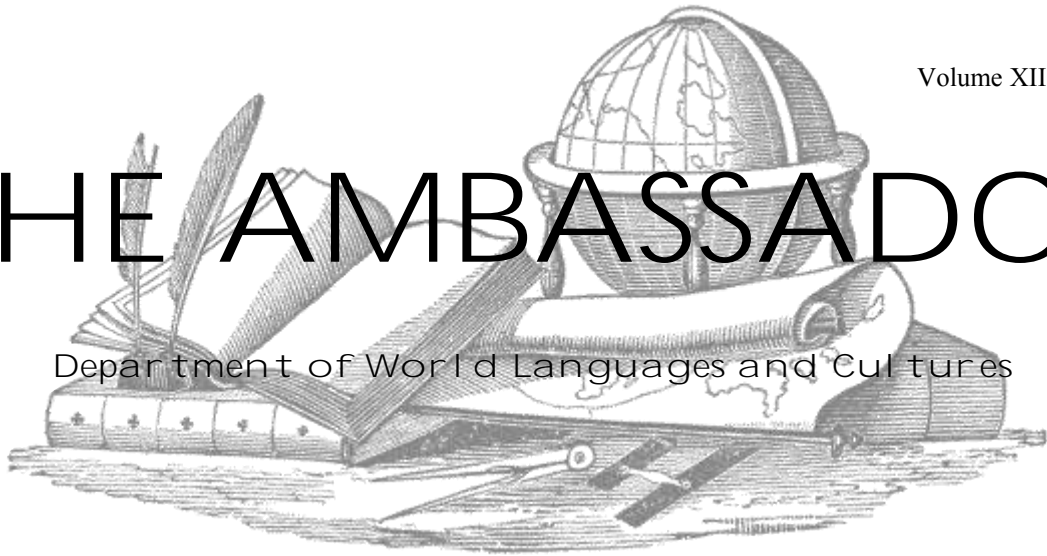


# THE AMBASSADOR

Department of World Languages and Cultures



## Notes from The Chair

### Life after a sabbatical

Well, I'm back, and my sabbatical year is now a dim memory. Two book chapters I wrote (and rewrote!) were accepted for publication in a volume of essays on exemplary women characters in Latin American and Spanish fiction, and a third essay on popular culture and gender is awaiting editorial decision. To write a good article takes a great deal of research and time on the part of the writer. Then comes the waiting period, which can be a few weeks or many months. Once the article is accepted, phase two of waiting begins; the article or book may not actually be published for quite a long time. My article based on a presentation in 2007 came out in 2011. I rewrote in Spanish a presentation I gave in English in 2006, and the book with my essay in it should be out by the end of this year, along with several pieces accepted over two years ago. The

academic life is simultaneously very much in the present, with classes and committees; in the past, with work done long ago suddenly appearing; and in the future, with new writing in progress and proposals pending for conference presentations a year from now. So if I occasionally seem preoccupied or distant, maybe I'm just in a different time zone!

Being back in the classroom is delightful. Teaching is a way to be a perpetual student and still earn a living. It is also a mission, a means of sharing the marvelous world of learning, the world of other cultures and languages. This semester a class of mainly science majors is reading Latin American literature in translation. We began by "finding" Latin America, literally bringing her geography into the students' consciousness. And I'm teaching Brazilian Portuguese, my favorite language (and culture) ever, and over the years I've studied Arabic, French, German, classical Greek, Italian, Latin, and Spanish. *Leve o Brasil no coração!*

**Linda Ledford-Miller**

#### Inside this issue:

- New professors
- Meet the TAs 2011-2012
- Three new GAs
- Upcoming events
- Alumni servicing abroad
- Study trip to Mexico 2012



### Colonial Letters

**Dr. Yamile Silva** presented her research at two international professional meetings: *La situación de Cuba a través de la carta de Ana Mozo de la Torre* (1815) at Asociación For Spanish and Portuguese Historical Studies, held on Portugal in June, and *Las peticiones-merced o los discursos de la retribución en dos cartas coloniales enviadas al Rey de España en el s. XVII* presented at the X Congreso Internacional de Literatura Hispánica in Puerto Rico, in March. Thanks to a Internal Research Grant, she was at the Archivo Histórico Nacional in Spain where she did research for new project. This fall semester, she has worked on two articles on documents she found in that archive.

