



THE AMBASSADOR

DEPARTMENT OF WORLD LANGUAGES AND CULTURES

NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

This is my last semester at the University of Scranton, and in the Department of World Languages and Cultures. I came to the University in 1985, fresh from graduate school, with a husband and a three-year son, and a dissertation to write. In the early years, I taught five courses each semester, which may be one reason it took me three years to finish my dissertation!

The Department and the University have changed a great deal over the last 33 years: new buildings, new majors, new people, and new faculty-led study abroad programs. I've had three offices: first at the back of the Philosophy department's secretary's office, now her office; next, an office cut into two, with our secretary in the first section and, through her area, my office in the second; and third, my current office in O'Hara, which I refer to as "The Palace." What academic wouldn't want an entire wall floor to ceiling of books? And windows? And a couch and chair for meetings? (kindly donated by Dr. Lee Penyak when he was updating his home.) I'll stay in the office until August 2019, but I'm teaching my last class and chairing the department for the last time. I have no fear of the future with new freedoms and new adventures, but I am grateful for my years here. I've enjoyed my colleagues, made some friends, and learned much. So my advice to you, Dear Reader, is to pursue a career that you enjoy, at least most of the time, and bloom where you're planted.

Anyone wishing to contact me in the future can always find me at my University of Scranton email: linda.ledford-miller@scranton.edu, though I may take a day or two to answer. Who knows? I might be in Bolivia!

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This newsletter can be read in color at the Department of World Languages and Cultures website:
<http://www.scranton.edu/academics/cas/world-languages/newsletter.shtml>

Dr. Yamile Silva

During this spring, Silva has been peer-reviewer for two academic journals: *Meridians: feminism, race, transnationalism* and *Letras Femeninas*. Her peer-reviewed anthology *Raza, género y diáspora en el Caribe* -coedited with Daniel Torres (Ohio State)- was published in *Cuadrivium: Revista de la Universidad de Puerto Rico*. (January 2018). She is currently working on *Rendir cuentas: Historia y Agencia como fabulación/ History, Agency and Gendered Narratives*, a co-edited anthology with Diane Marting (University of Mississippi) and Eva Paris (Ohio Wesleyan University) that will be published by Ministerio de la Mujer in Santo Domingo, Dominican Rep. on August 2018. Also, Silva has been invited to write a chapter to be included in *Colonial Latin American Literature in Transition* that will be part of the collection *Cambridge Literature in Transitions* (Cambridge University Press). Tentative title of her essay is “Space, land and territory in Gerónimo de Ypori’s relation (1580)”. On May, she will present her paper “La reclamación de libertad de Juana Agripina, la esclava rebelde de Ponce (1865)” in the XXXVI Internation-



Dr. Jamie Trnka



Dr. Trnka continues to conduct original archival research on the EU-sponsored cultural initiative “Shahrazad—Stories for Life.” Her analysis of Shahrazad’s work between 2007 and 2012 provides new insight into how advocacy organizations turn increasingly to documentary theatre and other creative media to advance the cause of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. Her current focus is on their multilingual, multimedia initiative *Letters to Europe*, which brought together authors from twenty-two countries writing in twelve languages. She uses critical theories of the archive, memory citizenship, and translation to address new developments at the intersection of documentary literature and first-person narrative. She will present her work in the local community this spring through an event organized by the Scranton Refugee Committee, and to an international academic audience at an innovative theatre and performance studies workshop hosted by The University of Innsbruck, Austria, this summer. The workshop, *Europe’s Staging, Staging Europe*, brings together scholars and critics from around the world to discuss how contemporary performing artists are negotiating challenges to Europe’s bor-

Dr. Virginia Picchiatti

Dr. Virginia Picchiatti, Professor of Italian Studies, published a chapter entitled, “*Andremo in città: A Levinasian Witnessing in Edith Brück’s Short Story and Nelo Risi’s Film*” in the edited volume *Resistance, Heroism, Loss: World War II in Italian Literature and Film* (Farleigh Dickinson UP, 2018). In addition, she was invited to participate in a symposium in honor of the late Peter Bondanella, Ph.D., Professor of Italian and Film Studies at Indiana University, Bloomington, the leading scholar of Federico Fellini studies and the history of Italian cinema, and a leading scholar of the Italian Renaissance. The symposium will be held as part of the International Film Studies Conference at Indiana University in April.



Dr. Linda Ledford-Miller

Though selected as a national finalist for a Fulbright Scholar in Residence grant to the Catholic University in Cochabamba, I did not receive the award. Fulbright only informs finalists of the outcome but not the reasons, which can vary from the number of grants available, to another, preferred finalist being chosen, or even a lack of cost sharing on the part of the sponsoring institution. After much thought, I decided not to reapply, though I did give two talks at the University in May, while in Cochabamba with our study abroad program.

