



Works Cited

Department of English & Theatre

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Fall 2013

Grads Gone Global

Lingua franca of globalized business and industry, English and its perceived eminence as the native tongue of what many consider the world's only "superpower" can pose challenges for the reflective, ethically-alert student the University of Scranton seeks to recruit and encourage. The influence and impact of



Having completed an M.F.A. in poetry at Portland State University and with teaching experience in literature and creative writing at PSU and the University of Portland, Sara is employed by El Centro de Idiomas at the Universidad del Istmo in rural Oaxaca.

English, for good or ill, can become an especially thought-provoking issue for Scranton graduates who elect to go abroad to teach English as a second (or more) language to students in other nations. With this possible tension in mind, *Works Cited* asked several recent grads who majored in English or minored in English or Writing to share some thoughts on their experience as English language teachers abroad.

Writes **Sara Sutter**, Scranton native and '07 grad with a major in Philosophy and minor in English, "As a political idealist, I've rejected the ESL enterprise as capitalist cultural whitewashing and the proselytizing of a too-powerful hegemonic language." Nonetheless, she says, she finds herself this year in Oaxaca, Mexico, "teaching English. Sort of."

In Oaxaca, a linguistically rich area of Mexico claiming at least eight languages descended from the Aztecs in addition to Español, Sutter admits to finding it "refreshing" that much of her local community is "largely apathetic to learning English." At least, she goes on to clarify, apathetic in terms of viewing English as a commodity. When she encounters students who treat course material as a "debit card, something within me dies a little." Happily, she reports, it's more often the case that she has "students and colleagues who, if they want to learn English, want to learn because they think the language sounds like music or because they would like to be able to converse with English speakers at the beach. It's not Harvard, but it feels human."

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Congratulations!

Teresa **Grettano**, assistant professor, is the newly appointed director of First-Year Writing. Jim **Shygelski**, Theatre '14, was presented with the Michael B. Bagdzinski Memorial Scholarship at the conclusion of the September 21st performance of *The 39 Steps*. The department welcomes three new adjunct professors, Virginia **Grove**, Julie **Lartz**, and Dawn D'Aries **Zera**, and belatedly welcomes Emily **Dennison** who joined our teaching faculty last year. Amye **Archer**, the new Writing Center Coordinator, is also teaching for us. Thank you and welcome to all! 📖

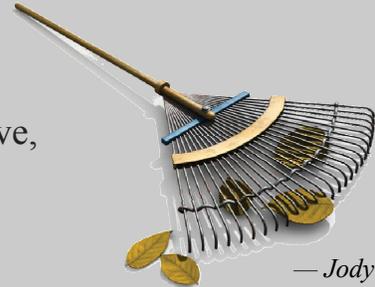


Notes from the Chair

Haiku Explaining Why The Fall 2013 Chair's Column is So Short:



The autumn leaves are
done. My sabbatical leave,
thank God, continues.



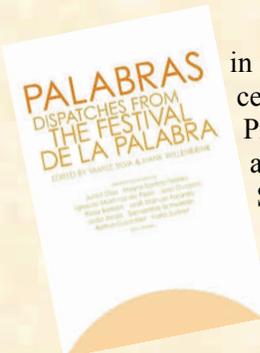
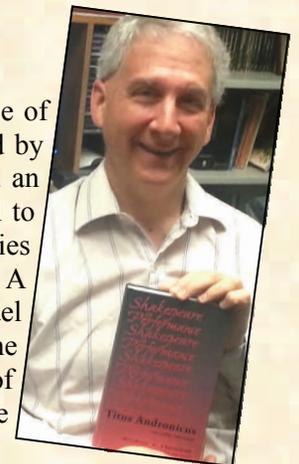
— Jody DeRitter



University Players in rehearsal on the visually appealing set of *We Won't Pay, We Won't Pay*, a tonally ambitious farce by Nobel playwright Dario Fo, translated by Ron Jenkins. The production directed by guest artist José Zayas enjoyed a well-received run in late October and early November. 📖

