

Perspectives

Department of Communication Studies / 408 924 5360

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- Rona Halualani on collaborative research- page 2

Celebrating Careers of Retiring Faculty

The Western States Communication Association’s annual conference in Palm Springs featured more than the traditional meetings, presentations of research, and responses to our colleagues’ scholarship. This conference also included two celebrations for retiring faculty members: **Philip Wander** and **Jo Sprague**. Professor Wander’s double-session, “Honoring Philip C. Wander: Cherishing Four Decades of Teaching and Scholarship in Rhetorical Studies,” included

Dr. Wander’s presentation of current research and remarks from luminaries that include Dana Cloud (University of Texas, Austin), Peter Ehrenhaus (Pacific Lutheran University), John Hammerback (California State University, East Bay), Robert P. Newman (University of Pittsburgh), and Michael Sproule (St. Louis University). The panel was co-chaired by **Hanns Hohmann** and **Andrew Wood**.

Professor Sprague’s double-session, “Cherishing Our Time With

Our Colleagues: Honoring the Work of Jo Sprague,” celebrated decades of innovative work in the scholarship of teaching and learning. Some of the noted scholars who offered their remarks include Ann Darling (University of Utah), Jan Hoffmann (Georgia College and State University), Jody Nyquist (University of Washington), Tasha Souza (Humboldt State University), and John T. Warren (Bowling Green State University). The panel was co-chaired by **Deanna Fassett** and **Beth Von Till**.

First Thesis Production Performance

Kristo Gobin presented his one-person performance, “That’s So Gay,” to a packed theater space for four nights in February. His show presented an autoethnographic account of coming out as a Gay, Croatian man. Weaving together stories about his childhood, depictions of his family’s reaction to his announcement, and an

introduction to various dimensions of sex, gender, and sexuality, Gobin demonstrated a kind of performance scholarship that offers an innovative approach to communication studies. One of Gobin’s committee members, **Jay Baglia**, explains: “[His] performance demonstrated to students, faculty, and the general public who

attended, the significance of *embodied* scholarship.” Gobin’s committee chair is **Matthew Spangler**. His other committee members, **Wenshu Lee** and **Philip Wander**, threw a celebration for the show’s final performance attended by dozens of faculty, friends, and well-wishers. The result?

Yet another packed house.

Research Team Produces Groundbreaking Article

Rona Halualani and **Deanna Fassett**, along with former students **Jen Morrison** and **Patrick Dodge** (both now doctoral students at University of Denver) have published a research article in *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*.

Their essay, entitled "Between the Structural and the Personal: Situated Sense-Makings of 'Race,'" draws from 100 interviews about individual experiences of diversity. From that research, the authors develop notions of *raceless diversity encoding* (stripping race of its power to create

inequitable relationships) and *racial pivoting* (pulling both away and toward race as needed).

Department Chair **Dennis Jaehne** notes the importance of this kind of team-based scholarship: "This is especially noteworthy because the project involves our students in the research collaboration. This type of student engagement is highly valued in the educational models that stress student learning and success."

The team, now in its fifth year, also includes **Anu Chitgopekar** (De Anza

College), and graduate students **Larissa Bailon** and **Dary Yos**. Previous members have included **Toni Adams**, **Amy Stalder**, and **Cere Gillette**.

Members of the team, which has garnered about \$40,000 in grant funding, have also published their findings in the *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* and the *Journal of Communication*. Currently, a team from Howard University and a professor in South Africa are working with our colleagues to replicate one of their studies.

Reflecting on the team's success, Dr. Halualani states, "The best thing about this research team is the collaborative effort at looking at any interesting problematic and finding out how best to analyze that problematic. It is also so rewarding to see graduate students really blossom in a research team environment that enables them to showcase their knowledge and methodological skills to an actual ongoing project."

Faculty Publication on Mormon Sisterhood

Julie Hawker, an adjunct faculty member, published an article in the November 2005 issue of *Sunstone Magazine*. *Sunstone* reflects Mormon experience, scholarship,

issues, and art. Hawker's article, "Toward a More Authentic Sisterhood," confronts what Hawker defines as hidden envy and competition among Mormon women.

