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Romance Studies

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ROMS News

SPRING/SUMMER 2021



Letter from the Chair

It's been over a year since UNC went remote after spring break in 2020. For more than twelve months, most classes have been convening (wholly or in part) on Zoom. Lectures and workshops have all taken place virtually. I have only seen most of my colleagues on a computer screen. And traveling to archives or professional conferences is a distant memory. Through these challenges, my colleagues and students in Romance Studies have found new, creative ways to continue our intellectual work.

While study abroad programs have remained canceled, some students at UNC—including many in Romance Studies—have collaborated with peers and professors overseas through the Collaborative Online International Learning program. Faculty members have also discovered enriching long-distance collaborations, such as Kwazman vwa – a national collective of young scholars working contemporary Caribbean literature including our own Dr. Erika Serrato.

Online lectures have been a revelation. Our speaker series on “Spanish as a Heritage Language,” for example, attracted at least twice as many attendees as could ever fit in Toy Lounge, including colleagues from across North Carolina. Questions and comments from the many K-12 teachers in the audience indicated the practical impact of sharing this research on Hispanic linguistics and language teaching and learning with a larger community.

Remote gatherings have been a necessity throughout the past year. But they have also allowed us to make unexpected connections and to reach broader publics. In the coming months, as vaccines make it possible to come back together in Dey Hall, my colleagues and I will be aiming to continue to use our new technological skills to make the work of Romance Studies more accessible. I hope you'll be able to join us, whether in person or remotely, at a future event.

Ellen Welch

Spring Highlights

- Fifty-one [Romance Studies](#) majors will graduate on May 14-16, 2021, joining eleven Fall 2020 graduates. Watch the department website for a virtual celebration including remarks by undergraduate award winners Nicole Donzella (Camões Prize for Excellence in Portuguese), Marine Elia (Jacques Hardré Award for Excellence in French), Abigail Seitz (Kimberly Kyser Award for Excellence in Italian Studies), and Micah Mullarkey (Sterling A. Stoudemire Award for Excellence in Spanish).
- ROMS alumnus [Enrique Toloza](#) (BA '17), a Physics and Hispanic Literatures and Cultures double major, as well as a former recipient of the Sterling A. Stoudemire Award for Excellence in Spanish, has received a [Paul & Daisy Soros Fellowship](#) for New Americans to work towards a graduate degree in Medicine and Physics at Harvard and MIT.
- The 25th annual [Carolina Conference on Romance Studies](#) took place virtually on March 26-27, featuring well over 50 presentations from contributors across the globe and a keynote address by Professor Elena Past. Congratulations to the organizers, PhD students [Sandra García Gutiérrez](#), [Jhonn Guerra Banda](#), and [Emanuele Stephanori](#).
- UNC's Center for European Studies is supporting new courses by ROMS faculty: Teaching Assistant Professor [Martha Alexander](#) is teaching a new Languages Across the Curriculum course this semester, "Islamic Architecture in Spain." Teaching Associate Professor [Cristina Carrasco](#) received a Curriculum Development Award to create "Let's Talk about Food: Cultural Identity in Spain," which will focus on the culinary traditions of Spain and how they are shaped by geography, religion, demographics, and sustainability.



New Faculty Feature: Interview with Assistant Professor Jennifer Mackenzie

Professor Mackenzie joined the Romance Studies Department in Fall 2020. She earned her PhD in Italian Studies from the University of California, Berkeley in 2017 and previously taught at Franklin and Marshall College in Pennsylvania. At UNC, she teaches Renaissance Italy, including courses on pre-modern travel literature and the relationship between humanism and anthropology.

What inspired you to focus on Renaissance/early modern Italian literature and culture?

I discovered the Italian Renaissance near the end of my time in college. I had been studying English literature and wanted to continue to graduate school. Many periods and authors interested me: Shakespeare, Milton, Romantic poetry, 18th century satirical writing, modernism. I wrote my undergraduate thesis on the contemporary Sri Lankan-Canadian author, Michael Ondaatje. Just before graduating, I studied the Renaissance with a professor who has remained a mentor and friend ever since, Daniela Boccassini. Her courses put paintings, buildings, sculptures, and objects from the period into dialogue with the texts that she asked us to read. This brought the Renaissance to life for me as a three-dimensional world – and what an extraordinary world it was. When these different worlds started to come together – my English major, Italian language minor, and Italian heritage (inherited from my mom) – I knew that I’d found my path into scholarship as a young person.

