

## **INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLOQUIUM: THE VERACITY OF MEMORY** (September 23, 2009)

**Shelli Petersen**  
Associate Professor of Art, Rivier College  
and  
**Martin Menke, Ph.D.**  
Professor, Department of History, Law, and Political Science, Rivier College

### **Introduction by Dr. Martin Menke**

The work of today's panelists reveals how scholars in different disciplines can use similar vocabulary to mean very different things, almost as if they are speaking about completely different topics. And yet, as today's presentations show, interdisciplinary dialogue must occur to provide new inspiration and creative sparks to continue scholarly work.

In history, for example, memory is a complicated subject. As a research source, oral history, for example, depends on memory, but also on its verification and contextualization like any other source. (For example, the Story of Cohen Center Film could be mentioned here). Thus, those who own memory must be respected, as I am sure Dr. Pattison would agree. Dr. Rekart will explain to us a little more of what memory is in the brain, and Dr. Wright will start us off.

### **Presentations**

- "Rhetorical Perspectives on Memory" by Dr. Liz Wright;
- "Distortion and Decay of Memories from Synapse to Behavior" by Dr. Jerry Rekart;
- "Clinical Presentation, diagnosis, and Treatment of Dementia" by Dr. Ivor Pattison.

The outlines of these presentations are published in this Fall-2009 edition of the *InSight: Rivier Academic Journal*.

### **Biographies**

**Prof. Shelli Petersen**, Chair of the Interdisciplinary Colloquium Committee, is an Associate Professor of Art at Rivier College. She teaches illustration, design, animation and Game Design. Shelli Petersen's art career began at three with crayon drawings of the solar system. After receiving a BFA from Missouri State University, she worked as a graphic designer and illustrator in Kansas City, MO. Her Master's thesis project at Savannah College of Art & Design evolved into her first published children's book, *Magali—An Aztec Legend of Good Fortune*, written by Patricia Petersen. Shelli's clients include National Heritage Museum, McGraw-Hill, Renaissance House, and Highlights Magazine. Over the past decade, Shelli has focused on the art of the book. Her children's book illustration and design emphasizes myth as a powerful tool to teach us about ourselves and about our journey through life. The children's book is a perfect vehicle for myth, helping children to develop a sense of themselves, this world, and the world beyond the visible.

**Dr. Martin Menke** is Professor of History, Department Coordinator and JYS Chair at Rivier College. He teaches courses in history and secondary social studies education. His research focuses on the question of political values in theory and practice in German Catholicism. He is also interested in tension between national and religious identities in modern Germany.

**Dr. Liz Wright** is Associate Professor of English and Communication here at Rivier College. She received her Ph.D. from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, her M.A. from Columbia University, and her B.A. from Hamilton College. In a previous life, she worked in the professional theatre and would love to thrill you (sometime) with stories of the famous and not-so-famous that she's worked with in the past.

**Dr. Jerome L. Rekart** received his B.S. in biochemistry from Indiana University in 1998 and his M.Sc. (2001) and Ph.D. (2005) in biological psychology from Northwestern University, where his graduate research focused on the cellular and molecular determinants of learning and memory. After graduate school, Dr. Rekart did his postdoctoral training in developmental plasticity at the McGovern Institute for Brain Research at M.I.T. before joining the Department of Psychology at Rivier College in the fall of 2006. He now has a dual-appointment in the departments of Education and Psychology and his current research spans multiple scales and reflects the intersection of these two disciplines as he continues to theorize on the molecular nature of memory, conducts laboratory research on the role of emotion in memory and seeks to integrate laboratory findings into K-16 settings to enhance pedagogy and student learning.

**Dr. Ivor Pattison** earned his B.S. degree from the University of Massachusetts, Lowell, M.S. in Adult Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing from Boston College, and Ph.D. (Doctoral Fellowship) in Clinical Decision Making (Nursing) from Boston College. Ivor has practiced as a Psychiatric Nurse for the past 40 plus years. For the first half of his career he held a number of positions in psychiatric hospitals and units, both in the United Kingdom and in the USA. These positions ranged from working as Psychiatric Staff RN to serving as an Associate Vice President for Psychiatric Nursing Services. In his mid career, Ivor worked as a consultant to a variety of hospitals and nursing homes in Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Maine as they moved to establish, or improve, the quality of care on inpatient psychiatric and Alzheimer's Disease units. Since 1995 Ivor has taught within the Division of Nursing at Rivier College. He maintains a private mental health practice in Nashua New Hampshire where he provides care to adults and elders who suffer from depression, anxiety, mood disorders and dementia. ■