### Literature and Cinema

**Dr. Virginia Picchietti** presented a paper titled "The Shoah Experience in Italian Youth Literature" at the American Association for Italian Studies Conference in Pittsburgh, PA. In her presentation, Dr. Picchietti discussed the ways in which the Italian Shoah (1938-1945) is represented in Italian literature for young readers. She investigated in particular the techniques authors use to represent the trauma children experienced during the Italian Shoah. The authors typically endeavor to craft a tale that engages without frightening and turning the young reader away from future reading. Dr. Picchietti concluded that the purpose of this literature is in part to help develop an ethical reader who in the future will be socially and politically aware.

At the conference of the American Association of Teachers of Italian held in May in Erice, Sicily, Dr. Picchietti organized and chaired two sessions, titled *Italian Cinema Since 1945*. These sessions included presentations on such topics as the politically-engaged cinema of the post-Fascist era and the Italian thriller of the 1970s.



### From Marbach to Maastricht



**Dr. Jamie Trnka** recently spent a month at the National Literature Archives in Marbach, Germany, as a C.H. Beck Post-Doctoral Fellow. While in Marbach she researched the reception, translation, and publication history of Latin American literature in West Germany. This November she will return to Marbach by invitation of the director to speak about the importance of Pablo Neruda's concept of "impure poetry" for politically inflected literature in German.

She returned to the U.S. in September to speak about socialism and modernity, and as the co-coordinator (with Dr. Marike Janzen) of a series of panels on "Germany's World Literatures" at the Annual Meeting of the German Studies Association.

She is currently on leave and living in Maastricht, The Netherlands, where she is completing work on a book about the aesthetics of solidarity in Cold War East and West Germany. In her free time she is enjoying the opportunity to learn Dutch.

### Presentations, essays, and books

**Dr. Linda Ledford-Miller** had a publication come out, "Literature as History: Two Views on the Massacre of Indigenous Peoples in Guatemala," in *Proceedings of the XIII Congress of FIEALC (the International Federation of Latin American and Caribbean Studies)*. At the invitation of a colleague in Rwanda, she gave a presentation, "Comparative Collaborations: Puebla, Mexico and Kigali, Rwanda," for the panel on "Building Bridges Between Scholarship and Activism to Advance Women's Equality" at Women's World 2011: Inclusions, Exclusions, and Seclusions: Living in a Globalized World, held in Ottawa-Gatineau, Canada, 3-7 July 2011. Prince William and Princess Kate were also in town on holiday.

Due out soon is her essay "The Invention of Woman in *The Last Will and Testament of Senhor Silva da Araujo* by Germano Almeida," in *Africa: Revista trimestrale di studi e documentazione dell'Institutio italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente*, published in Italy. "No hay que disculparse: *A Winter in Central America and Mexico* por Helen J. Sanborn is soon to appear in *Viajeras entre dos mundos* by the Brazilian press, Editorial de la Universidad Federal de Dourados.

Accepted for publication were two book chapters "Gabriela, or Freedom versus Marriage," about the Brazilian Jorge Amado's novel, *Gabriela, Clove and Cinnamon*, and "Jesusa in the Context of Testimonios: Witness to an Age or Witness to Herself?" an analysis of Elena Poniatowska's *Hasta no verte, Jesus mío* for a volume of essays.

## Monika Moyrer, professor of german

As the “new kid on the block”, I would briefly like to introduce myself. Since my graduation in German Studies from the University of Minnesota, I have taught German at various institutions from the Midwest to Virginia and Maine. I am grateful for this experience because I have learned a great deal “on the job” about the diversity of American culture. I am also thankful for having been raised with more than one language. I grew up in a German-speaking minority community in Brasov, the second-largest city in Romania. Later, when living in southwestern Germany, I realized how beneficial the proximity to neighboring countries, such as France, Switzerland, and Austria, is. Since then I have been a supporter of the European idea, even though at the moment one needs idealism to believe in a prosperous future for the European community. Moreover, I have learned to see my own language and culture with a critical distance. In fact, this is what I wish to share with my students in the classroom: my enthusiasm for languages, the richness of history and culture, and the idea that our “own” culture only provides a relative point of view, as there are multiple sides to any ONE image.