Your current book project centers on heraldry—the imagery and “logos” adopted by powerful dynasties in medieval and early modern Europe. For you, how does heraldry help us better understand the intellectual culture of Renaissance Italy?

I was interested in how people and communities use images and proverbs to give shape to their identities. Heraldry is one example of this impulse to create ourselves with symbols.

I realized that heraldry doesn’t fit well into our typical understanding of the Renaissance as a cultural revolution. This is supposed to be a time when individuals began to fashion themselves as such, more emancipated from family, profession, and class. It’s a time when so many creators (writers, architects, scientists) become conscious of their ability to invent and improve on tradition. Yet, if we move through a

Renaissance city, library, building, or book, we almost always find coats of arms. They purport to be inherited. They seem unaltered by time and the process of being replicated. For us anyway, they tend to look medieval or gothic in style. In short, in Renaissance contexts coats of arms seem quite out of place and out of time. This disjunction has allowed me to rethink our big Renaissance narratives, and to bring into focus a series of debates from the period about different modes of economic production and social organization (feudalism and capitalism); different models of time's passing (cyclical, linear, progressive); and different theories about where individual identity and nobility comes from.

How does your project shed new light on humanist attitudes to history?

The historians that I'm most interested in right now reconstructed the histories of bloodlines. They were genealogists. They don't get a lot of credit in our accounts of humanist historiography, because we've tended to most appreciate Renaissance attitudes towards history that more resemble our own: The historian should strive to be objective; should approach evidence with skepticism; should limit the subject to a particular context or period; should not be too personally invested in promoting a particular family or partisan goal, etc. But today, our attitudes are changing. Genealogy is becoming ever more popular, boosted by genetic sequencing technology. We are putting a lot of pressure on inherited identity categories. More and more in America, we seem to be taking for granted that where we come from, and who we come from, will influence the way that we see and move through the world.

For me, these are reasons to be interested in humanist history writing that centered genealogy. Remembering how and why this kind of history was written and evaluated in Europe can offer some lessons today as we try to balance our (longing for) ancestral narratives and roots with our liberal institutions that center the individual in her irreducible singularity.

Does early modern heraldry make you think differently about modern phenomena like “branding” or having a “personal brand?”

It does, and I've developed and taught one course so far – working with first-year college students – to explore these connections. Like our contemporary brands, early modern brands needed to be updated regularly to respond to changing technologies and circumstances. They wanted to evoke the right emotions: allegiance, but not anger; passion, but not fanaticism; humor perhaps, but not invective or satire. The most effective brands were connected to stories and values. They needed to be recognized quickly and to be interesting. They needed to endure in time without seeming outdated, and to be innovative without appearing inauthentic. Research today about corporate and personal branding strategies teaches these lessons, but when their insights are put into dialogue with the pre-modern history of branding it seems to me that we can get a richer sense of what we are doing when we interact with, or create, a brand today.

Your research brings visual culture into dialogue with literary culture. Why do you think it's valuable to explore texts and images together?

When we study Renaissance culture, it's particularly useful because this culture understood writing and images as related forms of communication. Images and words worked together collaboratively, or in a spirit of lively competition. The same story – say, the pagan story of Aphrodite's birth from the sea foam, or the Christian story of the Annunciation, or a historical story about a battle or diplomatic event – these could often be read or experienced visually in the Renaissance. Which format was more effective for evoking an emotional response in the audience? Which medium would last longer? Which was more reliably accurate? These kinds of questions were debated. Lettered people collaborated with artists to design images and visual artists found subjects in books. I have gravitated to these contact zones, perhaps because I began to enjoy art and architecture long after I

learned to enjoy reading, and so the realm of images always felt exciting and somewhat mysterious to me, like uncharted territory.

