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Opening letter from the Head

Dear Friends,

We are so grateful to have a community of active and keenly engaged graduate students and faculty colleagues. This issue of *Lingua Franca* amply demonstrates the kind of academic and civic citizen that a liberal arts education strives to foster: an intellectually curious, emotionally intelligent, and politically aware citizen who contemplates the meanings that underlie current and past events, and also who engages in principled actions in order to better our society and circumstances.

As Prof. Stinchcomb states in her interview, education is paramount in developing citizens who think freely and unconstrained by ideologies.

The word “education” comes from the Latin word meaning “to lead out”: education leads us out of the prison of self, and puts us in conversation with people and ideas far away in space and time. The study of languages other than our first language is a critical piece of this formation, and leads us out of our individual small world and into ever-larger realms. Our SLC graduate students exemplify this principle. Pergamus! (Let us proceed!)



Madeleine M. Henry
Professor of Classics and Head
School of Languages and Cultures

Opening remarks from the SLC Graduate Student Committee President



Dear all,

On behalf of the Graduate Student Committee, I welcome you to the newest issue of *Lingua Franca*.

I hope that you will find great value in its content and that it will inspire you, as well as aid you in your own goals to grow.

I want to thank all the members of the Newsletter Committee: Ana María Carvajal, Hernán Matzkevich, and Jason Wright, and our Editor, Ricardo Quintana Vallejo, for their terrific job during these months. It is a great honor for me to work with such amazing fellow graduate students!

Furthermore, I want this newsletter to be valuable for all of you, so please, share your feedback and suggestions to help us improve!

I wish you pleasant reading,

Valentina Concu
Ph.D Student and SLC GSC President
School of Languages and Cultures

Free Speech and Diversity

The unsolved issue on Free Speech and the Respect of Diversity

An interview with Prof. Dawn F. Stinchcomb

By Ana María Carvajal, Valentina Concu, Hernán Matzkevich, and Jason Wright

According to the *Southern Poverty Law Center*, in the United States there are 892 hate groups that are currently active. This website reports an increase of 14% in total number of hate groups in respect to 2014. The current policies in the United States protect the hateful speech of these groups, which are for the most part directed at racial, ethnic, and LGBTQ minorities.



Picture courtesy of the Southern Poverty Law Center



Ku Klux Klan members march down Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C. in 1928

Indiana alone counts 16 groups in total, 3 of which are active *Ku Klux Klan* groups in Kokomo, South Bend, and Muncie. The Klan is one of the oldest and most infamous groups in the United States. While today Klan activities go unnoticed for many people, their presence is still very real. This, however, was not always the case. Klan members once marched and rallied all throughout the United States in order to spread their message.

The following interview with Professor Stinchcomb gives us a window into what it was like to be a black university student during this time.

How do you perceive the current climate of inclusion and diversity (sexual, racial, religious) in academia? Have there been notable changes since you were an undergraduate to what the situation is now in American universities?

Speaking in general terms of the academic world, and not specifically of any institution, I have to say that there are still a lot of problems, things we have yet to address. There are still many wrongs in society, and those wrongs affect who applies to go to our schools, and whether they stay or not in school. We have to do a better job at addressing that situation.

But I also have to acknowledge that, yes, there have been major changes from the time when I was an undergraduate. I went to private religious schools, and I left school in 1988. After that, I went to study in Spain, and that trip changed my view on a lot of things. It was my first experience outside the country, and I could feel that over there, people were less prejudiced, in general, about things like race, background, or sexual orientation. Many of them, for instance, would tell me that I was the first black person they had ever met. But they were open about discussing their ideas of what that meant, and they were willing to listen to my own opinions. After that trip, I came back home and reflected on all the things that disappointed me about higher education. So I wrote a letter to the president of my school expressing my inconformity with him for not addressing what was clearly overt racist behavior on our campus. Among many issues, I questioned the use of the Confederate

flag. Growing up in Columbia, SC, I had felt that the flag was a symbol of hate more than anything else. It was understood by the African American community as a symbol of hate towards them, although those who used it claimed it to be a symbol of heritage. But it was clearly a warning sign for blacks, for example, when a



Confederate Battle Flag Flying at South Carolina State Capitol, Columbia, South Carolina.

house was for sale in a predominantly white neighborhood, and all of the sudden, the neighbors would put out their confederate flags. It was clear then that it was a symbol of hate, an unwelcoming message to potential African American residents. So, on the university campus the flag was used constantly, and it was part of the display of a particular fraternity. But there were many other incidents.

Could you tell us more about those incidents? What things were happening that could be considered as racist behavior?

I recall, for instance, an episode that happened during a soccer game. I have always loved soccer, and I remember I was the only African American on campus to ever go to the soccer games. However, because it was the last game of the season and our school was playing its biggest rival, I invited my friends, the other



1963: Governor George Wallace attempts to block the enrollment of black students at the University of Alabama.

three African American girls in the entire dorm to the game. Our rivals, another private school, had sought Brazilians to play for their team. When we were at the game, we started to hear some guys from our school screaming insults to the black Brazilians on the other team, and specifically the N-word. It was not an isolated yell. They were screaming constantly, for as long as the black players would be in possession of the ball. So my friends left the stadium. What made things worse was that the president of the student body of the school was sitting with the men that were proffering the insults, so he certainly heard them, but he didn't do anything to stop them. Some of the students, however, did express their disapproval of what had happened, and wrote about it in the school's newspaper. The episode began a long

discussion on campus, with articles being written and responded to all involved. Those first students that complained about this racist behavior, and I must say that they were white, ended up leaving school because they were extremely unhappy with the response they got from the president. Eventually, all black students on campus –we were less than 30– got together. We met with some professors too, among them the first African American professor on campus. I strongly voiced my opinion on all of this, but after our meeting it was clear that there was not much that we could do to prevent that kind of behavior. So that's why, months later, I wrote that letter to the school's president, saying that I thought he should have done something. I felt that I needed to state that the school was wrong in not addressing those issues.

