



The English Update



A newsletter for English majors and faculty at BSC

Produced by the English Society, with assistance from Dr. Ben Carson and Dr. Ann Brunjes

Volume IX

Spring 2005

English Department Welcomes Dr. Julia Stakhnevich

What are your research interests?

My academic background is in Linguistics and Teaching English as a Second Language. As a researcher, I am interested in the investigation of identity construction and power dynamics in bi- and multilingual contexts. In my current research project, I focus on the language attitudes and practices in the state of Oaxaca in Mexico.

Oaxaca is known for its linguistic diversity: more than fifteen distinctly different languages are still widely spoken. The Oaxacan sociolinguistic context is further complicated by the dominance of Spanish, the language of power, and the growing presence of English, the language of prestige, commerce, and tourism. As in other parts of the world, dominant western languages exercise a direct and lasting impact on language use in Oaxaca, often undermining existing language ecologies and causing communities to change their language practices. My project focuses on the Mixtec community and traces how young women from this indigenous community negotiate their identities as they learn English and use Mixtec and Spanish in the speech communities of their choice.

Which theories have influenced you the most?

The theoretical framework that has guided my research is based on Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of learning and the language philosophy of dialogism developed by Mikhail Bakhtin.

Student English Society News

During the Fall 2005 semester, a small group of students met in the English Department conference room full of ideas, excitement, and a willingness to work hard. With one goal in mind, beginning an English Club at BSC, they began sketching numerous ideas and planning to start the new organization. They were aware that the English Department wanted an English Club, and under the advisement of Dr. Ann Brunjes they were determined to make this a success. By the end of that meeting the Bridgewater State College English Society was formed. In the subsequent weeks, paperwork was filed with Student Involvement and Leadership and officers were elected for the 2005-2006 school year. They were Nicole Williams (President), Melissa Dacosta (Vice President), Erin Downey (Secretary), and Amanda Viana (Student



Professor Julia Stakhnevich

These approaches emphasize the importance of affective, communicative and aesthetic experiences in the construction of knowledge and interpret language as meaningful only in the context of constant dialogue, both as inner speech and with others. The ideas of Edward Said and Stuart Hall on post-colonialism and the role of the researcher in post-colonial contexts have undoubtedly influenced my self-positioning as a research in Oaxaca. For my interpretation of identity, I drew on Michel Foucault and Pierre Bourdieu.

Julia Stakhnevich, continued p. 2

Liaison). Throughout the fall the English Society continued to grow its membership. The Society hosted bi-weekly writing workshops to provide majors with peer review.

As a result of the hard work put into establishing the organization in the fall, The English Society was given official recognition status in January 2006. This semester, The English Society, with the support of the English Department and advisor Professor Ben Carson, was able to hold two events. In February, the English Society held a panel discussion at which professors from a variety of disciplines spoke to students interested in pursuing graduate school.

The second event, organized with the help of Professor John Mulrooney, was a poetry reading with poet David Rivard from Tufts University. The reading was held on Wednesday April 19th.

In addition to the two events the English Society held two bake sale fundraisers.

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Julia Stakhnevich Joins Department

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This is your first semester in the English Department. Where were you before? Which courses will be teaching in the future?

For the last six years, I was teaching ESL and Linguistics courses in the Department of Foreign Languages here at BSC. As of this semester, the ESL Program has joined the English Department, and I am very excited about this move. I will continue offering courses in my area of expertise so that more students can engage in the analysis of such fascinating sociolinguistic issues as language maintenance and loss, bilingual language development, language policies, and community language practices.

I will be teaching a special section of ENGL 324 Language in Context: A Study Tour to Oaxaca, Mexico in spring '07. The course will have an on-campus component that will be enhanced by a field trip to Oaxaca during the spring break. Through this course, students will investigate the relationship between language, identity, power, ethnicity, gender, and class as experienced today by different sociolinguistic groups in Oaxaca. While in Oaxaca, students will explore sites of cultural importance, visit several indigenous communities, interact with Mexican students of English, and perform community service with Oaxacan children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Upon return to Bridgewater, students will analyze the materials collected in Oaxaca and will complete a project on the effects of globalization on modern Oaxacan cultures and languages. This is a 3-credit Core Curriculum course in Humanities.

