

teaching, scholarship or life in order to be rewarded by awards—and in fact have some problems with our award culture. But again, it's nice to get a pat on the back sometimes."

Looking ahead, Smith is shopping around for a publisher for his textbook on English grammar: "I have used the manuscript twice in my classes and two graduate students of mine have also used it. I also have a bulging folder of notes to begin writing an 'Introduction to Linguistics,' and I am itching to get started on that!" For Smith, preparation of the portfolio for this award was quite the undertaking, including writing out 10 essays of two pages or so in length a piece, so it required a lot of condensing. However, he was clear, "While the task is time consuming and onerous, there is the benefit that it is a great moment to really think about what you have been doing, for better or worse, and to sit back and appreciate yourself—something some people do too much of but others, like me, not enough."

Other Faculty Award Winners

Professor Katherine Ellison was named the 2019 College of Arts and Sciences Outstanding Researcher in the Humanities.

Professor Susan Kalter won the 2019 College of Arts and Sciences Outstanding Service Award.

Professors Lisya Seloni and Paul Ugor were recognized in 2019 with student Impact awards, created by University College to acknowledge the tremendous individual contributions members of the campus community have on new students, their overall success, retention, and ultimately graduation.

third-wave romantic hero who is very much of the mindset, 'It's all about you, baby,'" said Trites. "Peeta is so self-abdicating that he makes it all about her needs, her life, and her body being more important than his. That's not equality if one person is calling all the shots."

Material feminism in YA still examines relationships and empowerment, but views the characters as complete beings, rejecting the idea that the brain and body are separate. "We can't have a brain without a body. We can't have a body without a brain," said Trites, who added sexist roles are often entrenched in the separation. "Throughout much of Western history, women have been equated with the body and men with the mind."

Trites hopes instructors of YA literature will take the ideas of material feminism to infuse more discussions into their classroom, but advises teachers to look beyond lumping novels into categories. "Teachers need to think in a range beyond asking 'Is this work feminist? Is it sexist?'" said Trites. "It's not a binary. We can look at many different aspects of how we assess something as having elements of feminism."

Even if a book does not uphold all of the values of current ideas of feminism, Trites believes YA can provide an outlet that offers young women an alternative to sexism. "The need for female empowerment never goes away. Sadly, it's never out of style," she said.

Undergraduate Spotlight: Maddi Kartcheske earns American Democracy Project Student Citizenship Award for civic engagement

Maddi Kartcheske

ISU undergraduate Maddi Kartcheske received the American Democracy Project's Student Citizenship Award, a university-wide award given annually at the Civic Engagement Celebration. She was nominated by the supervisor of her student leaders at the Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning; a trip advisor from the Alternative Spring Break trio she led to Wilmington, North Carolina; and the supervisor of her internship with the School of Social Work. She helped coordinate their annual Social Work Day, which focused on civic engagement and visual, performing, and written arts.

For Kartcheske, it meant a lot to be formally recognized for an area of study that she's been so passionate about throughout her college career. She received a minor in civic engagement and responsibility, and feels the award, in part, reflects the time and dedication she put into the subject. Along with helping others now, Kartcheske is thinking about her future: "As I move forward from my undergraduate education, the award will not only prove my dedication to civic engagement, but it serves as a reminder to value interdisciplinary learning. My major and minor are inextricably linked, and I will strive to do the same blending in my career."

Kartcheske said she is forever grateful for the people who work for and volunteer with the Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning: "After volunteering with them for three years and working for them during my senior year, I was exposed to a community of dedicated and passionate individuals who consistently work to make a difference and educate their participants." Kartcheske is honored to be included in an incredible group of people who dedicate themselves to civic and community engagement. "I know it's thanks to the English Studies program that I was prepared for engaging with new frameworks," she said. "The program's dedication to critical thinking, interdisciplinary exposure, and theoretical analysis allowed me to be comfortable with complexity, asking questions, and learning from others."



For the next year, Kartcheske will be traveling internationally with a group called Up with People, which combines performing arts, civic engagement, and cultural competency to educate their students. Kartcheske will be volunteering an average of three days a week, staying with host families, and performing in a professional show once a week. Congratulations to Maddi Kartcheske and best of luck in her future endeavors!