What was the president's response?

He invited me to campus to meet with him. It was the worst conversation I have had in my life. He basically agreed to meet with me because he would not write what he had to tell me. His position was, basically, that the families of those offending students were the ones paying for the school, and were the trustees of the school. So there was nothing he could do about it. Money mattered more than anything.

So I do think that things have changed since then. I know of many schools that pride themselves on their appreciation of diversity. They recruit students, faculty and staff with different backgrounds precisely because they want those different worldviews and opinions. Generally speaking, the academic world still faces the challenge of making everyone feel welcome and wanted on university campuses. And on the other hand, academia needs to be constantly reminded of its commitment to social justice. But the situation now is very

different from the one I experienced as an undergraduate student. It is definitely better.

How about your experience growing up? What was it like to be an African American girl in SC? When did you experience discrimination for the first time?

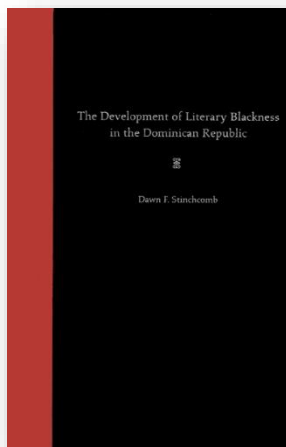
The first time I felt I was different was in kindergarten. My family had recently moved from New York City to South Carolina, and we were moving around a lot. I remember I went to 5 different schools in 5 years. Back then, schools had some toys that students could take home with them for the weekend, and then return them. For some reason, I really liked the kaleidoscope, but I remember the teacher would not let me take it home. Now, in my five-year-old memory, I remember a comment the teacher made saying something like “you people move too much, and you don’t bring things back when you borrow them”. So I went home and I repeated that to my mother. I don’t know what conversation occurred between her and the teacher, but the following week I could finally bring home the kaleidoscope. Eventually, I asked my mom why the teacher wouldn’t let me take home the kaleidoscope at first. My mother answered with an ugly truth that most African American children receive from a very early age. She said, “well, it’s because you are black. She thinks you won’t bring it back to school because you are black”. Of course, I didn’t know what that meant at the time. But I felt that there was something in me that my teacher didn’t like, and it was related to my being black. It started there, at age 5, but of course I felt something similar repeatedly as I was growing up.

You have served as member of the Advisory Committee on Equity, and you have been both a member and Chair for the Diversity Action Committee. What efforts are being made on this campus to foster diversity, inclusion and equity?

I only served briefly as chair of the Diversity Action Committee, and my work with it was short. However, I was happy to see that the people who are part of it really want to be there, and they want to see change and improvement. Some of the Chair’s responsibilities were to interview all candidates for heads of departments and deanships. And the Committee also came up with ideas that were passed on to the deans for ways in which to improve diversity. I understand that things have changed now, but I have to say that during my term I didn’t see a lot of action. The Committee got together to argue and debate. We had lots of different ideas on how to improve and celebrate diversity. But when those ideas were passed on, and when it was obvious that they required money, then they were not implemented. I left the Committee in 2011, so I know that things have changed since then, and for the better. For instance, I know they have sponsored talks on diversity that have been held on campus. However, I still think that it has the potential to generate more impact. Also, as faculty members, we need to create the space for the conversation on diversity to happen in our classrooms. That can be challenging, but it needs to happen.

Now, my favorite committee that I have ever served on is the Advisory Committee on Equity. I loved being able to participate in change and making academic life better for

people. Part of the Committee's mission is to review when one person accuses another person of robbing them of the opportunity to enjoy their education at Purdue. These could be cases of sexual harassment, racial discrimination, prejudices against sexual orientation, among others. By Federal law, all universities have to form this kind of committee, and it has to report these cases. Even though members are chosen randomly, I felt honored to be part of this committee, because it allowed me to make real changes, real improvements.



Prof. Stinchcomb latest book: The Development of Literary Blackness in the Dominican Republic published by the University Press of Florida in 2004.

It seems like your professional work, which deals with topics such as race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality in Latin American literature, is aligned with your own sense of social responsibility. How do you connect your urge for social justice with literature as a professional endeavor?

For me it is all encompassed. My research is the result of my particular philosophy of life. My work is my life, and my life is my work. It is not a switch that I can turn off. But literature came to me as a sort of accident. I originally started in Education. Throughout my life I had many awful experiences with bad teachers, so

I determined to become a teacher myself, so that I could help all those students that felt disenfranchised. And when I came back from Spain in 1989, I felt that there was this whole other world that some students in SC knew nothing about. So my idea was to become this beacon of light to show my students that there was something better out there, and to provide them with an opportunity to have a glimpse of the rest of the world. My plan was to get a doctoral degree in Education, and stay in that area, so that I could help others through teaching. However, the circumstances changed those plans. I ended up applying with a friend to the University of Tennessee, but I didn't know we were applying to literature. I assumed I was going to learn how to teach. But I ended up studying literature, which always seemed a bit arcane to me. And of course, I felt like an outsider, and it took me a long time to understand that literature can reflect life, and that it does not simply occur in some vacuum. Writers reflect their culture, and their work is an expression of their society and their time. So then I decided to focus on a kind of literature that really engaged in talking about life. I realize that all literature does that, in a way, but some schools, some movements and periods of time do it more directly than others. I became a fan of *arte comprometido*, that is the point from which I work, and that is also where I will stay. I am focused on the message, much more than on the form of literature. I use literature as a tool for change. It has the power to change me and to change students.