My own experiences have triggered many of my teaching interests. Primarily, I am interested in questions of homeland(s) and the literature of ethnic groups living in the diaspora often writing “from the margins.” More recently, my interests have shifted to combining questions of homelessness with experimental aesthetic forms. “Pasting” literature, i.e. collage (rather than traditionally “writing” with a pen) has become a primary focus of my research. These rather visual forms have filtered into my teaching. More importantly, I am not content with traditional academic methods (reading, discussion) alone; rather, I seek possibilities for students to establish meaningful connections to their own lives. In my free time, I travel. Sometimes my journeys take me to foreign destinations, other times, I do rather imaginative voyages, reading books and watching films. At the moment, I still enjoy hiking and can’t wait to explore the wider region of Northeastern Pennsylvania by foot. Anyone care to join me?

## Allison Lai, Visiting Professor of Chinese

About 20 years ago, when I browsing through the newspaper as usual one day, my eyes fell upon a photograph with a woman and a group of children in a shabby, dark room. I read the article and learned a story about a Taiwanese woman who had given up her high-status high-salary job in Taiwan to teach Chinese in Northern Thailand. That was when I became interested in teaching Chinese to foreigners. As a young and idealistic student, I secretly dreamed of myself in this job, hoping one day I could follow her lead.



My first contact with teaching Chinese as a Second Language occurred when I was a college junior, when I undertook training to become a Chinese language teacher in the language centre of Cheng Kung University. Since then, I have been teaching Chinese for more than 15 years. From 2002 to 2005, I was a Chinese Lector in the Faculty of Oriental Studies at Cambridge University, England. After returning to my homeland, I taught Chinese to foreign students at National Kaohsiung Normal University. Later, I applied to graduate school there and received my Master’s degree in Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language in May, 2011.

I always knew one day I would come to the United States and I was lucky enough to be employed as a Chinese instructor in the University of Scranton right after obtaining my M.A. degree. “Love at first sight” can describe my feeling towards Scranton area. I enjoy every moment being here, especially the walk from my house to the office in O’Hara Hall every morning. Where I work now is like a small united nation. It’s amazing that people around the world gather together in the Department of World Languages and Cultures. The Scranton students have strong motivation and are eager to learn. I am so grateful that they are interested in my language, country and culture.

**MEET THE NEW GA'S OF THE WORLD LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT...**

From the left, César Reyes-Mateo, Estefanía González, and Kouji Kimura

Hi, my name is **Kouji Kimura**. I came to the University of Scranton last year as Japanese Teaching Assistant. This academic year, I entered the Graduate School at this university. My major is Secondary Education and Teaching. Now I am a graduate student and I am also in charge of one Japanese course as a GTA. My hobby is taking pictures. If you see a strange person who is eagerly taking pictures on campus, that person must be me. Please don't call 7777! Instead, please tell me of beautiful spots where we can enjoy seeing a wonderful scenery and animals, I mean small animals, not bears. I am often in the Language Learning Center. Please come visit there and enjoy speaking Japanese. I am sure I can help you improve your communication skills in Japanese. However, if you are planning to read and write Japanese naturally, please give me three years. Ha-ha.

¡Hola! I am **César Reyes-Mateo**, from the Dominican Republic. I first came to the US in 1998 as a scholarship recipient from Georgetown University. I received my Associate of Arts degree in American Sign Language Interpreting in the year 2000. I was then employed for five years as a Functional Competency Coordinator at the Hiram G. Andrews Center, in Johnstown, PA. It was there I coordinated life skills activities for the deaf and hard of hearing students. I first came to the University of Scranton during the Fall 2009, and this past summer I obtained my Bachelor of Arts degree in Hispanic Studies with a concentration in Latin American Studies. I am currently pursuing a Master's degree in Secondary Education (Spanish). I have always felt the desire to become a teacher and because of the great professionals I've met along the way at the U of S, my dream is about to come true! My hobbies include dancing merengue, salsa, and bachata; singing; spending time with friends and family; traveling to the Dominican Republic.