Hawker will also chair a panel on the topic, and present her research about of women and envy, at *Sunstone's* symposium on April 22, 2006, in Ontario, California.

Professor Varona Offers International Scholarship and Leadership

Federico Varona continues to expand his research and service agenda around the world. Currently, he is chair of the Steering Committee for the planning of the one-day Communication Conference of the Americas sponsored by FELAFACS (The Latin America Communication Association) and NCA. This pre-conference will be

held on November 15, 2006, at NCA in San Antonio. Dr. Varona is also presenting a paper in June at the International Communication Association's conference in Dresden, Germany. The paper, co-authored with Päivi Vaahterikko-Mejia (University of Jyväskylä, Finland) and Mariela Pérez Chavarría (Tecnológico de

Monterrey, Monterrey, Mexico), is entitled "A Comparative Study of Employee/Superior Communication Style Between Finnish and Mexican Employees." Professor Varona is also presenting a keynote presentation and workshop at the National Meeting of Human Resources Personal of Public Administration Institutions in Vitoria,

Spain, in June. The topic of the presentation is "Appreciative Inquiry as a New Way for the Sharing of Knowledge for Organizational Change." His workshop is entitled, "How to Conduct an Appreciative Inquiry to Improve Employee-Superior Communication."

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We're on the Web!

See us at:

[http://www.sjsu.edu/
depts/commstudies/](http://www.sjsu.edu/depts/commstudies/)

Alum Offers Life Skills Course

Clint Pardoe, 1999 MA Graduate and current adjunct faculty member, is offering courses for students seeking a more complete, balanced, and satisfying life. According to Pardoe, *Integral Life 101* "includes topics such as personal growth and development, taking good care of yourself, building

and maintaining healthy relationships, time management, money management, effective communication, facing your fears, creating a life beyond predictability, focusing on your strengths and managing your weaknesses, team building, community service," and more.

Facilitating these courses, Pardoe offers his expertise as a certified business and life coach who for the past three years has worked with CEOs, business teams, writers, small business owners and real estate agents. To learn more, call Clint at (831) 566-6933.

Chair Report

The department mourns the loss of two emerita faculty members. **Dr.**

Marie Carr passed away in December, while on a trip to Fiji. She was a long time faculty member from the early days of the department, and she was our former chair. The Marie Carr Scholarship Award is named in her honor.

In March, Prof. **Lottie Fryer** passed as well. Lottie was a long time teacher of rhetoric. Both of these women were pioneers of sorts in breaking down academic barriers against women on our campus. They were well connected in the campus community and their loss will be mourned. Both were involved in hiring many of the current "elder" generation of department faculty, which gives some of us a

particularly special connection with them.

I was surprised in both cases. I had a wonderful conversation with Marie at the Dean's holiday party; she was zestful, sharp-witted, and full of enthusiasm for her trip to Fiji. Lottie and I had spoken on the phone of Marie's passing and though she was quite saddened, she seemed upbeat and indicated that she was feeling pretty well.

More details will be posted on our website as we have them, including the eulogy for Marie. If we can obtain Lottie's eulogy we will post it as well. We will remember both of our colleagues at this year's department commencement convocation on Thursday, May 25.

I am writing from Prague, CZ, where four members of our debate team have just completed their competition in the International Forensics Association Tournament. Our teams placed fifth and sixth Parliamentary Debate, and coach **Elijah Keys** placed second in the special event speech on a theme of Czech Tourism. Team members are visiting museums and other cultural sites in Prague during their week visit. The trip was supported by a generous grant from the College of Social Science Lottery Professional Development grant. Team members will present a colloquium based on their trip experience in later April. These details will be posted on our website: <http://www.sjsu.edu/depts/commstudies/>

- Dennis Jaehne

See anything missing?

If you'd like to see a news item in *Perspectives*, email Andrew Wood at wooda@email.sjsu.edu. The deadline to send materials for the Late Spring issue is May 5th.