

SCHOLAR-IN-RESIDENCE 2012

Jacqueline Kolosov

Award-winning Poet and Author Visits PCCC

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Dr. Jacqueline Kolosov reads from her works at a special Scholar-in-Residence program.

Award-winning poet, novelist, and educator Jacqueline Kolosov visited PCCC as the Spring 2012 Scholar-in-Residence last month. The author of five young adult novels and several collections of poetry, Dr. Kolosov is also a creative writing professor at Texas Tech University.

As Scholar-in-Residence, Dr. Kolosov visited English classes, where she read excerpts from her works, discussed reading preferences, and challenged students with her unique assignments.

"We talked about the necessity of creative writing in the classroom as a form of self-expression," Dr. Kolosov explained.

"What I Could Never Tell My (Mother, Boyfriend, etc)" was the intriguing writing topic Dr. Kolosov assigned to one class. Students were asked to write the answer with their non-dominant hand, a tactic that encouraged them to slow down and give more thought to what they write. "It proved productive," said Dr. Kolosov. "One woman wrote to an estranged brother, and this was particularly poignant."

In another class, a discussion about reading choices evolved into a conversation about what to read to children. "The class was very, very lively and engaged," said Dr. Kolosov."A number of the students were mothers who preferred the works of Shel Silverstein and Judy Blume."

The author concluded her visit with a reading for the college community titled "Mothers and Daughters," an acknowledgement of how becoming mother to her daughter Sophia influenced her writing. "Children anchor you to the present," explained Dr. Kolosov, whose works often feature strong-willed young women.

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She read excerpts from her recent young adult novel, "The Red Queen's Daughter," an historical fiction about the daughter of Catherine Parr, the last wife of King Henry VIII of England. Selections from Dr. Kolosov's poetry, particularly "Art Lesson: Julie Manet Walks with Renoir," demonstrate the influence of the visual arts on her works. Another poem, "Object Lesson," portrays a child's reaction to a cat that was struck by a car and offers, according to Kolosov, "a more realistic view of motherhood."



Dr. Kolosov donated copies of her works to the college. Reference librarian Ruth Hamann looks over the new books.

Dr. Kolosov took time to learn about the rich history of Paterson and commented during her presentation that the urban area offers a "sense of place" that, she said, is rarely experienced anymore.

"I found her visit to be very smart, gracious, and inspiring," said Professor Michael Rizza, organizer of the Scholar-in-Residence program. Her lessons seemed to say "Take your own ideas seriously. Words have power. What you say has value. Be mindful. Savor language."

Professor Rizza said students were equally impressed. "I thought it was amazing," said Joey Hrabovsky. "You got to hear a professional writer in person."

By Linda Telesco PCCC Communication and Public Relations