



PROVIDENCE
COLLEGE

**Guide to the Rodney Delasanta papers
1950-1977**

Providence College
Providence, RI 02918-0001

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Table of Contents

Collection Overview	1
Biographical Information	1
Scope and Content Note	2
Arrangement	2
Index Terms	3
Administrative Information.....	3
Inventory.....	5
Course Materials 1973-2007	5
Subject Files 1949-2002	8

Collection Overview

Creator:	Rodney Delasanta
Title:	Rodney K. Delasanta papers
Dates:	1950-1977
Quantity:	3 box(es) (3.0 linear feet)
Abstract:	The papers of Rodney Delasanta consists of materials generated by Delasanta during the course of his normal activities as Professor of English for Providence College.
Identification:	rppc_delasanta
Language:	The records are in English.
Repository:	Providence College Phillips Memorial Library Providence, RI 02918-0001

Biographical Information

Rodney K. delasanta graduated from Providence College, summa cum laude, in 1953 and from Brown University, Ph'D and Phi Beta Kappa, in 1961. He returned to Providence College in 1961 and spent the next forty-six years there, fulfilling the archtype of the scholar-teacher. For seventeen of those years he was also Director of the Liberal Arts Honors Program.

As a nationally acclaimed Chaucer scholar who published more than 40 scholarly articles and authored *The Epic Voice*, Delasanta is remembered as an outstanding scholar who cared deeply for his students and made a lasting influence on the college. "He was a Renaissance man. That says it all," said Dr. Donna McCaffrey, assistant professor of history. "Everything he did, he did well." To many faculty members, Delasanta was the embodiment of what the College should be.

"He represented everything I admire about Providence College: intellectual pursuits blended with humanity and spirituality," said Dr. Joseph Carroll, adjunct assistant professor of English. "His brilliant mind was surpassed only by his genuine warmth, humor, compassion, and deep faith."

As a member of one of the first graduating classes of the Liberal Arts Honors Program in 1953, Delasanta was part of a group that was "in some ways groomed to be the first lay faculty of the College," said Dr. Bruce Graver, chair of the department of English. Earning his master's degree in 1955 and his doctorate in 1962 from Brown University, Delasanta joined the PC faculty as an assistant professor of English in 1961. He would eventually chair the department of English and the honors program, and serve as assistant director of the study abroad program. In addition, he held visiting professorships at Brown University and the University of Fribourg, Switzerland.

During his tenure at Providence College, Delasanta was the recipient of the President's Distinguished Faculty Award and the Sears Roebuck Award for Excellence in Teaching. He also chaired the Rhodes Scholarship Nominating Committee for Rhode Island.

As head of the honors program, Delasanta played a large role in recruiting top students to Providence College. As the son of an immigrant weaver from Woonsocket, R.I., he maintained the first-generation connection with students and drew in legacy students. "His ability to recruit students as a faculty member was unmatched and will be extremely hard to replace," said Dr. Stephen Lynch, professor of English and then director of the liberal arts honors program.

"He was an inspiration for both students and faculty alike. He had a way of delivering a lecture that was clear, learned, informative, and impressive in the old fashioned lecture style," said Graver.

"He looked the part, he acted the part, he had the resume for the part, he played the part. Probably because he actually wasn't playing."

"Even for newer, younger faculty, Dr. Delasanta was a warm, inviting senior faculty member," recalled Dr. Matthew Dowling, assistant professor and chair of the department of history. "He was greatly admired for his teaching and scholarship." "It's a great loss for the college. He was one of the great teachers and academic leaders for 40 years," said Dr. Mario DiNunzio, professor of history. For DiNunzio, however, Delasanta's passing was more than the loss of a colleague.

"We literally grew up in the same neighborhood. We'd known each other personally and professionally all our lives," he said. He was known for his generosity - he was open and giving to everyone he met," he said.

Delasanta's attitude toward life was echoed in his approach in the classroom. In describing his own philosophy of teaching, Delasanta quoted directly from Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*: "Gladly would he learn and gladly teach."

