



the anecdote

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH, COMPARATIVE LITERATURE, AND LINGUISTICS

Message from the Chair

In my first semester as Department Chair, I've been reminded time and again of the importance of those who came before me. Perhaps this is a relatively obvious point to raise with scholars of English, who've dedicated years of their lives to studying literature of the past and thinking about its relevance to the present, yet I think a parallel can be drawn between this understanding of literary history and the history of our department. As we move forward—hiring new faculty members, teaching new students, hosting conferences and events—we rely upon the faculty, students, and staff who came before us to help us chart the course.

Thanks to the wonderful generosity of our alumni, for example, we will be hosting our first writer-in-residence next semester! David Hernandez, the 2011 recipient of the NEA Literature Fellowship in Poetry, is the author of three books of poetry and two young adult novels. In addition to teaching an intermediate creative writing course, Mr. Hernandez will run a series of workshops for students and alumni during his tenure as Writer-in-Residence. On April 13, he will treat us all to a poetry reading at the 2013 Annual Alumni Event, to be held at the Golleher Alumni House on campus.

From studying abroad in Ireland, to documenting an indigenous language of Oaxaca, to gathering career advice from alumni, this issue of our department newsletter showcases the rich interplay between the achievements and support of our alumni and the ambitions and success of our students. I'd like to end this message by thanking my most recent predecessor, Sheryl Fontaine who, as chair, was a relentless advocate for the department, working hard to maintain the excellence of our programs in the face of devastating budget cuts. I look forward to continuing her work strengthening our relationship with our alumni. Most of us, after all, are sailing courses that have been charted by those who've gone before. To succeed, students of English, Comparative Literature, and Linguistics don't just need the scholars and authors who preceded them, they need the students who preceded them, too.



Spring 2013 Featured Courses

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| ◇ Comparative Literature 324
<i>World Literature to 1650</i>
Dr. Yichin Shen
MW at 1:00 p.m. | ◇ English / Comp. Lit. 355T
<i>Images of Women in Literature</i>
Dr. J. Chris Westgate
MW at 1:00 p.m. |
| ◇ English 105
<i>Introduction to Creative Writing</i>
Dr. Stephen Westbrook
TTH at 2:30 p.m. | ◇ English 373
<i>Science Fiction</i>
Dr. David Kelman
TTH at 2:30 p.m. |
| ◇ English 327
<i>Asian American Literature</i>
Dr. Yichin Shen
M at 4:00 p.m. | ◇ Linguistics 106
<i>Language and Linguistics</i>
Dr. Patricia Schneider-Zioga
MW 1:00 p.m. |
| ◇ English 331
<i>Shakespeare on Film</i>
Dr. Ellen Caldwell
TTH at 11:30 a.m. | ◇ Linguistics 412
<i>Sociolinguistics</i>
Dr. Franz Mueller
MW 1:00 p.m. |
| ◇ English / Comp. Lit. 345T
<i>Harry Potter</i>
Dr. Erin Hollis
TTH at 2:30 p.m. | ◇ Linguistics/English 442
<i>Changing Words</i>
Dr. Natalie Operstein
TTH 11:30 a.m. |

Inside these pages:

<i>Faculty Spotlight</i>	2
<i>Staff Profile: Diane Costello</i>	3
<i>Student Focus: Lauren Bailey</i>	3
<i>Faculty in Action</i>	4
<i>Students in Action</i>	5
<i>Linguistics: Documenting a Language</i>	5
<i>Study Abroad</i>	6
<i>Alumni Panel</i>	7
<i>Creative Writing Night</i>	7

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Natalie Operstein



Natalie Operstein joined the Department of English, Comparative Literature, and Linguistics as an Assistant Professor of Linguistics in the summer of 2011. Her research focuses on the interplay between theoretical and historical linguistics, with emphasis on phonology, and is interdisciplinary in nature; and her teaching is geared towards stimulating students' interest in a variety of linguistic phenomena. She is also active in the scientific community, organizing conferences, conference sessions and workshops, and editing collective monographs.