Consequently, my sabbatical focused my work here. I gave **two presentations** during my sabbatical.

“Women and Men for Others in Action: the Kino Border Initiative.” Invited speaker for Soup and Substance series at Marquette University, Milwaukee, November 15, 2017. Co-sponsored by The Office of International Education and the Center for Peacemaking. Students, faculty, staff, and community members attended. For more information on this very worthy initiative see <https://www.kinoborderinitiative.org/who-we-are/>. Also called “the church without borders,” Jesuits and others work with migrants at the border of Arizona and Mexico.\

“*Last Night in Montreal*: Emily St. John Mandel’s Revisionist Detective Novel.” Panel on “Women and Families in Detective Fiction.” Mid-Atlantic

Publications

“The Dangers of Village Life: The Novels of Louise Penny.” *The Nashwaak Review* 38-39 (Jan 2018): 297-313.

“Érico Veríssimo 1905-1975.” *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism*. Lawrence J. Trudeau, Ed. Farmington Hill, MI: Gale, 2017, 245-320. Academic Advisor, bibliography, further reading, translations.

Coming soon

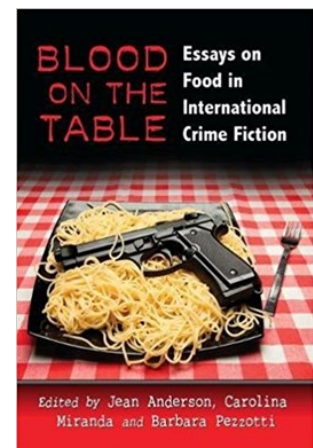
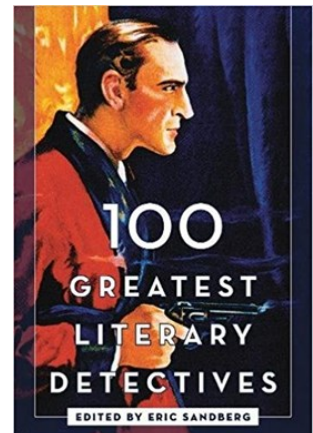
“Food for Thought: Italy’s Detectives Brunetti and Montalbano.” *Blood on the Table: Essays on Food in International Crime Fiction*. Editors Jean Anderson, Carolina Miranda, and Barbara Pezzotti. McFarland, available 30 March 2018. https://www.amazon.co.uk/Blood-Table-Essays-International-Fiction/dp/1476671753/ref=sr_1_3?ie=UTF8&qid=1512632089&sr=8-3&keywords=blood+on+the+table

Two essays on detectives are in press: “Brother Cadfael” and “Inspector Espinosa,” both for *Sleuths, Private Eyes, and Policemen: An International Compendium of the 100 Greatest Literary Detectives*. Rowan & Littlefield. According to the publisher’s website, and the editor, the volume will be out on April 15, 2018.

My translation of the Costa Rican poet and playwright, Ana Istarú’s play, *Nuestra madre que estás en la tierra, Our Mother who art on Earth*, will appear in the spring issue of the peer-reviewed online publication, The Neglected Ratio. <https://theneglectedratio.com/>

Under review

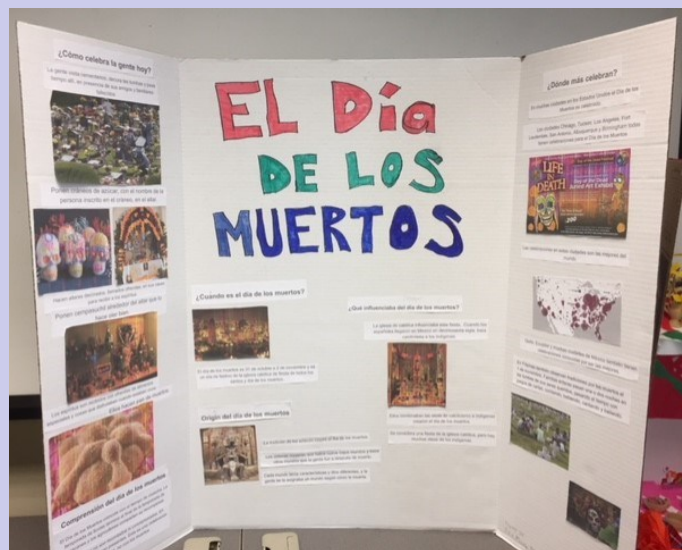
In addition to the more traditional scholarship mentioned above, I did some creative writing as well, submitting two pieces of flash fiction to the rounds of inevitable rejection. I’m currently working on a non-fiction essay, “Sherman Alexie Goes to Mauritius,” and a presentation,



