

Gordon-Gray recipient stresses individual attention in teaching

By Thomas King
Staff Writer

Joy Kasson is starting her 21st year at the University and plans to keep teaching until administrators kick her out.

"I'm going to teach forever," said the professor in the curriculum of American Studies. "I love teaching. It keeps me invigorated."

As an undergraduate, Kasson studied American history and literature at Harvard/Radcliffe. She came to UNC in 1971 from Yale graduate school with a Master's degree in American Studies.

"It was a wonderful opportunity to come to the University," she said. "My husband and I got jobs at the same time, so that was an extra incentive. This is a great place to live. I've really enjoyed the students that I've worked with — the graduates and the undergrads. It's so challenging."

Kasson is one of six professors selected last spring to receive Gordon



Profile

Gray professorships. Her honorary chairmanship will begin July 1, 1992, and will last for three years.

The Gordon Gray Professorship is sponsored by the Bowman and Gordon Gray family to recognize outstanding teachers of undergraduate students with a chairmanship and a salary supplement.

When people talk about Kasson, they usually emphasize the fact that she is very personable and really cares about what is going on in her students' lives.

"She does a lot of very careful and thoughtful advising with individual students, more than some that I know," said Townsend Ludington, chairman of the curriculum in American Studies.

"As a teacher, scholar and adviser she seems to me to be exceptional,"

Ludington said. "In whatever subject she's teaching she always gets rave reviews from students. Those seem to me to be the qualities you are looking for in the Bowman (sic) Gray Professorship."

Students who have studied under Kasson said they liked her friendliness and the nurturing aspect of her teaching.

Anu Mannar, a senior journalism major, said, "She likes her students as much as the subjects she teaches."

According to Jolayne Keller, a senior American studies and anthropology major, Kasson is readily available for her students if they want to talk and takes a personal interest in them.

Although she began her college career as a science major, Kasson later decided she wanted to study something that would give her a broader view of the world rather than focus on one discipline. "Even as an undergrad I wanted to bring things together — synthesizing

rather than specializing." She tries to incorporate different branches of knowledge such as history and literature into her teaching by taking an interdisciplinary approach to her classes, she said.

"Some people are only interested in the specific branches of knowledge; I'm interested in the way they connect and interrelate, and to me a lot of the excitement about teaching is trying to help people think in different ways."

Keller said, "She introduces you to stories that go untold by encouraging original and creative thinking and designs her classes around practicing that."

"She gives a lot of feedback on your work so you can improve; she sets up clear and useful assignments to create a healthy and comfortable learning process instead of one that is stressful or overwhelming."

Kasson said she felt there was a dichotomy in her responsibility to the University. "I feel that a teacher at a university like this is in two halves. One involves my own learning and research and the obligation to stay current with



Joy Kasson

the exciting new developments in my field, but that is something you can do in libraries.

"Teaching in the classroom is a real

interaction with people. It's not just telling things that you think about, finding out what other people think and working with them. I love the combination of thinking my own thoughts and sharing that with other people."

The most rewarding aspect of teaching is watching someone go through the "Ah-ha" factor — when students see something they didn't know before, she said. "It makes the subject coherent to find common threads and themes."

Elizabeth Gorsuch, a senior English major, said, "She sees beyond the everyday world of homework and tests and gets into what learning really is all about — being yourself, discovering who you are and what you can do to express that into the world."

Kasson's most recent achievement was the publication of her book *Marble Queens and Captives*. It was a long project on sculpture in the 19th century, focusing on representation of women.

Ludington said: "One thing that stands out about Joy is how thoughtful she is about ways to teach. She is really a very concerned and caring teacher."

English conversation programs provide learning with friendship

By Josh Boyer
Staff Writer

This fall, not only was Ana Salas-Cardona in a new school, but in a country where people didn't speak her language. Like many other newly arrived foreigners, Salas-Cardona needed to improve her English.

The UNC English Conversation Partner program and the private English as a Second Language courses are two ways people in her situation can receive help.

"When I arrived, it was hard to understand people. I have a problem with Southern accents," Salas-Cardona said.