Operstein became interested in linguistics after having studied several major Romance languages such as French, Italian, and Spanish while still in her teens. The striking similarities between these languages spurred her interest in comparative-linguistic issues. Meanwhile, she was acquiring knowledge of a large number of other ancient and modern languages, laying the foundation for her future interdisciplinary research work. A combination of large amounts of cross-language data and theoretical-linguistic frameworks led her to the discovery of a new phonological phenomenon, consonant prevocalization, and a new model of consonant structure. Her monograph, which opened John Benjamins' catalog on theoretical linguistics in the spring

of 2010, supports her theory of consonant prevocalization and intrasegmental structure with data from over 150 languages and dialects.

While a graduate student at UCLA, Operstein participated in the Project for the Documentation of Languages of Mesoamerica. This provided her with an extensive fieldwork experience, and spurred her interest in Mesoamerican linguistics. Combined with her interest in the historical reconstruction of proto-languages, this led her to the first published reconstruction of personal pronouns in Proto-Zapotec, the hypothetical ancestor of the Zapotec languages of Mexico. After becoming an expert in the field, she made contributions to the historical Zapotecan linguistics and the study of contact between the indigenous languages and Spanish. She is currently co-editing a collective monograph on Zapotecan linguistics for a major publisher, and is bringing an International Conference on Mesoamerican Linguistics to CSUF.

Operstein's familiarity with different languages and language families also led to her interest in language contact and the formation of pidgins and creoles. She conducted a major study of the impact of second language acquisition on contact languages like Lingua Franca. That work has led her to more general issues of language evolution, and she is currently working on developing an integrated model of contact and genetic linguistics aimed to resolve a series of long-standing issues in this area.

In her teaching, Operstein aims at spurring students' interest in linguistics and providing them with necessary knowledge and skills. In her undergraduate classes, she emphasizes clarity of theoretical concepts, illustrating them with carefully selected data from a variety of languages, and introduces her students to interesting linguistic and cultural phenomena. In graduate classes, she focuses on building students' research skills while stimulating independent and critical thinking, and strives to deliver instructional quality on par with the leading linguistics schools. She encourages and facilitates student research by suggesting research topics, providing publication opportunities, monitoring students' progress, and supporting students with RA-ships whenever possible. She also involves students in scientific community activities, such as reviews of scholarly books and participation in the organization of an international conference.

Natalie holds a Ph.D. from UCLA, publishes in several areas of linguistics, and presents her research at national and international linguistics conferences. She has taught over 60 undergraduate and graduate classes at UCLA, University of Pittsburgh, University of Iowa, University of Sonora, and CSUF. In addition to her major hobby – linguistics – she is a voracious reader and a fitness enthusiast. In 2006, she was profiled in the program “Men and Women of the World” on KCLA-FM radio in Los Angeles.

Carolyn Houston



By Maria Figueroa

Born and raised in Southern California, Carolyn Houston has devoted her life to educating generations of Californians inside and outside of CSUF. She was interested in educating not only students, but also future educators. Houston made an impact on students both in the classroom, through her role as an administrator, and as a meta-teacher.

Soon after she received her B.A., she began teaching at Western High School in Anaheim. While she loved teaching, she also loved the administrative aspect of education. She became Assistant Principal of Kennedy High School in Anaheim in the early 1990s. Then in 1995 she became Principal of South Jr. High School, also in Anaheim. In addition to these administrative roles, Houston served as the Language Arts curriculum administrator for Anaheim Union High School District for seven years where she worked with English teachers, worked on curriculum cycles, and selected textbooks. Her final role as an education administrator was as the Principal of Anaheim's Oxford Academy from 2003 until her retirement in 2006.

Her career at CSUF began in the 1990s, supervising future English teachers. She enjoyed the experience so much that upon her retirement from Oxford Academy, she started working for CSUF's English Education Program. She currently teaches the English Education Internship where she continues to influence the field of education. She loves her continued contact with students and with schools. Her role of preparing future teachers keeps her informed about what is happening in the county and the field of English Education.

When not working at CSUF, Houston travels with her husband, Tom. They enjoy visiting Napa Valley and playing golf. They often visit Madrid, their favorite city. Houston is a voracious reader who enjoys a variety of genres but favors espionage novels. She is drawn to Spanish writers like Isabel Allende, María Dueñas, and Carlos Ruiz Zafón. She is expecting her first grandchild next year.