THE DAY OF THE DEAD EL DIA DE LOS MUERTOS NOVEMBER, 2017

In the United States, we celebrate Halloween by dressing up in assorted costumes and going door-to-door saying “Trick or Treat!” Sometimes children perform a “trick”—a song or poem or joke—to “earn” their “treat,” usually candy. In several Spanish-speaking countries and in the United States, people commemorate their dead by inviting them in for a visit. (See the film *Coco*, very fun!) The family prepares an “altar” with “ofrendas,” or offerings for the invited guests, candles to light their way, and the traditional flowers, bright orange tall African marigolds. Offerings are geared toward the preferences of the visitors—Tío Juan perhaps prefers tequila to Tía Julia’s chocolate. The family also places photos and perhaps other emblems of the departed on the altar, along with photos of dear friends. The commemoration includes a visit to the cemetery as well, where the families take a picnic and play music to share with those loved ones who’ve moved on to another realm. Truly, then, our dead are always with us, and the Day of the Dead is a visible reminder of their presence.

To commemorate this day in World Languages and Cultures, Dr. Ledford-Miller shared a skeleton on her office door, along with a poem written for her by a Fulbright FLTA from 2003-2004, Aracely Hernández of Oaxaca, Mexico. This year’s Fulbright FLTA, Vianey Florentino Pérez, Mexican and Mazahua (an indigenous group of Mexico), worked with her class to create the altar in the



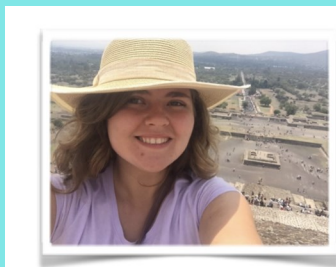
STUDENT NEWS

Kylie Mignat

Kylie Mignat (German, International Studies and Hispanic Studies, 2018) will present a paper, : "Framing Undocumented Immigrants in the Media: Effects on Public Support for Immigration Policies," at the Pennsylvania Political Science Association 79th Annual Meeting - April 13, 2018 at West Chester University.

She will also present this research at the Latin American and Caribbean Studies 4th Biennial Undergraduate Conference at Binghamton University on April 14th.

Lauren Coggins



A Student Reflection: Studying Abroad in Mexico

January 23, 2018

This article originally appeared in the fall 2017 issue of the Latin American and Women's Studies newsletter.

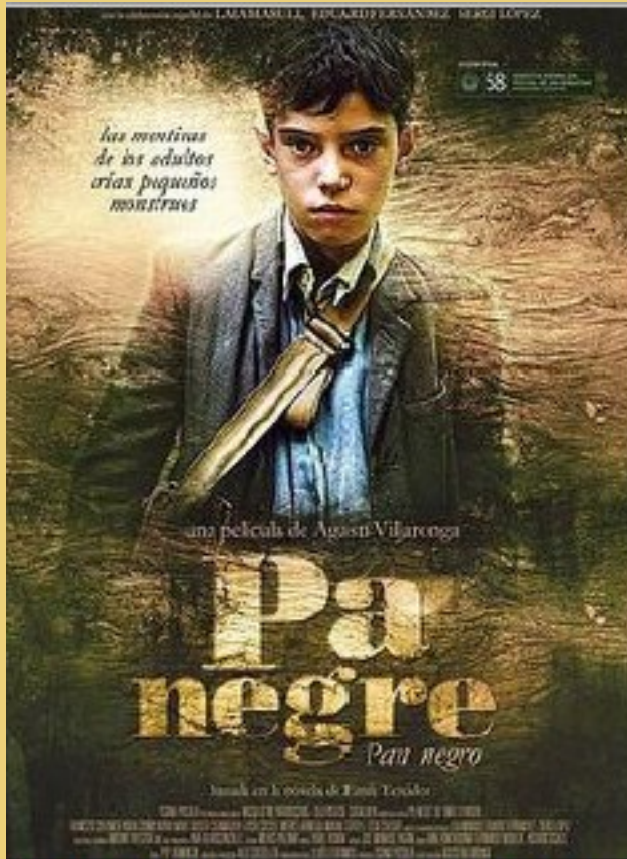
My journey to Mexico was actually seven years in the making, meaning that I had dreamed of going there ever since eighth grade. For me, this meant seven years of my parents trying to convince me to study abroad in Spain. Although many here at the The University of Scranton have had amazing experiences doing so, I decided to keep my promise to my younger self to study in Mexico.