I can add that teaching has been a motivation to keep visual studies as a part of my work as well. Young people today have really strong visual literary skills. An undergraduate class today can respond in very subtle ways to a Renaissance painting. I want to leverage that to help students make connections to ideas and authors that can be more challenging in our digital and future-oriented society.

What has it been like to start teaching at UNC during this pandemic year?

My colleagues have been very welcoming. I have been given a tremendous amount of freedom to design new courses here. I've been surprised that substantive conversations with students can very much happen on Zoom when we get to know each other. The energy and rhythm of class meetings has gotten me through the pandemic year. I don't want to minimize how difficult the pandemic has been in many other respects, but talking with UNC students about traditions and texts that I have spent many years trying to understand is obviously a privilege. Local trails, flora and fauna, and my increasingly close-knit little neighborhood in Carrboro - where I landed here last summer - has helped a lot too.

What are you most excited to teach in the Fall and why?

In the Fall, I'm going to repeat my Italian Renaissance course (The Italian Renaissance Mind and Body, Ital241), an interdisciplinary introduction to the period I love. This is always a favorite for me. I'm also excited to offer a relatively new course called Research, Creativity and Innovation in the Humanities. This will be open to students in ROMS, English and Comparative Literature, and German and Slavic. It will be a space for students to learn more about what research in literary studies looks and feels like, while they develop a project of their own. To be brief, I can say that I'm most excited for this one because there is still so

much for me to play with in terms of the course design. What's more, the students in the course will surely take it in directions that I can't predict in advance.

Global Learning through the Pandemic

This spring semester, two Romance Studies courses participated in UNC Global's [Collaborative Online International Learning](#) program, which connects UNC classes with students and professors at institutions abroad. Students in the courses share their experiences collaborating with peers in Ecuador.



Real World Conversations

By Akshatha Bharadwaj ('22), Statistics and Analytics major, Spanish for the Medical Professions minor

When I was in high school and attending classes, there lingered a question in the back of my head: *when will I ever use this information?* Despite my strong interest in learning Spanish, there was a part of me that asked this question every year. I grew up in a community that was 90% white, and I only knew one person from my entire school that spoke Spanish. Back then, I did not realize how unexposed I was to both the beauty and the challenges of multiple cultures living, sometimes inharmoniously, with each other. After moving to North Carolina and being exposed to many cultures and ethnicities, I realized how sheltered I was. My first job in a restaurant and trips to the grocery store showed me that taking Spanish in school **WOULD** aid me in the future.

One of the strongest experiences that has reinforced my decision to become a Spanish minor is my Community and Professional Engagement class (SPAN 329) taught by [Professor Lorna Avilés](#). Not only has it brought to light the struggles of Latinx immigrants in this country, but it also has given me a fantastic opportunity to connect with Ecuadorian university students through a program called COIL, or Collaborative Online International Learning.

My three partners and I have focused our conversations mainly on the topics we have focused on in class — discrimination against Indigenous populations, corruption in the government, and the effect of globalization on Ecuadorian culture. We have learned about these issues through readings and videos. However, by speaking with other students who have personally witnessed discrimination or been affected by a corrupt government, my view of these situations has surpassed simple acknowledgment and become understanding.

I had this moment of realization after a recent discussion with my COIL partners about the impact of Indigenous communities on Ecuadorian culture. One student explained how the Quechua language's presence in everyday life continues to fade while English slowly exerts more and more influence. Big city life and the increased utility of English in job applications have made Quechua less prevalent. Younger generations opt to wear Western clothing over traditional clothing, and they no longer speak their native language. After hearing the emotion in his voice, I was thoroughly convinced. However, his classmate disagreed with him, citing his own experiences with other indigenous adolescents. For him, most young people continue to educate others about their communities, and they take pride in wearing traditional clothing and speaking their native language. Hearing this difference of opinion, I truly understood the value of this opportunity to talk with peers in South America and capture the complexity of how these situations manifest to different people. I better appreciated the importance of applying my classwork to a real-world setting. For me, COIL eliminates the barriers of time and distance to gaining access to diverse perspectives around the world.



