

F I S BULLETIN(O)

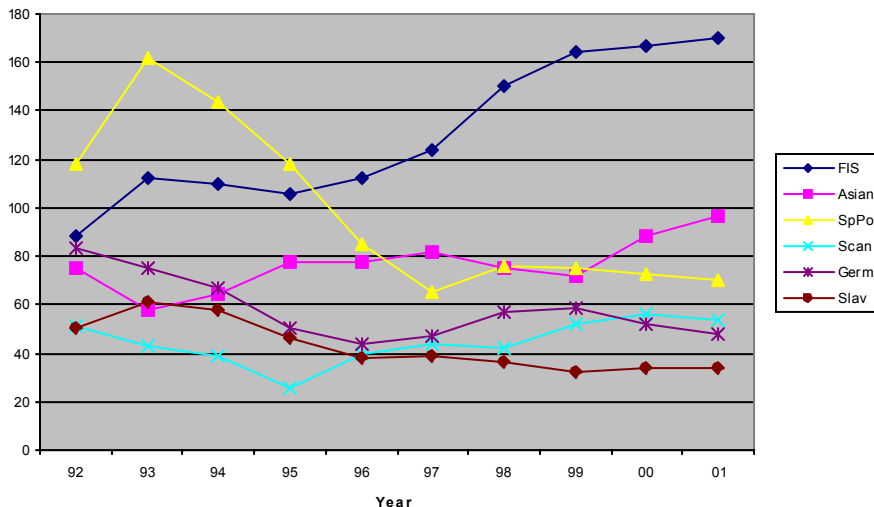
*The Newsletter for the Division of French and Italian Studies,
University of Washington, Seattle, WA*

Connecting FIS to the Community John T.S. Keeler, Chair

Spring 2003
Volume I, Issue I

This newsletter is part of a major effort that we have undertaken this year to improve our connections with members of the community—especially our alumni—who share our interest in French and Italian Studies. Our alumni have increased substantially in recent years as a result of the extraordinary success of our undergraduate programs. As figure 1 below illustrates, the number of FIS majors has increased every year since 1996-97. From 1997-98 through 2001-02, the number of French majors increased 19% (from 114 to 138), while the number of Italian majors increased a remarkable 220% (from 10 to 32). Whereas most “Language and Literature” programs at the University of Washington and nationwide have been suffering from declining or flat enrollments over the last decade, FIS has been struggling to accommodate ever-growing course demand. *We now have the largest number of French majors of any university on the West coast as well as one of the fastest growing Italian programs in the United States.*

Figure 1: Majors in L&L Departments



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CONNECTING FIS TO THE COMMUNITY

(Continued from page 1)

We are, of course, proud of the success of our programs. But such success also poses challenges, especially at a time of tight state budgets. The ratio of FIS majors to faculty is roughly *three times* that of the other comparable L&L units. We are not only relatively short of faculty, but we are also relatively short of administrative staff. Those of you who are recent alumni will no doubt remember long lines outside the advisor's office. That is one of many things we are now working to rectify, and we hope that you might be willing and able to help us. We are also directly soliciting help more broadly throughout the community.

Along those lines, one of our major projects this year has been to establish Advisory Boards for both French Studies and Italian Studies. These boards feature prominent individuals from the Seattle metropolitan area who have agreed to help us strengthen our ties to the community, so as to better serve Washington state residents who share our interests, and to raise funds from the community for the enhancement of our programs. We are honored that the following individuals, all of whom are very busy people, have agreed to work with us. The **French Studies Advisory Board** includes: **Jack Cowan, Chair** (Director, French-American Chamber of Commerce of the Pacific Northwest; Honorary Consul, Republic of France); **Richard Bale** (retired businessman and UW alumnus); **Nicole Brodeur** (columnist for the *Seattle Times*); **Kathleen Brunner** (Secretary for the Board, French-American Chamber of Commerce of the Pacific Northwest; Vice-President and Administrator, National French Contest of the American Association of Teachers of French); **Stephan Coonrod** (Partner and Chair of Business Department, Preston Gates & Ellis); **Joan Cremin** (Ph.D., French Studies, University of Washington); **Jeff Gutierrez** (President, French-American Chamber of Commerce of the Pacific Northwest; Attorney, Stafford Frey Cooper); **Monica Howell** (President, Seattle-Nantes Sister City Association); and **B.H. Liebes** (retired Professor and former Chair of the Department of Journalism, San Francisco State University).

The **Italian Studies Advisory Board** includes: **John Welch, Chair** (retired Civil Engineer and Certified Management Consultant); **Ralph Alfieri** (Lawyer); **Jeff D'Amelio** (President, Sons of Italy); **Anita Bingaman** (President, Dante Alighieri Society of Washington); **Pietro Borghesi** (Co-owner and Chef, Osteria La Spiga); **Michael Grigoni** (Financial Administrator, UW College of Engineering; part-time student in UW Italian Studies); **Luke Magnotto** (M.D.; Director of Urgent Care Services, Harrison Memorial Hospital, Bremerton, WA; formerly Medical Program Director, Kitsap County); **Adriana Paetzke** (Italian instructor); **Susan Ghiglione Raney** (retired Pension Actuary, Fellow of the Society of Actuaries); **Karen Riley** (active in variety of Italian organizations); **Albert Rosselini**, former Governor of Washington state); **Giuseppe Tassone** (Director, Italian Language Program, Dante Alighieri Society of Washington); and **Joe Zavaglia** (Executive Vice President, Retail Banking Group, First Mutual Bank).

On behalf of all of our faculty and students, I would like to thank these volunteers for the gift of their time, energy and ideas. Special thanks go to Jack Cowan and John Welch, who have agreed to chair the French and Italian boards, respectively, and to former Washington state governor Albert Rosselini, who continues to serve the community in countless ways. With the help of our Italian Board, we organized several events this year designed to make distinguished scholars of Italian culture accessible to the community. Next year we will have more such activities of interest to our alumni and friends interested in French as well as Italian studies. Meanwhile we will also be working with the boards on a wide range of community projects, from encouraging the teaching of French and Italian in public schools to designing special on-campus programs.

I would also like to acknowledge here a special gift recently made to our French Studies program. One of our new French Board members, B.H. Liebes, has donated to our program a large collection of French books that belonged to his late wife, Georgette Ninet Liebes. These books will henceforth be available for the use of our students and faculty. A plaque commemorating this generous donation will soon be installed outside our main office in Padelford Hall.

Needless to say, we would welcome other donations of this kind as well as the sort of monetary gifts that would enable us to subsidize trips by students to our programs abroad, organize special events or even hire additional faculty. In this newsletter you will find essays by several of our current students testifying to the importance of study abroad for our majors and graduate students. You will also find interviews with three of our new faculty: Monica Azzolini, Claudio Mazzola and Vinay Swamy. Support from alumni and friends in the community is now vital to build the sort of vibrant program that can attract and retain such valuable faculty members.

I look forward to meeting and working with many of you over the next few years. If you would like to contact me directly, simply send me an email at keeler@u.washington.edu.

UNDERGRADUATE NEWS

Italian Studies Curriculum Initiative, by Nancy Rubino

With the guidance of FIS's highest ranking Italian professor, Albert Sbragia, the Italian wing is planning an undergraduate program curriculum initiative in the fall of 2003. Responding to a three-page document signed by a group of Italian majors describing the types of changes they would like to see implemented in the program, the Italian Studies faculty have revamped the curriculum by developing and adding three new Italian courses intended to give students the background or tools they will need to perform better at the 400 level. These new courses, cleverly described as "corsi cuscinetto" (cushion course) by one of the Italian faculty, Claudio Mazzola, serve as a bridge between standard language courses and literature seminars. By providing more practical language skills and cultural-historical background, these *cuscinetto* courses are designed to address the concerns that both students and faculty had regarding the rather abrupt leap that majors were previously required to make from language intensive courses to literary surveys and topical seminars.