Carolyn received her B.A., English and History from CSULB in 1969. She then completed her M.A. in 1974 in Education Administration also at CSULB. In 1988 she received her Administrative Credential from Pepperdine University. Carolyn also completed Harvard's Principal's Academy.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Lauren Bailey



By Michelle Greer

If you've never met a superhero before, it might be time to meet CSUF undergraduate Lauren Bailey. While Lauren politely denies having any secret lair or superhuman strength, her track record here at CSUF is pretty much out of this world.

Lauren is currently working on the last year of her undergraduate English degree while also in the process of applying to twenty-three doctoral programs for continued study in English. In addition to finishing her degree, Lauren spends her time as the CSUF Chapter President of Sigma Tau Delta, the international English honor society, is an active member of CSUF's Creative Writing Club, ACACIA Club, and is a Project Manager for the campus Volunteer Service Center.

ager for the campus Volunteer Service Center.

With such a long list of current activities and projects under way, it becomes even more impressive that Lauren remains a positive, enthusiastic, and motivated member of the university's community. In her very first semester as President of Sigma Tau Delta, Lauren organized an inter-disciplinary conference held on campus in November 2012, open for all university students or community members interested in discussing topics of popular culture.

Her dedication and focus, however, don't stop there; after only her first year as a transfer student at CSUF, Lauren was awarded with numerous scholarships to acknowledge her successful studies including the Kimberly Anne Holloway Memorial Scholarship, the Virginia McGarvey Memorial Scholarship, and the Sally Casanova Predoctoral Scholarship, which she was the only undergraduate from CSUF to receive. Lauren hopes to gain from these awards the opportunity to achieve her dream: to become a university professor of Victorian Literature and Women's Studies. Let's all wish her luck, though I hardly think she'll need it.

Diane Costello

By Amber Tavasolian

Anyone who frequents the English, Comparative Literature, and Linguistics Department is familiar with eleven-year administrative veteran Diane Costello. The Graduate Secretary and Administrative Support Assistant position is one that puts Diane in direct interaction with many of the students and faculty, but other than the witty banter that seems to be her signature trait, Diane remains rather enigmatic.

As graduate secretary, Diane works as the self-proclaimed "mommy to lost souls," referring to new student hires in the Writing Center, graduate students in the Teaching Associate program, and any anxious students who wander into the department looking for help.

Many may not know that Diane worked in several temporary positions around campus before finding a home in our department. When asked about her decision to make her position with us more permanent she stated, "I needed a job where I felt like I'd fit in." As well as being an invaluable asset to the department, Diane is also an avid reader of murder-mystery novels and an amateur experimental cook.

In her spare time she enjoys watching cooking shows and attempting to recreate the recipes on her own, in her words "with extremely limited success. But I keep trying!" Diane also mentioned her favorite dish is rack of lamb, which may be useful knowledge to anyone with late timesheets.

SIGMA TAU DELTA HOSTS THE FAR WESTERN REGIONAL CONFERENCE

Popular Culture and the Written Word



By Amber Tavasolian

This semester CSUF's chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, an international English honor society, contended with Pepperdine University to host the

Far Western Regional Conference. Lauren Bailey, the president of the CSU Fullerton chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, succeeded in bringing the regional event to campus.

Bailey bashfully admitted "I wanted to put CSUF more prominently on the academic map, so to speak." When asked further about her reasons for lobbying for the conference, she stated, "I wanted the students of our campus to have a conference that was accessible for individuals that hadn't attended conferences before as well as to bring a conference to our



campus that is by its very nature interdisciplinary."

The title of the conference, "Popular Culture and the Written Word," encouraged students from a variety of academic fields to examine popular trends in culture, past and present, through an assortment of texts. Keynote speakers Dr. Amy Coplan, Associate Professor of Philosophy, and Brande Jackson, Lecturer in American Studies, helped to foster the interdisciplinary camaraderie while providing insight into the significance of cultural response to popular visual and literary texts.

The event took place Friday, November 30th and Saturday, December 1st, and featured panels addressing the representation of such topics as Postcolonial and Derridian readings of *Doctor Who* as well as a feminist reading of Liz Lemon, and an examination of Batgirl's trauma. When asked about the goals of conducting

an event with a focus on popular culture, the organization's vice president, Sierra Tavasolian, said, "we hoped to introduce first-time presenters to an approachable conference experience while also providing an intellectual and academic setting to network among their colleagues." Fellow conference committee planner Maryellen Diotte shared similar sentiment stating, "We hope to encourage burgeoning academics to engage in a conversation with other scholars; and also, to open a door to an arena of academics that most undergraduates wouldn't necessarily see otherwise." The success of this semester's conference foretells student interests in such events and will, we hope, lead to more conferences like it.