Could you tell us what was your experience as an African American woman while you were an undergraduate student in South Carolina? I'm thinking about a story you shared with us last semester, in which members of the Ku Klux Klan were able to manifest in your campus at the time.

At the time, it was the late eighties; it was common for the Klan to hold rallies in SC. Since I lived in the suburbs, it was not something that I was familiar with, but the university was downtown. The Klan would get a license from the local government to have their rallies in downtown Columbia. And although it had never touched me before, it was inevitable for me, having been brought up in SC, to deal with the presence of the Klan. I had several classmates who had family members that were part of it. And everyone knew about it. Some of them were very proud of it. So, when I was in college, the female dorms were right on the border of Main Street. The Klan marched through the town's Main Street, if I remember correctly, the first Saturday of every month. So the university would alert us, and they suggested that, if anyone was sensitive to their message, it would be better for them to leave campus. It was precisely this position of compliance of the university that bothered me. I remember



Dr. Samuel Green in opposing President Truman's Civil Rights Program, speaks at a Klan demonstration in Wrightsville, Ga., March 2, 1948.

talking about this one day with an African American substitute teacher, and she told me that it used to be much worse before. She told me that not too long before, the members of the Klan used to drive at night around the streets with their hoods on, with the sole purpose of frightening the African Americans

that were passing by, perhaps going back home from work. Their intention was to let blacks know they were always watching, and they were the ones in power. So she was thankful that things had gotten a little better, because she felt that during the daytime they were not as menacing as during the night.

However, I remember feeling that they were, in fact, very menacing. But the Klan was protected by the freedom of speech. I have only recently started to accept the real meaning of freedom of speech, because I understand that if we put limits on what people say, then the day will come when someone will do the same to me.

It seems like there is a serious debate going on precisely now around the concept of Freedom of Speech. In some Western European countries, such as Spain or Italy, hate speech is perceived as dangerous, and it is banned by law. It seems that, in a way, hate speech is protected in the United States by this broad category of Freedom of Speech. Do you see in the academic world a debate around freedom of speech and its plausible reconciliation with diversity and inclusiveness?

Yes, as I said, I am only now starting to understand and accept the importance of freedom of speech. The problem for me arises when a particular group's rights of expression are more protected than those of other groups. I had an experience like this when I was teaching in high school. After a difficult season of standardized tests for my students, I decided to get for each of them a set of Guatemalan worry dolls. The dolls came with a little piece of paper that explains the ancient tradition of the dolls, and how they are supposed to take your worries away after you whisper your problems to them and then place them under your pillow. So I thought it

was a perfect gift for my students after a stressful time for them. I had 150 students, and I gave a bag with the dolls to each one of them. I don't know why, but one of my students decided to strap the bag of dolls around her neck and wear it, and she wore it to a church function. The minister asked her about the bag, and the student explained the Guatemalan worry dolls' legend to him. But the minister rejected her explanation and presupposed they were voodoo dolls, assuming that, because I am African American they had to be voodoo dolls. Eventually I came under suspicion for teaching my students about religion and witchcraft, to the point that my freedom of instructing my students on Latin American culture became very limited. If I wanted to teach them about Virgen de Guadalupe or Virgen de Fatima, I was questioned for hurting the sensitivities of my students and their families. This to me seemed very ironic, because no one seemed to have cared much about my sensitivities only a few years earlier whenever the Klan rallied right next to my dorm, screaming hateful messages directed to me and my people.

So for me it felt like the Klan's freedom of speech mattered so much that I had to accommodate to them, even though I was paying for my right to be on that campus. Their freedom of speech was more important than mine. If I intended to teach my students about a different culture, I had to be constantly censored, and people wanted me to be silenced. But whenever it was the other way around, whenever it was me feeling hurt by the hateful speech of the Klan, the same logic did not apply. Their right was more protected than mine.

But there is another aspect to freedom of speech that is important to consider. I think people sometimes tolerate the expression of very vile opinions in support of freedom of speech, but those vile opinions can only exist in places where they are permitted to exist. I am talking here about the reactions of communities towards a particular discourse. So, for example, it would be very difficult for the Klan to organize a rally like the ones they held in Columbia in New York City. My guess is that the people there would not tolerate that. People would strongly react against their message of hate. So I would really like for us to have communities that would not tolerate hateful messages. However, that is a long process that can only be achieved through education.



Members of the Greensboro Coalition for Unity and Justice show their banners during an anti Ku Klux Klan rally in downtown Greensboro, North Carolina Saturday, June 6, 1987. (AP Photo/Bob Jordan)

CLA NEWS

An interview with Dean Reingold

By Ana María Carvajal

In the year that you have been working at Purdue, what did you find is the current situation of the SLC? What are the challenges you have found that are shared with other CLA departments, and what are specific to SLC?

One of the challenges that the SLC has, and every unit has is pressure around undergraduate enrollment: a loss of credit hours and a loss of majors for many years now. That is a common challenge that we all face, and it has to be one of our top priorities, in order to find ways to turn that around. Regarding the current situation, I have really enjoyed learning about some of the creative efforts that are underway in SLC. There are some innovations, particularly in educational programming and the incorporation of technology into language acquisition. I think that is fabulous work, and I have worked with Madeleine Henry, Head of the SLC, to explore ways to support these innovative efforts, particularly in our educational programs.

You have identified CLA's consistent low enrollment as one of the major challenges that the college has to face. How can the faculty and we, the graduate students in SLC, support your planned strategies to increase enrollment?



David A. Reingold is the Justin S. Morrill Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Professor of Sociology at Purdue University.