My name is **María José Estefanía González Betanco**. I am from Guadalajara, México, the land of Tequila and Mariachi. I completed my undergraduate studies in teaching English as a Foreign Language at La Universidad de Guadalajara and taught EFL to children and adults in my hometown for five years. I first came to the University of Scranton in the 2009 as a Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant. I am pursuing a Master's degree in English as a Second Language. This will be my last year in Scranton. Being here has allowed me to grow professionally and personally in a way that I could have never imagined. My future career goal is to become a language learner trainer and to teach Applied Linguistics in a higher education setting in Mexico or in the United States. Therefore, I am looking forward to continuing my graduate studies in the United States.

**...AND THE NEW TA'S: CULTURES FROM 5 DIFFERENT COUNTRIES**

From the left, Esther Tranchant, Carolina Sánchez, and Keiko Saijo,

Boujour. I am **Esther Tranchant**, the French TA. I come from Etampes, which is an hour South of Paris, where I go to the university. I have a Master in American Literature and I want to be a secondary school English teacher in French secondary schools around the world. I love travelling and discovering new cultures, and I am very happy to spend a year at the University of Scranton. I like writing, painting and playing the piano. And you might see me going around campus taking pictures which is another of my hobbies!

Hola todos! Soy **Carolina Sánchez**, de San Juan, Argentina y soy la Spanish TA 2011-2012. Back home, I am an English teacher and work in different institutions with varied groups: children, teenagers and adults. In each of them, I find something different that keeps me in love with the teaching profession! In my free time, I usually visit my family and friends, or, quite often, spoil my 7 years-old nephew and his 2 years-old sister by taking them to the park and buying them sweets, or toys. I also enjoy reading and listening to music, though, as I am a nature-lover, I much rather do these activities by the dam or the nearby mountains that surround my city. I'd love to help anyone practice their Spanish and learn about Argentinean culture, so, if you are interested, come and see me at the Language Lab on Mondays, Wednesdays or Fridays from 12pm to 1pm. ¡Nos vemos!

Hello there, my name is **Keiko Saijo**. I am the new Japanese teacher of elementary and intermediate Japanese. I am from a part of Northern Japan called the Iwate prefecture, famous for its rice and seafood such as oysters and scallops. It takes about three hours to get there from Tokyo by bullet train. I feel that I am really blessed that I can be here. I enjoy walking around in Scranton and looking at the beautiful sites. I also enjoy teaching my students, as they try to learn hard all the time. It is said that Japanese is difficult to learn compared to French, Spanish and other languages. My teacher showed me the data which is ranked the difficulty of learning languages. When you learn languages closely related to English, such as Italian, French and Spanish you need 575 class hours to become fluent. If you take languages that are exceptionally difficult for native English speakers, such as Chinese, Korean and Japanese you need 2200 class hours! I am very glad that my students are attempting to study a difficult language. Although they are struggling with Japanese now, they will definitely improve in the near future. One of my greatest joys is seeing their progress. I love everything about Scranton, except for one thing. The food is dangerous. It is very delicious and I always eat too much. I have eaten ice cream every day since I came here and now I have an ice cream belly.

## 5th East German Film Festival

November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> will be the dates for the 5<sup>th</sup> East German Film Series. This year's selection features three films that were included in the series "Rebels with a cause. The cinema of East Germany," screened at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City in October of 2005. The title suggests that the films were significant in combining political engagement with artistic innovation, and were rich in theme and style reflecting the energy of inventive filmmakers who dared to test the limits of censorship. The films lend themselves to comparisons especially with the US landmark film *Rebels without a cause* (1955), and invite especially students (but not only) to engage on a deeper level with a different perspective on youth, political engagement, and creativity.

The 'rebel' movies to be shown are: *Berlin-Schönhauser Corner* (Gerhard Klein, 1957), a classic teen cult film which is a perceptive social portrayal of a city in which political and economic division have affected the entire population; *Carbide and Sorrel* (Frank Beyer, 1963), a comedy that takes place at the end of World War II, and deals with the hilarious odyssey of a worker who tries to move supplies through the Soviet occupation zone when he is sent by his coworkers to pick up welding supplies for his factory in Dresden; and *Her Third* (Egon Günther, 1971), an entertaining love story, and a testament to the evolving self-confidence and independence of East German women, through a newly liberated protagonist who discovers herself after two failed relationships, each of which produced a child. Shows will be at 7 pm in Brennan 228 (Pearn Auditorium) with English subtitles.