Connecting across Cultures to Explore Race and Ethnicities

By Alejandra Suarez Garcia ('22), Biology and Hispanic Literature and Culture major, and Laursen Lancaster ('22), Political Science and Global Studies major/ Spanish for the Professions minor.

We are taking a Spanish class called Race and Ethnicity in Latin America taught by [Professor Emil' Keme](#). We have been working with a class at the Universidad San Francisco in Quito, Ecuador to discuss various works by Indigenous and Afrodescendant writers and to put together research projects about a topic of our choosing related to course content.

Although we are in separate groups, we agreed that working with students from outside our University and even our country was a very immersive experience where we exchanged ideas, culture and could

practice and work on another language. We have really appreciated the opportunity not only to study with students outside the US, but also make new friends and connect with people we would not usually have the chance to meet. It was very interesting to explore a topic regarding race and ethnicity in Latin America with students that are part of this community in Ecuador. This gave us an inside lens into their lives as Latinx college students as well as their country, indigenous culture, and relationship with race and ethnicity outside of the US.

As part of the COIL experience, we had the pleasure of meeting Gina Maldonado, a writer and professor from the Quechua people in Ecuador. She shared her life stories as a minority and an Indigenous woman. It was very impressive to see her speak in Quechua with students from USFQ, as this exemplifies the impact that Indigenous groups have both within and outside their cultures as they represent a crucial component of the Ecuadorian and Latin American communities.

We are so grateful that we were able to connect with students from Ecuador, especially during COVID. It is so hard to make new connections with people and meet other students when we barely leave our homes, so to make friends with a class in a completely different country is something we never could have imagined. We have loved being able to virtually connect with them as we continue to navigate what it means to be a student during COVID.

Focusing on Heritage Learners of Spanish



[Diana Torres](#), PhD student in Spanish and member of the Working Group on Heritage Learners of Spanish, reports on a recent lecture series.

According to the U.S. Census, North Carolina has one of the fastest-growing Hispanic populations in the country, increasing 25% from 2010 to 2018 in our state, as compared to 18% nationwide. Currently, the Latinx population in the state is about 1 million people, mostly concentrated in the Raleigh-Durham metro area. Many of these Spanish-speakers grew up—or are growing up—bilingual, making Spanish a major heritage language in our state.

This spring, the Department of Romance Studies at UNC, with co-sponsorship from the department of Linguistics and the Institute for the Study of the Americas, hosted two presentations as part of the *Lecture Series on Spanish as a Heritage Language* that generated great interest and stimulating discussion.

Dr. Jim Michnowicz, Professor of Hispanic Linguistics and the Director of Graduate Programs at the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures at NC State University—was the first guest. His presentation, “Spanish in North Carolina. Insights into Heritage

Spanish/El español en Carolina del Norte - Perspectivas sobre el español de herencia,” focused on the importance of recognizing the Spanish spoken by American Heritage Speakers as a legitimate variant of Spanish.

Dr. Kim Potowski, Professor of Hispanic Linguistics at the University of Illinois at Chicago and faculty affiliate in the Latin American and Latino Studies Program and the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, was the second guest of the Series. Her lecture, “Apple and Oranges: Best Approaches in Working with Spanish Heritage Speakers,” highlighted the cultural and linguistic differences between heritage speakers and students of Spanish as a second language. She also stressed diversity among heritage speakers, identifying as the most common group students who predominately use English in public and in educational environments while speaking Spanish mainly in the more informal, domestic sphere.

The two lectures emphasized the importance of Spanish as a sign of identity for heritage speaker communities and the need to develop institutional and pedagogical strategies that contribute to their cultural and linguistic development. The audience for the Zoom lectures, which included K-12 teachers as well as college-level educators from throughout the state, participated in a lively discussion about the practical implications of the speakers’ research.