In addition to teaching, you are also in charge of the ESL Services in the Academic Achievement Center. Can you please comment on this part of your professional life?

In addition to teaching, I have been supervising the ESL Services in the AAC. This is an important part of what I do on campus, and I love working both with tutors and ESL students. I hope that my move to the English Department will encourage English majors to consider working with ESL students in the AAC. As of now, I am looking for candidates to work as ESL tutors next fall and would like to invite English majors with excellent communication skills and interest in working with linguistically and culturally diverse populations to apply. Interested students can contact me by email at jstakhnevich@bridgew.edu

What do you like best about teaching at Bridgewater?

I enjoy my interactions with faculty and students. Every day I learn something new, and that's always rewarding. My students come from a variety of cultures, and as the semester goes by, I learn more and more about their cultural background, traditions, and values. The same is applicable to my colleagues.

As a researcher, I have been very fortunate to receive a lot of support from the BSC faculty and administration, which allowed me to conduct research in Russia, Mexico, Japan, and the USA. Brought up under the Soviet regime where travel was restricted or not allowed at all, I value the educational opportunities that Bridgewater affords in its international projects, courses, and grants.

What do you enjoy doing outside of work?

I love spending time with my husband Dan, our Boston Terrier Henry, and two very demanding cats. Since my first trip to Mexico, I have become the biggest Russian fan of salsa (the dance, not the food). Whenever I can, I take classes and go out to salsa bars. Even when I travel, I check for salsa clubs or courses offered in the area. At home, when I am not dancing, I love listening to National Public Radio (Prairie Home Companion, etc.), watching films (some science fiction, some fantasy, a lot of international, especially Russian), and reading for fun. I have a very eclectic taste when it comes to reading outside of the profession: Russian classics, but especially Pushkin, Dostoyevsky and Turgenev, British lit (Jane Austin is my all time favorite), and contemporary literature by multilingual/multicultural writers (e.g., Andre Makine, Eva Hoffman, Milan Kundera).

Letter from Dr. Evelyn Pezzulich, Department Chair

Dear Majors,

Each semester I enjoy the opportunity to let you know about new developments in the English Department. We are pleased to announce that next year Dr. Michelle Cox will join the department as our newest rhetoric and composition specialist. She completed her doctoral work at the University of New Hampshire. Look for more details in the fall issue of the *English Update* which will feature her faculty profile.

Two other items of interest include collaborations with neighboring institutions of higher learning. First, our student run English Society is working with the English Society at Stonehill College on a joint undergraduate research symposium. Again, watch for more news about this in the fall. Second, Professor Linda Cohen, one of our adjunct faculty members, and I recently participated in a presentation with colleagues from regional institutions at the College Composition and Communication Conference in Chicago. The session was entitled "CONNECT: Building Coalitions for Common Outcomes in First-Year English at Five Colleges." The five institutions involved in coming up with common outcomes for freshman English are BSC, Bristol Community College, Cape Cod Community College, Massasoit Community College, and The University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth. By working to reach a consensus on what students should know and be able to do after completing first year composition courses, we hope to improve the success rate of students transferring from one college to another. I thought this would be of interest since many of you have come to us at Bridgewater State College from these other institutions.

Finally, the English Department was involved in several exciting events this past semester. On April 11th we co-sponsored the Seventh Annual Distinguished Asian Studies Lecture which featured Dr. Leung, one of Hong Kong's leading men of letters, who is a poet and professor of Chinese literature at Lingnan University. We also made a very generous \$500 contribution to the second Annual Festival of the Arts which was held on April 26th when the unveiling of the third issue of *The Bridge* occurred. Upcoming events include the School of Arts and Sciences Honors Recognition Ceremony which will take place on May 3rd at 3:15 in the Campus Center Ballroom when I and other faculty will serve as presenters of well deserved student awards. Please come to support your fellow majors who are being honored.