Albert Sbragia has outlined the three *cuscinetto* courses currently being developed by the Italian faculty: Translation, Composition, and Contemporary Italian Culture. The Translation course, which will be taught by Giuseppe Leporace, is specifically designed to give majors practical experience in the literary and non-literary uses of the Italian language, and to introduce the students to strategies of interpretation as well as to translation programs on the Web. The Composition course, which will be taught by one of the newer members of Italian Studies, Monica Azolini, is primarily geared toward helping students refine their writing skills and build research expertise by introducing students to library research material and ways of incorporating research into academic papers. In contrast to the more practical uses of the Translation and Composition courses, the course on Contemporary Italian Culture, taught by Claudio Mazzola, will address the cultural and historical lacunae experienced by many undergraduates taking advanced literature seminars. According to Sbragia, the students "have been to Italy, but they don't have a cultural-historical vision. This course would give them that grounding." Taking into account that Italy is the first western European country after the fall of the Berlin Wall to undergo radical political transformation, this particular *cuscinetto* course will provide Italian majors with a background of the cultural evolution of Italy especially in the last 20 or 30 years. Sbragia also intends to offer a more panoramic History of Italy course, which, he claims, is currently lacking in both the Italian Studies wing and the History department at UW. He intends to add such a course to the Italian curriculum in the near future as a fourth *cuscinetto* course.

The response of the Italian faculty to the student document asking for changes in the Italian program extends to areas beyond the classroom, specifically, to internship experience. "A lot of majors," says Sbragia, "don't plan to continue on to grad school, so they want a different kind of training." Internship is an excellent means for students to maintain a connection with Italian in a meaningful, possibly career-oriented fashion, and, in Sbragia's view, "it also establishes ties between the program and the community at large."

Internship, however, is not a novel idea amongst the Italian faculty. Giuseppe Leporace, who is most actively connected with Seattle's Italian community, had already negotiated internship positions with the Italian Trade Commission in past years and has recently created internships for majors at the Italian Consulate in Seattle, for which he is Honorary Consul. "What is about to change," says Sbragia, who will be in charge of the internship program, "is that it'll be more formalized." Sbragia intends to meet with each student in order to establish a research topic based on the position they hold. At the end of the internship the student will turn in a paper for academic credit.

Whereas Sbragia is actively seeking out internship opportunities in Seattle, he is also actively planning to export the internship program to Rome. "Some of the internship possibilities in Rome are very exciting," claims Sbragia. He has plans to establish internship positions in the film industry at the Scuola Nazionale del Cinema, where he has professional contacts. But Sbragia will also search out internships in businesses, in trade, and in the art industry. "We've got to communicate to our students what we were trained to communicate in the classroom. But at the same time," says Sbragia, "we've got to have an open attitude towards what is the true reality of a large part of these students." Their reality, which the Italian curriculum overhaul has so successfully addressed, is to be able to use their Italian language and cultural awareness in practical, career-oriented ways.

U N D E R G R A D U A T E N E W S

New Courses

FRENCH 470 CINEMA: FILMING IDENTITIES: CONTEMPORARY FRANCE, 5 cr., Vinay Swamy

The last few decades of the twentieth century have seen many changes in the very fabric of French Society. As Phil Powrie remarks in French Cinema of the 1990's, the sweeping economic and social changes of this period has had an appreciable impact on the kinds of film that have been produced in the last ten or so years. This course will use Phil Powrie's book to examine the various concerns of French society and its relationship with the emerging "postcolonial" culture(s) as portrayed in different works, all filmed in the 1990s. By focusing on the representation of gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity and race in these films, this course will highlight the different processes by which the so-called "French" identity is constructed and can be (and are being) deconstructed.

FRENCH 499 SPEC TOPICS: FRANCOPHONE SURVEY, 5 cr., Vinay Swamy

Fidèle ou pas? (Ré)écritures littéraires et cinématographiques.

This course introduces students to the notion of rewriting in the larger sense of the term that includes both literary rewritings of History and literature as well as cinematographic adaptations of literary works from the Francophone world. What constitutes the rewriting of a text and how can (or should) it be faithful to its inspiration? How does a text get modified by the cinematographic version? What motivates literary revisions of History? What are some of the narrative strategies specific to literary or filmic rewritings? These are some of the questions we will explore in the course as we sample works from the Caribbean, North and West Africa as well as those by immigrants from these regions to France.

ITALIAN 403/503: EARLY MODERN ITALIAN READINGS II, 5 cr, Azzolini

The focus of this course is on the major literary and cultural movements of the 17th and 18th centuries, with particular emphasis on Baroque and Enlightenment cultural production in literature, science and music. Students will read, analyze and discuss 'texts' belonging to all these three disciplinary areas. Authors studied will

include: Tasso, Monteverdi, Galilei, Campanella, Redi, Tsauro, Marino, Basile, Vico, Goldoni, Metastasio, Verri, Parini, Beccaria and Alfieri. Course assignments will include readings from Il Sistema Letterario, and the reading of the following two texts: Campanella's La città del sole and Goldoni's La Locandiera.

FRENCH 499: SPECIAL TOPICS

5 cr., Mackenzie
Science fiction course conducted in French!

ITALIAN 351: CONTEMPORARY ITALIAN CULTURE

5 cr., Mazzola
Italian culture from the 1980s to the present, with discussion of major events of the period and readings from fiction, political manifestos, song lyrics, etc. Emphasis on recent linguistic developments, changed role of women, meaning of multiculturalism in Italy, and the spread of global culture. Conducted in Italian.

French Studies #1 on the West Coast!

As of fall 2002, FIS had 138 French majors— more than any other university on the West coast. French Studies alone now claims the second highest number of majors in the Humanities Division at the UW.

Meanwhile, the number of Italian major has increased 260% (from 10 to 36) since 1997!

GRADUATE NEWS

Doctoral Dissertations, 2002-2003

Linda Beck, Ph.D., Romance Languages and Literatures, "Laurent de Premierfait's Les Cent Nouvelles: An Emblem for Cultural Appropriation in 16th Century French Literature."

Katherine Maynard, Ph.D., Romance Languages and Literatures, "Epic Lessons: Pedagogy and National Narrative in the Epic Poetry of Early Modern France."

Masters Degrees awarded in French, 2002-2003

Otilia Baraboi Isabelle Boudreau
Sandy Evans Insook Webber

Masters Degrees awarded in Italian, 2002-2003

Nikla Riverso-Levander

Kudos!

Congratulations to Kitty Maynard, who recently accepted an Assistant Professorship at Washington College in Chestertown, Maryland!



Pictured above are John Keeler, and Kitty Maynard at the 2003 FIS Graduation Celebration.

Below are images from the FIS Graduation Gala. Turn to page 6 for more snapshots.



GRADUATION GALA 2003



This year's FIS Graduation Gala was held at the Waterfront Activities Center on Friday, June 13th. Master of Ceremonies, Academic Advisor and Italian

Teaching Associate, Sabrina Tatta, energized the crowd with trivia games, appetizer and dessert competitions, and the presentation of special awards to top students in French and Italian Studies.



