

Retirement from the Skidmore College Faculty

Spring 2014

Faculty Meeting
April the Twenty-Fifth
Two Thousand and Fourteen

With the retirement of Victor L. Cahn, the English department loses an inspiring Shakespearean, a prolific playwright, a

in the Mathematics and Computer Science department at Skidmore in a shared position with her husband, Gove Effinger, in 1986. Just prior to

department's capstone course for the major. Some of these collaborations with students led to conference presentations or posters by the students, or deeper work as part of the summer collaborative research program.

Much of Gove's work in number theory centered on taking questions about integers and re-interpreting them in terms of polynomials over finite fields, which are commutative rings that share many properties of the integers. For example, Gove published several papers on the Goldbach theorem for polynomials, and the so-called '3-primes problem'. His paper, *The Polynomial 3-Primes Conjecture*, was notable because it used the IBM 3090, a "supercomputer," to model and analyze his data. This paper earned Gove an honorable mention in the 1989 IBM 3090 Supercomputing Competition. Some of his work was collaborative with David Hayes at UMASS, with whom Gove published not only research articles, such as *A Complete Solution to the Polynomial 3-Primes problem*, but also in 1991 an advanced book on the subject entitled *Additive Number Theory of Polynomials over a Finite Field*. After dispensing with the polynomial 3-primes problem, Gove has taken up work on the harder, polynomial twin primes problem and has published several papers on this problem as well.

Gove expects to continue to work on his interests in number theory and finite fields after his retirement. In fact, he has already agreed to host a conference at Skidmore College next year: the 12th International Conference on Finite Fields and their Applications ("Fq12") in July, 2015.

In addition to his unwavering dedication to the student and his scholarly pursuits, Gove has served the College in many other ways. In addition to his service as department chair and QR Director, he has refereed papers for the American Mathematical Society; he has served on the steering committee for the Hudson River Undergraduate Mathematics Conference twice--in 1995 and again as co-chair of the committee in 2011 when the conference last took place at Skidmore. He has served on numerous college committees and task forces and has headed several recent search committees.

Gove has also served the college in more intangible ways. Many of his colleagues within and outside of the department are appreciative of his contributions to the community of Skidmore runners, most visibly his leadership in organizing the annual Celebration weekend 5k race (which

has raised significant charitable donations over the years) and the annual Corporate Challenge race in Albany. Another member of the department notes how Gove, together with his wife, Alice Dean, went out of their way to make visitors (such as job candidates) to campus feel especially welcome and at ease, by taking their own time to give them tours of the college campus and the Saratoga area, to welcome them into their home, or to join them at a restaurant for a shared meal. That some of these job candidates are now our colleagues speaks well for the ways in which Gove and Alice have reached out to them as visitors. In fact, Gove is noted for his efforts to build collegiality through socializing. Gove has always supported department gatherings in a social context, such as going out to dinner after departmental meetings several times per year. Furthermore, Gove and Alice generously open their home every year for the annual departmental Christmas party.

Gove Effinger will be remembered as an accomplished teacher-scholar, a generous and collegial colleague, and as someone who is highly focused on the common good, be it through his dedication to community service, or through his utmost concern for the well-being of our students. Congratulations, Gove, on your retirement from 28 years of service at Skidmore College, and good luck on your new shared position with your wife, Alice Dean, as Skidmore Retiree!

Mary Ann Foley's achievements across thirty years of teaching, scholarship and service are, in a word, astonishing. Mary Ann so thoroughly exemplifies the Skidmore model of teacher/scholar that it is impossible to distinguish her teaching from her research. When she arrived in 1984, the Skidmore News reported, "In the near future[,] Dr. Foley would like to form a lab group." That evidently was a gross understatement; thirty years later Mary Ann's record of scholarship, carried out with Skidmore undergraduates, would be highly distinguished for a professor at a research university. Her contributions to cognitive psychology are widely recognized in the scientific community, as evidenced by her stellar scholarly record, the immense number of reviews she has conducted for journals and external funding agencies, and the external grant funding that she has received. Mary Ann has over 50 publications, including more than 40 peer-reviewed articles, many

appearing in the most prestigious empirical psychology journals. She has

from the endowed chair to support at least a dozen additional students in her lab, again integrating research and teaching in a way that flows naturally for her. Somehow, in the midst of her outstanding achievements as a scholar and teacher, Mary Ann managed to provide enormous service to the Psychology Department and to Skidmore. She served on the Committee for Academic Freedom and Rights, Curriculum Committee, Faculty Development Committee, and Admissions Committee, and far too many more committees, subcommittees and task forces to list. She has participated in more searches than anyone can recall, and served as the department chair for ten years, a record that few faculty members share. In these roles, Mary Ann's remarkable sense of the "big picture" has helped many of us see our way more clearly through challenges big and small.