FACULTY IN ACTION



Professor Reads From New Book of Poetry

By Amber Tavasolian

On Friday, August 31, 2012, Dr. Irena Praitis read pieces from her latest collection of poems, *Straws and Shadows*, published by Irvine-based Moon Tide Press. Hosted by the Huntington poetry group Tebot Bach, the reading was held at Golden West College in Huntington Beach.

Straws and Shadows was inspired in part by interviews Praitis conducted with her grandmother, a native of Lithuania, while working on her last book, *One Woman's Life*. The poems in *Straws and Shadows* are set in Lithuania just before the outbreak of World War II, and although many of the voices in the book are imagined, the poems are inspired by events occurring during the Nazi occupation of Lithuania between June 22, 1941 and January 28, 1945.

While interviewing her grandmother, Dr. Praitis was moved by the tragic events that pitted the community of Lithuanian citizens against one another as they tried to survive the Nazi occupation. She wrote the book, she says, to try and understand what an individual would do in such dire circumstances. "When someone is pointing a gun at your head, where do you stand? What choices do you make?" she said in an interview, describing questions the book seeks to answer. In her poems, Praitis explores the complexities of human experience in order to better facilitate connectivity and empathy through literature.

The book is, she says, "a call to empathy all around. That is what literature does, and that's why it is so important. As long as we're at a distance we remain complacent and literature invites us to connect to others and empathize."

Former Chair Promoted to Associate Dean

By Amber Tavasolian

Sheryl Fontaine, formerly the Chair of the Department of English, Comparative Literature, and Linguistics, became Associate Dean of Administration for the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at the start of the Fall 2012 semester.

Dr. Fontaine's new position entails similar responsibilities to those she had as Chair, such as supervising staff, working with faculty on topics like advising and assessment, and monitoring class enrollment, but on a much larger scale—for the entire College of Humanities and Social Sciences.

Serving in the Dean's office, she said in a recent interview, means constantly responding to new challenges. "The work is whatever walks in the door," she said quoting former Dean Tom Klammer. "Each day will ultimately do what it wants."

Although she has quickly adapted to her new role as Associate Dean, she still holds the department fondly in her heart. "It was my academic home, to use the tired metaphor, for the last twenty-three years."

Still, things aren't that different. Dr. Fontaine will still be teaching "Writing Through Paris," in Paris, France during the January, 2013 Intersession.

And like all university positions, the Dean's office ultimately exists for the students. After all, Dr. Fontaine says, "everything we do here [in administration] is about student development. It's all about making the good university even better."



Publications

Cornel Bonca

"Rethinking 'Cosmopolis'" *Los Angeles Review of Books*, 2012

David Kelman

Counterfeit Politics: Plots and Conspiracy Narratives in the Americas Bucknell University Press, 2012

"To the Side of the Day: Comparison without Comparison in Pynchon (and...)." *Mosaic: A Journal for the Interdisciplinary Study of Literature*.

Natalie Operstein

"Semantic classification of positional verbs in Zaniza Zapotec." Expressing Location in Zapotec. Munich: Lincom Europa, 2012.

With William Banks. Review of Braunmüller, Kurt and Juliane House (eds.). 2009. *Convergence and Divergence in Language Contact Situations*. Hamburg Studies on Multilingualism 8. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins. *Journal of Historical Linguistics* 2 (2012)

With Amber Clontz. Review of Kortmann, Bernd and Benedikt Szmrecsanyi (eds.). 2012. *Linguistic Complexity: Second Language Acquisition, Indigenization, Contact*. *linguae & litterae* 13. Berlin: De Gruyter. *Linguist List*, December 2012.