Bachelor of Arts Degrees Awarded 2002-2003

French

Banh, Jean-Pierre	Nguyen, Phuc
Bodi, Philippe	Olsen, Kristopher
Bulpett, Diane	Petrin, Lea
*Cooke, Elizabeth	Pham, Ann
Dupuy, Kendra	Pham, Thong
Esteves, Joanne	Rauw, Courtney
*Farmer, Janay	Rehwald, Christine
Fongemie, Angela	*Slotemaker, Maria
Hammarlund, Ariana	*Stevenson, Brita
Hutchison, Diane	Stotts, Nicole
Johnson, Julianne	Sylvester, Erin
Jones, Schuyler	Warr, Andrea
Larned, Michael	Van Tuyl, Vanessa
Lawrence, Jessica	Winters, Emily
*Marwaha, Jasmine	Wong, Sylvia
*McNae, Alexa	

Italian

Ashleigh, Kalindra	Kluz, Jamie
Bafaro, Rossana	Lomax, Alena
Blagojevic, Slavica	Sergeant, Kathryn
Durbin, Tammy	*Swanson, Genevieve
*Esser, John	Williams, Meris
Harris, Mica	Williamson, Melissa

* Graduating with Baccalaureate Honors

GRADUATION GALA 2003



The Division of French and Italian Studies wishes to thank the following local business for their generous gift donations:

Brasserie Margaux

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100 University Street
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We encourage you to submit notices of your events to the Division of French and Italian Studies by email (frenital@u.washington.edu) or fax: 206-616-3302

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F A C U L T Y N E W S

The Midnight Oil Recent Faculty Publications, Papers and Activities

Monica Azzolini, Assistant Professor, Italian

- Annual Meeting, Renaissance Society of America, Toronto, 27-29 March 2003. Co-organizer of three panels on *Science and Culture in Early Modern Europe*, and speaker with the paper "Alle gentili e honeste donne: Giovanni Marinelli on the excellence of women".
- College Art Association, New York City, 19-22 February 2003. Panel *Picturing the Healing Arts: 1050-1450* sponsored by the International Center for Medieval Art and organized by Jean Givens University of Connecticut, and Karen Reeds, Princeton Research Forum, Independent Scholar, "The Fabric of the Body: Leonardo da Vinci and Galen's De constitutione artis medicae".
- The History of Science Society, Milwaukee, 7-10 November 2002. Panel *Exploring Authority and Exploding Boundaries: The Trafficking Between High and Low Culture in Early Modern Europe*, Chair and Commentator.
- Herzog August Bibliothek, Symposium on *Medical History in Its Historical Context*, 4-6 July 2002-: "Leonardo in Context: Scholastic Science and the Language of Art in Renaissance Milan".

Doug Collins, Associate Professor, French

- "The Great Effect of Small Things: Insignificance with Immanence in Critical Theory". Anthropoetics, Fall/Winter 2002-03.
- "The Spinoza Connection", Catholic University, Washington D.C., March 2003.

Denyse Delcourt, Associate Professor, French

- Conference paper, "Night, Birds, Desire: Reading Marie de France's Laöstic", Kalamazoo International Conference, May 2003.
- "Ironie, magie, théâtre: Le mauvais roi dans le Roman de Perceforest, Le Moyen Français, December 2002.

Dianah Jackson, Assistant Professor, French

- "On Coaches, Letters and Virtue," Lumen (journal of the Canadian Society for XVIIIth-Century Studies), November 2002.

John T.S. Keeler, Chair, Division of French & Italian Studies

- Co-editor (with Jolyon Howorth) of Defending Europe: The EU, NATO and the Quest for European Autonomy, published in 2003 by Palgrave Macmillan.
- Program Chair for the annual conference of the European Union Studies Association, Nashville, Tennessee, March 27-30, 2003.

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FACULTY NEWS

The Midnight Oil

Recent Faculty Publications, Papers and Activities

(Continued from page 8)

- Served as Distinguished Visiting Professor at the University of Oklahoma, April 16-19, 2003.
- Elected to the Executive Committee for the European Union Studies Association for 2003-2007 and elected Vice-Chair of EUSA for 2003-05.

Giuseppe Leporace, Senior Lecturer, Italian

- Translation of Mark Strand's Blizzard of One. Zanzotto Editore.
- Poetry Reading of Amelia Rosselli's works at the Dante Alighieri Society, February 26, 2003.
- Translation of excerpts from Amelia Rosselli's Serie Ospedaliera, The Spoon River Poetry Review, Vol. XXVII No. 2, Summer/Fall 2002. Pp. 85-87.
- Translation of La Libellula by Amelia Rosselli. Yale Italian Poetry. Vol. V-VI, 2001-2002.
- Translation of excerpts from Amelia Rosselli's Serie Ospedaliera, Chelsea 72, 2002. Pp. 48-52.

Hedwige Meyer, Lecturer, French

- Encore des exercices!, 3rd edition, McGraw Hill, 2002.

Louisa Mackenzie, Assistant Professor, French

- Conference Chair: "Scientific Poetry", Renaissance Society of America, Toronto, March 2003.
- "Pestilential Ambition: Caesar in Sixteenth-Century France, Uses and Abuses of Caesar", British School in Rome, March 2003.
- "An Ecocritical Approach to Teaching Don Delillo's White Noise", Approaches to Teaching (PMLA series).
- "Traduire le Sumatra en Français: le journal de voyage de Jean Parmentier" (1529), Seuils et Traveses III: Acte du colloque international.

Albert Sbragia, Associate Professor, Italian

- "Max Ophuls' La signora di tutti". Luminous Psyche: Selected Films of Max Ophuls, Seattle Art Museum, January 2003.
- "Gabriele Muccion's The Last Kiss," Seattle International Film Festival, Pacific Place Theater, June 2002.
- Book Review- Norma Bouchard, Celine, Gadda, Beckett: Experimental Writings of the 1930's. Italiaca 79.2, Summer 2002.
- "The Cinema of Poetry", Lingua Humenitatis, 2:2, October 2002. Pp. 143-161.
- Entries on "Cesare" and "Macaronico" in A Pocket Gadda Encyclopedia, Edinburg Journal of Gadda Studies 2, 2002.

Vinay Swamy, Assistant Professor, French

- "Politicizing the Sexual, Sexualizing the Political: The Crossing of Political and Sexual Orientations in Frears/Kureishi's My Beautiful Laundrette (1986)" forthcoming in Comparative Literature Studies, Spring, 2003, Vol. 40, No. 2: 142-158.
- Chaired panel on "National Identities" for the Comparative Literature Graduate Students Colloquium, March 2003.
- "PaCS, Parité, Placard: Whither Homosexuality in France 2002?" Modern Languages Association panel on "PaCS, Parité, identité," MLA convention, New York, December 2002.

FACULTY NEWS

Interview with Vinay Swamy, Assistant Professor of French*Conducted by Nancy Rubino and Dianah Jackson**Prof. Vinay Swamy joined the FIS faculty in 2002 after receiving his Ph.D. from Northwestern University.*

What courses are you teaching this winter quarter?

I'm teaching a Francophone literature survey course and a course on contemporary French film.

Could you please offer a general definition of Francophone Studies?

In general FS highlights cultural productions in the French language but not necessarily that of metropolitan France. So that would include both countries and regions in which French is spoken or used as a means of communication. It might be an official language although there are other languages. I'm thinking of countries like Senegal or Congo. In Viet Nam and Algeria, French is no longer an official language but authors especially of a certain generation still write in the French language. So all people who come from that part of the world are exposed to a certain kind of French culture that emanates from the Colonial project. This is the other part of the Francophone project. Implicitly we do talk about colonialism and post-colonialism so Francophone Studies does intersect with post-colonial studies because of the historical reasons for which French as a language is spoken in different parts of the world.

Historically speaking are there particular countries or regions that have been more active in

either establishing or promoting Francophone Studies? Could we ask which of the former colonies has been more proactive in establishing something like Francophone Studies?