After thirty years, Mary Ann's intellectual family tree, as she refers to it, is very large and deeply rooted, and has many seedlings. Those who are part of that tree, and most of all, her beloved Skidmore alums, have been richly nurtured by Mary Ann's special talent for wondering and inviting others to wonder with her. We are recognizing and honoring Mary Ann today as she retires, but the effects of her teaching will never retire. They will reverberate through the years in the hearts and minds of hundreds or perhaps thousands of Skidmore alums, colleagues, and friends. We can accept Mary Ann Foley's retirement from Skidmore only because we know that she will imagine new adventures, will translate those adventures from imagination to reality, and that she will continue to spread "wonder" to those with the good fortune to cross her path.

Susan Lehr is the only tenured member of the Education Studies department and with her retirement, a big chapter of the department's history will retire with her. But, not to worry. Reliable sources in the department give assurances of her legacy. Susan played an important role in reshaping the content and pedagogy of the major in Elementary Education, from its origins in 1960-61 to the constructivist philosophy adopted in 2000-01. Constructivism has informed her approach to teaching, building "upon the knowledge base and core abilities gained from studies in the liberal arts and sciences." Emphasis is

department that is bound to honor externally-imposed requirements in an ever-changing state and national education context involves dexterity. As she has always encouraged students to develop habits of creativity, whether for careers as classroom educators or as education policy professionals, while always mindful of constraints, Susan, too, has demonstrated her ability to juggle both, creativity within constraints.

Susan has achieved national recognition for her literacy education work, serving as president of the Children's Literature Assembly of the National Council of Teachers of English, working with cutting-edge educators and

us after an illustrious career at Washington University and the Central Institute for the Deaf in Saint Louis, Missouri. He traveled a great distance to get where he is today. Not only from Missouri to New York and over to Spain, but also from humble roots. His father was a wood pattern maker and his mother grew up in a small town of 300 in the mid-West. Although Mike is reserved and completely unpretentious, he has admitted that for him, rising from such a modest upbringing to become a professor is one of the greatest achievements in his life.

Despite his distinguished accomplishments as a teacher, scholar, and community leader, Mike has never forgotten where he began. That small town boy who learned the values of privacy, humility, honesty, and self-reliance is a gentle man with an enduring capacity for empathy. Mike has always had an abiding interest and respect for people on the margins, whether it was working as a teacher of the deaf for eight years or writing about contemporary women poets who have been largely ignored by mainstream criticism.

When you ask someone to describe Mike, the one word that appears over and over is generous. As Viviana Rangil notes: “Mike is a generous person with a refreshing sense of solidarity and community involvement.” Indeed, he displays a constant willingness to share his expertise. He is always eager to help students hone their skills, to discuss his research findings with fellow scholars, to participate in the governance of the department and college, and to volunteer in his church. Mike is a man of faith, a cantor and choir member at Co

contemporary Spanish women writers share an interest in poetry as more than just a vehicle to self-awareness and empowerment; they also see it as a way to express their desire to know and communicate with others. Focusing on the prominent image of the mirror in their writings, he makes the case that “mirroring depends on constantly renegotiating self and other to expose connections between them.” Rather than threatening, the Other is deemed essential to self-realization.

Mike has published articles on a wide variety of topics in some of the most

cue a student on how to articulate a particular sound. The vocal teacher needs to guide each student in the production of unseen internal vibrations, such that every individual learns how to develop a unique voice.

Consequently, Anne has been sought after as a vocal clinician at institutions such as Oakland University and Washburn University. She has also worked with singers from the Albany Symphony, the Seagle Music Colony, Union College, and the Lake George Opera. Indeed, her devotion to this process contributed to her role as one of the co-founders of the Eastern New York State Chapter of the National Association of Teachers of Singing.

Characteristically, Anne has been most proud of her students, some of them going on to professional careers after graduate studies at institutions such as the University of Michigan, Indiana University, the New England Conservatory, Ithaca College, the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory, the University of Kansas, the University of Texas, and the Eastman School of Music. In this spirit, she has recently established the