

Visiting Writers Series ends with Grosholz poetry reading

By CECILIA LYNN CASEY

North Carolina Wesleyan College ended the 1993/1994 Visiting Writers Series by welcoming Emily Grosholz to the Pearsall Library on April 6.

Grosholz's poems cover a wide range of topics, from her husband and children, her travel abroad, and her studies of philosophy. Her manner was soft, soothing and gentle which worked against the reading. Reading poems such as "Reflections in the Transfinite" and "Nietzsche in the Box of Straws," her voice and manner loses the attention and interest of those who are less devoted to her work. However; she has a wonderfully quiet way of looking up and then glancing at the ceiling to emphasize a line or word, which made her a bit more lively.

Most of her poetry is accessible to non-philosophers, and she says herself that "15 years later I hope my poems are not so abstract, so philosophical." Her poem "The Return" is a good mixture of thought and verse.

Starting with a quote from Kierkegaard's *Fear and Trembling*, the first line begins "the

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gesture of resignation/ as the knight of faith/ turns his hand like a calyx back/ from the bloom on lassc's check/ shows that no illusion blunts his pain:/ death lies on the rock./ Yet somehow Abraham regains/ the life he laid aside: what floods/ the empty circle of his arms?"

Then later in the same poem, "So the poet to her inventions./ so the mother to her child:/ take, creature, your own true future./ its shape no longer moans and hides/ in me, but wakes in you. And when that one/ pull on the globed/ mantle of its own intentions./ what does the sad creator welcome then./ what rushes into the hollow of the heart?"

And the last stanza, "So the bereft, abandoned, blind./ cry to their lost inheritors./ go, you are not I./ The creatures flee and constitute the world;/ the dance begins again./ the solid world, the moving world./ It is the world that enters in."

"The Return" has subtle images such as the moon pulling

back the coves of earth which are the waves washing over the sand at work to make the poem understandable to everyone while posing questions like what rushes into the hollow of the heart, and "Blind Galileo, father of the moon.... what filled the dark horizons of your sight?" which makes the reader think about concepts like what is there beyond our reach and inside ourselves.

Grosholz is a good poet because she is able to capture the mystery of philosophy and all its "Whys?" and connect it to lines such as "What filled the dark horizons of your sight?/ The dance of fire and stone/ in order through the sky" which shows that there is the possibilities of having an answer to the "whys" through the use of language. She lets her language suggest the answers, or even just celebrate the questions.

Also her ability to talk about her life with her husband and children in a way which makes her life familiar and comforting makes her stand out as a successful poet. In "West Wind I" she takes what could be potentially boring and if not careful an almost lewd subject, laying next to her



POET VISITS — Poet Emily Grosholz visited Wesleyan on April 6 in a reading of her works at Pearsall Library as the final offering of the year through the Visiting Writers Series.

husband, and turns it into a emotion and a state we all wish to know and enjoy. "Who would wake from such a real/ and ramifying dream? I switch the tongue/ of our alarming clock from lark/ to nightingale, and wait with open eyes."

It is sad that with the high qual-

ity of the poems that the reading was on the slow side. She did not have in mind what she wanted to read and floated off the track more than once. If someone wanted to go to the Visiting Writers Series for the first time, she might be a bad place to start in terms of getting and holding interests.

Insurance industry wants liberal arts grads

Traditionally, the multibillion dollar insurance industry has been a good home for liberal arts graduates who are frequently hired directly out of college into management training programs in the areas of customer service, marketing, and administrative areas.

Among the insurance carriers who actively recruit on college campuses are such giant corporate employers as Aetna (48,000 employees nationwide), Metropolitan Life (54,000), Prudential (100,000), State Farm (58,000) and Travelers (32,000).

Why do insurance companies like to hire non-business majors? According to Lorenzo Pace, Aetna's administrator of college relations, the "flexibility" demonstrated by employees with liberal arts degrees makes them desirable. In fact, over the past few years Aetna has increased its hiring of these employees and today hires about equal numbers of business grads and liberal arts grads.

At the Chubb Group, a diversified group of insurance carriers with 65 offices in North America and 19 overseas, liberal arts grads are valued for their superior writing and analytical abilities.

Cheryl Kozak, corporate staff recruiter for The Travelers Insurance Co., says the communication skills that liberal arts graduates bring to the company are a key asset.

"They can see the bigger picture. They're creative and not so specialized, and they bring new ideas," she says.

Liberal arts grads are hired by Prudential because of their innate "thinking skills," said Joyce Goldstein, vice president for administration, who believes "liberal arts grads have a much better foundation than technical people."

Ironically, many liberal arts grads don't even consider a career in the insurance industry.

"I think there are a lot of mis-

conceptions about who we are and what we do," says Aetna's Pace. "Often times, the liberal arts major sees us as insurance salesmen, meaning that's the only type of career area we offer."

In a company as large as Aetna, which manages assets of more than \$90 billion, there are numerous employment opportunities in such diverse fields as human resources, law, public affairs, communications, marketing, information systems, or training. That's in addition to conventional insurance jobs in underwriting, loss control, and claims.

Because it makes good business sense to keep their clients healthy, insurance companies tend to be enlightened about what keeps their employees happy as well. Insurance companies were among the first to offer such innovations as employee wellness programs, on-site fitness centers and childcare facilities, maternity and parental leaves, work-at-

home arrangements, flexible work schedules, sabbaticals, and continuing education and training programs.

What does a beginning job in the insurance industry pay? Liberal arts graduates can expect to earn between the mid-\$20,000s and low \$30,000s the first year, plus generous benefits, which can range in value between \$5,000 and \$10,000 annually.

There are also opportunities for rapid advancement. For example, Metropolitan Live offers a fast-track career path called the Management Associate Program (MAP). The two-year training program offers new hires the chance to try out different disciplines through six-month hands-on work assignments.

The vast majority of MAP participants (depending on the year, as much as 75 percent) are liberal arts graduates from a wide range of majors, including anthropology, religion, East Asian his-

tory, psychology, urban studies, French linguistics, political science, and 19th-century English literature.

In a study of several hundred corporate employers, two distinct prototypes emerged: progressive and non-progressive.

Progressive companies were characterized by innovative programs, such as quality control circles and flexible work schedules; in general they strived to improve work conditions on an on-going basis. It was part of the company's "corporate culture." Senior management of these companies was dominated by liberal arts graduates and not too surprisingly, these companies tend to hire more liberal arts graduates and promoted them faster than non progressive companies.

The "perfect employer" does not exist. All companies have their positives and negatives. But as a whole, insurance companies tend to be progressive.