Students recall lectures in which Delasanta would stop to exclaim, in awe, about the beauty of a piece of work. But he was certainly not limited by the repertoire of traditional classes. In one *Development of Western Civilization (DWC)* music lecture last year, he brought in his keyboard and led the class in a raucous rendition of "Doe-a-Deer."

"He was always really excited about anything he was teaching. He really got into it. If it was something you could have an opinion on, he had a hard time not showing his opinion, but in a good way . . . it would prompt debate. He was very feisty!" said Katie Mattaini '08. He is described as a man who truly cared for his students, both inside and outside the classroom.

"Dr. Delasanta was not only a spectacular professor who could make any subject interesting and even the most impossible concepts easy to understand, but his enthusiasm and caring transcended the classroom into all aspects of the student's life," said Kenney. His love for his students extended beyond the classroom. With fellow *DWC* professors, he hosted monthly Slavin Center lunches for his students.

According to his fellow professors, Delasanta's enthusiasm for life went beyond the boundaries of the Providence College campus. "God wants you to be fully alive,' his example seemed to say," said Dr. Robert Reeder, assistant professor of English. "It's become cliché, but he was one of the most passionate teachers I've ever known," said Dr. Charles Duffy, professor of English. "He was so completely involved, not just in his teaching, but in whatever he did here. He was a great inspiration to people. . . you felt so alive around him."

Even before his death, Delasanta's legacy at Providence College was solidified. In early February of 2007, Lynch announced that the annual honors program lecture would be called the "Delasanta Lecture." Delasanta was able to attend the Feb. 8 event where he was officially honored by College President Rev. Brian Shanley, O.P.

"Dr. Rodney Delasanta leaves a legacy of inspiration," said Dr. Jane Lunin-Perel, professor of English and director of the Women's Studies Department. "He has encouraged and brought to life the literary imagination, love of scholarship, and spiritual awakening of countless students, faculty, and administrators. Staff members have also appreciated his humor, humility, and compassion. When Rodney laughed, the world turned hilarious; when his mood was serious, it was time for all who knew him to experience deep reflection." Delasanta passed in 2007 in his Woonsocket home, which he built with his own hands. He is survived by his wife and four children.

Scope and Content Note

The collection consists mainly of course materials and notes relating to the *Development of Western Civilization* core program of Providence College. Additional materials include photographs, curriculum materials, select faculty meeting minutes, article reprints, and lesson plans.

Arrangement

The collection is generally arranged alphabetically into two series.

Series list

Course Materials

Subject Files

Index Terms

Researchers wishing to find materials related to this collection should search the HELIN catalog with these index terms - - View the catalog record for this collection.

Chaucer, Geoffrey, d-1400. Canterbury tales

Delasanta, Rodney

Literature and history - England - History - 16th century

Literature and history - England - History - 17th century

Tales, Medieval - History and criticism

Administrative Information

Custodial History

Prior to acquisition the collection was acquired and maintained by Rodney Delasanta. Upon his death and prior to it's donation to Providence College the collection remained in the care of his immediate family.

Preferred Citation

Deny Delasanta papers, Providence College, Phillips Memorial Library, Special and Archival Collections

Acquisitions Information

The papers of Rodney Delasanta were donated to Providence College in 2008 by the Delasanta family.

Processing Information

The collection was processed in the Spring of 2013

Restrictions

Open for research.

Some materials may be restricted. For further information contact Special and Archival Collections, Phillips Memorial Library, Providence College.

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Certain restrictions may be imposed to protect the confidentiality of living individuals.

Related Material

There are no known related materials.

There are no known separated materials from this collection.

Inventory

Series: Course Materials

Dates: 1973-2007

Extent: 118 folders

Material types:

Scope and Content Note

This series contains course materials and files generated by Delasanta during his career as an English Professor at Providence College. The much of the materials within the series consists of article reprints, which were used for research purposes and as classroom aids. Other materials include accompanying class notes, published and unpublished manuscripts, along with a small amount of correspondence.

Arrangement

This series is arranged alphabetically.