[Dr. Martha Ruiz-García](#), undergraduate advisor for the Hispanic Linguistics major, noted: “These lectures helped me understand that our student population is linguistically diverse, and we need to be mindful of these differences to enhance our Heritage Speakers program. I recall Dr. Potowski saying, ‘we should start with the learner, not the curriculum,’ and that helped me recognize the importance of first thinking about our students and their diverse backgrounds when designing better programs and experiences.” [Dr. Anastacia Kohl](#), Director of the Spanish Language Program, concurred, “I think that the two biggest takeaways from the speaker series for me have been 1) given the demographics of North Carolina and our student body, creating a more robust Heritage Learner Program in Spanish should be a priority for us, and 2) the needs of our Heritage Learners are especially diverse and must be handled with care and sensitivity. The

talks have helped me think differently, and, perhaps, more creatively about the program and the impact it could have.”

The series will conclude in Fall 2021 with a virtual lecture by Dr. Sara Beaudrie, Associate Professor of Spanish Borderlands at Arizona State University.



Discovering New Paths in Caribbean Literature

Dr. Erika Serrato, Assistant Professor of French & Francophone Studies, talks about a collaborative project to foster discussion of new writing from the francophone Caribbean.

What is Kwazman vwa? What are you and your collaborators hoping to do with this project?

Kwazman vwa is a collective of scholars with intellectual ties to the Caribbean, especially the French-speaking regions but who also seek to go beyond those linguistic borders. The project is called kwazman vwa (croisement/carrefour de voix, in Haitian kreyòl) to center the intersection of multiple voices. We aim to disseminate the literary and

cultural production of the Caribbean by showcasing the works of up-and-coming writers and artists from throughout the archipelago. For our second event, for example, we interviewed Jessica Oublié about her book *Tropiques Toxiques*, a graphic narrative that follows her as she researches the chlordane (or kepone) scandal, about a banana insecticide that the French government allowed long after it was known to be carcinogenic. The French tribunal is still reviewing the case as of this year and Martinicans and Guadeloupians have organized massive protest efforts a few weeks ago, so this text and its message are not only timely but also urgent. Amplifying this text and the stories it relays was imperative.

The group describes itself as a “collective...with rhizomatic roots,” borrowing a botanical metaphor developed by the late Martinican writer and thinker Edouard Glissant. How do the philosophies of the Caribbean influence the way Kwazman vwa does its work?

Kwazman vwa, as a collective, thinks from, with, and through the Caribbean and its proposed alternative ways of understanding the world. We are interested in writers and artists, the ideas and experiences they explore, but also in how they work and relate to each other. Kamau Brathwaite’s tidalectics also comes to mind: It illustrates how certain contexts and experiences necessitate a discourse that would describe more accurately or even ethically Caribbean phenomena such as the spatiality of geography, time, and language. Some of the works we showcase might shed light on socio-historical issues and/or aesthetic questions. There is incredible range in the works produced in the region. Some texts are relatively straight-forward in explaining a pressing matter, such as Oublié’s text, while others might resist being understood and even reject the premise of transparency, reminiscent of Glissant’s assertion of the right to Opacity. The underlaying current is how rewarding all these texts are, each in their own way.

Which contemporary Caribbean writer are you most excited for your audience to discover and why?

I'm excited about the possibilities. I want the audience to get to know the rich literary and artistic landscape of the Caribbean. The greats won't cease to be relevant, but there are so many new voices adding compelling ideas to the conversation. We also want to affirm the multilingual nature of the region and blur those temporary linguistic divides, so we're lining up voices from the Spanish- and English-speaking Caribbean and translating the events in post-production.

How does Kwazman vwa resonate with your approach to your scholarship or your teaching?

My scholarship and my teaching style, namely close-reading primary sources and critical examination of materials, are reflected in the collective's interests and guiding principles. I will say that working with like-minded individuals makes intellectual labor a much less lonely endeavor. The community is a great reminder of why I do this type of work and why it's important to engage students in meaningful ways.

Learn more at <https://kwazmanvwa.com/> or on social media. The group's first event, an interview with Haitian author Néhémy Pierre-Dahomey is available on the website, complete with a transcript in French and subtitled into English. À la rencontre des nouvelles voies caribéennes!