We are trying to pursue this goal on a number of fronts, since we don't think there is a single strategy to achieve this goal. We announced last year the Innovate program that provides support for faculty members who want to advance new efforts in undergraduate education. We have had some success, although we are still midstream. Faculty members are proposing ideas, and we are trying to marshal the resources to support their efforts. For instance, there is a new certificate in Medical Humanities that Professor Wendy Kline in History has advanced. Also, Professors Rebekah Klein-Pejšová and Christopher Yeomans in History and Philosophy, respectively, moved forward a certificate in Human Rights. They are building off our existing curriculum –which means we are not creating something from scratch–, but they are responding to issues of the day and applying the liberal arts disciplines to help solve challenges that have more meaning to undergraduate students. The Innovate program is very important. This year we are focusing on gateway courses, experiential or project-based learning, and learning communities. We are challenging faculty to re-imagine introductory courses,

so that they can capture students' interest early in their academic careers when they might consider a liberal arts minor or major. We are encouraging faculty to design learning communities that give students an opportunity to live in residence halls and have continuity around intellectual interests and passions. We also want to support faculty who will bring experiential learning opportunities, such as project-based learning, into the classroom. Hopefully, all these efforts will continue to make progress.

Another effort is the proposal for Cornerstone, an integrated program in Liberal Arts. Right now, students have to take certain classes in order to fulfill their core requirements. There is little continuity to the choices students make and it is unclear whether or not students are being exposed to foundational materials, regardless of their major. To address this, we are trying to bring together a more coherent option. Students who opt in would experience a more grounded approach to our disciplines, and they would be taught by full-time faculty. There has been great interest in this proposal by partners across campus. I am hopeful that, if we do it right, students in the program will be able to satisfy from half to maybe even two thirds of the university's core curriculum, as well as a large portion of the CLA curriculum. I think this initiative has the potential to attract more students into our fields and disciplines.

Another effort designed to address our enrollment and credit hour decline is to allow students the option of a second major without the degree. This practice is common at other peer institutions. Students in one college getting a degree can get a secondary major without getting the degree from a second college. So, for instance, a student could get a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering, and she could also get a major in Spanish without getting a B.A. in Spanish. Purdue has never done

that. But we have been exploring this idea, and we will see if it fits our institution's goals. These are a number of different ideas we are currently developing. I mentioned in my opening year letter the possibility of 3-year degree options. We have one in Communications, and it is very innovative. I think the big opportunity for us with 3-year degree options is that we could marry them up with graduate programs and other degree programs, both on this campus and with partner institutions, both in the US and around the world. Those 3-year degree options could become the pathway to the life that someone is trying to pursue. We are pushing forward on all of these efforts. And we welcome ideas from faculty, students and staff.

On the 2016 Roadmap, you propose to develop a “more entrepreneurial, innovative mindset” within CLA. What are some of your plans for SLC on this issue?

We are surrounded by very smart people in the college. The faculty and students are very thoughtful, and have many good ideas. Part of our job is to create an environment that will allow people to pursue those ideas, and to be invested in a variety of different enterprises and efforts. In many ways, there are a lot of good ideas percolating around SLC, such as language testing and the oral practice/language assessment software, Speak Everywhere. And there are also a number of opportunities in our backyard that we could pursue. For instance, Indiana is a manufacturing state, and a large portion of that is auto-manufacturing. Many of the auto-manufacturing firms and the auto-supply parts firms are Japanese. A challenge some of these companies' face is running a U.S.-based organization whose parent company is Japanese. The language

and cultural barriers are substantial. But many of these firms are not aware of our Japanese program as a potential resource. So, this could be an opportunity for us. With the administration, our goal is to encourage and empower faculty to explore these opportunities, and I suspect many others.

This is connected to my next question. There are several initiatives that come from faculty and graduate students in SLC that benefit the Greater Lafayette community. These projects are in alignment with the goals of a land-grant institution, have the potential to generate revenue, and they also make visible a pragmatic aspect of the Liberal Arts that is not always acknowledged. How do you envision outreach, extension, and service learning projects as possibilities for CLA in general, and for SLC in particular?

I hear a lot about the translation work we do, as well as the support we offer to a variety of local schools and other important community institutions. These are important efforts for the College and the University. The Dean's office is here to help support faculty and graduate students who want to go out there and try to build something with local community partners. Our resources are not unlimited, so we have to make difficult choices, but I would invite all of our friends from SLC who have ideas to reach out. They can contact me or one of our associate deans (Wei Hong, Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs; Melissa Remis, Associate Dean for Research & Graduate Education; and Joel Ebarb, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education and International Programs). All of us want to find ways to support efforts along those lines. Please reach out to us and give us a chance to find ways to be supportive and make this happen.

You have mentioned the need to work alongside STEM programs to strengthen the Liberal Arts. What strategies do you have in mind for SLC?

Well, the vast majority of this campus, in terms of the undergraduates, has no language requirement. I have been trying to make the case to other Deans, and the Provost, and the Board of Trustees, and the President that we could be doing a disservice to the students on this campus by not building the expectation of a language requirement. And we should encourage students, in different ways, to become proficient in a language. I have always thought that one of the best ways to learn your own native language is to become more immersed in a foreign language. It forces you to learn a lot of the mechanics of your native language. I have been very impressed with the SLC coursework that connects language with topics in science, technology, engineering and business. These efforts are getting more students to take language classes and that is important. I applaud our faculty and colleagues who have worked to advance those new courses. We need to remind others that, at least in my experience, the only way to really understand another culture is to be fluent in its language. If you don't have the language, you'll never fully understand and appreciate all of the nuances of the cultural dimension. I am confident that over time, more and more parts of the campus will come to appreciate this point. We have a lot of work to do in to change the status quo.

Could you talk to the SLC community about the need to make a budget reduction, and could you tell us what are the expected improvements that may come out of it?