Box 1	Folder 1	Allegory/Esthetics	undated
Box 1	Folder 2	Bibliography	undated
Box 1	Folder 3	BOECE - Boethian Epistemology	undated
Box 1	Folder 4	Book of the Duchess	undated
Box 1	Folder 5	Canon's Yeoman's	undated
Box 1	Folder 6	Chaucer Bibliography	undated
Box 1	Folder 7	Chaucer Letters	1987-1991
Box 1	Folder 8	Chaucer Miscellany	undated
Box 1	Folder 9	Chaucer Newsletter	1973-1990
Box 1	Folder 10	Chaucer Newsletter - The Bleen	1983
Box 1	Folder 11	Clerk's Tale	undated
Box 1	Folder 12	Courtly Love	undated
Box 1	Folder 13	The Demise of Me	undated
Box 1	Folder 14	DWC - Readings in the History of Religion and Theology	Spring 2004
Box 1	Folder 15	DWC I - class notes	1977
Box 1	Folder 16	DWC I Honors Course	1974
Box 1	Folder 17	DWC 102	Spring 2007
Box 1	Folder 18	DWC 203 - Honors Program	Fall 1992
Box 1	Folder 19	DWC I and II	1985-1986
Box 1	Folder 20	De MM Material [De Maria Magdalena]	undated
Box 1	Folder 21	ENG 231	1983
Box 1	Folder 22	ENG 307	2006
Box 1	Folder 23	Florida	undated
Box 1	Folder 24	Franklin	undated
Box 1	Folder 25	Friar's Tale	undated
Box 1	Folder 26	Georgia State	undated
Box 1	Folder 27	Gower	undated
Box 1	Folder 28	Host	undated
Box 1	Folder 29	House of Fame	1973
Box 1	Folder 30	Howard, Donald	1977
Box 1	Folder 31	Howlers	undated
Box 1	Folder 32	Intro to Lit.	undated
Box 1	Folder 33	"I stumble" article	1987
Box 1	Folder 34	Italy - DWC 201-202	1975
Box 1	Folder 35	Keenan, Hugh	1988
Box 1	Folder 36	Knight	undated
Box 1	Folder 37	Letters - colleagues	1993

Box 1	Folder 38	Liturgy	undated
Box 1	Folder 39	Lyrics	undated
Box 1	Folder 40	Manciple	undated
Box 1	Folder 41	Man of Law	undated
Box 1	Folder 42	MS [Manuscript]	undated
Box 1	Folder 43	Recent MS [Manuscript]	undated
Box 1	Folder 44	Unpublished MS [Manuscript]	undated
Box 1	Folder 45	Medieval Drama	undated
Box 1	Folder 46	Melibee	undated
Box 1	Folder 47	Merchant's	undated
Box 1	Folder 48	Miller's Tale	undated
Box 2	Folder 49	Monk	1972
Box 2	Folder 50	Montaigne	undated
Box 2	Folder 51	More, [Thomas]	undated
Box 2	Folder 52	Nun's Priest's	undated
Box 2	Folder 53	NEH Grant	1982
Box 2	Folder 54	NEH miscellaneous	1993-1994
Box 2	Folder 55	NEMLA [Northeast Modern Language Association]	1979-1980
Box 2	Folder 56	Neo-Classical Art and Music	undated
Box 2	Folder 57	New Testament	1960-1962
Box 2	Folder 58	Opera	undated
Box 2	Folder 59	Old exams and papers	1980
Box 2	Folder 60	OVID [Publius Ovidius Naso 43BC-17AD]	undated
Box 2	Folder 61	Pardoner	ca 1978
Box 2	Folder 62	Parson's Tale	1983
Box 2	Folder 63	Pascal	undated
Box 2	Folder 64	PAVIA article	1985
Box 2	Folder 65	Petrarch and Boccaccio	1989
Box 2	Folder 66	Petronius	undated
Box 2	Folder 67	Philosophy	undated
Box 2	Folder 68	Picasso	2002
Box 2	Folder 69	Pietism	undated
Box 2	Folder 70	Pilgrimage	undated
Box 2	Folder 71	PMLA Forum	undated
Box 2	Folder 72	PMLA Paper on Parson's Tale	1978
Box 2	Folder 73	Poetry Seminar	undated
Box 2	Folder 74	Popes	1963
Box 2	Folder 75	Purcell, [Henry, 1658-1695]	undated
Box 2	Folder 76	Prioress	undated
Box 2	Folder 77	Racine	1982
Box 2	Folder 78	Reader Commentary	1984
Box 2	Folder 79	Reeve	1982
Box 2	Folder 80	Renaissance Art	undated
Box 2	Folder 81	Renaissance Literature (Pietrasanta)	Feb 1961
Box 2	Folder 82	Romance of the Rose	1969
Box 2	Folder 83	Romantic Art	Apr 1961
Box 2	Folder 84	Sartre	undated
Box 2	Folder 85	Schleirmacher	undated
Box 2	Folder 86	Shakespeare	1991
Box 2	Folder 87	Shipman's Tale	1993
Box 2	Folder 88	Sidney	Aug 1961
Box 2	Folder 89	Sir Thopas	undated
Box 2	Folder 90	Smith, Adam	undated