No, I really couldn't respond to that off the top of my head partly because FS as studies in America is from our vantage point, as in, from American Academic institutions that we have created the sub-genre of studies if you will. And so I would say that it's really a creation of our intellectual curiosity to go beyond canonical texts. Of course there are official organizations that promote what is called Francophonie. The UN has an organization under its umbrella that promotes Francophonie. But it seems that we as scholars in the US and other parts of the world are not talking about the same kind of Francophone studies as these organizations where the promotion of a certain kind of metropolitan language and (high) culture is the main concern. So I hesitate to say that any one particular country or set of organizations does promote one concept of Francophonie. In fact it's a concept that is very contested. That's part of the problem in defining it. To use an example, most metropolitan French people think of Francophonie as the teaching of the French language to non-French speakers. While I was in France all of last year when I said I did FS they would say, "Oh, I know someone who does Francophone Studies." So I would be intro-

duced to all of these people who were teaching French as a second language. I was really surprised. I realized that it conflicted with what our definition of Francophone Studies is all about. In France, by and large it is correct to say, the French university system has not espoused the North American model of FS. For that reason people don't really think about it the same way we do.

What were two major influences from your background that contributed to your career choice?

When I was in England I had a Belgian roommate and I didn't speak a word of French. I started spending time with his family for the holidays and that's how I got interested in the language. Of course, several friends of mine were French speakers because I was in an international school. So the curiosity sort of killed the cat and here I am a decade later.

Did you consider another field of study?

Actually, I got a degree in mathematics. That was supposed to be my career plan. But somewhere along the line I realized that although I was happy doing mathematics it wasn't going to be my professional choice. At the time when I switched studies I didn't know that I was going to go for a Ph.D. in French. I just didn't know yet what I wanted to do with my life. That's why I came to America because it's one of

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FACULTY NEWS

Interview with Vinay Swamy*(Continued from page 10)*

the few countries in the world where you can actually apply to a university and say, "I'd really like to study but I'm not sure what I want to study" and get a fellowship. That's what prompted my move to America. I wasn't really thinking about it otherwise. So I went to a Liberal Arts college and I wanted to transfer

some of my credits from my previous degree. I went around meeting different professors from different departments saying I'd done work in this and that. I ended up in the language department and got credit for the languages I spoke. My aim was to graduate a couple of years ahead of time since I'd already spent three years getting a degree. I ended up speaking with a French professor who was glad to transfer the credits I needed but asked me to take a 300-level course and I said "Sure. I'll do that," because I was in French anyway. It was at that point that I became a French major and eventually went to graduate school. I must say during my years at Miami of Ohio where I did my masters I started thinking about FS as a real option because I had a very good mentor. Mark McKinney, who had been hired that year from Cornell, worked on

Maghrebian literature. That's how I got interested in non-canonical French studies. That prompted me to look for a Ph.D. program that was strong in FS. I decided to go to Northwestern because Françoise Lionnet was there. And it so happened that while she was on leave Mireille Rosello was hired as visiting professor to fill in for her in part and also because she is a preeminent scholar herself. That was the beginning of Northwestern's courtship of Mireille Rosello. They hired her as part of the faculty. So for a very short period of time I had the bliss of having

both Françoise Lionnet and Mireille Rosello as part of my committee. But then Françoise Lionnet decided to move to Los Angeles. I stayed on because I wanted to work with Mireille Rosello. They both have been towering figures in my education. Mireille Rosello has been exceptionally generous with her time and energy. I've learned a lot from her and my love of film is in part because of her own interest in film.

How has your study of mathematics influenced your work?

One of the things that I learned during my years doing mathematics was to try to break down the problem to its logical unit. I think in many ways I operate the same way when I study a text or analyze film sequences. I try to look at what the basic configuration of the text in question is. In fact for my own research I started out with a theoretical model that I was proposing for my dissertation about the ways in which people identify themselves. It was easier for me to sketch out a little diagram. This diagrams have a name from a part of mathematics called

"set theory" and you have what are called Venn diagrams and you can actually talk about the intersection of different groups and so on. I'm sure that's where I drew my resources from-- although I wasn't thinking about it at the time when I was drawing out my little diagrams. But looking back I can see that my training during my undergraduate years helped me a lot to think in those terms and to be able to map out "identification clusters" and cluster forms. And the fact that I work with websites, for example, is also a legacy of my penchant for logic. A lot of constructing websites is based on trying to organize your information logically and to be able to retrieve it in a logical fashion. So I still have a connection with mathematics although I don't remember any formulae anymore.

What attracted you to the University of Washington?

First things first, it's in a wonderful region.)- The University is in a cosmopolitan, metropolitan area and I was very keen on living in a metropolitan area in the United States. And the University is very well renowned as a research institution and the department has been wonderfully collegial and very friendly. When I came for my interview that was one of the things that I liked the best about being here. I felt very comfortable and not threatened in any way.

What do you enjoy most about the University of Washington and French and Italian Studies in particular now that you up and operational?

I enjoy my independence. The department has been wonderful in giving me a free reign on what I want to teach and how I go about teaching. I must say I

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FACULTY NEWS

Interview with Vinay Swamy*(Continued from page 11)*

have been pretty impressed with my students thus far. They have been really friendly and intellectually curious. My students have done some wonderful presentations so that's been very encouraging for me.

How is teaching your particular specialization important to the general education experience at the University of Washington? In other words how are Francophone Studies important to undergraduate education at large?

Let me answer that question by way of example. Yesterday in class we started reading a novel by Malek Ouary, an Algerian born author. The novel is set in pre-independence Algeria around the time of the revolution (Algeria gained independence from France after a particularly violent period from 1954-1962). We looked at how two of the protagonists who meet on the street and how their identities—although they are from the same clan—are perceived very differently. One of them, Amergou, is seen by the public as a French individual whereas the other one is an indigenous Arab. So this discussion on how people perceive different identities in different contexts led us quite naturally to talk about current day issues such as how certain power struggles can either put a group of people down and marginalize them in society or include them. The students were quite amazed at how contemporary these issues were. I think it is very important not only for the university student to contemplate issues that are pertinent to today, such as the possibility of war on Iraq. It is also important that they look at how historically there have been various waves of domination that have projected and propelled similar kinds of ideologies that color the discussion of issues such as racism, diversity and gender bias.

What are the strengths of French and Italian Studies and how do you see them being relevant to life outside of academia, in Seattle and beyond?

One of the things I really like about this department is that there are so many young faculty members, all of whom are very energetic and have a lot to provide in terms of intellectual support for the students and also show the way for thinking about various issues. Also I find the department to be very flexible in the way that it thinks of itself. I really like that. Up until now, for instance, there haven't been too many people interested in using the internet and integrating internet technology into their courses but that hasn't created any inertia for me. The department has been very supportive in providing me with the resources that are necessary to go on and hopefully help the department move along with today's technology. And not just let technology rule our lives but use it in ways that would be useful and productive for our own goals which would be to talk about French and Francophone cultural productions and their import in understanding today's multicultural societies.

What are your current web-based projects?

I have two courses that I'm teaching this quarter and both of them have an associated website. I hope that the websites will act as portals to various kinds of media that aren't normally accessible in the traditional classroom or through a traditional paper syllabus. Especially with my film course what I've been able to do is to put up on my website short film sequences that the students can watch several times over at home and analyze them and come to class better prepared for discussion. Often the problem with teaching film is that the students have seen the film just once and aren't able to go into detail when we talk about any part of the film because there is only so much the human mind can remember. So that's one of the

greatest advantages of the Web site. But I must hasten to add that these Web sites are not open to the general public nor are they linked from any other university website because they contain film sequences under copyright.

What sorts of projects do you envision with the Cinema Studies program in Comparative Literature at the University of Washington?

This quarter my film course is cross-listed with Comparative Literature. I have students who come from that department and elsewhere. This kind of cross-listing I hope to continue in the future so that students from all over the university have access to the kind of classes that I offer. While I teach film, I usually don't like to separate out film courses and non-film courses because, for instance, both my courses this quarter are interdisciplinary. In the future I plan to use films and other forms of cultural production, be they novels or textual documents and audiovisual material to form the corpus of my courses.