In conclusion, as the end of this academic year approaches, let me say what a delight it is for the English faculty to see our department steadily grow with now over 400 majors. We take great pleasure in teaching you, measuring your accomplishments, and getting to know you. On behalf of all my colleagues, I wish you success as you complete your final papers and exams and hope that summer will find you relaxing on the beach with yet one more good book.

Evelyn Pezzulich

Notes from the Writing Studio

The 2005-2006 Academic Year has been a very successful one for the BSC Writing Studio. Our competent and energetic group of consultants are receiving rave reviews from the clients who come in for feedback on their writing.

Additionally, the Writing Studio has continued with its regular Writer's Cafe events. Every semester, BSC writers from all disciplines are invited to share their writing with an appreciative audience. This spring, the Writer's Cafe took place on April 5. Writers selected to read their work included Dave Guimond, Michele Morato, Gary Marchand, Christina Smith, Maria Alonso, Sean Janson, and Virginia Williams. If you did not submit a piece for this semester's Writer's Cafe, please consider submitting one next fall or spring!

The Writing Studio is located on the bottom floor of the Maxwell Library, in the AAC. Consultations can be conducted via walk-in or by appointment. Call us at 508-531-2053 or visit the Studio website at <http://www.bridgew.edu/WritingStudio/>



English Society

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After Spring break the English Society held elections for officers for the 2006-2007 school year. They are Nicole Williams, President; Amanda Viana, Vice President; Erin Downey, Secretary; Diana Tutko, Treasurer; and Lauren Le, Student Liaison. The new officers will take their positions at the last meeting of this year and are looking forward to planning new events. Any faculty member or student with event or fundraising ideas for The English Society may contact President Nicole Williams at nwilliams@bridgew.edu.



**Front: Nicole Williams, Erin Downey, Melissa Dacosta.
Back: Amanda Viana and Diana Tutko at the English Society Bake Sale**

Maxwell Library Alert!

This summer the library will again be undergoing construction. The second floor will be a major construction site, and modifications will be made to the third floor atrium area to keep the dust from destroying the collection. Consequently, both the second and third floors will be accessible to full time library staff only.

The library will be open the usual summer hours and resources on the first floor (periodical collection, reference books, Information Commons) will be available. The ERC and some of its collections will be temporarily housed on the first floor. Books can be requested online; library staff will retrieve the books and deliver them to the Circulation Desk. This procedure may take time. If you plan to use materials on the second or third floor and would prefer to browse the stacks, do so before May 22. After this date, the areas will not be accessible.

Please contact me (x1742) or Michael Somers (x1255) if you have any questions or concerns.
~Marcia Dinneen

Sigma Tau Delta News

On March 29th in the Heritage Room the International English Honors society, Sigma Tau Delta, officially welcomed the following inductees:

Stacey Arnold, David Bevans, Jr., Brittany Botelho, Isabelle Campanini, Carol J. Carlson, Stacy M. Cohen, Ian Dashner, Lauren Hakala, Elizabeth Hawes, Teresa Hunter, Victoria Large, Alexandra Malloy, Eric Marshall, Heidi McCabe, Michele McGrath, Irene McNulty, Sondra A. Mullen, Alison Nagle, James A. Norman, Johannah B. O'Connell, Jason Pietroski, Stephanie Rafuse, Lisa M. Riva, Melissa Santos, Abby Sherwood, Claudina Silva, Heather Speed, Megan E. Tully, Bradford Vezina, Nicole Williams.

It is with great pleasure that we recognize their academic excellence and sincerely congratulate their notable achievement.

Bridgewater State's Alpha Iota Mu chapter also officially installed Cherylynn Silvia and William Candler as President and Vice President respectively. These new officers are in the process of organizing upcoming events and are looking forward to the remainder of the semester.



Allison Nagle and Abby Sherwood



Will Candler and Cherylynn Sylvia



Guest Speaker Dr. Kathy Evans, inductees Libby Hawes and Nicole Williams and Dr. Greg Chaplin.