From Seville, Spain, Salas-Cardona is a teaching assistant in the Spanish department. In Spain, she had been an English major, but she still wanted to improve. She found help from the English conversation program.

For eight years, this program has linked foreign students, visiting scholars and their spouses with American students. Each pair meets for at least an hour a week, allowing the foreign partner to work on conversation skills.

Marisa Crowell, a junior English major, is Salas-Cardona's partner. Crowell said she signed up because, "My grandfather was from Spain, and so I understand some Spanish customs, but this will help me understand more."

Salas-Cardona said she wanted to

take part in the English Conversation program to converse with someone one-on-one. "This is the first time in my life that I have a partner to speak English to. In Spain, I felt silly speaking to American students in English."

Their weekly sessions are informal. "It's not like we have a fixed pattern. We go to the mall; we cook Spanish food," Salas-Cardona said.

"Or we go to the grocery store," Crowell added. "I proofread her papers, too." She said they spent more time together than the designated one hour per week.

The American partners need not know the other's language. Crowell, however, does know Spanish. "Her Spanish is better than my English," Salas-Cardona said.

"When I first met her, we spoke in Spanish," Crowell said. But then they started speaking in English, she pointed out, because the purpose is for Salas-Cardona to improve her English.

What does Salas-Cardona think of her new surroundings? Understanding her professors isn't hard because she had English teachers from England and the United States in Spain, she said.

"The hardest thing to understand is the (teaching) methods. They are very different in Spain."

The English Conversation Partner program is run by Ann Deutsch. "Stop and think about if you were in another

country. You'd want a friend to talk to and ask questions," Deutsch said.

A lot of the American partners have been overseas and have had someone help them out. "They want to return the favor. There is a lot of empathy and idealism on the part of the people who do this work," she said.

Kenya, Finland, the Soviet Union, Saudi Arabia and Chile are just a few examples of the foreign students' native countries. The majority, however, are from Asian countries.

"The program is working fine. We have a great percentage of successes. People make life-long friends," Deutsch said. She encouraged more foreign students to sign up. "We have people just waiting to help someone."

Another way to improve English skills is through English as a Second Language programs.

"I don't speak German with Germans or Spanish with Spanish speakers. We speak English from day one. It's like opening up a new world for people," said Pam Rice, an ESL tutor.

Another tutor, Lorraine Scott Smith, saw her program as an alternative to language programs in public schools.

"I'm a maverick, I guess, because I don't believe in the over-glorified, old methods. I like to achieve specific goals in a time frame. This doesn't happen in public schools." Smith taught in public schools for 18 years.

She also doubts the value of language tapes. "You can't learn by reciting sentences like a parrot," she said.

Smith tailors the program to the student. Whatever the student is interested in is the subject of their conversations.

To achieve a basic level of comprehension in Smith's program, students take at least 24 sessions. Each lesson costs \$25; the student rate is 10 percent less.

ESL courses and the English Conversation Partner program are available to students of any level of English proficiency.

Beckett's 'Endgame' success through design of stage, actors' performances

By Beth Formy-Duval
Staff Writer

The West End Project Theater Company at Carrboro's ArtsCenter opened its second bimonthly presentation Friday with Samuel Beckett's "Endgame," a bizarre story of post-apocalyptic characters searching for some meaning to their existence. The effect of the play was challenging for both the audience and the actors.

The story centers around what may be the last four members of the human species living in a bunker after an unspecified catastrophic event that has left the countryside gray, barren and lifeless. The characters try to sort out the angst, loneliness and unhappiness of their condition.

The performance's success is a result of the excellence of the stage design and the performance of the actors.

The West End stage provided an intimate environment for the production of the play's stylistically simple sets. The stage set the mood of the wasteland condition with metal poles that framed a single room. In the center of the room was a chair that, though it looked like an old dentist's chair, was actually a crudely made wheel-



'Clav' (seated) and 'Hamm' in 'Endgame'

chair. At the back of the stage, on a raised platform, sat two large barrels, labeled "his" and "hers." Colorful material draped over the metal poles provided the only bright color in the room. The atmosphere was like a vacuum of death.