Box 2	Folder 91	Solzhenitsyn	undated
Box 2	Folder 92	Song of Roland	undated
Box 2	Folder 93	Spencer	undated
Box 2	Folder 94	Spinoza	undated
Box 2	Folder 95	Squire	undated
Box 2	Folder 96	Summoner's Tale	undated
Box 2	Folder 97	Strode	undated
Box 2	Folder 98	Symbolists	1979
Box 2	Folder 99	Tennyson	undated
Box 2	Folder 100	Themes	undated
Box 2	Folder 101	Trent [Council of]	undated
Box 2	Folder 102	Trollis	1962
Box 2	Folder 103	Thoreau	1990
Box 2	Folder 104	Transcendentalism	1981
Box 2	Folder 105	Universals	undated
Box 2	Folder 106	Usk	undated
Box 2	Folder 107	Verdi	undated
Box 2	Folder 108	Voltaire, 1694-1778	undated
Box 2	Folder 109	Virgil	undated
Box 2	Folder 110	Wanning	1989
Box 2	Folder 111	Weil, Jimone	undated
Box 3	Folder 112	Wiesel	undated
Box 3	Folder 113	Wife of Bath	1979
Box 3	Folder 114	Wittgenstein	undated
Box 3	Folder 115	Women's Studies	undated
Box 3	Folder 116	Woolf, Virginia	undated
Box 3	Folder 117	Wordsworth and Coleridge	1993
Box 3	Folder 118	Wycliffe	undated

Series: Subject Files

Dates: 1949-2002

Extent: (13 folders)

Material types:

Scope and Content Note

This series consists of article reprints along with miscellaneous materials not fitting elsewhere within the collection. Additional materials include a DVD of a 1991 interview of Rodney Delasanta, photographs, and some materials relating to the Liberal Arts Honors Program.

Arrangement

This series is arranged alphabetically.

Box 3	Folder 119	Alembic	1964; 1966
Box 3	Folder 120	Article Reprints	1966-2004
Box 3	Folder 121	Article Reprints - Delasanta	1978-2002
Box 3	Folder 122	Certificates and Diplomas	1949-1999
Box 3	Folder 123	English Department Faculty Meeting Minutes	2005
Box 3	Folder 124	Environments for Worship	1976
Box 3	Folder 125	<i>The Fishes - poems by Jane Lunin Perel</i>	1977
Box 3	Folder 126	Interview with Rodney Delasanta DVD - 38:38 minutes	Mar 1991
Box 3	Folder 127	Lecture Notebooks Seven notebooks of varying sizes containing lecture notes.	undated
Box 3	Folder 128	Liberal Arts Honors Program - brochure	1960; 2002
Box 3	Folder 129	Photographs - unidentified event	undated
Box 3	Folder 130	Providence in Europe - brochure	ca 1980
Box 3	Folder 131	Providence Magazine	1966; 1967