I was delighted to see that the stipends in SLC were increased. I set an expectation that we would increase stipends to at least \$15,000. SLC exceeded this expectation and graduate student stipends are at \$15,750. I applaud these efforts. When I took this job and looked at the stipend levels for graduate students across the Big 10, in just about every single field we were dead last. We had a taskforce of heads that produced a report containing some good recommendations on how to address that situation. From the competitiveness standpoint for our graduate programs, having the lowest stipends among our peer institutions was not a good place to be. The increase in student stipends and an emphasis on research assistantships across the college are moving us in the right direction to make our graduate programs more competitive, while placing graduate education at the center of our research mission. And frankly, there is the basic human dimension to this problem. Many of our graduate students are struggling to make ends meet. So, our efforts in graduate education are designed to address these issues. We have made some good progress on that front.

Additionally, when coming to graduate school, teaching is an important part of preparation, in terms of graduate training to get into PhD programs. But we are a research institution. We are a Comprehensive Research University, so graduate education should be a blend of teaching and research. One of the other expectations that I established was to have us work towards at least 20% of research based assignments for graduate students. Some units have been able to get further along than others, but I think in SLC there has been some good faith movement, which I applaud, and want to continue to support.

It is also important to note that we have vast differences in the support has been provided for graduate programs in the college. Some graduate programs are

receiving 10 to 15 times the amount that others are receiving, and we need to ask why, and if that makes sense. The amount of money that SLC has this year is around the same amount it had a couple of years ago –if I remember correctly, 2013 or 2014–. So the amounts are not really shifting in dramatic ways. But I can understand that anything that is less than what you had the year before is undesirable. Having said that, I see that we have made a lot of progress, and I want to applaud everybody for that. I am confident that we can continue to make progress in getting our stipends into an even more competitive place across the college, trying to get more of a blend of experiences for our graduate students in terms of research and teaching, and continuing to make graduate education one of the central drivers of the research profile of the college.

Are there any other ways in which SLC could generate its own resources? What could be other possibilities besides increasing enrollment, and the number of students in majors and minors?

In the sciences the classic model is based on some institutional support for graduate students in the first year or during the start, but after a while, faculty members have to pick up the entire cost for their graduate students through extramural grant activity. We have a very different model and tradition in the humanities, the social sciences and the arts. Our CLA faculty has outstanding research productivity and we can build on this research productivity in our efforts to secure external research grants.

Professor Melissa Remis led a fabulous effort to analyze some of the research programs we have had from 3 to 5 years. The goal of these programs is to assist faculty members in the development of

their scholarship with the hope that they would frequently lead to efforts that could secure extramural support. External grants can be used to support graduate students and helps create a climate of intellectual inquiry that benefits faculty members, the department, the school, the college, the campus, and all involved. The data she collected and her analysis suggests that these programs make a difference. These programs increase the likelihood of a faculty member to compete for extramural support. And at the same time, those faculty members who compete and win these awards, are more productive in terms of their publications, in terms of their presentations and number of publication and, among other indicators. As a result of this analysis, the Vice President for Research has agreed to continue support for these programs through 2020.

On a different topic, could you comment on some of the efforts that are being made at the CLA to foster diversity and prevent hate speech and harassment?

I wanted here to remind you about a sad incident with one of our SLC graduate students, who was harassed and singled out for his sexual orientation by a preacher that often visits our campus.

It is very disheartening to see our students, our faculty and members of our community subject to uncivil discourse. I support freedom of expression, as I think that our commitment to freedom of expression is a good thing, and what universities should be about. But how that bumps into these kinds of incidents, such as the one we had last year are very troubling. I met with our colleague in SLC and did everything I could to support him and demonstrate our commitment to him

and his time here, and his value to the college. And we will continue to be actively engaged with members of our community who are subject to these types of interactions. I would like to encourage everybody to exercise our own freedom of expression. Our voices are important. It's important to speak out, and make it clear that we don't condone uncivil language.

Now, regarding graduate student diversity, and diversity among undergraduates as well as faculty, we have room for improvement. I know the Provost has been working in a very serious and deliberate way in trying to cultivate a more inclusive climate and to advance diversity initiatives. And we fully support him. There was a lot of confusion in the spring over some information that was circulated by some of our colleagues, who were trying to raise a very important issue by highlighting some data on levels of diversity among graduate students across the college. That information, however, was not accurate. In response to it, we started to track down the evidence we have in official records on graduate student diversity. I worked with each of the Heads of Departments to share with them what the institutional records show in terms of our graduate students and their backgrounds. We took that data and asked them to verify it, using the categories that the university establishes. It took us a long time, because we were trying to make sure that we were getting the right data. We wanted to establish a baseline. And we put that information on the CLA website, so if anybody gets incorrect information from other sources, at least they have access to what the official records are.

Right now we are asking each of the departments in the college to work on some goals relative to graduate student diversity. We want them to establish an aspiration, so we are asking each of the units to give us their answer to the

question “where should we be in terms of diversity? Where do we want to be?” Once we can establish those goals, then the question will be “what do we need to get there?” Having the lowest stipends in the Big 10 is not a good starting point to achieving progress in graduate student diversity. Raising the stipends might not be a very efficient way of improving diversity, but it is nevertheless a necessary measure to help us advance. It is also important to say that some units have been working very hard on this for many years. If you look at our numbers in CLA, we have one of the most diverse faculty bodies and graduate student bodies on this campus. On the undergraduate side, recent data suggests that the vast majority of undergraduate applications to Purdue from historically underrepresented students are to CLA. These results derive

from the hard work of many people over several years. We have to build on those efforts.

Is there anything else you would like to say to SLC that you did not have an opportunity to address?

The SLC has been undergoing an organizational transition in the past 10 years. And I am mindful that transitions are difficult, and they take time. I think Maddie Henry and her leadership have been working very hard to continue positive evolution of the school. I fully support her efforts, and I can see that there is progress. These transitions take time.