With Allyson Walker. Review of Parth Bhatt & Tonjes Veenstra (eds.). *Creoles and Typology*. *Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages* 26:1 (2011). *Journal of Historical Linguistics* 2 (2012)

Irena Praitis

Straws and Shadows
Moon Tide Press, 2012

Jason Taylor

The Little Book of Don'ts
Herschel Greenberg, 2012

Presentations

Lana Dalley

Presented "'Mother's Mercy': Economic and Familial Networks in *Mary Barton*." North American Victorian Studies Association Conference, University of Wisconsin at Madison, September 2012

David Kelman

Presented "Politics as Translation: Following Benjamin in Martínez's *Santa Evita*." Conference title: "Critical Speculations - Future Worlds, Perilous Histories, and Walter Benjamin Unbound." University at Albany (SUNY), September 28-29, 2012

Natalie Operstein

Presented "Selected Aspects of Consonant Prevocalization." Linguistics Colloquium, California State University Fresno, 18 October 2012

Presented "Valence and Verb Classes in Zapotec." American Indian Seminar, UCLA, 20 November 2012

Presented "Valence Changes in Zapotecan Languages." American Indian Seminar, UCLA, 14 May 2012

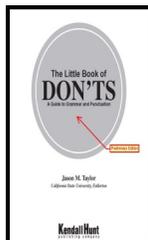
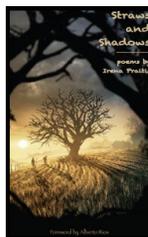
Presented "Typology and Diachrony: on the Origin of the Zapotec Causative Prefix *k-." American Indian Seminar, UCLA, 10 January 2012.

Chris Ruiz-Velasco

Presented "Walter Mosley and Chester Himes: Race and Space" at the Pacific Ancient and Modern Language Association Conference hosted by Seattle University, 19-21 October 2012

Patricia Schneider-Zioga

Presented "Agreement and the vP in Kinande" at an African Linguistic Workshop hosted by the University of Missouri, Summer 2012



STUDENTS & ALUMNI

ALUMNI

Bryant Brislin— (B.A. '09) received the Larry Webb Leadership Award from the Orange County/Inland Empire chapter of the Urban Land Institute, a prestigious award that honors emerging land use and real estate professionals under the age of thirty-five.

Christine Hernandez— (B.A. '09) received the Standing Committee for Multicultural Affairs Outstanding New Professional Award and the Standing Committee for Women's Outstanding Emerging Professional Award from the American College Personnel Association.

Corrine Jackson— (M.A., '08) *If I Lie* featured by The Veterans History Project in their booth at the National Book Festival on the National Mall in Washington, D.C.

Rick Kempton— (B.A. '74) is the new superintendent of the Annapolis Area Christian School in Severn, Maryland.

Tony Ortega— (B.A. '87 M.A. '89) Recipient of the 2012 CSUF Vision and Visionaries Award.

STUDENTS

Lauren Bailey — 2012/13 Sally Casanova Pre-Doctoral Fellow

Rocio Prado— 2012 CSUF Graduate Equity Program Scholarship.

2012 JEVID Scholarship Recipients

Lauren Bailey	Pavel Grichine	Paula Reed
Lisa Baker	Corrie Harb	Alyse Reyneveld
Valerie Brizuela	Kamal Lahlou	Thomas Reynolds
Thanh Bui	Jennifer Lee	Jessica Santana
Andrea Cerna	Jennifer Maddock	Nina Valentin
Maryellen Diotte	Louis Magallanes	Kristina Wallace
	Forrest Montgomery	

Documenting the Language of Totontepec Mixe – Huitepec Dialect

By Roberto Degante

As a student of Linguistics, I have experienced a growing interest in minor languages, especially ones that originated in the American continent. Unfortunately, it is not easy to find courses dedicated to their study. Fortunately, CSUF made it possible when I had the marvelous opportunity to document Huitepec-Mixe, a language native to the Americas, through the Field Methods in Linguistics course with Dr. Patricia Schneider-Zioga.



The course gives students the opportunity to use skills learned during the study of our discipline. We did not just sit and listen, but we actively applied methodology and practice of linguistics analysis and language description as in the field. More than a regular theoretical class, the classroom became our playground where we did our best to decipher the language. We recorded words and sentences that became pieces of a puzzle that we had to assemble by figuring out their sound, order, rules and functions. During the first sessions, the group discovered that the variety of the language that we were analyzing was even more special than we thought since it was spoken by only 260 people, and since there are no publications about this specific variety, we became pioneers.