Stepping off the plane after years of waiting, I found myself alone, navigating my way through a new country 3,000 miles away from all that I had ever known and loved. Safe and sound, I made it to my host mother's home, where she welcomed me as if I were one of her own children. Despite this promising beginning, I was nervous about exploring the city of Puebla, as I had always previously lived in the countryside.

My host mother made it a point to introduce me to students within our neighborhood, who would later become my hardest goodbyes upon my departure. Together, we would get to know almost half of Mexico, visiting thirteen out of thirty-one states in five months, ranging from Jalisco to Quintana Roo. During my travels, I discovered new foods, such as tacos al pastor and tlayudas, and stepped out of my comfort zone, jumping from 10-meter waterfalls. Within my university, Universidad Iberoamericana, I had the pleasure of taking courses in the medium of Spanish with professors who opened my mind to new perspectives and ideas. In particular, taking Philosophy of Education abroad allowed me to use the warmth of the Mexican culture to develop my own philosophy on teaching. At the end of the semester, I discovered the importance of caring for the whole student as a teacher, as this plays a crucial role in helping to form future upstanding members of society.

Studying abroad in Puebla taught me more than I had ever imagined. Aside from the rich education that I received at Universidad Iberoamericana, I am thankful for the moments that I shared with friends during my brief stay. Without even realizing it, they opened my eyes to a new way of life, changing me into a more mature, culturally-aware version of myself. Although I had to say goodbye back in May, I do not plan to let this recent experience in Mexico be

SPANISH FILM SERIES 2018



Time: 7 p.m. Spanish Film Series 2018 Place: O'Hara 307

Films from Spain, not in Spanish

- Wednesday, February 14—*Pa negro / Pan negro* (Agustí Villaronga, 2010)
- Wednesday, March 7—*A esmorga / La parranda* (Ignacio Vilarr, 2014)
- Wed. , April 4 — *Loreak / Flores* (Jon Garaño, José María Goenaga, 2014)



12TH ANNUAL TA TALK



The World Languages and Cultures Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistants presented at the 12th annual TA Talk events on February 27th and March 6th. Lea Gorski (Germany), Rabab Mesbahi (Morocco), and Vianey Florentino Pérez (Mexico) presented on February 27th to a group of local community members and educators, including world language teachers, school counselors, and principals. The event hosted teachers from school districts all over northeast PA, including Scranton, Pleasant Valley, Scranton Preparatory, Old Forge, Delaware Valley, North Pocono, Wyoming Valley West, and Riverside. On March 6th, the TAs presented to students, faculty, and staff at the University. The TAs shared what they love about their countries, addressed common stereotypes, and answered questions from the audience. The TA Talks were made possible by the Diversity Initiatives Grant through the Office of Equity and Diversity. They provide an opportunity to engage in dialogue and increase awareness about other cultures at the university and in the community. As a result of these talks, the TAs have been invited to talk about their countries with local schools, classes, and community groups and look forward to the opportunity to share in the future!



2017-2018 FLTAs Vianey Florentino Pérez (left), Rabab Mesbahi, Lea Gorski (right).



Vianey Florentino Pérez demonstrating her love for wrestling by wearing a traditional mask during the sports section of her presentation.

FORMER FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING ASSISTANTS: WHERE ARE THEY NOW?



Lyna Kauv, French Foreign Language Teaching Assistant for 2005-2006, is happily married with two lovely children, Maxence, 6 in late March, and Lysie, 3 in April. They live in Vincennes, “a family friendly town near Paris.” After several tries, she finally got *le Capes* (the difficult and competitive exam you have to pass to be a state teacher in France) and she is now working two part time jobs: one is for a French high school where she teaches English and the other for an English university (Ulip: University of London In Paris) based in Paris where she teaches French. She says she really enjoys working in two places and teaching two languages!

FORMER STUDENTS: WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Michael Canaris, BA '02, Italian Studies Concentration and major in Theology and Philosophy, received the Ph.D. in Systematic Theology at Fordham University, the *Licenza in Ecumenismo* from the Pontifical University of St Thomas/Angelicum in Rome, and is currently an Assistant Professor in the Institute of Pastoral Studies at Loyola University-Chicago. He will teach at the Loyola University Rome campus in summer 2018 and has been tasked with restructuring and leading his department's graduate summer program in Rome.

Jordan West, BA '15, Italian major with a minor in International Studies and Spanish, is a graduate student in the International Relations Program at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan, Italy. He was previously an intern with PULSE - Pittsburgh Urban Leadership Service Experience. Edward Besse, '11, majors in Italian, Religious Studies, and Art History, is a graduate student in Art History at Emory University.

THE UNIVERSITY OF
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A J E S U I T U N I V E R S I T Y

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