The College of Liberal Arts Fountain



Celebration and Mourning: Pride as our Traveling Temple

Remembering the Orlando Shooting

By Ricardo Quintana Vallejo

We all know when to hide our rainbows, when our walk must look masculine, when to let go of our partners' hand and deepen our voice. Our mothers warned us of the dangers of public spaces where sexual and gender diversity becomes visible. And many times we hide. But every summer we get together to make sure we are still here, to verify we survived, to dance and embrace, because we have more in common among strangers than with our siblings and cousins, our colleagues or classmates.

The first time I walked in Pride was 2009 in Mexico City. I had never been to a gay club and my schools did not have centers for us. This was the first sacred place I ever visited, a traveling temple in which I could finally recognize myself in the other parishioners. I didn't have the vocabulary to enunciate it, but I saw my identity represented and performed in the symbols that the others wore on their bodies and gestures. I walked with my first rainbow flag in one hand and a water bottle full of vodka in the other. It was a celebration of what we had achieved, not by accident or the innate goodness of dominant identities, but because those who came before us opened the spaces we have, through screams, scratches, and punches.

I walked with friends, but it was the first time I had a sense of community and the safety that entails. Like many, the only homosexuals I knew were Disney villains and gross caricatures

in the comedies that aired before *Telenovelas*. In the nuance of the subjects who walked I realized the possibility of finding alternative role models. Later, in this visibility-induced euphoria, I danced until I dropped in a little bar on the corner of *Liverpool* and *Insurgentes*.

Pride may seem superfluous and vulgar to the skeptic's gaze. "I don't mind them kissing, but why do they do it in public?" —says this one; "It's fine that they fight for their rights, but why do they get naked in public?" —says another. And without trying to change any skeptics' mind —because human rights should not hinge on whether the majority feels minorities deserve them— the carnivalesque nature of Pride is fundamental. Pride was born out of the resistance to policemen who would violently arrest us. When we walk it is a subversive act. It is not a stage for the majority to see us and find —to their tranquility— decorum, solemnity, or assimilation. Pride must be insubordinate, disobedient. Pride finds its bliss in collective alterity. To walk is to celebrate, to walk is to resist.

My following Pride was in San Francisco. Pride is on Sunday because the previous night is Pink Saturday, a monumental party that closes 8 blocks in the Castro until dawn. Sunday morning rises with fences on Market Street that will separate those who walk from the ones who watch. Mostly-naked "Dykes on Bikes" lead the parade; marching bands, cheer squads, and corporate floats follow. Some men walk in leather, their testicles painfully bound. The city knows herself and celebrates. Whole families, old and young, are fascinated by the colors and possibilities.

My last Pride was last year in New York. Not a month had passed since SCOTUS had made equal marriage the law of the land. The streets were drenched in joy from Central Park to the Stonewall Inn, where it all started on June 28, 1969, when the crowd fought the police with stones and bricks. They could not take us that night. Not because they decided we were human beings, but because we did not let them.

Every Pride we remember we were, and still are, subordinated identities. That if we were nor queer we would not need Pride because they would not kick us out, would not attack us in the street, we would be able to scream slurs at the stadium and convince ourselves it is not homophobia but harmless fun.



2015 Pride celebrated access to the institution of marriage (which many rejected due to its normative nature), a symbol of our activism. And if we walked to celebrate in 2015, what did we walk for in 2016, after Orlando? Some said marriage was the end of the road, we had achieved equality; an AR-15 assault rifle would wake us up, shake us to the core.

Let us remember that Pride is indeed a time for joy, but also resistance and bravery. For, what is braver than to celebrate while mourning and get together again, like every year, and survive? It is said that wakes, vigils, and novenas are for the living, to begin the work of mourning in a sacred space among friends and family, to share the burden of pain. Pride is our sacred space, to share the pain of those we lost, to celebrate we are here and here we will stay. To walk is to return, every year, with the thrill of the first time, to recognize each other, to be moved to tears, to love and dance; to mourn but, above all, to resist, because no scream or rifle can stop us.



SLC Diversity

Let's talk about asexuality

By Jason Wright



“Asexual” is a sexual orientation in its own right, much like heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, and so on (my apologies to anyone who thought that we would be talking about plants and sponges). Generally, asexuality is defined as a lack of *sexual* attraction towards any and all genders. However, it is important to take that definition with a grain of salt, as asexuality is a sort of spectrum of sexual identities in and of itself. Some

other identities include: “demisexual,” or someone who experiences sexual attraction only after having formed a close emotional bond with that person, and “gray asexual,” or someone who experiences sexual attraction only very rarely or under other specific circumstances unique to them. It feels like right now is the time to talk about asexuality, for many reasons: last week (10/23-10/30) was Asexual Awareness Week; I’ve seen a fair amount of students on campus who are sporting different pieces of asexual pride gear (asexual colored buttons, asexual rings, and so on), and; asexuality in general seems to be gathering, ever so slowly, some public attention. That being said: let’s introduce asexuality!

We’ve already gone over some of the main definitions, but the asexual community has been absolutely prolific in creating labels to describe a wide variety of unique situations. I’ve been swimming around in the asexual community for a few years, and it’s not uncommon for me to learn a new word every now and then. Where this creation of vocabulary is perhaps most interesting, or useful to know, is when asexual folks split up romantic attraction and sexual attraction. So, it’s possible for an asexual person to say something like “hey I’m asexual, homoromantic,” meaning that this person doesn’t experience sexual attraction, but they could develop romantic attraction for people of their same gender. Luckily for all you note-takers, the romantic orientations use the same prefixes as sexual orientations (hetero-, homo-, bi-, poly-, pan-, a-), so that should help you keep track of the 30 different combinations that exist so far within this framework (asexual/aromantic, asexual/panromantic, etc.)! It’s worth noting that anyone of any sexual orientation can make this difference (i.e. “I’m homosexual, aromantic”), but from what I can tell this seems to be a trend in the asexual community more so than it is a trend in other queer communities.