Our consultant was Mrs. Octavia Santiago, a native speaker of Huitepec-Mixe and Spanish. She is originally from the Mexican town of Santa Maria Huitepec. The class was conducted in English, while our requests for Mixe translations for our consultant were in Spanish. Therefore, every class was a multilingual and multicultural session due to our different backgrounds. Each of my fellow classmates was eager to collaborate according to their own specific abilities

I think of languages as living creatures; this one, Huitepec-Mixe, is at risk of extinction. Since I vehemently believe that each language gives us a specific opportunity to appreciate and identify our world and inner self, I feel especially honored to have had the opportunity to work on a language that may be soon lost forever. My next goal in life is to begin my graduate studies in applied linguistics, focusing on either French or Italian language while pursuing the TESOL certificate but my Mixe adventure has also become a future project for graduate studies.



"The students in Linguistics 492, Linguistic Field Methods, are taking part in a unique experience: documenting an indigenous language spoken in Oaxaca, Mexico. We are working with a native speaker of the language which is called Huitepec Mixe. Our consultant is the mother of one of our students, who so generously shared her mother, and her mother's linguistic knowledge, with the class by, among other things, serving as translator. This is a really good and exciting event taking place in our department. Here we see the true meaning of 'university' which is from the Latin for 'community.' The learning experience here is generated by the generosity of a member of the larger community sharing with the academic community. The final product of this class will be a grammar of the language."

—Dr. Patricia Schneider-Zioga

Students Study in Dublin

By Nicole Rehnberg



of *Ulysses* “Yes I said Yes I will Yes.”

The most common question I was asked when I came back from Dublin was: “did you fall in love?” and honestly, the answer is yes. Not with a person—that would be too much like a Rom-Com, but I definitely fell in love with a place. As I tried to find my way through the twisty-turny streets of Joyce’s “Dear Dirty Dublin,” I also, in an unabashedly cliché way, found myself. With every book I bought, with every line of *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* I attempted to untangle, with every look at the Liffey, and even an ill-planned hike at Howth, I fell into a sort of love that rocks your core senselessly and never lets you go, mostly because it let me actually see myself for myself. I bought too many books, made too many notes in my books, almost lost an umbrella to the Liffey, and ruined a pair of tennis shoes at Howth, but it is the culmination of all of my experiences there, and all of the words I read, and all of the pictures that I took that tell me that it isn’t a question of if I will go back, but when I will go. To quote the last line



By Lindsay Kerstetter



Over the summer, I was fortunate enough to study Irish literature with Dr. Erin Hollis and a group of students in Dublin, Ireland – the city that inspired some of my favorite literature of all time. We lived on campus at Trinity College, one of the oldest universities in Europe, which was mind-blowing, knowing that Oscar Wilde and Samuel Beckett had studied there. Being right in the middle of everything was perfect because Dublin is one of those cities where you can walk everywhere, something that as a Californian I wasn’t used to. As a class, we visited several legendary landmarks – the Book of Kells, the National Library of Ireland, and the Guinness Brewery, just to name a few, all while getting to know one another well.

We also had plenty of free time, most of which was spent indulging in the food and desserts that could be found in bakeries that seemed to be on every corner. I personally became obsessed with fish and chips while I was there (it was a running joke on the trip because I practically ate it everywhere). On top of the delicious food and amazing city, the Irish people were wonderful! I never once felt unwelcome, I actually felt like I was at home despite being across the globe. While I did experience mild homesickness, the five weeks flew by way too quickly. One thing I learned after returning from Ireland is that study abroad is impossible to describe to other people – it’s something you have to experience for yourself. No amount of pictures, stories, or songs can recreate the experience of being abroad. I feel like I really stepped out of my comfort zone and was able to learn about a new culture and meet new friends, while learning about myself and making some life-changing memories.



Marilyn Chin Speaks with Students

By Robert Neis



In the Department of English, Comparative Literature, and Linguistics, we have the luxury of spending much of our time with some pretty spectacular books (and we get away with

calling it work). It is easy to forget that these complex, engrossing narratives were thought up and written down by actual living people—disappointingly ordinary people who laugh at the antics of their cats, or were once met with raised eyebrows from family members upon expressing their lifelong professional devotion to the written word.