Faculty and Visiting Lecturer News and Achievements

Drs. Evelyn Pezzulich, Jadwiga Smith, Gregory Chaplin, and Arnold Girdharry were recognized on April 20th at the Bridgewater State College Awards for Academic Excellence program hosted by college President Dr. Dana Mohler-Faria. . . **Dr. Ben Carson** organized and chaired a session on Native American literature and presented "Ecocide in Gerald Vizenor's *Bearheart*" at the College English Association's National Conference in San Antonio, TX, on April 6; he also presented "Teaching 'the gentle arts of the spirit' in the Age of Multinational Capitalism" at the University of Connecticut's Comparative Literary and Cultural Studies Conference on the Crisis in the Academy on April 21. Ben's essay "'To Build a Bridge from Man to Man': Existentialism in Richard Wright's *The Outsider*" will be published in June in a collection entitled *Existentialism in Twentieth Century American Literature*. . . **Dr. Gregory Chaplin** delivered an invited lecture, "Milton and the New Heresy," at the Medieval and Renaissance Colloquium at Yale University. This summer he will be directing James Norman's Tinsley Program Summer 2006 Research Grant . . . In April, **Dr. John Kucich** presented his essay "A Son of New England: William Apess's Regionalism" at the College English Association in San Antonio. Also in April he presented his essay, "Indian Nullification: William Apess and the Rhetoric of Resistance" at the Native American Literature Symposium at the Saganaw Chippewa Reservation in Mt. Pleasant, Michigan. . . **Gohar Siddiqui**, who holds an MA in English from the University of Delhi, India, is a visiting lecturer here at BSC, as well as an MA student. Under the advisement of Dr. Lee Torda, she is currently finishing her hybrid thesis that looks at the ways various theorists are co-opted differently within the two disciplines of English Studies—literature and Rhetoric & Composition—in ways that define the two fields both in terms of research they respectively produce and the teaching they engender in the undergraduate classroom. Having been accepted to UMASS Amherst, Syracuse University, and the University of Notre Dame, Gohar will be leaving BSC at the end of the semester to pursue a PhD. She received a doctoral fellowship at Syracuse and a very generous assistantship at Notre Dame. It appears that UMASS will be following suit with a teaching assistantship. Gohar has not yet decided where she will attend. . . **Jamie White-Farnham**, part-time faculty member, will begin working toward her PhD this fall in the Rhetoric and Composition Program at the University of Rhode Island. Jamie was an assistant director of the writing studio when she was earning her MA.

thebridge Journal Publishes Volume III English Majors Play Central Role in Success

thebridge is an annually published, student-managed journal of fine arts that showcases superlative creative writing and visual art created by BSC students. A \$200 First Place Prize and a \$50 Second Place Prize is awarded in six categories.

thebridge was founded by Dr. Jerald Walker (Department of English), who serves as co-advisor with Professor of Art Mary Dondero. Since the release of its inaugural issue in the spring of 2004, *thebridge* has featured the works of forty English majors, and twelve English majors have worked as editors. English major Mandy Simoneau gained national recognition when she was awarded a First Place Gold Circle Award from the Columbia Scholastic Press Association (CSPA) for her short story "Paper Fish" following its publication in the first volume of *thebridge*. Volumes I & II have received a total of seventeen national honors, including a Gold Crown, the most prestigious award offered by the CSPA. President Dana Mohler-Faria called the Gold Crown an "outstanding achievement" and said, "*thebridge* just gets better and better every year."

Volume III was released on April 26 during *thebridge*'s Second Annual Festival of Arts held in conjunction with the 42nd Annual Student Art Show – a three-hour event that featured readings, visual art, and musical, theatrical and dance performances. Volume III is available at the Campus Book Store, Maxwell Library's circulation desk, the Art Building lobby, and just outside the Department of English office.

Literature submissions for Volume IV are being accepted now through December 13, 2006. For inquiries or complete submission guidelines, visit <http://www.bridgew.edu/thebridge/>.