Faculty Book Publications

Michael **Friedman**, professor, reports he's very pleased to see the recent appearance of his *Titus Andronicus*, a monograph in the Shakespeare in Performance series published by Manchester University Press. "It was about three and a half years in the making and an enjoyable project," he reports. "With the support of the university I was able to travel to Canada, England, and New York to explore documents in various archives and libraries and to view a number of filmed and taped productions of Shakespeare's grisly drama." A recognized authority on filmed and staged productions of Shakespeare's plays, Michael acknowledges a debt to one of his mentors, noted scholar Alan C. Dessen. "He did the first edition on *Titus Andronicus* and recommended me for this updated consideration of productions done during the past twenty years or so." The new book identifies the authors as "Michael D. Friedman with Alan Dessen." 📖



Hank **Willenbrink**, assistant professor of Theatre, and Yamile Silva, assistant professor in the Department of World Languages & Cultures, were recently in Puerto Rico to celebrate the publication of their edited anthology of short fiction published by NoPassport Press, founded by Caridad Svich. The anthology features English translations from Spanish and Portuguese of stories by many writers from the Caribbean, Central and Latin America, Spain and Catalonia including Junot Diaz, Aurora Arias, and Mayra Santos Febres. Says Hank, "Yamile and I enjoyed the opportunity to work with translators eager to make available to English readers a variety of short fiction by diverse voices from the Americas and Iberia." 📖

John **McGill**, English '12, and Matt **Porto**, English '12, with U.S. Poet Laureate and Detroit native Philip Levine after a recent reading on Long Island. 📖



Grads (Continued from page 1)

Concludes Sara, “I’m surprised and grateful that this experience of teaching English and learning Español is giving me real insight into what is too often dismissed as a cliché, ‘Language is living.’”

Meanwhile, **Andrew Milewski**, a '13 grad (*photo on p. 1*) with a major in Psychology and minors in English and Philosophy, is completing his fourth month in the Republic of Korea where he teaches English in a “hakwon,” a private elementary-level academy and “a for-profit machine,” Andrew says, “dedicated to making its students *learn*.” Many Korean parents, like parents in Japan, China, and elsewhere in Asia, place great importance on education and urge their children to excel academically. They’re often willing, he explains, to make financial sacrifices to enroll their children in a hakwon. “Hakwons are not without controversy,” Andrew says. “Young Korean boys and girls put in very long schooldays, and recent studies suggest the long hours and the pressures to succeed can rob students of their natural zest for living and their creativity.”

Sympathetic to demands placed on very young children, Andrew says, “When I can go into the classroom and begin by making the children laugh, I feel good. When I hear them in the hallways or on the street using of their own volition an English phrase or remark I taught them, that’s the best feeling. In class I try to acknowledge each student as a colleague as we work together to solve a problem, whatever it is. That’s

the kind of atmosphere I encountered with my University of Scranton professors, and my pedagogy is indebted to them.”

Andrew is one of nine Scranton students or alums currently under consideration for a Fulbright and he hopes to pursue his interest in teaching ESL in Vietnam next year.

Matt Porto, English '12, also has experience teaching English in Asia, having completed a year of working in a “cram school” in Tainan, Taiwan. As in Korea, he notes, students in Taiwan often put in long hours, attending an “after school” school for lessons in English. “I taught approximately 100 students of



various ages including a wonderful class of kindergarten-age kids.” In addition to the pleasure of working with young children, Matt reports that the abundant and carefully prepared food he encountered in Taiwan was a major delight. Having purchased a small motorcycle upon arrival in his “hometown” of Tainan, the island nation’s oldest city located on its southern coast, he was able to enjoy the natural beauty of the Central Mountain Range on the weekends.

