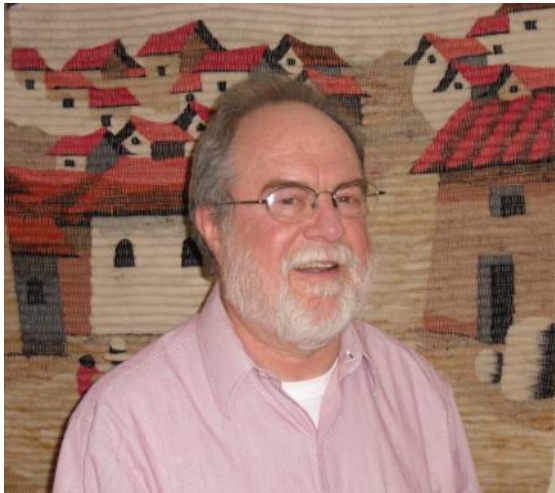


THE AMBASSADOR

Department of World Languages and Cultures



NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

THE AMBIVALENT FEELINGS OF A ONE YEAR EXPERIENCE

During the last several years of my fourteen year tenure (from 1988 to the fall of 1993) as chairperson of the department then known as Foreign Languages and Literatures, I slowly and reluctantly came to the incontrovertible decision that I no longer felt any enthusiasm or passion for the job. I still loved to teach, but the chairperson's duties left me little time for course preparations and made it difficult to concentrate my energies on teaching.

At that time the department was fortunate to have a faculty member in the person of Dr. Linda Ledford-Miller who was both willing and able to assume the chairperson's duties. She has done a wonderful job in the years since then, and when she asked me if I would step in as Acting Chair for one year while she took her sabbatical, I agreed. However, I felt a great deal of apprehension and a bit of anxiety, both because I knew that the job had changed in the intervening years and because I was still not sure that my heart would be in it. Now that my year as Acting Chairperson is nearly over, I can say that I have ambivalent feelings about the experience. On the one hand, I have found genuine pleasure in some aspects of the job, such as working with people I have known for many years in the advising centers and other University offices. I even enjoy attending the monthly CAS Dean's Conference meetings, hearing the perspectives of other department chairpersons and working on issues of concern to departments across the college. On the other hand, I have clearly relearned the limits of my ability to sign a constant stream of papers and to (attempt to) solve problems both serious and trivial; I certainly no longer need anyone to refresh my memory as to why I stepped down eight years ago.

That said, however, I believe I would do it again if asked – perhaps in another life.

Dr. Robert A. Parsons

Inside this issue:

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The Art of Rewriting

Dr. Linda Ledford-Miller is in the second semester of her sabbatical. Some of her former and current students have wondered just what a sabbatical is. From the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*: a period of paid leave granted to a university teacher for study or travel (traditionally one year for every seven years worked).

Professors are evaluated in three areas of activity: teaching, scholarship, and service. What a sabbatical really does is provide a period of rest from the normal, rather frantic, routine of teaching and committees, to allow a professor to focus more specifically and deeply on scholarly pursuits. Professors must propose a project or projects for research and have the sabbatical approved by the administration. To take a full year sabbatical means a reduction in salary, but if time is money, the time is worth it. Life events have provided both burdens and blessings during my sabbatical, but my reading and research has nevertheless gone well. I have ventured into entirely new areas of interest while staying tied to ongoing avenues of investigation. A couple of small publications have come out, including a biography of Laura Esquivel for an edited volume of essays, and just today I received my copy of the journal with my review of *The World of Lucha Libre: Secrets, Revelations, and Mexican National Identity*. I've written and revised and submitted and resubmitted a couple of other essays. Remember what Robert Louis Stevenson said: "And when I say 'writing'--O believe me, it is rewriting that I have chiefly in mind."



Amnesia and Remembrance: The Italian Holocaust

Dr. Virginia Picchietti was invited to give a lecture at Boston University's third-annual commemoration of the Italian Holocaust Remembrance Day. The event, Amnesia and Remembrance, took place on January 30, 2011 and was co-sponsored by the Consulate General of Italy in Boston, the Consulate General of Israel to New England, and the American Jewish Committee of Boston. The commemoration included a screening of Ferzan Ozpetek's award-winning film *Facing Windows*, which features a survivor of the Shoah in modern-day Rome. Dr. Picchietti's lecture, "Memory of the Italian Shoah and Ferzan Ozpetek's *Facing Windows*," discussed the history of the Italian Shoah and the inception of the Italian Holocaust Remembrance Day, and presented questions to consider while viewing Ozpetek's film. Dr. Picchietti also participated in the post-screening discussion, providing a commentary on the film and answering audience questions on the film and on the Italian Shoah.