On September 13th, Dr. Chris Ruiz-Velasco’s “Modern Critical Theory” class had the rare oppor-

tunity to sit down and speak with writer Marilyn Chin. The class had recently studied her novel, *Revenge of the Mooncake Vixen*; her presence gave the class valuable insight into questions regarding the boundaries of authorial intention and the pressures of being read as a “feminist Asian-American writer.”

Conversation ranged from the “double consciousness tightrope walk” expected from children of immigrant parents, to the “flesh-like, seductive nature of tofu.” Like her novel, Chin’s words were insightful, exhibiting both levity and a wry humor; she finds poignancy in what is commonly taken as banal. In addition to reflecting on the book itself, Chin discussed her creative process. She emphasized the importance of talking with others when writing, seeking feedback from friends, and the frustrations that come with the entire experience. She pointed out that writing is a

challenge for anyone, that one does not simply sit down and write a novel. Throughout the talk, students were able to see the author humanized, as more than just a face on the dust jacket sleeve.

Following the class session, all CSUF students had an opportunity to converse with Ms. Chin on an individual basis at a reception held by the English, Comparative Literature, and Linguistics Department. The event serves as a testament to the advantages that being a student of words affords. Much praise goes out to Marilyn Chin for sharing her time, in addition to Dr. Ruiz-Velasco, department staff, and everyone else who helped to organize the event; their dedication to community are part of what make the CSUF experience what it is, and what makes literature more than merely text on page.

Department Hosts the 20th Annual Shakespeare Symposium

By Cathie Allman, B.A. ‘05, M.A. ‘09
President, English Languages Chapter



The Department of English, Comparative Literature, and Linguistics hosted the 20th Annual Shakespeare Symposium at Cal State Fullerton on Friday, November 16th and Satur-

day, November 17th. Dr. Kay Stanton established the Shakespeare Symposium twenty years ago to give undergraduate and graduate students a forum in which to present their scholarly findings. This year’s forum lived up to its reputation for being interesting, informative, and insightful.

I couldn’t even begin to choose which essay was my favorite. Each one was as thought-provoking and

creative as the last. Keynote speaker, Dr. Naomi Conn Liebler from Montclair State University, commented on how impressed she was with the presenters she heard. She was especially impressed with CSUF’s undergraduates. Each presenter spoke with poise and grace. I, too, was impressed with the confidence that each speaker brought to the podium. Even with the sessions being grouped together by theme, each paper was diverse and unique. They were all creative.

Presentation topics included Macbeth, Lady Macbeth, psychopaths, unsexed females, witches, lunar symbolism, and quantum physics in the plays of Shakespeare. It was varied, fun, and delectable. Yes, as in scrumptious. Part of the festivities on Saturday was the Shakespeare Tea. All symposium participants indulged in traditional English scones, tea, delightful finger sandwiches, and an assortment of

biscuits or cookies for us Yanks.

After we filled ourselves up with food and drink, we were treated to a very enlightening presentation given by Dr. Conn Liebler. Her essay “Reading (Between) the Lines: Shakespeare’s Old Ladies” complemented the theme that seemed to dominate this year’s symposium: women in Shakespeare. I know that I speak for everyone when I say that it was truly a smashing success!



Alumni Regale Students with Career Advice

By Amber Tavasolian

In the fields of English, Comparative Literature, and Linguistics students often encounter the assumption that they will pursue a career in teaching. In early December, Sarah Kelman, Lecturer and Internship Coordinator for the Department, organized a panel of CSUF English alumni who pursued careers outside the field of teaching to share their experiences with current students in the Department. Donald E. Bradley ('86 B.A.) a partner at Musick, Peeler & Garrett, LLP; Emily France ('05 B.A.) a Public Affairs Manager at the So. Cal. Gas Company; Lynda M. Jenkins ('75 B.A., '93 MPA) a freelance grant writer and fundraiser; Robert J. Linn, Jr. ('82 B.A.) the president and Co-CEO of Inside Out Solutions; and Markus Self ('99 B.A.) an attorney at Green & Hall,

all shared their experiences about going into the job market with a degree in English, and they gave advice about how best to distinguish oneself as a job candidate. For example, Emily France stressed the importance of internships as venues for acquiring practical experience and networking opportunities. France also encouraged current students to be open-minded when considering potential careers; although you may not be as passionate about your company as you are about Emily Dickinson, she advised, you can still be passionate about the work you do. Robert Linn, who parlayed his English degree into the foundations of a successful career in business, touted the benefits of discussing novels in class. When working through a difficult passage or debating the motivations of a character, Linn notes,

students are honing an ideal skill set for the business world, where the ability to understand multiple perspectives and to solve complex problems are rare but highly valued skills. Don Bradley, Markus Self, and Lynda Jenkins shared valuable tips for the interviewing process and Emily France ended the panel discussion by reassuring students that perceived setbacks in career-hunting are learning opportunities that will make you a stronger job candidate. The panel was a wonderful opportunity for the Department community to gain a better understanding of just how valuable an English degree can be, and to revel in the successes of our alumni!