How have you been able to balance life in academia and life outside of it since you arrived?

To be honest with you I haven't yet had the opportunity to "balance my life." It has taken a lot of energy, and I knew that this would be the case, to settle down and find my bearing both within the university and outside. I've just moved into my apartment not long ago. In that respect, I suppose that my students' image of me sitting there eating cold soup is quite appropriate. I've been so busy preparing for the classes that I'm teaching now and continuing with my own research that I haven't really had the time to make the contacts or connections outside the university. But that is what I hope to do. I think living in Seattle is very promising because of the city's cultural and social opportunities.

FACULTY NEWS

Interview with Monica Azzolini, Assistant Professor of Italian*Conducted by Dianah Jackson**Prof. Azzolini joined the FIS faculty in 2002 after receiving her Ph.D. at the University of Cambridge (U.K.).*

What were two major influences perhaps from your childhood or early adult years that contributed to your career choice?

I come from a society where the idea still holds that “The place of the woman is in the house.” While things are rapidly changing in Italy, this has been a real phenomenon of the past twenty to thirty years. In my parent’s time it was still common for women to marry, have kids, and give up on their jobs as a consequence. The idea that women would have a career, not to speak of having a successful one that would make them equal to their male colleagues, did not occur to them. I think that even now women often have to work twice as hard to get to the same level as male counterparts, especially in certain professions. For me, education was a way to independence, a chance to achieve something that women of my mother’s generation could not aspire to. The other influence was that I was always fairly good at school and that encouraged me to carry on but not necessarily in the direction of my work right now. My twin sister, for instance, became a successful business woman.

Were there any other career choices that might have come your way or did you specialize in a different discipline at any point?

In high school I studied at what is called a liceo scientifico, which had a distinctive bent toward the sciences and I was pretty good at that. So the natural choice was a scientific subject and any parent would like that because it leads to a better-paying job. I studied engineering for one year: I didn’t dislike the subject but the fact that it

was so dry and the classes were so huge. Some first-year classes had anywhere from four hundred to five hundred students enrolled! It was rewarding in that the exams were going well, but it wasn’t so in terms of where it was leading me. That’s when I decided to switch to the study of literature.

How did your study of engineering ultimately influence your future work?

The interest that I still have in science now, say in physics or biology, has to do with those early years. I still enjoy being able to read of medieval optics or renaissance astronomy and have a rough idea of what is going on. It also interests me how science has moved in new directions, changed or failed to change.

What do think first attracted you to the University of Washington?

The fact that the job was advertised as being interdisciplinary. I was really looking for that in my job search. When I arrived on campus I was happy to see that interdisciplinary programs were already in place and that I didn’t have to create my own niche. There was not only a place for interdisciplinary work but such work was encouraged. My own work on the interrelationships between literature and medicine has been seen in a very positive light. The Walter Chapin Simpson Center for the Humanities has been one of the key factors in my choice to come to the University of Washington. It is an amazing resource and a source of inspiration for interdisciplinary studies. I think it is very important for people from different disciplines to communicate to one another. The Simpson Center represents the privileged forum of such an exciting exchange of knowledge. Honestly, I could not have asked for more.

Now that you’ve been teaching and

doing research for over a quarter here, what are some of the most positive aspects about being a part of French and Italian Studies?

This is a small department where people know each other fairly well. What I find interesting is that with some colleagues my interests overlap in terms of the period we study and with others, it’s in terms of subject matter. So as a group our interests complement one another well. In this way I can learn from my colleagues but also share with them my own research. In this respect the department works very well. At the same time it creates a forum for interaction with colleagues outside the department. In our program I will also have the opportunity to learn French, a language I’d like to know better.

What do you think are some of the strengths in French and Italian Studies and in your own work that might be relevant to communities outside academia?

Our program is made up of a lot of young faculty. This means there is a lot of enthusiasm and new ideas for research they are doing. Their research topics are the most up to date because they have just come out of graduate school. They are involved in all the latest ideas in their respective fields. Our faculty can expose the community outside the university to the cultures of Europe. Since there is a general fascination with Italy and France we need to simply keep giving the public more reasons to be fascinated. We can show them that the literature, the culture, and the sciences are all part of the countries that they might wish to study.

You were recently selected to participate in the Society of Scholars at the Walter Chapin Simpson Center. Could

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FACULTY NEWS

Interview with Monica Azzolini*(Continued from page 13)***you briefly describe what your project will be for next year's Society?**

I will concentrate on the scientific culture that developed and was already in place in Milan between 1400 and 1500. This interest developed from my dissertation project on Leonardo da Vinci. The more I looked at Leonardo's work, the more I came to understand that he could not have come to such a vast understanding if there had not been a specific scientific culture in place. What I mean by scientific culture is the natural philosophy of those days that would have supported and encouraged the kind of knowledge and production we associate with Leonardo. The more I looked into that, the more I found that there were clear and interesting signs that such a culture was very much alive. For the Simpson project I have decided to touch principally on astrological medicine. I found that medicine, and astrological medicine in particular, was very much part of court culture. The two things were very much connected to one another. The historiography of the period, specifically on Galileo for example, suggests that courtly science has been understudied. The courtly science of Milan has been completely neglected. It is important to put Milan, and also courtly science, back on the map because generally speaking science has been studied only in relation to universities and learning institutions and much less in relation to court life.

How would you define astrological medicine for someone who is a non-specialist since it is a surprising combination of terms?

Renaissance scientists used the influence of the stars and the position of the planets to determine what kind of treatment was the best for healing a person at a given time. Often they drew charts and horo-

scopes to show what kinds of planets were influencing the person in question and so as to establish what kind of treatment would be appropriate. Herbs and stones were believed to have properties that could be associated with different planets. Therefore the position of the planets would determine the best treatment, and the right moment to administer it. For instance, astrological medicine was important for treating fevers. Fevers were charted depending on how often they occurred, every three or four days, for instance. These were often treated with different medications depending on their frequency, the patient's complexion (that is the abundance or otherwise of each of the four Galenic humors: blood, phlegm,

we can still find traces of them in the 18th century. You just need to browse the web to see that there are still people believing in both astrology and humoral theories!

How have you taught yourself how to read these astrological charts?

I still have a lot of work to do. The tradition of astrological medicine is very complicated and there is no user friendly, how-to-do manual. For a while I was contemplating taking astrology classes offered around Seattle because from what I've heard about the practice of modern astrology doesn't differ very dramatically from its Renaissance counterpart. A friend of mine in London used to make a living of reading charts. He would go to bars in Amsterdam to put himself through school.

Tell us about the award you received for organizing a series of speakers interested in science at the Walter Chapin Simpson Humanities Center.

The speaker series is called "Science Studies" and is organized together with my colleagues Simon Werrett in History and Arthur Fine in Philosophy. It will run throughout the 2003-2004 academic year. What we want to do is bring speakers to campus who will be interested in the cultural and social aspects of the sciences. It will vary historically, covering a span of time that goes from the Middle Ages to modern times. We hope to invite sociologists of science as well as anthropologists interested in the sciences. So our speakers aren't limited to historians of science. We'd actually like to see a variety of specialists from different disciplines who approach the sciences through, for instance, anthropology, literature or art history.

Still another of your projects is*(Continued on page 15)*

MS. Ashmole 1462, fols. 44v-45r

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black bile and yellow bile), and the position of the stars. The four humours, too, were related to planetary configurations. It was believed that if these humours lost their natural balance in the human body, illness would result. Blood-letting — which was practiced in the case of humoral imbalance and thus illness — would be applied fairly regularly (it was indeed a widespread practice in Renaissance medicine), but it had to be done at a certain time and hour of the day, according to planetary configurations. These were determined by the position of the stars at a particular time of day. These medical theories and related practices, as bizarre as it may appear to us now, were not challenged until way into the 15th century and

FACULTY NEWS

Interview with Monica Azzolini*(Continued from page 14)*

organizing a graduate student conference for next year at the University of Washington. What are your plans for the conference to date?