Ron Stacker Thompson (B.S. English, '64)

College of Arts and Sciences Hall of Fame Inductee, 2019

On September 28, 2019, one of last year's Department of English Distinguished Alumni Award winners, Ron Stacker Thompson, was inducted into the College of Arts and Sciences Hall of Fame for his career achievements. Acting department chair Ricardo Cruz joined his wife, Carol, department chair Chris De Santis and his wife, Christy, professor emerita Jan Neuleib, Cle Thompson, President Larry Dietz, Dean Zosky, and others at the ceremony in celebrating Thompson's contributions to the arts.



Acting chair Ricardo Cruz, Carol Cruz, Ron Stacker Thompson, Cle Thompson, department chair Chris De Santis, and Christy De Santis

Thompson '64 has been a producer on such diverse films as *A Rage In Harlem*, *Deep Cover*, *The Cemetery Club*, *Sister Act 2*, and *Hoodlum*. Other feature credits include *To Sleep With Anger* and *Grand Canyon*. His film experience has afforded him the opportunity to work with such stellar talents as Whoopi Goldberg, Maggie Smith, Laurence Fishburne, Ellen Burstyn, Danny Glover, Christina Ricci, Jeff Goldblum, and Andy Garcia.

In television, he wrote and produced *America's Dream*, the highly acclaimed HBO Special nominated for nine Cable Ace Awards, two of which Thompson won for Best Writing and Best Producing of a Dramatic Series or Special. *America's Dream*, starring Danny Glover and Wesley Snipes (based on short stories by Maya Angelou, Richard Wright, and John Henrik Clarke), was also honored with the prestigious NAACP Image Award for Best Television or Mini-Series. Thompson has also written *Nat King Cole: Love in Return*, an award-winning series biography on the A&E Network. His most recent work is the feature *Funny Valentines* starring Alfre Woodard and Loretta Devine for BET/Universal.

It is in theater where Thompson developed his unique ability to successfully blend all aspects of his talent. As founder and artistic director of the Oakland Ensemble Theatre he produced and directed over 50 plays, many of which he wrote. He has directed tours of *Some of My Best Friends Are the Blues* starring Della Reese; *Soul Survivor* starring Ted Lange; and *Achieving the Dream* starring Yolando King, daughter of Martin Luther King Jr. He has directed productions at The Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center, The National Black Theatre Festival in North Carolina, and Off Broadway at the Henry Street Settlement, AMAS Theatre, and the famed Apollo Theatre in Harlem. His most recent work as a playwright is *Rejoice! A Musical Celebration*, produced during the 2016 holiday season at The Willingham Theater in Yadkinville, North Carolina, where he has been artistic director for the past seven years.

Thompson has been deeply involved in education, teaching subjects ranging from literature and poetry, urban and ethnic studies to speech, theater, dance and multicultural philosophy. He is a professor at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts, where he is chair of the Screenwriting Department in the School of Filmmaking.

He just celebrated his 50th wedding anniversary with Cle Thompson, noted jazz vocalist. They recently documented their lives together in the musical dramedy *The Daze of Our Lives*, which highlighted their daughter, Ashley, and grandchildren, Magnus, 14, and Thaddeus, 9.

"There have been a few bumps in the road," Thompson said, "but basically life has been very good to me ... in fact, far better than I could have imagined."

In Memoriam

Joan Crooks

Joan Crooks died June 20, 2019, at her home. She was 71. Joan was born March 10, 1948, in Mount Vernon, a daughter to Ivan and Mildred Bunnell Crooks. Joan earned the M.S. in writing at ISU in 1988 and served as instructional assistant professor in the Department of English for 22 years. She was an accomplished poet and teacher, and she was recognized by ISU students with an Impact Award in 2017.

John Hill, Ph.D.

John Hill, Ph.D., died December 1, 2018. He was 89. John was an associate professor at Illinois State University from 1962 until 1977 when he became a full professor and moved to Texas State University. At Illinois State, John served three years as assistant head of the English Department and two years as director of graduate studies. From 1975 to 1977, he was executive director of the Academic Affairs Conference of Midwestern Universities.



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