What was most intriguing for the audience and the actors was the stage

that sat right on top of the audience. Sitting in the front row was an experience that at times made you anxious. The theater itself was more like a classroom or a workshop than an auditorium. The audience sat on three sides of the stage and not more than five rows back, which enabled the audience to interact with the characters. At times, the actors stepped beyond the realm of the stage and entered the audience — close enough to touch those seated at the front. This approach worked, letting the audience participate in Beckett's work. The only distraction with this concept came at the end of the play when a curtain fell to reveal a fire exit sign. Oddly enough, this occurred at the end of the play, and the glaring red light cut through the darkness that signified death. It made the audience empathize with almost all of the claustrophobia of living in the tiny bunker with nothing outside but wasteland.

The second factor that contributed to the success of "Endgame" was the incredible acting by all the performers. Hamm, played by Ann Church, is a character who is trying desperately to end the game of living. His goal is

See **ENDGAME**, page 7

Campus Calendar

THURSDAY
SARR, Students for the Advancement of Race Relations will meet in 317 Bingham.

3:30 p.m. **JOB HUNT 101:** Basic information on how to use the UCPPS office will be held in 210 Hanes.

4:15 p.m. **JOB HUNT 102:** Resume Writing Workshop for seniors and graduate students will be held in 210 Hanes. Sponsored by UCPPS.

5 p.m. **The Black Graduate Women's Support Group** offered by the University Counseling Center will meet in 213 Union. All black female graduate and professional students are welcome.

5:15 p.m. **The Black Interdenominational Student Association (BISA)** will hold a Bible study in the Union. Check Union Desk for room number.

6 p.m. **Free Tutoring** in French 1-4, Spanish 1-4, ECON 10, STAT 11 & 23, CHEM 11, BIOL 11 and MATH 10, 16, 17, 18, 22, 30 & 31 will be held until

8 p.m. on second floor Dey Hall. Sponsored by the Student Government Tutoring Program.

Come watch "Eye of the Storm" and discuss multiculturalism with Robert Porter of the AFAM department in Connor Lounge. Food will be served.

7 p.m. **Marine Action Committee** will meet in the Campus Y Lounge. Questions? Call 932-9285.

7:30 p.m. **Chimera**, UNC's science fiction club, will have a gaming sampler in 213 Union. Come and try out new games.

8 p.m. **Habitat for Humanity** core group leadership meeting will be held in the Campus Y Lounge.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

The Collegiate Black Caucus is sponsoring a canned food drive. Please drop non-perishable food items in the box in the Black Cultural Center today and Friday.

The Black Cultural Center invites you to view Angela Medlin's "Background" in the BCC until Oct. 21.

Student Health Services is forming a **Diabetes support group**. Call 966-6562 for more information.

The **1992 Yachety Yack** will be on sale from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. this week in the Pit.

IM-REC Sports: Today the home run derby, men's and women's divisions, will be held on a drop-in basis.

The **UNC Math Contest** is available in the math-physics library, 365 Phillips.

Experience "A Night in Africa" at 8 p.m. Friday in the Cabaret with the N.C. Central dance group, "The Ebony Readers." Call 933-5835 for more information.

The **Lorelets** will present their first two-night cappella, "Wham Jam Thank You Ma'am," at Playmakers Theatre at 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday. Tickets are on sale all week in the Pit.

Register to Vote in the Pit between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. until Oct. 4. Bring a picture ID with your birth date and proof of local address (phone bill).

Corrections

The Sept. 24 Daily Tar Heel University brief "Search helps graduate students find grants" incorrectly stated students must wait one hour for the two-part search to be processed. Dottie Baker, research services librarian, said students are asked to set aside an hour to fill out both parts and for the information to be processed. The hours the search is offered at the Research Services Library were cut because librarians were having problems getting access to campus computer lines.

The Sept. 25 story "Sororities sympathize with loss of charter, consider implications" incorrectly stated that Pi Beta Phi sorority had 54 pledges this semester. The group had 55 pledges.

The DTH regrets the errors.

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