The Simpson Center has expressed an interest in consolidating the graduate colloquia that go on at the University of Washington into one and that would attract more speakers from other universities. The idea was to have a cross-disciplinary topic that would also bring the science departments into the picture, and foster exchange of knowledge and cooperation. We have decided to call it The First Annual Interdisciplinary Graduate Student Conference, and next year's theme will be "The Crossroads of the Disciplines." We hope to bring in people from medical schools or from cognitive sciences or clinical psychology who could talk about the latest developments in their fields. There are obvious examples of possible overlaps with scholarship done in Early Modern studies. A constant interest of Renaissance medicine as well as literature was, for instance, how the brain functions, or how can the sense organs be deceived. Both Dante and Leonardo discuss these issues extensively in their works. The idea is to establish it in a way that the Center will remain in control of the conference and graduate students from different departments will be in charge of organizing it. So far every year the graduate students have been trying to put this together and struggled to get the resources to do it. We thought it would be better to have one large graduate event instead of several smaller ones. The newly-formed Graduate Student Planning Committee is composed of students from Information Science, Communications, History, English, Comparative Literature, and Astronomy.

Interview with Claudio Mazzola, Lecturer in Italian*Conducted by Nancy Rubino*

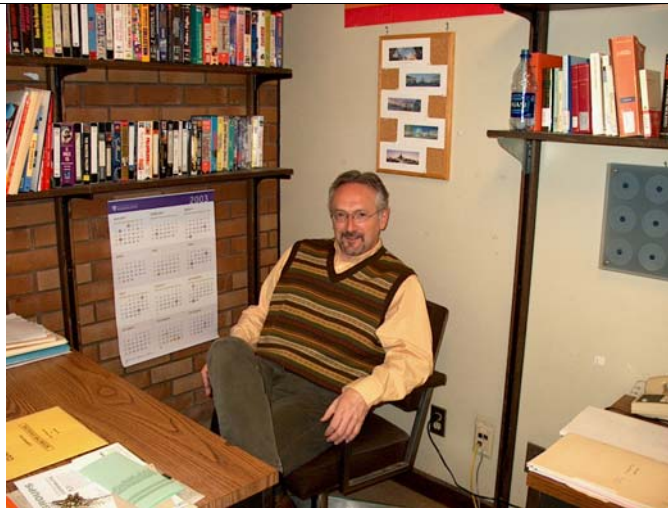
Dr. Mazzola received his Ph.D. in Comparative Literature at the UW in 1986 and joined our faculty full-time in the fall of 2002.

Do you find teaching Italian Studies at the UW different from your previous teaching experiences?

I've taught at Liberal Arts schools like Holy Cross and Vassar where classes were much smaller than they are here. Students were not taking classes because they had to, since there was no requirement, so it was a different student population. Here you have much larger classes with a mix of students who are interested and students that are taking the class because they have to. The literature courses I've taught here include mostly Italian majors so they are very interested in the subjects.

What kind of literature courses are you teaching here?

Last spring I taught a course on Pulp Fiction, which is a recent development in Italian literature, and it's a course that's not usually offered in most major universities. Next quarter I'll be teaching



a similar type of literature course which includes only novels written by women in the last 10 years.

How do you think such a course would benefit or fit into the general educational experience of undergraduates at the UW?

Basically, the students have two kinds of experiences. Most of them have already been to Italy when they come to these courses and their knowledge of Italy

today clashes with their typical image of Italy based on literature courses that deal with Renaissance or late Renaissance Italian literature or life style. So I think that pulp fiction – because most of this type of literature deals with contemporary Italians and issues like immigration, rape, and sexism in the work place – is much closer to the everyday life either the one that they've experienced when they were in Italy or their everyday life here. I think that they can relate to that very easily. Courses like

Pulp Fiction are a window on contemporary Italy and must be offered. It's also difficult for the students because suddenly they realize that they are reading something that they heard but never read about before. The kind of language that they read in these courses is more of a spoken language that they heard when they were in Italy; but it's a clash with the more typical classical or more historical kind of writing that they're used to in literature courses. Suddenly, they read in

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FACULTY NEWS

“It’s a kind of fiction, a kind of cinema – it’s a kind of culture – that is really more in line with what’s going on today. It’s much easier for the students to appreciate and to understand the literature literally, verbally, to understand the context as well, because these movies deal with immigration, they deal with drugs and prominent problems, like where do you use drugs in Italy, how do you use them, who uses them and why.”



Interview with Claudio Mazzola

(Continued from page 15)

a much easier, much faster way because it’s closer to the way they speak.

Do you think that offering courses like pulp fiction is a necessary enhancement to the Italian program?

Necessary may be too strong a word. But for sure it’s an opportunity that should not be missed. Some people say Dante is necessary; Pulp fiction may not be necessary. Most Italian critics think that such literature is not relevant to the development of Italian fiction. I don’t think so. You know very well that Italian fiction – Italian literature – has always been very reluctant to accept popular fiction, to accept anything that comes from the masses, for the masses. While American fiction – think of magazines like *Pulp Fiction* from the 30s and 40s – America has always been open to this; Italians absolutely not. Academics as well as the general culture have been reluctant to accept it. So I think it’s an interesting openness that should be encouraged. And, what is interesting to me is that through that kind of fiction is where a lot of women got the chance to write and to become known.

Obviously Pulp Fiction is a course that you’ll continue to offer. Have you had any time to do more research on it lately?

Oh yes, absolutely. In fact I interviewed some of these

people. These writers are mainly between their 20s and 30s – so I interviewed some of them and I’m writing an article on this. It’s an area that has to be discovered and I’d like the opportunity to do that.

Critically, there has been a school, so to speak, of what is called pulp fiction in Italy, which are a group of 5 or 6 writers that started in the middle of the 90s to write about the kind of action that had a lot to do with serial killers, with drugs, and things like that. But I don’t want to limit that course to that particular group. It’s a development of a new trend in Italian fiction so it’s a very general, broad label. I’ve been working on this for a while.

I’m also interested in cinema. But I’ve not taught cinema here. I’ve taught it at Michigan State, at Vassar and Holy Cross. When Albert goes on sabbatical I will offer some courses.

What kinds of cinema are you interested in teaching?

Well in general, it’s what we call post WWII cinema, but it’s hard to limit yourself to any particular genre. Albert does something very interesting which is to promote some more recent films – rather than the usual Fellini, Antonioni and so on. They are difficult to acquire in dubbed or subtitled versions. So it’s mostly for people who are majors. It’s easy to get copies of original movies but they’re not subtitled.

Do you include cinema in

your course on Pulp Fiction?

In a way yes – I showed the students two movies that were made by young directors. There weren’t any subtitles so they were very difficult to understand. They were speaking slang very fast. A course that somehow embraces new Italian fiction along with new Italian cinema would be interesting. There are a good number of books that have been made into movies. So it’s not that difficult to find a connection between the two.

Would you say that by offering these types of courses it would be a way for Italian Studies at the UW to connect more easily with the Italian community outside of academia?

Absolutely. It’s a kind of fiction, a kind of cinema – it’s a kind of culture – that is really more in line with what’s going on today. It’s much easier for the students to appreciate and to understand the literature literally, verbally, to understand the context as well, because these movies deal with immigration, they deal with drugs and prominent problems, like where do you use drugs in Italy, how do you use them, who uses them and why. It’s different from the drug problem or even immigration problems in the US. Obviously, these are not unknown problems for American society, but they are to Italian society, relatively speaking. Immigration, for example is very, very new. So it’s easier for the students to see themselves (analyzing) these movies, and criticizing

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FACULTY NEWS

Interview with Claudio Mazzola*(Continued from page 16)*

them. It's a good opportunity to speak about contemporary issues.

