

Craig Thorn IV, 47, Beloved English Teacher And Mentor

By ALEXA REID

Craig Thorn IV, a member of Phillips Academy's English Department for 26 years, died on Monday, June 12, 2006, after a two and a half year long battle with cancer. He was 47. One of the most loved and revered teachers on campus, Mr. Thorn is survived by his wife, Andrea, son Alex '04, and daughter Kelsey '08. Originally from Hudson, New York, Mr. Thorn graduated from Hudson High School in 1976 and went on to Dartmouth College, where he was a member of the Alpha Theta fraternity. It was at Dartmouth that Mr. Thorn cultivated his love for the English language, and where Ted Geisel—better known as children's author Dr. Seuss—became his mentor. In 1980 Andover hired Mr. Thorn as a Teaching Fellow for one year. After earning a Masters Degree in English from Brown University in 1982, he returned to join the Andover faculty as an Instructor in English. Originally a specialist in the works of Swift and Twain, as well as the Romantic Poets and Shakespeare, Mr. Thorn's focus changed to encompass

Native American, South, and Central American Literature after a sabbatical to Santa Fe, New Mexico in 1991. During his term as English Department Chair from 1995-2001, Mr. Thorn supervised an exciting period of growth in the department. Not just a teacher, Mr. Thorn served as a house counselor in Eaton Cottage, Bishop Hall, and most recently Thompson House. Mr. Thorn was most closely connected to his students in his dorms. Mr. Thorn also reached a cult-like status as General Manager of the student radio station WPAA and as the advisor to many student publications, including The Courant. He ran two educational publishing houses geared at helping his colleagues publish professional essays of pedagogy. In a school-wide email, Head of School Barbara Landis Chase called Mr. Thorn a “husband and father, friend, colleague, mentor, and master teacher,” and wrote, “For twenty-six years, Mr. Thorn has been a defining presence in Bulfinch Hall and at Andover.” Kelsey Thorn '08 said about her father, “He was the most amazing man in the entire world and an inspiration to all. I know that every day I admired his charisma and looked up to him for everything. As a father, he gave me all of his love until the very end. As a teacher, he taught until he dropped. And as a member of the Phillips community, he admired and was admired by all. He always did things for others and was a selfless person who cared more for the people

around him than anyone I have ever met. He taught me the meaning of life and what's important to be happy. I miss his laughter, wisdom, jokes, love, and most importantly, his love for life." Over the years Mr, Thorn, always an avid supporter of youth activities and civic groups on and off campus, touched the lives of thousands of students. Memorial services will be held on Sunday, October 8, 2006 at 2:00 p.m. in the Cochran Chapel. In lieu of flowers, the Thorns request that contributions be made to the Craig Thorn Memorial Fund at Phillips Academy.

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