Undergraduate Student Achievements and News

Awards

Eight English Majors earned scholarships and awards this year. They are:

Melanie Bernier: Bristol County Savings Bank Scholarship

Will Candler: Nicole T. Prince Memorial Award; Dr. Wallace L. Anderson Memorial Scholarship; Professor Achille Joyal Humanities Memorial Award; Mary and Anna '38 O'Brien Memorial Scholarship

Michele De Faria Morato: Edith G. Shoolman English Award

Allison Nagle: Victoria Roberts French '63 Scholarship

Abby Sherwood: Rose Leonard Coveney, Class of 1939, Scholarship

Cherylynn Silvia: Professor Thomas M. Curley English Scholarship

Bradford Vezina: Dr. Harold G. Ridlon Memorial Scholarship

Melanie Willis: Vincent J. Worden Memorial Scholarship

National Conferences on Undergraduate Research (NCUR)

Five English Majors presented projects at the 20th National Conference for Undergraduate Research (NCUR) in Asheville, North Carolina:

Colleen Farrell (Mentor – Ann Brunjes): "Performing Poetry-Spoken Word Breaking the Page"

Teresa Hunter (Mentor-Garland Kimmer): "Blood in the Street Like Words on a Page: The Conflict Between Poetry and Violence in Yeats and Heaney"

Angelique Paparella (Mentor-Dr. Lee Torda): "Choices"

Cherylynn Sylvia (Mentor-Kathleen Vejvoda): "One Ring to Rule The All: Power and Surveillance in the Film Adaptations of the Lord of the Rings"

Adrian Tinsley Program (ATP) Summer Grants

Four English Majors were awarded ATP summer grants for undergraduate research for Summer 2006:

James Norman will be working with Dr. Greg Chaplin (English) on a project called "In His Image: Satan's Re-creation of Adam and Eve in Paradise Lost"

Bradford Vezina will be working with Roger Dunn (Art) on a project entitled "The Authenticity of Our Past: Forgery and Art"

Amanda Viana will be working with Lee Torda (Office of Undergraduate Research) and Sheau-Hwang Chang (Library) on a project entitled "Picture This: An Undergraduate Foray into Digital Media Preservations"

Nicole Williams will be working with Dr. Lee Torda (Office of Undergraduate Research) on a project called "Reading the Gardner: Viewership, Readership, and Public Art"

News from Recent Graduates

Kate Powers ('05) reports that she has been accepted to the Master of Arts Program in Professional Writing at UMass Dartmouth. Kate also has been awarded a teaching fellowship in the program.

Corie Dias ('05) has taken a job the Currier Museum of Art in Manchester, New Hampshire.

Graduate Program News

Spring 2006 Graduate Research Symposium at Westfield State College

Nine BSC students from the English Graduate Program presented papers on April 6 at the 2006 Symposium in Westfield, MA. A total of 43 BSC graduate students presented their work at the symposium, the most from any of the nine Massachusetts state colleges, representing more than 50 percent of all participants.

Melissa Freitas, “The Best Within: Representations of the Monstrous in Early Modern Cinema.”

Justin Haggerty, “Truth and Beauty: Themes of Romanticism in ‘The Birthmark.’”

Rita Hurley, “Coetzee’s *Waiting for the Barbarians*: A Contrapunctual Reading.”

Sean Janson, “Don’t Call Me Ishmael: Melville’s Independent Narrator and the Nature of Interpretation in *Moby Dick*.”

Brian Keaney, “Stepping up to the Urban Carnival: Caligari, M, and the Surrender of Individuality.”

Susan Kelliher, “‘Sol y Sombra’: Comments and Criticism on the Poems from *Fairies and Fusiliers* by Robert Graves.”

Randi Rezendes, “E Pluribus Unum: Charles Brocken Brown’s *Wieland* as a Reflection of America.”

Nathaniel G. Turner, “Who’s the Man?: Representing the Masculine in *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe.”

Meghan Wolk, “Toni Morrison: Tracing the Past through Maternal Storytelling.”