Building Language Communities Through Puppet Theater

Dr. Habib Zanzana and Graduate Assistant **Jackie DeFilippis** will be presenting a workshop at The American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese on July 2011 in Washington D.C. The workshop is entitled "How to Build Language Communities through Hispanic Puppet Theater."

In addition, Dr. Zanzana was awarded 3 grants in the academic year 2009-2010. The first grant was awarded by the Office of Diversity and Equity. It was used to develop and stage an original learning project that involves the use of puppets to teach Arabic language and culture. Part of the grant was also used to build a Moroccan Sitting Room for the public to enjoy. There was also a Moroccan photo exhibit with more than a dozen pictures taken by Heather Di Paolo, a local artist who traveled in Morocco and the Western Sahara.

The second grant, the Internal Research Grant was awarded to enable Dr. Zanzana to work with Ms. DeFilippis to write an annotated bibliography on Hispanic films dealing with domestic violence. Dr. Zanzana also received a Summer Research Grant to expand the depth of this preliminary research on domestic violence in Contemporary Spanish Cinema. It has enabled him to study gender-based violence in Latin American films in terms of human rights, social responsibility and artistic expression.

THE TOURNÉES FESTIVAL

French Film Festival

Dr. Marzia Caporale organized The University of Scranton's first French Film Festival in the beginning of March. Dr. Caporale comments that, "The Tournées French Film Festival was very well attended and well received. It was wonderful to see that many people from the community attended the films and participated actively in the post-screening discussions. This was a very valuable opportunity to bring French and Francophone culture through film to our campus, and I hope we can continue organizing similar events in the future."

FEATURES LIST



COCO AVANT CHANEL (COCO BEFORE CHANEL)

Anne Fontaine, 2009 / 110 min.

Anne Fontaine's thoughtful exploration of the pre-fame life of the world's greatest fashion designer focuses on Coco Chanel during the *Belle Epoque*. The film opens in 1893 with a powerfully grim scene of 10-year-old Coco and her sister unceremoniously dumped at an orphanage and ends around World War I, a few years before the Chanel empire is launched.



PARIS (PARIS)

Cédric Klapisch, 2007 / 130 min.

In Cédric Klapisch's wistful ensemble film about the City of Light, characters of vastly different backgrounds intersect, providing a sense of the multitudes and complexities contained within one of the world's greatest metropolises. Regardless of whether you've never been to Paris or have visited several times, Klapisch's stunning compositions of the city will inspire you to book a flight to the French capital right away.



LE CHANT DES MARIÉES (THE WEDDING SONG)

Karin Albou, 2007/ 100 min.

In her follow-up to her 2005 debut, *Little Jerusalem*, Karin Albou reveals herself to be a highly gifted, sensitive chronicler of both the complex lives of young women and religious differences. Set in Nazi-occupied Tunis in 1942, *The Wedding Song* focuses on the friendship between teenagers Nour, a devout Muslim celebrating her engagement to Khaled, and her neighbor Myriam, a secular Jew living with her widowed mother.



35 RHUMS (35 SHOTS OF RUM)

Claire Denis, 2008 / 100 min.

Films about families and their complications all too often pierce eardrums with shrieks of dysfunction. Amid the din, Claire Denis's sublime *35 Shots of Rum* stands out all the more for its soothing quiet, conveying the easy, frequently nonverbal intimacy between a widowed father and his university-student daughter.



LA BELLE PERSONNE (THE BEAUTIFUL PERSON)

Christophe Honoré, 2008 / 88 min.

Loosely based on *La Princesse de Clèves*, Madame de Lafayette's 1678 novel about forbidden passions and unrequited love among the aristocracy, Christophe Honoré's pleasingly tart *La Belle Personne* plays like a Gallic Gossip Girl. Honoré's wry look at teenage lust and bad adult behavior, filled with dark love songs by Nick Drake, is a pitch-perfect exercise in mood and style, completely besotted with the beauty of its comely cast.

SEMINAR BY AUTHOR YOKO TAWADA AND TRANSLATOR BETTINA BRANDT IN REGARDS TO THE GERMAN TRAVEL WRITING COURSE

The University of Scranton will host esteemed Japanese author Yoko Tawada as well as comparatist and translator Bettina Brandt on April 6-7, 2011. Their visit is planned in conjunction with Dr. Trnka's course on German Travel Writing, and will entail both a seminar for students who will have read and discussed Tawada's work as well as a literary reading and discussion open to the community. Yoko Tawada, born in Tokyo in 1960, has lived in Hamburg and Berlin since 1982. She has written and published award winning plays, novels, stories, and essays in Japanese and German, and the work has been translated into dozens of languages. Among her prizes are the Akutawaga Prize, the Adelbert von Chamisso Prize, the Tanizaki Prize, and the Goethe Medal.