So, when you read “asexual people don’t feel sexual attraction,” you probably thought to yourself, “so they live forever alone and have lots of cats and houseplants, but they have no relationships.” Well, cats are cute and I’m definitely pro-plant, but that’s not quite accurate! Asexual folks are fully capable of entering into relationships, but it sometimes feels

like our society is so steeped in sex and sexual expectations that asexual folks have created a whole vocabulary just to say something to the effect of “hold up, no I don’t have any sexual desire...but, like, dinner and a movie would be nice. I mean, come on, it’s not like you have to get naked afterwards. Or ever. Jeez.” On the other side of this coin, let’s not forget about the fact “aromantic,” or no desire for a romantic relationship, was mentioned above. This is indeed a very common one in the asexual community, but it’s important to not mix the two up! It’s also important to not slip back into that “so you have 2 cats, 3 bonsai trees, and 0 relationships, wow your life is sad” attitude towards aromantic people. Life is just as awesome as an aromantic person and if you disagree then you clearly have never pet a cat or looked at a tree.

Okay, so you’re probably super confused, so now is a good time to make it even worse. Asexual people can have sex! The asexual community makes the difference between “sex repulsed,” “sex neutral,” and “sex positive” aces (quick slang note: “ace” is super cool slang for “asexual”). Hopefully those descriptors kind of define themselves, but whether or not an individual asexual person is interested in having sex is sort of up to them, and depends entirely on their situation. So this is a very special, unique little can of worms. But, at the end of the day asexual people have (human) bodies that are capable of doing (human) things, such as the sex. It might not be very common, but it is within the realm of possibility that an asexual person can have sex. Remember that some asexual identities feel sexual attraction only very rarely or under certain conditions.



So, asexuals tend to disrupt the normal expectations for a relationship. It's entirely possible for an asexual person to date someone of the opposite gender, but be totally grossed out by sex. This kind of puts the common ideas about dating through a loop. The same thing holds up for aromantic asexuals who have no interest in relationships. If the story of a successful life goes something like "go to college, get a job, get married, have kids," then an aromantic asexual person, just by virtue of existing, challenges those common ideas of what a happy and successful life looks like. In fact, asexuality kind of puts itself through a loop in that asexuals can engage in sex, can build romantic relationships, and some asexuals actually do feel sexual attraction every blue moon (but, like for some, literally every blue moon).

But being asexual disrupts more than just relationships. Notably, asexuality is sometimes praised in certain Christian groups (depending on the brand of Christianity and probably some personal feelings), and yet asexuality is a queer identity. Existing between those two things is so weird. It doesn't end there either, sometimes society praises a lack of sexuality ("good for you, Jonny, school is more important than girls anyway"), but once you hit a certain age that praise turns into doubt ("Jonny you're 30 and you're a virgin what the hell man are you gay?"). Some would even contest whether or not asexuality is a part of the queer community, for a while last summer a whole "ace discourse" cropped up on Tumblr, and for a little while there it became popular to slander asexuality, especially by claiming that it wasn't a queer identity. Asexuality feels like it straddles the line between so many opposite spaces (secular/religious, straight/queer, social expectations/individuality), so being ace is sometimes super weird.

I'm positive that this is confusing to many people, but I'm also positive that it's necessary to talk a little bit about asexuality. Invisibility and lack of education are some of the main issues that plague that ace community, to the extent that if I come out to someone I have to give a pretty good definition of what asexuality is, unless of course I want to make people think that I think that I'm a self-reproducing organism. Even then, though, a lack of sexual attraction is a hard concept for some (and I don't blame them, given our culture). Hopefully, this introduction to the ace community has been able to give you some food for thought. Especially relating to how asexuality disrupts our social expectations of what a relationship should include, and whether or not a relationship is even necessary. If you want to know more about asexuality, then I would recommend doing a search for "asexuality" on Everyday feminism and/or The Huffington Post (two websites which have done a pretty good job of covering the topic). The website asexuality.org is also pretty awesome, as it's the website for the Asexuality Visibility and Education Network. They host a good FAQ page, and a neat forums section for people to talk about asexuality.

Get Involved!



- **Arabic Tea Hour**

Thursdays from 1:45-2:45pm in SC 131

Arabic Film Series

Monday November 21st at 6PM in REC 112: *Where Do We Go Now?*

Monday December 5th at 6PM in REC 112: *The Band's Visit*

- **Brazilian Film Series**

Thursday November 10th at 6PM in SC 239: *Nise: The Heart of Madness*

- **Chinese Tea Hour**

Thursdays from 3-4PM in SC 131

Chinese Film Series

Thursday November 15th at 7PM in SC 239: *IP Man 3*

- **Classics Open House**

First Monday of every month from 4:45-5:45pm in SC 131

- **French Coffee Hour**

Wednesdays from 3-4PM in SC 131

French Film Series

Thursday November 3rd at 6PM in SC 239: *Bon Cop, Bad Cop*

Thursday November 17th at 6PM in SC 239: *La belle et la bête*

Thursday December 8th at 6PM in SC 239: *Mommy*

- **German Coffee Hour**

Mondays from 2-3PM in SC 131

- **German Film Series**

Monday November 7th at 7PM in RHPH 172: *Sommersturm*

Monday November 21st at 7PM in MTHW 210: *Das weisse Band*

Monday December 5th at 7PM in MTHW 210: *Er ist weirder da*



- **Italian Coffee Hour**

Wednesdays from 1:30-2:20 at Lavazza Expression

- **Japanese Tea Hour**

Mondays from 3:30-4:20pm in SC 131

Japanese Film Series

Friday November 18th at 7PM in WTHR 104: *Wolf Children*

Friday December 2nd at 7PM in WTHR 104: *Suite Dream*

- **Portuguese Tea Hour**

Fridays from 1-2PM in SC 131

- **Russian Tea Hour**

Wednesdays from 11:30-12:30PM in SC 131

- **Spanish Coffee Hour**

Fridays from 10-11am in SC 131



STUDY ABROAD

Paris, France:

The French Department is hosting a 6-week study abroad program from May 15th - June 23rd in Paris, France. Students can obtain either 3 or 6 credits, can use this study abroad for multiple different requirements. Students will need to have finished FR 202 and a 2.0 GPA before the study abroad begins. Did we mention that it was in Paris? For more information, please contact Professor Veldwachter (nveldwac@purdue.edu)



Mallorca, Spain:

The Department of Spanish and Portuguese is hosting a 6-week study abroad program from May 21st – July 2nd in Mallorca, Spain. Students will be able to grab 6 credits, and these classes count towards a minor or major in Spanish. Four semesters of college Spanish (or the equivalent) and a 2.5 / 4.0 GPA are required before jumping on the plane to Spain!



Madrid, Spain:

The Department of Spanish and Portuguese is also hosting a study abroad in Madrid, Spain. This program runs from May 15th – June 26th, meaning that all three study abroad programs will put in your target country for a month and a half! This program requires students to have completed five semesters of Spanish and a 2.5 / 4.0 GPA. While this program also gives students 6 credit hours, the classes offered in Madrid differ from those offered in Mallorca.

**LECTURES:****September 15th: Ulrich Peltzer Reading**

This past September, Ulrich Peltzer gave a reading of his fiction (in English) at the West Lafayette Public Library. The reading was open to Purdue students and faculty, as well as to the general public. The Department of German & Russian, the School of Languages and Cultures, The Comparative Literature Program, and the Creative Writing Program of the English Department all came together to co-sponsor this event. Ulrich Peltzer is a novelist based out of Germany, and has won several awards for his writing, the most recent of which is the Peter-Weiss-Preis of the city of Bochum in 2016. It is always nice when the university can host public lectures and readings, and this event certainly was no exception to the rule. Refreshments were served (and *consumed*).

**November 3rd: Colonial al-Andalus: Uses of the Past in Spanish Colonial Morocco, 1859-1956.**

On November 3rd at 6PM, Dr. Calderwood visited Purdue to give a talk with the above title. Dr. Calderwood is a professor of Comparative Literature, Arabic Studies, Spanish and Medieval Studies at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Dr. Calderwood has published several articles on these subjects.



**Colonial al-Andalus:
Uses of the Past in Spanish Colonial
Morocco, 1859-1956
Thursday, November 3rd, 2016
REC 108 @ 4:00 PM
Dr. Eric Calderwood**

Assistant Professor of Comparative Literature, Arabic Studies,
Spanish and Medieval Studies, U. of Illinois, Urbana Champaign

SLC Graduate Student Committee Workshops

The informative workshop series are intended to provide help and support to our graduate students on different topics.

Do you wish to have a workshop on a specific matter?

Contact the Workshop Chairs, Mayu Miyamoto (mmyyamot@purdue.edu) and Hernán Matzkevich (hmatzkev@purdue.edu), or the SLC Graduate Student Committee President, Valentina Concu (vconcu@purdue.edu).

SLC Graduate Student Committee Workshop series
Fall 2016

"Everything I Know Now that I Wish I Knew at the Beginning of Grad School!"

Boris Yelin is a PhD Candidate in Spanish Linguistics. His current research focus is on lexical processing and third language acquisition.

Sep. 20th SC G046 3:30 - 4:30
Sep. 21st SC 283 10 - 11

SLC Graduate Student Committee Workshop series
Fall 2016

Prof. Thomas Broden
Associate Professor of French

Prof. Atsushi Fukada
Professor of Japanese and Linguistics

How do I get started with a research grant application?

Nov. 3rd SC 239 3:30 - 4:30

Meet the Team!



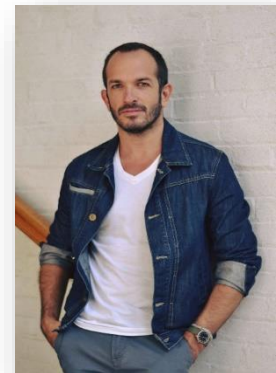
Ana María Carvajal
Newsletter Chair
acarvaja@purdue.edu

Ana is from Colombia, and she is a Ph.D candidate in Spanish Literature. She currently works on Teresa of Avila and women sanctity in Early Modern Spain.



Valentina Concu
GSC President
Newsletter Publisher
vconcu@purdue.edu

Valentina is from Italy, and she is a Ph.D student in German Linguistics. She currently works on Historical Linguistics within a Complex Network Framework.



Hernán Matzkevich
GSC Vice-President
Newsletter Assistant
hmatzkev@purdue.edu

Hernán is from Argentina, and he is a Ph.D student in Spanish Literature and Jewish Studies. He currently works on the Spanish works written by Amsterdam's Jewish Community during the seventeenth century.



Jason Wright
Newsletter Assistant
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Jason is from Texas and is currently pursuing an M.A. in French Literature. His research interests currently include gender, sexuality, and cognitive literary studies.



Ricardo Quintana Vallejo
Newsletter Editor
quintan0@purdue.edu

Ricardo is from Mexico, and he is a Ph.D student in Comparative Literature. He currently works on Migration in contemporary Coming-of-age Novels.



Liana Hakobyan
Photographer
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Liana is a PhD student from Armenia. She works with 20th century Latin American Literature and Film.