Could these movies be promoted in places other than the academic classroom?

The mass market is not distributing these movies because distribution in the US is so conservative with respect to who is making money, can this movie make money... that's why they don't distribute them. But there are tons and tons of movies that are hidden somewhere and that nobody is willing to distribute. Even in Italy, because the mass market has become so similar to the one in the US, Italian movies stay out maximum a week. If you're not right there to go and screen them you lose them. Sometimes people tape them for me, some others buy them when they come out on DVD or VHS.

The best time to go to Italy to screen them is in September or May. So I try to go during those periods, especially in September, right after the Venice film festival is when most of these Italian movies are screened all over the country. Albert is screening some recent ones here, in Seattle, in May.

What, in your opinion, are the

strengths in Italian Studies at the UW?

I think the major strength is the student population. As far as Italian is concerned, the quality of our Italian majors can easily match the quality of schools like Vassar, where I've taught. In fact, we're taking advantage of that interest in Italian literature and culture to promote Italian Studies. We're currently reviewing our curriculum in Italian and revamping it.

To what do you attribute this large interest in Italian culture?

I think there are many reasons. One is the stereotypes that you well know about Italians. The other is perhaps that this is a young area, and in a young city like Seattle some people like to invest in traveling. They like to explore new things – and Italy is probably still fascinating to them. It's a source that provides them with what Seattle doesn't have.

Special Awards

Jack A. Cowan, Chair, French Studies Advisory Board, was decorated with the honor of *Chevalier de l'Ordre National du Mérite* by the Consul Général de France à San Francisco, Monsieur Gérard Coste, at a Ceremony of Recognition here in Seattle on April 2, 2003. As described by the *Agence Consulaire de France à Seattle*, the National Order of Merit is the most recent French Order of Knighthood, created by General de Gaulle in 1963. Second in importance to the Legion of Honor, the National Order of Merit is awarded to those making outstanding contributions in public, civilian or military office, or in the private sector.

John Keeler, FIS Chair, was decorated with the *Chevalier de l'Ordre du Mérite Agricole* at the same ceremony. This award is given by the French Ministry of Agriculture to individuals "having rendered noteworthy services to agriculture through the practice of agriculture, work in its related industries or in public office, or scientific work and agricultural publications." Keeler's award recognized his many publications on French agricultural policy, most notably *The Politics of Neocorporatism in France: Farmers, the State and Agricultural Policy-making in the Fifth Republic* (Oxford University Press, 1987).

The Simpson Center for the Humanities & The Society of Scholars have named **Monica Azzolini Ph.D.** and **Louisa Mackenzie Ph.D.** Research Fellows for 2003-2004 academic year.



Pictured from left to right are Jack Cowan, Jacques Boiroux, Monsieur Gérard Coste and John Keeler.

STUDY ABROAD EXPERIENCES

A GRADUATE EXPERIENCE IN GENEVA— *Contributed by Anne Hélène Miller*

I was at the University of Geneva on the Exchange program during the Academic Year 2001-2002. Overall, my experience was very good and I think this is an excellent program especially for the Academics. The University of Geneva is a prestigious institution, with first-rate libraries. You get to meet or take seminars with world-renowned scholars. I really enjoyed the intellectual atmosphere, which I found particularly stimulating.

During that year, I was registered for a DEA (Diplome d'Etudes Approfondies), which generally precedes the stage of the Dissertation in the Francophone Universities. This is a very valuable diploma and you can complete it within a year. In addition, the Department of French Studies offers you a monthly stipend, good enough to sustain a living in Geneva. You may need some extra cash if you want to do more than just go to school but this is still very nice, as you do not have to do any work for them and can devote all

your time to your personal research. Indeed, Geneva can be an expensive place for foreign students, especially for food and lodging. The persons responsible for the Exchange in Geneva are fully aware of it, so they would automatically ask you if you want to reserve a room at the "Cite Universitaire". This is not luxurious but decent enough to consider it as a good deal. But, even for that, you have to reserve way in advance. Personally, I have a good recollection of my time at the Cite-U. I met a lot of interesting people from all over the world and there was always a lot going on there. My quarter was not always the ideal place to study, and I preferred the quiet ambience of the library for that matter.

On another note Geneva is also a very cultural city. You can find a lot of exciting exhibitions, museums to visit, films, conferences and plays to attend. Some of those events are free or offer student discounts. The city is also very cosmopoli-

tan, and you can hear various languages spoken just about everywhere. Besides, Geneva is not that big; everything is of walking distance downtown and public transportation is quite good.

Finally, Geneva is only fifteen minutes from the French border, or I should say French Alps, so if you like to ski, like myself, this is a great chance. But you can also enjoy the Savoy region or be in Paris in no time with the TGV. That's what I did!



A GRADUATE EXPERIENCE IN PARIS— *Contributed by Jennifer Church*



Sometimes, when I was living in Paris last year, I would leave off reading in the late morning and walk a little ways to Montparnasse, where there was a café that I liked. I would step carefully through the narrow entrance, where to the right stood a coat rack piled with heavy coats and to the left, a teetering plateau of cakes and pies. If I felt rich, I would eat lunch, maybe a salad or the day's special. If I didn't feel rich, which was usually the case, I would order tea and read the newspapers that hung on wooden sticks near the door. I arrived once in the somber hours of a January afternoon, and when the tea I

had ordered arrived at my table with two little cookies on a saucer and a wink from the familiar waiter, I decided that this was my favorite café.

I liked to watch the trains sleek in and out of the Gare Montparnasse. I could see them from the fourth story window of my apartment, until construction workers piled up enough concrete that the building they were erecting obscured my view of the lovely TGVs and the homely regional trains that rolled slowly and endlessly past. I was sad when I could no longer see the trains, but one day I was looking out the

window and the man climbing the ladder on the very tall crane at the construction site waved from midway up the ladder. I thought: "Is he waving to me?" and after a moment, I waved back. Then he began to move his arms wildly and after that, we were friends and waved every day that I was home and sitting at the big wooden table in front of the large east-facing window of my apartment.

I wondered if the crane-man knew not to count on waving to me on Wednesdays and Thursdays. On those days, I left very early in the

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STUDY ABROAD EXPERIENCES

“I would leave off reading in the late morning and walk a little ways to Montparnasse, where there was a café that I liked. I would step carefully through the narrow entrance, where to the right stood a coat rack piled with heavy coats and to the left, a teetering plateau of cakes and pies.”

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morning – when it was still dark in the wintertime – to catch a train from Montparnasse to Versailles, where I taught English at the Université St. Quentin. Until the building next to the train tracks got too high, I could see my apartment windows from the train if I was watchful in the first few moments of the ride. After that, I liked to look out the window and watch the stops tick by as a sort of blurred and familiar poem. When I reached Versailles-St. Quentin I got off. Then I walked through the outdoor mall that had been built not so very long ago – a fitful maze of concrete walkways and shiny storefronts, with music piped in. There was a statue of an enormous seated man about halfway between the station and the university. He seemed oddly out of place amid the shoppers.

I taught English conversation, mostly, and English to students of economics, so I learned a lot from the business pages of *The Herald Tribune*, which was our textbook. I also taught a British civilization course, which was very funny, since the only thing I could definitively say about the British in this context was that they were, indeed, it seemed to me anyway, very civilized. That class required some extra

preparation, so I could appear authoritative about backbenchers and Queen Elizabeth. I assigned them presentations, and absolutely never laughed when a student said something like “the England has a system of constitutional monarchy.”

