

Marginalized, Monsters, and Minorities – March 31, 2012 **2012 Zeta Tau Literary Conference Speakers**

Karen Swallow Prior, Ph.D.

Keynote Address: “Lemuel Gulliver: Dead White Man Marginalized”

Dr. Karen Swallow Prior is a native of Maine who moved to Virginia from Buffalo, New York, where she completed her undergraduate and graduate studies. She was raised in a strong Christian home and received Christ at a very early age. But it wasn't until she was in her twenties that Dr. Prior was introduced to the concept of the Christian worldview. This was when her faith became real and she embraced the challenge of not only *living* biblically, but *thinking* biblically, too. Her life has never been the same. Dr. Prior incorporates this love of living and thinking biblically into her teaching and her study of literature and language, and it is what fuels her passion for both.

Dr. Prior was the 2003 recipient of the President's Award for Teaching Excellence. In 2006 she received the Sigma Tau Delta (LU chapter) Teacher of the Year Award. She was named Faculty of the Year by the Multicultural Enrichment Center in 2010. She teaches British literature primarily, with a specialty in Eighteenth Century British literature which she loves for its emphasis on philosophy, ethics, aesthetics, and community, as well as for the correction it offers to the universal human impulse to gravitate toward extremes.

Christopher Gaumer, M.F.A.

Plenary Address: “Be a Monster. Be Loved”

Christopher Gaumer is a husband, a writer, a professor. A graduate of Hamline University's MFA in creative writing program in 2009, Gaumer has fiction and non-fiction published in *Ruminate Magazine*, *Rain Taxi Review* and *Rock, Paper, Scissors*. His film script for “The Blanket Theory” earned a best short film nomination at the Southern Appalachian International Film Festival in 2011. Today, Gaumer teaches graduate and undergraduate creative writing at Liberty University where he also works as the executive editor of the literary publication *LAMP*.

Emily Walker Heady, Ph.D.

Plenary Address: “Lost on the Map: Distant Reading in the Travel Writings of Charles Dickens and Harriet Martineau”

Emily Heady is Dean of the College of General Studies and Associate Professor of English at Liberty University. She holds a BA from The Ohio State University and an MA and PhD from Indiana University. Her work has appeared in journals such as *Dickens Studies Annual*, *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, *Christianity and Literature*, *Studies in Medievalism*, and *JNT*. Her book, *Victorian Conversion Narratives and Reading Communities*, is forthcoming from Ashgate Press. Her address for the Zeta Tau conference will be published in the next issue of *Prose Studies*.