## A French Play:

### *La farce de Maître Pathelin*

Invited by **Dr. Marzia Caporale**, the Francophone theater group La Chandelle Verte will perform the French classic *La farce de Maître Pathelin* on campus on November 2nd. Le Théâtre de La Chandelle Verte, based in Buffalo, New York, is an alliance of professional artists and scholars from Universities across the United States, dedicated to performing theater in French to audiences nationwide since 2001.

*La Farce de Maître Pathelin* is a fifteenth-century (1465) anonymous comedy which became extraordinarily well-known in its day, and held an influence on popular theatre for over a century. The 5-person play revolves around a clientless lawyer who stages a complicated plot to avoid paying for the clothes he bought for him and his wife from his clothier Guillaume Joceaulme. Pathelin is also called upon to defend the clothier's shepherd who has been stealing and eating Guillaume's sheep. The play ends when Pathelin's trickery in court turns against him as the shepherd uses the lawyer's own deceptive techniques against him and ultimately refuses to pay him for his services. Performances, free and open to the public, will be held at 12:00 and 7:00 pm in the Jefferson Auditorium (Leahy Hall).

## 6th Annual TA Talk/ Luncheon

The Department of World Languages and Cultures will host the 6th Annual TA TALK luncheon event, Tues, Nov. 22 at 11:30am, in Brennan 509. The event features talks by TAs presently in the department: Carolina Sánchez from Argentina, Esther Tranchant from France and Keiko Saijo from Japan, and visiting professor Allison Lai from China.

Funded by a Diversity Initiatives Grant this event presents a unique opportunity to learn about other cultures from the perspective of these enthusiastic young ambassadors. Each will share what is so special to them about their countries. The event is free and open to all but reservations are required. Please contact Marie Karam, Director of the Language Learning Center, at [karamm1@scranton.edu](mailto:karamm1@scranton.edu).

## SEED for El Salvador Has First College Graduate!

Eight years ago José María Ortiz was a bright and dedicated eighth grade student in the remote village of Las Delicias, El Salvador. Due to his family's extreme poverty he would have been unable to attend high school but the SEED (Scholarships to Establish Educational Development) program from the University of Scranton changed that. José not only continued high school but this year he graduated with a college degree in accounting with an almost perfect average! He now works as an accountant but still commutes to the village and lives with his family inspiring other students and helping with community projects. Over the past eight years SEED has annually funded the educational costs and related expenses of over 60 students K - college. These students live in extreme poverty in corrugated metal huts with dirt floors, lack running water and sanitation. In addition they wake up each day to increasing gang and organized crime violence that permeates their existence. SEED believes in the youth of El Salvador. Students like José María who in spite of overwhelming odds struggle to make something of themselves. According to **Marie Karam**, program coordinator, "SEED is changing lives. Young men and women like José María and Albidia, who will graduate from college this year, are proof of this. The cost is little, the results are priceless".

SEED is funded by the purchase of parchment gift certificates with photos of the scholarship recipients and the recipient's name in calligraphy. You can sponsor an elementary age child for \$60 per year. For information please contact Mrs. Karam at [karamm1@scranton.edu](mailto:karamm1@scranton.edu).

## From Scranton to Servicing abroad: two stories



**Julia Kropf and Jose Stella, in Quito, Ecuador.**

While studying for a degree in Management and Hispanic Studies at the University of Scranton I was not exactly preparing myself for a career in teaching; yet for the next year I will be teaching to kids and adults from underprivileged families at The Working Boys' Center, or El Centro del Muchacho Trabajador (CMT), in Quito, Ecuador. I've only completed over a month of service, but the lessons I've already learned are invaluable.

The CMT is a catholic institution founded to help families with working boys to elevate themselves to a better way of life above the poverty line. The truth is that while we in the U.S. recognize child labor as a problem, the people of Ecuador recognize it as a necessity in order to support their families with the income needed to survive. Therefore, the CMT promotes the value of work and takes in families in which there is a working boy.

I first heard about the CMT from a fellow U of S graduate, **Joe Stella**. Joe and I made our commitment to the program after hearing the good things former volunteers had to say. Specifically, the CMT's emphasis on the importance of community. The CMT community operates as a family, which is a concept that I find imperative when trying to implement social change.