Brandt, who has worked closely with Tawada as her research assistant and Dutch translator, will speak on the challenges of translating multilingual authors such as Tawada. She is also the recipient of numerous prestigious awards and fellowships, including the National Endowment for the Humanities Faculty Research Fellowship. Furthermore, she has held teaching appointments at Harvard, Columbia, MIT, and Montclair State University, and currently teaches at Pennsylvania State University's main campus in State College. The planned seminar will enable students enrolled in the course to engage directly with the author of their course reading "Where Europe Begins," a fascinating story of movement from Japan across Siberia, the former Soviet Bloc, and toward Western Europe which ultimately questions the integrity of geographic and cultural boundaries between Asia and Europe.

Annual Teacher Workshop

The Department of World Languages and Cultures regularly sponsors the World Language Teacher Workshop for all area world language teachers. This year, Tuesday, May 10 from 9am -2pm at the University of Scranton, former national president of the American Council on Teaching Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Eileen Glisan will be the principal workshop presenter. Ms. Glisan is also co-author of the most widely used text for teaching methods to foreign language teachers *Teacher's Handbook: Contextualized Language Instruction*.

Professor Marie Karam is the Director of the Language Learning Center, as well as the Methods Instructor. She works with the future world language teachers at the University of Scranton and is the coordinator of the annual spring workshop for area teachers. Included in this workshop are the University of Scranton Teaching Assistants; the TAs of the 2010-2011 academic year come from Argentina, China, France and Japan..

Hispanic Puppet Show

The tentative title for the first Hispanic puppet show is *The Legend of Moctezuma and the Five Mighty Suns: The Resurrection of the Aztec Empire*. The entire cast will be made up of the extremely talented students from the University of Scranton Spanish courses, who will participate in a unique theatrical production. The story will take place in ancient Mexico and features historical figures, mighty Aztec gods, the Aztec calendar, and wild creatures such as tigers, sacred snakes, magical potions, and a fantastic denouement. The show will include dialogue in Spanish and Nahuatl, an indigenous language, and possibly a few lines in Arabic as well.

The puppet show will be performed by students at The University of Scranton and will include songs, dance, mythical creatures and gods, and the participation of children. Be sure to attend and mark your calendars for May 6th, 4 p.m. at the Moskovitz Theater. This highly interactive event is sure to be a great success !

THE WORLD THROUGH THE EYES OF OUR TEACHING ASSISTANTS

From the left, Prof. Marie Karam, Kouji Kimura, Cecilia Launat, Guan Wen, and Ennio Navarta

The Teaching Assistants in the Department of World Languages and Cultures presented the annual Teaching Assistants Talk /Dinner on Wednesday, March 16 in Brennan 509. This event was coordinated by Prof. Marie Karam, Director of the Language Learning Center and was funded by a University of Scranton Diversity Initiatives Grant. The TA Talk/Dinner provided a unique opportunity for both the campus community and area educators to increase their awareness and appreciation of other cultures. Ennio Navarta (Argentina), Cecilia Launat (France), Guan Wen (China) and Kouji Kimura (Japan) shared presentations on what makes their countries so special to them.

The first to present was Ennio, who took the audience throughout a journey to different places in Argentina, where they learned about foods and drinks such as *asado* and *mate* which represents friendship. Ennio focused on the beauty of the scenery and nature in Argentina. He explained that the seasons in his country differ from the United States. For instance, while it is winter here it is summer in Argentina. After Ennio spoke, Wen discussed the Chinese culture with us. Wen shared interesting facts about China; for instance, its population of 1.3 billion people and 20 million in Beijing alone. She also mentioned that the Great Wall is 5,500 miles long. Wen also discussed prominent figures in Chinese history such as Confucius and showed the audience the Forbidden City with its unique architecture.

Kouji spoke then with sadness about the effects of the recent earthquake in Japan. "I feel sorry for the earthquake that occurred, but thankfully my family is okay", he said. Despite the unfortunate events, Kouji spoke lightheartedly regarding life in Japan. He showed us photos of his favorite foods, photos of his family and of his life as a student. Kouji also explained cultural traditions such as taking off shoes before entering someone's home. In addition, he discussed some of the stereotypical aspects of the Japanese culture that most Americans are familiar with. For instance, samuri, anime, sushi, Nokia, Toyota. This was followed by a roar of laughter from the audience members. Cecilia also discussed some of the stereotypes about French culture. She pointed to a photo of a French man wearing a beret as well as a striped red and white shirt. The man was smoking while riding a bicycle with a baguette and wine in his bag. "This is not France," Cecilia said. Let me show you France. As Cecilia showed the audience photos of famous monuments, she also shared with us interesting facts. "Did you know that there are more tourists in France than French people?", she asked. In fact, there are 81 million tourists every year while the population of French residents is 64 million.