D. Bradley



E. France



L. Jenkins



M. Self



R. Linn, Jr.

Creative Writing Night 2012

By Joseph Blair

The Creative Writing Club (CWC) hosted its third annual Creative Writing Night on November 2, 2012 at the Titan Student Union Pub. Thanks to the labors of many CWC members, the entire affair was a grand success.

The evening started with the first panel of presenters taking the stage. The first three presentations were fiction and poetry readings by Ben Loory (author of *Stories for Nighttime and Some for the Day*), Carrie Seitzinger (author *Fall Ill Medicine*/poetry editor of *Smalldoggies Magazine*), and Matty Byloos (author of *Don't Smell the Floss*/fiction editor and founder of *Smalldoggies Magazine*). The readings set the tone for the night: captivating, beautiful, and humorous. Chris Ryall (editor-in-chief and creative director of IDW Publishing) closed the set with his unique insight on writing adaptations. All four presenters were returning guests who continued to delight us with their expertise and talent. Following the presentation attendees were encouraged to interact with the presenters over refreshments.

The second panel included Michael Miller (founder and editor of Moon Tide Press), Liza Palmer (nationally best-selling author of *Conversations With The Fat Girl*), Rob Delaney (comedian, writer, and Twitter dynamo), and Kate Gale (co-founder and managing editor of Red Hen Press/opera librettist). The presenters shared general advice for writers, such as what life is like in the professional industry, what to

keep in mind when considering publishers and writing towards publication, along with many painstakingly humorous albeit enlightening metaphors, including the complete retelling of the plot from *Back to the Future* with Doc Brown's voice included.

Creative Writing night highlighted the ground-breaking release of the fall publication of *Local Colors Chapbook* which features writers from CSUF who have been involved with at least one prior publication of CSUF's DASH Literary Journal. Submissions to *Local Colors Chapbook* were written over the summer and centered around the theme of the color red. After editors worked tirelessly through the early half of the semester to read the submissions, design, and organize the chapbook, the inaugural issue was printed and released during Creative Writing Night. Two of the contributors, Stephanie Flint and Alex Hamo, read pieces from the nascent publication.

Creative Writing Night was followed by a workshop session on Saturday. Six of the presenters worked with students on their individual pieces, providing feedback for further development. The workshop component provides a unique experience for students to receive professional feedback. Most walk away from these workshops feeling encouraged, excited, more knowledgeable, and sometimes even poignantly troubled after hearing such honest, helpful opinions.

Regardless students come away better writers for having attended and this year was no exception.





Writing Tip

"Pretend like you are writing a blog about your topic, and put down all your ideas--whether they're silly or not--about the topic. Once you have your ideas, pick out the ones you think you can use for the essay. And if you get a topic you don't like or agree with, write an angry letter to a friend about why you don't like it, and do the same thing. By putting down your thoughts (or ranting about the topic), the ideas start flowing and you have an idea--however vague--about main points for your essay."

--Sierra Tavasolian, Tutor, The Writing Center

Springing Ahead

- Study Abroad Paris, Intersession 2013
- Study Abroad London, Spring 2013
- International Conference on Mesoamerican Linguistics, February 22 & 23, 2013
- Acacia Conference, March 1 & 2, 2013
- Second Annual Alumni Reunion, April 13, 2013

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A Note From the Department

The Anecdote provides an opportunity for alumni and students of the Department of English, Comparative Literature, and Linguistics to learn about current events in the department, the professional activities of faculty, and the achievements of our students and alumni. Drop us a line! Tell us what you've been doing with your English, Comparative Literature, or Linguistics degree. If you have news you'd like to share, please email Maria Hernandez Figueroa (mafigueroa@fullerton.edu).

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