gitl, you mean?” I say, as though I could barely place her.

“Is that her name?” Isabelle says, alert to this new datum.

“You find her attractive?” I say, attempting surreptitiously to damage Isabelle’s confidence in her own subjectivity, perhaps even causing her to believe that it is she who, in finding Gitl attractive, has displaced her unconscious homoerotic feelings for her onto me.

“Didn’t you think so?” Easily she avoids the snare.

“Well, it’s very subjective—” I allow my voice to trail off as though I had more pressing things to consider.

“All that hair,” she sighs, breaking the silence.

“It’s a little much.” I nod in agreement, as she drives carefully through the snow, listening to a tape her sister sent: Elvis Costello and the Chieftans singing about a television set that blows up when the Christmas tree lights are plugged in.

“She’s new to your department, isn’t she?”

“She played in the Israeli Philharmonic. Trombone, I think. Under Zubin Mehta. At least I think that’s what she said.”

“That’s what you were talking about?”

“Oh, she went on and on. I could hardly get away.”

“Hm,” Isabelle says, trying to sound, if not bored, then at least uninterested, the gentle interrogation we both know she is conducting inexpertly concealing and revealing itself, and forcing me into this absurd stance of self-parodic befuddlement, my shabby theatricals revealing, as I intend them to conceal, the attraction I’m feeling towards Gitl Finkelstein.

The buildings and the streets are covered in frazzling Christmas lights. Long lines of cars back up along Lamar, waiting to turn onto 38 1/2 Street where the residents have decked every square inch of their houses and lawns and even the trees that form a canopy over the street with long strings of lights, the wild, lustrous chaos of it all reminding me (quite privately) of Gitl Finkelstein’s hair.

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**The Sound of Morocco: Katherine Dunn ’02C writes home**

The following is an excerpt from an April 2003 letter sent by Katherine Dunn ’02C, recipient of a 2002 Fulbright Fellowship. After six months of studying Moroccan women’s literature abroad, Dunn writes home to describe life in Morocco to family and friends.

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**About the author**

Assistant Professor of Creative Writing English Joseph Skibell’s debut novel, A Blessing on the Moon, received the Rosenthal Foundation Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the Turner Prize for First Fiction from the Texas Institute of Letters. A Book of the Month Club selection, the novel was named one of the year’s best books by Publishers Weekly, Le Monde, and Amazon.com and has been translated into half a dozen languages. A recipient of a Halls Fellowship, a Michener Fellowship, and a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship, Skibell joined the faculty of the English department at Emory in 1999. He is currently at work on a third novel.
50 years of women at Emory College

Just 50 years ago Emory College officially became “co-educational” and admitted its first class of women students. That milestone will be commemorated with two celebratory events in December 2003. First, on Wednesday, December 3, Rosalynn Carter will host a private reception and dinner honoring Mary Robinson, former UN high commissioner for human rights and former president of Ireland. That same evening, Ms. Robinson will deliver the Rosalynn Carter Distinguished Lecture in Public Policy for 2003 in Glenn Memorial Auditorium. Second, on Thursday, December 4, a luncheon honoring all Emory College alumnae will be held at the Miller-Ward Alumni House.

You can play a significant role in this celebration by becoming a member of the Host Committee for the Celebration of 50 Years of Women at Emory College. Your gift of $1000 will list you on the host committee and give you the opportunity to attend both the reception and dinner with Mrs. Carter and the lunch the following day. Names of the host committee members will appear in event publications. The funds received from host committee members will go directly to the newly established Emory College Scholarship Fund.

To join the host committee or to find out more about these events, please call (404) 727-8780 or email pbethea@emory.edu.

—Caroline Moise

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