FAREWELL TO THE LANGUAGE LEARNING CENTER GRADUATES



Bonjour tout le monde! I'm **Bill Woody**, a senior working in the Language Lab and I'll be graduating this May. While at the University of Scranton, I majored in Theology and Philosophy with a minor in French and a concentration in Catholic Studies. I was also a member of the SJLA program and the University Honors Program. I began working in

at the Language Learning Center as a French and Latin tutor in my freshman year, though I just recently returned to work here this semester. In addition to French and Latin, I also have a reading knowledge of Ancient Greek. This August I will enter the Jesuit Novitiate in Syracuse, NY, and will be ordained a priest in eleven years. I hope to continue my studies in French and Latin, though I will begin to study other languages as well. As part of the formation process, Jesuit novices study Spanish and later live in Bolivia for language immersion. I will also pursue graduate studies in philosophy and theology, and begin to study German. I'll miss the rest of the seniors working here, Professor Karam, and Joyce, my French professor, Dr. Caporale, and Habib for their help and efforts.



I'm **Colleen Adams** and during my time here, I majored in International Language Business. As part of my major I studied two foreign languages: Italian and Spanish. I anticipate on attending graduate school after graduation. I've had an amazing experience working at the LLC these past four years and it saddens me that I

will be leaving there soon. I met some of my closest friends while working at the LLC, and I'm happy to say that they are all people who I'll remain in contact with for a long time. I have several ideas of how I will keep up with my foreign language skills. For example, I love listening to music in both Italian and Spanish so that will assist me in the long run. I also love to read, and I already have the Italian version of several books such as Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone. I would like to thank the entire faculty and staff at the LLC. Without them, my work experience wouldn't have been as great. Most of all, I want to thank Professor Karam from the bottom of my heart. She's always been there for everyone and she has a heart of gold. I will definitely miss everyone.



Hi! My name is **Katherine Bowen**. This spring I will be graduating from the University of Scranton with a bachelors in Secondary Ed. English. I am currently having a wonderful time teaching the freshman and junior English students of Scranton High School and am looking forward to a career

in the teaching profession, although I definitely plan to go back to school for my masters. Teaching the ESL students of Scranton High has opened my eyes to a new academic area that I would love to explore. I started at the University four years ago as a Secondary Ed. Spanish major, and because of this was able to meet all of the wonderful people of third floor O'Hara. I would like to thank Professor Karam, the language professors, and my fellow staff members for being so supportive.



I'm **Anna Nakonechny** and I majored in International Studies, minored in Spanish, with a Latin American Studies concentration. I speak Spanish, Italian, and some German. After I graduate I will start a job in June at TransPerfect Translations in New York City.

The bonds I have made with the people here at the Language Learning Center are invaluable. We are a family at the LLC and I have always felt at home here through the years, meeting such interesting people from all over the world. In the future, I plan on traveling with my job and practicing my languages with every chance I get! I will miss everyone!! The years fly, and I wish I could take these people with me wherever I go. Thank you all for four, fun-filled years I will never forget!

(LLC Farewell, continues in page 7)

A letter from Alumni Tyler Nye

Tyler Nye is a 2010 graduate of the University of Scranton. He received his degree in Secondary Education, Latin, & Spanish with a Latin American Studies Concentration.

Greetings all at O'Hara Hall! Having studied in Il bel paese my sophomore year, I was overjoyed to have the opportunity to organize and lead a study tour to Italy for 21 of my high school's Greek and Latin students during mid-winter break this year -all of this during my first year of teaching! The trip consisted of 9 days

and seven nights surveying archeological sites in and around the cities of Rome and Naples. We visited the Roman Forum, Coliseum, the Vatican, Villa Borghese, the ancient city of Ostia, and the catacombs in the Rome region and then traveled south to visit the lost Roman city of Pompeii and Emperor Tiberius' Villa on the Island of Capri. After 9 days of non-stop eating in Italy, I returned, jet-lagged, to teach Spanish and Latin at my high school in the suburbs of West Hartford, Connecticut. I am thoroughly enjoying my first year and am currently researching master's programs for Spanish Language and Literature in the Hartford area.



Nye, with his students in the Forum of Pompeii with Mt. Vesuvius in the back.

