

## **The ANS Session of the MLA 2012 Conference**

This year, the ANS was pleased to receive an unusually high number of exceptional submissions for the ANS session of the annual Modern Language Association Conference. The selection process this year involved no less than three blind reviewers in consultation with ANS President, Kemp Williams, and ANS First Vice President, Donna Lillian. At the end of a rather arduous deliberation process, a special panel of three papers was assembled. The literary focus of this year's session is Gertrude Stein. Information concerning the presenters and their individual contributions can be found below. Congratulations again go to each of the contributors. In addition, special thanks are extended to this year's review committee for their service to the Society.

### **Presenter**

Julie Goodspeed-Chadwick

Institutional Address: Indiana University-Purdue University at Columbus

Division of Liberal Arts

4601 Central Avenue

Columbus, IN 47203 USA

[juligood@iupuc.edu](mailto:juligood@iupuc.edu)

### **Biographical Note**

Julie Goodspeed-Chadwick is an Assistant Professor of English Indiana University-Purdue University at Columbus. Her areas of specializations include twentieth-century American literature, transatlantic modernism, women and literature, and literary theory. Her book, *Modernist Women Writers and War*, was published by Louisiana State University Press in 2011. In addition to the paper which she will be presenting at the MLA conference, she has also has a forthcoming publication with *College Literature*.

### **Abstract**

*Reconfiguring Identities: Naming and Repetition in Canonical Works by Gertrude Stein*

Gertrude Stein's naming practices encourage us to grapple with how we understand names as stable markers of identifications, even though these names signify identities that are always in flux, in terms of language and representation and in terms of changing entities in the real world. In attempting to dismantle a Western, Cartesian mindset in the mappings of names, identities, and concepts in her work, Stein creates a literary landscape that turns on a spectrum of names and associations to make meaning(s). With Stein's pieces that employ repetition as a way of (re)naming and that dismantle and recycle names in startling ways, we see her engaged in constructing female identities, lesbian desire, and domestic space in some of her canonical, though difficult, poems. This presentation will interpret the significance of Stein's technique of naming and claiming and will offer interpretations of selected poems.

### **Presenter**

Allen Durgin

The Graduate Center

City University of New York

365 Fifth Avenue  
New York 1001-4309  
[adurgin@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:adurgin@gc.cuny.edu)

### **Biographical Note**

Allen Durgin is an English doctoral student at The Graduate Center of CUNY. A student of the late Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, he is currently writing on depressive pedagogy in the works of Oscar Wilde, Gertrude Stein and Marcel Proust.

### **Abstract**

*Queer Onomastics: Naming the Unnameable in Gertrude Stein*

In her lecture "Poetry and Grammar," Gertrude Stein makes the provocative claim, "a noun is a name of anything, why after a thing is named write about it" (210). Later in the same talk, though, Stein recuperates noun and naming, championing poetry as "the discovery, the love, the passion for the name of anything" (235). Focusing on "Poetry and Grammar," my paper teases out Stein's strange relation to names and naming. I argue that, in naming "the love that dare not speaks its name" in both her poetry and prose, Stein articulates a queer onomastics, one that follows different paths and procedures from those normally associated with onomatology. In doing so, she offers a new model for thinking about the relation between literature, identity, and naming practices.

Work Cited: Stein, Gertrude. "Poetry and Grammar." Lectures in America. Boston: Beacon Press, 1985: 209-246.

### **Presenter**

Merrill Cole  
Department of English & Journalism  
Western Illinois University  
1 University Circle  
Macomb, IL 61455  
M-Cole@wiu.edu

### **Biographical Note**

Merrill Cole is Assistant Professor of English at Western Illinois University. He is the author of *The Other Orpheus: A Poetics of Modern Homosexuality*, as well as numerous articles and poems.

### **Abstract**

*No Rectification or There about It: Gertrude Stein's Improper Names*

In *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, Gertrude Stein assumes the name of her life-companion, overriding the boundaries a name is supposed to set. Writing Toklas's signature belongs to her strategy of subverting nouns and proper naming. In "Poetry and Grammar," she insists that poetry "is concerned with using with abusing, with losing with wanting, with denying with avoiding with adoring with replacing the noun." Names in Stein hardly ever stay themselves. "Everybody," as *A Novel of Thank You* would have it, "can change a name they can change the name Helen to Harry they can change the name Edith to Edward they can change the name Harriet to Howard they can change the name Ivy to Adela.

This makes it impossible for all of them to say what they mean." Play becomes possible for everybody, Stein suggests, when we no longer require limited meanings and proper names.