Concluding his reflection on a year of teaching English abroad, Matt writes, “At times a big business mentality invaded the workplace, creating what I perceived as a conflict of interest. I realized, however, that I had the opportunity to shape a humane and caring environment in the classroom and I worked to be the best teacher of English I could be.” 📖

CLOSE READING



Eric **Pencek**, English '10, is pursuing a Ph.D. in English at Boston College. Michael **O'Steen**, associate professor, directed *The 39 Steps* in September. The hilarious send-up of the Hitchcock classic featured John **Niemiec**, Communication '14, Keri **Irace**, Theatre '16, Julia **Ekwall**, Theatre '14, Jim **Shygelski**, Theatre '14, Megan **Lasky**, Communication '16, and Cillian **Byrne**, Theatre '16. Teresa **Grettano**, assistant professor, defended her dissertation "Subjects of Terror: Rhetorical Education after 9/11" and took her Ph.D. in English Studies from Illinois State University. As the behest of Provost Baillie, Teresa was one of two University

representatives at the New American Colleges & Universities "Innovation Summit." Brianna **Noll**, English/Honors '05, is completing her dissertation, a collection of poems, at University of Illinois-Chicago and teaching composition and an introduction to poetry course. Brianna has new and forthcoming poems in online versions of *The Kenyon Review* and *The Missouri Review*. She also serves as poetry editor of *The Account*, a magazine she and some colleagues launched in October. Len **Gougeon**, professor and Distinguished University Fellow, has an essay, "Emerson and Race," in a collection titled *Emerson in Context* published by Cambridge University Press. Hank **Willenbrink**, assistant professor, had his play *The Boat in the Tiger Suit* produced at The Brick Theatre in Brooklyn in August. José **Zayas**, a frequent guest artist in our department, directed the Equity showcase. Chelsea A. **Cannon**, English '11, has a Teaching Assistantship at the University of Maine where she pursues an MA in English. She says she is blissfully exhausted. Sarah **Suwak**, English '09, works as a Medical Assistant for a private internal medicine practice in Scranton. Joe **Koivisto**, English '09, works as a library associate at the Martin Luther King Memorial Library in Washington, D.C. Sarah **Evans**, English/Communication Minor '12, pursues the PhD in Composition and Cultural Rhetoric at Syracuse University while teaching a public speaking course. In early November the Academic Theatre Program in collaboration with the Schemel Forum hosted *In Conversation: Paul Holdengraber of the New York Public Library and Playwright Douglas Carter Beane*. Beane's most recent plays include two 2013 Tony Award-winning productions, *The Nance* starring Nathan Lane and a newly revised book for the Rodgers and Hammerstein *Cinderella*. Michael **Flynn**, Theatre '10, works as an assistant to Beane. In October the Theatre Program hosted a special production of *To Escape My Fate*, a play based on the life of Stephen Crane written by John **McInerney**, professor emeritus and former chair of the English department. John Meredith **Hill**, professor, was a panelist and reader at the Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month (May) event sponsored by the Asian Studies Program and the Taipei Cultural Center featuring Yale poet-in-residence and professor emeritus Cheng Chou-Yu. Michael **Friedman**, professor, has an essay "Where Was He Born? Speak! Tell me!: Julie Taymor's *Tempest*, Hawaiian Slavery, and the Birther Controversy" in the Fall 2013 issue of *Shakespeare Bulletin*. Gemma **Williams**, English '10, has earned her MLS from Drexel University and has started a position as Director of Marian Sutherland Kirby Library in Pittston, PA. Gemma reports being thoroughly engaged in her work. Thomas **Haener**, English '10/Masters in Education '12, has begun teaching at Central Jersey College Prep Charter School in Somerset, NJ. It is a small 6th to 12th grade school, where Tom teaches 6th grade ELA (reading and writing). 



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Alums and Students! If you have info to share in the Newsletter, please mail to the address on the mailing panel, or send via email to: lynn.scramuzza@scranton.edu
Look for us online at: <http://www.scranton.edu/academics/cas/english/>

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