**A letter from Joe Rubino**

Since my Graduate Assistantship in the World Language and Culture Department, I have moved from the Scranton area to North Carolina. It has been an exciting experience, with a lot less snow. After graduating in May 2010, I was offered a position in the Federal Bureau of Prisons as a Recreation Specialist. I am currently running recreation programs for a diverse population of inmates. My training at The University of Scranton prepared me for this career. I received a MS in counseling and use these skills every day I set foot in the institution. I am trying to help inmates make the right choice and become productive members of society upon their release from prison. We can all make a difference in this world, we just need to use the gifts and talents God gave us. I pray that everyone has good luck in their career choices and finds a career that makes them happy.



(LLC Farewell, continued from previous page)

Hi I'm **Carolann Trotta**. As an International Language Business Italian major at the University of Scranton, I have had a lot of good experiences here and met some amazing people. Every year we had a great group of TA's from all around the globe who teach us that friendship knows no language barrier. The staff at the LLC have become like family for me over the past four years, and will be missed. I would also like to thank Professor Karam for her kind and encouraging words. Upon graduation, I wish to pursue a career in the international business industry, either in fashion or marketing. I speak English and Italian and am currently working on French. I would really like to take another trip to Europe before it's time for the real world to begin!



A letter from Shen Chen, former Chinese TA

Back in China, I recall my life in the U.S and sometimes have an illusion that it was all a dream. It was as if I had never been to Scranton! It was very interesting that I was not the only one who had this feeling. Other Fulbright TAs shared the same feeling when they came back to China. We jokingly called that our "American Dream". But people from Scranton keep reminding me that my experience is not a dream at all. Dr. William Parente, my political science professor, keeps me updated with what is happening on campus such as the new science building erected at the St. Thomas parking lot and the University commencement. He also sends me The Aquinas newsletter by mail. Dr. Ledford-Miller continues to help me with my questions, as she always did while I was in Scranton, only this time by email. Joyce also tells me about the new TAs in the department and how she enjoys learning about other countries and cultures.

My Scranton story continues when Allison and Mattie came to China for The Beijing Center Program to learn Chinese in the fall of 2010. They were my "baby students" taking Elementary Chinese while I was in the U.S. from the fall semester of 2008. After my program was over in May 2009, they went on to learn Chinese for another year with a new TA. Then they decided to further their study and that's how our reunion took place at my apartment in Beijing in October of 2010! I was expecting my baby in less than a month then. Allison brought me the baby socks and a bib with the University logo all the way from Scranton! Amy, a graduate from the University who used to take my Intermediate Chinese course, came to Beijing for travel and stayed at my place for a week. She was doing her Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship Program in Macau then and took her time off to visit some "landmark" places in Beijing like the Imperial City, the Great Wall, the Bird's Nest stadium for 2008 Olympic Games, etc. We talked about her culture shock coming to China as well as my reverse culture shock when I came back from the U.S.

Now with my baby girl coming to the world, my life has come into a brand new stage. Being a mom is challenging and painstaking, but indeed rewarding. Among the congratulations of the birth of my baby, Janet Upton's was especially funny. She is the officer of IIE Beijing and she hoped to see the baby at a Fulbright interview in less than 30 years from now. I'm not sure of that, but one thing I'm sure of is that my baby will visit Scranton one day to see how this nice place has made her mom a stronger and more optimistic person before her coming.



A letter from Hiba Al-Nasser, former Arabic TA

Hello to everyone in the World Languages Department! I just wanted to update you all on what I have been up to since I left Scranton. After I got back to Jordan I started working as a Business Development manager with ArabiCollege: a virtual college that teaches Arabic to non-native speakers through 24/7 online live classes. As a result of being a Fulbrighter and cultural ambassador in Scranton, in September 2010, I started my own small business – S'mores. I make and serve the famous American campfire dessert, which I first encountered when I was in the United States. Not many people in Jordan know this dish, so I saw an opportunity to share part of the American culture with Jordanians. The S'mores brand was first launched at the Amman Food Festival and it was a huge success. This was a dream come true for me. I thank all my friends in Scranton who introduced this cultural dish to me. I feel so happy that I am doing this because it reminds me of the awesome, unforgettable times I had in Scranton. I have also recently taken steps to create a positive change in my community. After completing market research, I concluded that the city of Irbid (my hometown) lacks a place for people to gather in a pleasant environment and

for home-based business to market products and share creativity. Therefore, I plan to organize a weekly bazaar and I am currently working closely with different governmental agencies, business owners, and other potential stakeholders to make this plan a reality. Thank you University of Scranton! Being a Fulbrighter has been empowering!