Senior Spotlight: Katie Neher

1) If you could take the place of a character in a novel, who would you be and why?

It's not exactly a novel, but Titania from A Midsummer Night's Dream. I'd love to swan about as a fairy queen, helping keep Oberon in line, ruling the denizens of the forest. Sure, she falls in love with the occasional ass, but don't we all?

2) What is the single best English class you've taken at Carleton and why?

London Theater! I got to cavort across England watching productions of some truly fabulous plays, what more could you ask for? If we're talking on the physical Carleton campus, Shakespeare I was an absurd amount of fun and changed my opinion of Romeo and Juliet, for which I'm truly grateful.

3) Tell us something that most of the other English majors don't know about you.

They only don't know this because it happened today, but my Dad just sent me a message in which he rewrote part of Henry V's band of brothers speech as an exhortation to defend Thanksgiving Day against the encroaching vegetables. So in other words, I come by it honestly.

4) Which book would you be okay never reading again?

The Mimic Men, by V.S. Naipaul. Sorry Arnab, but I can't deal with either Naipaul's personality problems or the narrator's descriptions of his lustrous flowing hair.

5) Six words describing your experience as a Carleton English major:

Wait, that paper is due TOMORROW?

6) If Shakespeare were to be a double major, what two majors would he pick?

Probably Classics (he'd comps on Ovid) and Theater, which is a boring answer, but I think accurate. I was tempted to say History, but he often sacrificed historical accuracy to drama.

Quote of the Week

When those fair Suns shall sett, as sett they must,
And all those Tresses shall be laid in Dust;
This Lock, the Muse shall consecrate to Fame,
And mid’st the Stars inscribe Belinda’s Name!

STUDENTS! Call in to ext. 4322 with the author and the name of the week. The first person to correctly name the quotation will win a special package of cookies with a faculty signature! Last week's winners were Emily Altschul and John O'Brien. As per John's request, this week is harder.

THAT BABY WROTE WHAT?

Who is this famous author? Email whit-er or laneo with your answer and you get to pick next week's baby.
1. **What is your personal favorite work on the syllabus for this course?**

   My favorite reading? The first chapter of Kwame Anthony Appiah's book on Cosmopolitanism, about cultural evolution and hybridization and the importance of choice. The excerpt is called “The Case for Contamination” and is written to refute cultural purists who resist changes brought by globalization.

2. **Your class is about how different people have written about globalization. How do you think globalization has changed writing?**

   Wow - big, fascinating question. Globalization has produced more travel, more international work, more diasporic migration, more cultural hybridity in many ways. That's reflected in literature in a number of ways: more and more works are translated, there are myriad diasporic novels, etc. And in scholarly and journalistic writing, there are many more perspectives available. Appiah is an excellent example: his father was Ghanaian, his mother English and he grew up in Ghana and England, but his career has been at Princeton. So he embodies the kind of cosmopolitanism he writes about.

3. **If you could take any other A & I seminar being offered in the English department, what would it be?**

   Well, since you’ve “upped the ante” on this question by announcing that there will be a “most popular” prize, I hesitate to answer. I might have to divide my vote: Since I love Melville and the 19th century, it would be Peter Balaam’s “Occupy Wall Street: Melville’s Bartleby.” Since I’d just audit the course, and not turn in any homework, on the first day of class I’d wear my t-shirt that says “I prefer not to” on it! But then, all my scholarship has been about “Place” in one way or another, so I’d also be attracted to Mike Kowalewski’s “Spirit of Place.”

4. **What do you like best about teaching A & I Seminars?**

   The students! My first-term first-year students have been so open, eager to discuss controversial texts, focused on improving their writing to a college level, willing to engage with each other - it’s a joy in the classroom!

5. **If you could give an alien three books (or other pieces of fiction or non-fiction literature) to explain to current state of America and the globalized world, what would they be?**

   Yikes. That's impossible; the necessary perspectives are so many and varied. Maybe the reader we're using for the course, The New World Reader - with at least 40 points of view on different topics. And then? A subscription to the New York Times? And then an anthology of recent immigrant fiction (I don’t know of one, but surely there’s a good one out there).

6. **What is the most interesting thing you have learned from your students’ writing in this class so far?**

   I’ve been impressed by what high expectations students have of themselves for their writing and how eager they are to tackle the big questions raised by globalization. They’ve been willing to take risks in their writing and in advancing hypotheses and opinions. On the other hand, I’m reminded that too many people don’t know how to spell minuscule (every graduate of Carleton should learn that!!) and confuse principal and principle, complementary and complimentary. Or maybe I’m just saying that everyone needs to proofread more carefully!

7. **What’s the biggest global problem you see today?**

   In this week of Hurricane Sandy, I have to say global climate change; we’ve already seen more severe storms in recent years along with all the reports of melting polar ice. I must say this week I’ve been glad to live in the Midwest, not near a coast and not on a river.

8. **What’s the biggest opportunity of globalization?**

   With instant and widespread communication, we all know so much more about different cultures. Proliferation of international foods is the most pleasant by-product, but the most beneficial will be (I hope) greater understanding.