

## Disability Awareness Events Fall 2007

### October – Disability Studies Short Course

The College's Humanities Center is sponsoring Professor Lennard Davis to teach as part of a special topics course. He is with the Department of English, University of Illinois – Chicago; also head of Disability Studies program. Lennard Davis has written about disability and normality. His book ENFORCING NORMALCY: DISABILITY, DEAFNESS AND THE BODY gives a political and social history to the idea of normality. BENDING OVER BACKWARDS: DISABILITY, DISMODERNISM, AND OTHER DIFFICULT POSITIONS is a collection of essays that covers the relation of disability to contemporary and historical culture and politics. Davis has also has written on the history and theory of the novel. His work FACTUAL FICTIONS: THE ORIGINS OF THE ENGLISH NOVEL presents a Foucauldian reading of the novel as a discourse emerging from the matrix of journalism, history, and the law. RESISTING NOVELS: FICTION AND IDEOLOGY continues that work by describing the formal and constitutive ways in which novels are inherently ideological structures defending and resisting bourgeois capitalism. His work includes a MY SENSE OF SILENCE: MEMOIR OF A CHILDHOOD WITH DEAFNESS and THE SONNETS: A NOVEL. He is editor of THE DISABILITY STUDIES READER and co-editor of LEFT POLITICS AND THE LITERARY PROFESSION. He is currently working on a cultural history of obsession. Personal: his parents are both deaf.

Full vita: <http://www.uic.edu/depts/engl/faculty/prof/ldavis/CVdavisFall2006.pdf>

## Disability Awareness Events Spring 2008

### Cultural Film – *Touch the Sound*

Friday, Feb 1, 8 pm, ARH 302

Saturday, Feb 2, 8 pm, ARH 302

Sunday, Feb 3, 2 pm, ARH 302

Germany, 2004. 99 minutes; in English. "Thomas Riedelsheimer's follow-up to *Rivers and Tides* conveys the extraordinary worldview of Scottish percussionist Evelyn Glennie, a virtuoso performer who lost most of her hearing by the time she was a teenager. By developing an acute ability to experience sound as touch, Glennie has developed a revelatory relationship between sound and body. In his impressionistic film, Riedeisheimer uses his camera to bring viewers inside Glennie's world, elucidating the hidden connections that bridge the senses. "Educates in exhilarating ways, ways that are immediately applicable to how one lives one's life" (Newsday).

### Thursday, February 14 – Convocation

11:00 am, JRC 101

This lecture will be signed by a professional interpreter.

Disabilities scholar Brenda Brueggemann will deliver the Grinnell College Scholars' Convocation on "Eugenics, Economics, Euthanasia: The Nazi T-4 Program Against People with Disabilities." Brueggemann, who is an associate professor of English and coordinator of the academic disabilities program at Ohio State University, will discuss the T-4 program used during World War II to euthanize more than 70,000 people with disabilities, those considered by Hitler to be "useless eaters" or "lives not worth living." Brueggemann, who is hearing impaired, has won accolades for her scholarship in deaf/disability studies and her dedication to diversity issues. She has written numerous books, essays, and articles on deaf and disability studies, including "Disability Studies: Enabling the Humanities," and *Lend Me Your Ear: Rhetorical Constructions of Deafness*. Her disabilities work has been recognized by Ohio State, the Ohio Humanities Council, and the Coca-Cola Foundation for Research on Women. Brueggemann's lecture, which will be signed by a professional interpreter, is sponsored by the Grinnell College Ad Hoc Committee on Disability Issues and is part of the college's Scholars' Convocation series. <http://people.cohums.ohio-state.edu/brueggemann1/>

### Fridays, April 4 – May 9 – 6-week short course – Advanced Special Topic in Non-Fiction Writing

Visiting professor Steven Kuusisto from the Iowa Writers' Workshop offers a six-week short course in non-fiction writing. Students who have taken at least one creative writing course at Grinnell (English 205, 206, 385, and/or 386) are eligible to register for this advanced creative-writing workshop. Fridays, April 4 to May 9; 2:15 - 4:05 pm, Mears Cottage.

### Thursday, April 17 – Writers@Grinnell

8:00 pm, JRC 101

Non-Fiction and Poetry Readings by Stephen Kuusisto and Kenny Fries.

We are also interested in having Steve host an afternoon workshop on the day of the reading.

**Thursday, April 17 – “Lessons Learned and Learning Lessons:” an Accessibility Tour of Campus**

Time TBA

Celebratory campus tour with disability scholars, Kuusisto and Fries. Celebrate achievements made on campus to improve building access.

**BIOGRAPHIES:**

**Stephen Kuusisto** holds a dual faculty appointment at the University of Iowa where he teaches courses in creative nonfiction in the English Department and serves as a public humanities scholar in the U of Iowa’s Carver Institute for Macular Degeneration. Professor Stephen Kuusisto, who has been blind since birth, is the author of *Eavesdropping: A Memoir of Blindness and Listening* and the acclaimed memoir *Planet of the Blind*, a New York Times “Notable Book of the Year”. He has also published *Only Bread, Only Light*, a collection of poems from Copper Canyon Press. His essays and poems have appeared in numerous anthologies and literary magazines including *Harper’s’ The New York Times Magazine*; *Poetry*; and *Partisan Review*. He is a frequent commentator on National Public Radio and lectures widely on disability, diversity, education and public policy. Professor Kuusisto’s visit is sponsored by ....

<http://www.stephenkuusisto.com/>

**Kenny Fries** is the author of *The History of My Shoes and the Evolution of Darwin's Theory* (Carroll and Graf, 2007), *Body, Remember: A Memoir* (Dutton, 1997; Plume paperback, 1998; new edition, University of Wisconsin Press, 2003) and editor of *Staring Back: The Disability Experience from the Inside Out* (Plume, 1997). His books of poems include *Desert Walking: Poems* (The Advocado Press, 2000) and *Anesthesia: Poems* (The Advocado Press, 1996). He received the 2007 Gustavus Myers Outstanding Book Award, the Gregory Kolovakos Award, a Creative Arts Fellowship from the Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts, and was a Fulbright Scholar to Japan. He teaches in the MFA in Creative Writing Program at Goddard College. <http://www.kennyfries.com/>