I was always very happy on Fridays, and usually celebrated by going to a movie just after breakfast. I kept a list of all the movies I went to the whole

things that will help me in the future. I also read frivolously. Someone gave me a collection of Katherine Mansfield’s short stories, and after I read “*Feuille d’automne*” -- the one about the young man who follows the neighbor girl around the market and finally catches up to her and hands her the egg he told her she had dropped -- I lobbed an egg out of my fourth story window. I was very surprised at the loud crack it made when it

hit the pavement at five in the morning on December 23rd. I wrote a postcard that said: “*C’est tellement beau, un oeuf qui s’écrase. Mais beaucoup plus violent qu’on imagine.*” I sent it to a friend.



year, because there were so many, and I began to feel as if I had accomplished quite a lot in seeing them. I bought the weekly entertainment guide early on Wednesday mornings, when it came out, and circled all the movies I planned to see that week, as well as art exhibits and concerts. I looked at the lists of recommended restaurants too, but never went to them, because I was too shy. I just went to my café, or to an Indian restaurant that I liked way up in the eleventh. I liked it because it was cheap and the waiter would tell me about Pondicherry and how much he missed India. Plus the samosas were good.

I read a lot, and many useful

My now-husband asked me to marry him at a restaurant near where I lived in the fifteenth, after a ten-day trip to Morocco, where I became very ill after eating a meaty tagine in a touristy river gorge. After that I could never look at a ceramic tagine dish without feeling nauseous. When we left the restaurant where he asked me to marry him, late on a May night, we looked down the street and the Eiffel Tower was lurching up between the crooked buildings and it was glowing delicately.

STUDY ABROAD EXPERIENCES

AN UNDERGRADUATE EXPERIENCE IN ROME— *Contributed by Katie Waldron*

About a year ago at this time I had my map of Rome stretched across my kitchen table as I charted the locations of the hostel I'd stay in before meeting with my host family, the UW Rome Center, and the homestays of two of the people that I knew before leaving. Two weeks before departure, I was happy to receive a letter from my host mom, Stefania. I was somewhat reassured that I had a "nice" host-mom. My biggest fear in going to Rome was in the uncertainty over my host family. I had no idea what to expect—and I think that the endless possibilities of what they "could be like" was what terrified me most. Stefania told me a little bit about herself and her family, and told me she was very excited to see me. As I got on the plane on March 19, the fear that I had expected was nowhere to be found. Upon arrival, I managed to get to Roma Termini with little hassle as I had been practicing my common sense over the past few weeks! That was the advice given to me by a friend of mine who traveled in Florence the year before! I was on my own, and I had no idea how much I would learn about Italian culture, American culture, or myself in the following three months.

I met Stefania for the first time a week later and the car-ride home from Termini was insane! It was a beautiful welcome to the world of Italian drivers. I realized quickly that not only did Italians think they were riding NASCAR over cobblestone streets, but that my host mom was not used to operating a vehicle! I looked to the back of the car and noticed that the tailgate had flung open, yet she continued driving as cars around us honked and my bags nearly toppled out. The level of confidence that I had in my Italian plummeted the moment stress was added to the situation, and I realized that this was a little different than the Italian spoken

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Pictured are Katie Waldron and her host mom, Stefania DiLoreto in Rome at St. Peter's.

amongst classmates in ITAL 202. The word for "tailgate" just would not come to me, when I finally blurted out "Vetrina!" she looked back and realized. I was introduced to my first few Italian swear words, and finally after driving with the emergency break on and a few good stalls, we arrived safe in EUR with the smell of burned rubber stuck in our hair.

She confirmed with me that the only meat that I ate was really *just* chicken—and then handed me my first course. I went to bed stuffed for the first two weeks until my stomach stretched out a bit, and I couldn't wait for the third course! Veal and prosciutto became relatives of chicken; and needless to say, Italy broadened my horizons on food, and my waistline. The fear that I had over my homestay dissipated the third night that I was there--Stefania came in with hot water and lemon in the middle of the night because I was coughing. She and I grew very close over those next two months, and I looked forward to going home to our nightly conversations over dinner that would last for hours. I left her a note every morning before I left for school, and she revealed before I came back to Seattle that she had kept and corrected

every single one—she wanted to show me how much my Italian had improved and how much those little notes meant to her. She was the mother that I needed while away from home, and I was the daughter that she missed. She told me the night that I arrived that her daughter had moved into a house in Centro, her mother had moved to stay at her sister's house, and her husband who was "away on business," was really away for other reasons. She let me keep my things in the drawers during my independent travel after the program had ended, and she and I spent my last few days in Italy together. As I set on my way for Fiumicino early June 20, I retrieved my packed bags and left on the promise that I would return after graduating from UW. We still communicate through letters and an occasional phone call, and each time she reminds me that her door is always open.

Class Monday through Thursday was like having a home away from home. The first couple of weeks I could not wait to see my English-speaking friends! I went to bed every night with a headache and dead-tired with all of the brain activity I was getting from communicating with Stefania,

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who did not speak English. The relationship that Sabrina Tatta had with all of us was professional and at the same time she became a dear friend to many of us. It was incredibly valuable to have her as a resource as an Ital-Americana! I learned more Italian in ten short weeks than I ever imagined possible.

Our Northern and Southern trips were incredible! We got to see sights that were not full of tourists, stay in beautiful agriturismos, meet wonderful families in Marzi, and have unforgettable meals! Since we were such a small group, it felt like we were a family.

I feel very fortunate to have had such a personable experience with the faculty, as well. Getting to know Donna, John, Lucy and Charlie was great. I especially loved having Charlie there. He is the same age as my brother, and I loved having a "little buddy" that I could pal around with, and someone who kept my homesickness blues away. I really enjoyed getting to know Robbie and Sabrina as people, and I appreciated how available they made themselves to us for matters that

pertained to the classroom and those that extended into the more personal realm. Even though the reward may be tremendous growth, being far away from home can result in some difficult situations. Having individuals that we felt comfortable speaking with was extremely helpful in that process of growth.

On the weekends I took trips around Italy with girls from the program, and we had an incredible time! Someone will say one word and we are all dying of laughter on the floor from a great mem-

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Pictured, from left to right are Spring 2002 Rome students Tina Burrows, Julie Mares, Kalindra Ashleigh, Tammy Durbin, Instructor Sabrina Tatta, Katie Waldron, Melany Grout, and Jenny Bertagni.

ory made on a trip! There are some great stories about the language barrier that we all pretty much succeeded in deconstructing after a few weeks of studying in Rome! After the program was over a few of us traveled with a friend of mine from high school. As we traveled from one town to the next, someone would have to leave as it was time for her to return home.

My return home was bittersweet. I longed for my toilet—even though my thighs got pretty strong while I was

there! I dreamt of my shower—it had a curtain, the water came at a steady pace from the wall so that I could stand straight up, and I didn't have to worry about any other hostel-goers feet who were there before mine. I couldn't wait to see my family. My twenty-two rolls of film, however, do not do Italy justice. I remember a few specific occasions when I looked to my friend Melany and told her that I wished I could just "box a moment up." The men whistling as they shuffle through the streets in solitude with their hands behind their backs, the little girl with a stream of unending

questions on the bus, the two circles of women that I finally saw socializing in public, the lapping of the water against the shore along the Amalfi Coast, the sight of hands in the air in passionate conversation...the pictures don't show the smells, the sounds, nor do they explain the emotion. For this reason, the group of friends that I formed while abroad, also known as the Rome Girls, do our best to get together every once in a while and at least stay updated on each other's lives. It

is freeing to be with one another, as we all went through this growth together -- each in our own separate ways. They are the closest to understanding and remembering the sights we swore to never forget, the music we swayed along with through the days, the tastes we savored on our tongue, the flutter in our hearts with each new experience, who each of us were upon arrival, and the people we are today.

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