I teach six different subjects. When I'm not dealing with the chaos of learning how to teach, implementing discipline, and deciphering the language, I visit the neighborhoods of Quito to recruit families to the CMT and to visit the homes of the poor and the sick. The struggles I've seen are eye-opening and humbling.

During my time in here, I will learn a new culture, and also to appreciate a way of life that revolves around community as opposed to the individual. Furthermore, I know I will never lose the feeling of love that emanates from the smiles on the faces of my students.

**Julia Kropf**



**Members of the Guatemala Trip leaving work .**

As my time at Scranton sadly came to end in May, I had the opportunity to finish my final year as a chaperone for the university's International Service Program's mission trip to San Lucas, Guatemala. Joined by co-chaperone Duante Stanton, Phonathon Manager, and our two Peer Facilitators, **Benjamin Courtney** and **Maria Marx**, we led a group of 10 undergraduate students on what was an incredible experience for all.

Our group spent the Spring semester preparing for our trip with country education meetings, fundraising events, and retreat activities, and departed on June 2 to the Toliman Mission, on the southeastern part of Lake Atitlán. Established in 1962, Fr. Greg Schaffer founded this mission with visions to enhance and enrich the whole person through the promotion of dignity, self-respect, and development. It has been a gradual process, which is demonstrated through the educational, medical, and socioeconomic programs associated with the mission.

During the 10 days that we were in San Lucas, our group not only served as "men and women with and for others," but also learned about the history of the Toliman mission, the oppression faced by the Mayan people during their civil war, and the personal life stories of the inspirational individuals we worked with. The majority of our service consisted of manual labor such as building rebar columns to be used to construct a playground at a Women's Center, carrying boulders and buckets of sand up hills to build walls, and laying bricks to make stoves. We arrived home exhausted each night and ended our days reflecting on all we had seen.

Now transitioning with a wealth of knowledge and gratitude from my Scranton experiences, I am thrilled to report that I will be starting my new journey in October as a Bilingual Elementary School Counselor in Northern NJ.

**Jackie DeFilippis**

## A New Chance to Study in Mexico in 2012

After a one-year hiatus **Robert Parsons** and **Yamile Silva** plan to revive the faculty-led study abroad course to Guadalajara, Mexico in the January 2012 Intersession. The course was last run by Parsons and **Kevin Nordberg** of the Philosophy department in 2010. The three week trip features home stays with Mexican families and courses in Spanish language and Mexican political culture at the Universidad del Valle de Atemajac. The trip also includes a number of interesting excursions in and around the greater Guadalajara area, in the state of Jalisco, including a visit to a traditional Mexican *hacienda* that is now an important tequila farm and factory, and the recently discovered circular pyramids known as Guachimontones. The highlight of the trip is a weekend tour of Mexico City that includes visits to the Chapultepec palace, the Anthropological Museum, and the pyramids of Teotihuacan. 20 students participated in the 2010 trip. January 2012 will be the 14<sup>th</sup> year of the trip. [ <http://www.scranton-guadalajara.com>.]



Participants of a previous trip at the pyramids of Teotihuacan.

Participants of a previous trip at the pyramids of Teotihuacan. 20 students participated in the 2010 trip. January 2012 will be the 14<sup>th</sup> year of the trip. [ <http://www.scranton-guadalajara.com>.]

## Florence 2011, a Study Trip that took place Last Summer



In the photo, from the left, Coleen Long, Catherine Cavazzini, Moire Parkinson, Michelle Cain, Stephanie Lauko, Patrick Jaraique, and Sam Zarro (upper row); Katelyn Darrenkemp, Stephanie Acosta, Bethany Reynolds, and Tim McCormick (lower row), participants in the 2011 Summer Study in Florence, during a cooking class.

In June 2011, **Dr. Marzia Caporale** and **Dr. Virginia Picchiotti** directed the University's annual Summer Study in Florence, Italy, organized in conjunction with the *Istituto Europeo*. Students participating in the program enrolled in language and culture courses, for 3-6 credits. They lived in apartments and enjoyed exploring the city and cooking Italian dishes at home. They participated in cultural activities at the *Istituto Europeo*, and visited the Chianti region, Venice, Rome, and Viareggio.