Alumni Spotlights



Meet ROMS Alumnus Matt Coss ('16)

I graduated from UNC in 2016 with a double major in ROMS (then ROML) with a concentration in Hispanic Linguistics and Asian Studies with a focus in Chinese as well as a minor in Entrepreneurship. When I wasn't taking every possible Hispanic Linguistics class offered in Dey Hall, I could often be found TA-ing for a Spanish 102 hybrid course in the basement of Dey, acting as a non-English-speaking patient in the [CAMPOS program](#) at the UNC School of Medicine, or taking Portuguese and French classes in Dey on top of my already multilingual, multi-focal course load.

Since graduation, I have continued to pursue my passion for language teaching, working first as a Spanish instructor for [The Language Academy of the Carolinas](#) (also run by a ROMS graduate!) before moving to the Washington DC area and earning a Master's degree in Second Language Acquisition from the University of Maryland. During my Master's, I worked as a Graduate Assistant for the [STARTALK](#)

[program](#) managed by the [National Foreign Language Center](#), where I helped coordinate logistics and eventually joined the team responsible for developing professional learning materials (trainings, model curricula and lesson plans, etc.) for teachers and learners of critical languages. I also spent a significant portion of my time each year teaching: Spanish in summer programs for immersion school students, Chinese at an immersion elementary school in Washington DC, and Chinese again at Georgetown University. During the summers of my Master's, I helped lead a program in Charlotte, NC to train K-12 and weekend school Chinese teachers in best practices in teaching and assessment in a local STARTALK program.

After graduating from the University of Maryland, I have stayed on as a Second Language Acquisition Specialist, developing resources for various government-funded projects including STARTALK, a federally funded student language learning and teacher professional development grant program for students and teachers of critical languages, which since 2019, includes Spanish as well. I also continue to give invited and self-submitted presentations at local, regional, national, and international conferences for language teachers. I am also a lecturer in the East Asian Languages and Literatures department at George Washington University. Last semester I taught a brand-new course in translation that, though it focused on Chinese and English, was significantly inspired by a class with Ruy Burgos-Lovece during my time at UNC. This semester, I'm teaching a class about the development of the Chinese writing system, which is based on a [C-START](#) class I taught while at UNC! Finally, I am also preparing for workshops for language teachers all over the world, including an event co-hosted by the Carolina Asia Center for NC Chinese teachers in higher ed—at the request of Yi Zhou, one of my professors in Asian Studies while I was at UNC!

Needless to say, my time at UNC continues to inspire and inform every aspect of my professional life. I am so grateful to all of the faculty and staff in the ROMS department, but there are two people I'd really like to thank here (we seldom tell the people who impact us the most just how much they mean, and I want this on the record!). First, I'd like to thank Dr. Bruno Estigarribia for inspiring a love of the scientific study of language (and language acquisition—since he taught that class for the first time while I was in my 2nd year at UNC), for challenging me in

every one of the (many) classes I took with him, and for caring so deeply about *teaching* in addition to the research he does with such an inspiring passion. Second, I would like to thank the recently retired Glynnis Cowell who, since my first day on campus as a first year, always found the time to listen so intently to my rambling. Dr. Cowell always responded with such wisdom, and she had this knack for seeing the connecting thread where I saw jumbles of ideas and possibilities. I spent quite a few afternoons in one of her two offices just recounting recent events and thinking about the future, and I always left with new insights that she made so clear with such ease. I would not have pursued a MA in Second Language Acquisition or developed professionally as I have without the selflessness of these two members of ROMS's magnificent faculty.



An Update from ROMS Alumnus Zachary Turner ('17)

I graduated in 2017 with a major in French and Francophone Studies and a minor in Hispanic Studies. Prior to Chapel Hill, my exposure to French began and ended with *Les misérables* and *Pépé Le Pew*. However, French quickly took on a greater personal significance through travel. Sometimes that traveling was done on the page, time-traveling via the centuries-old texts in Wilson Library. Other times, it was onboard the *SNCF*, riding the rails through alpine peaks and the many bucolic expanses in-between. In Lyon, France, I spent my junior year studying at L'Université Lyon III Jean Moulin and bartending in an Irish Pub on the fringe of the city's trendy *Croix-Rousse* neighborhood. It was a banner year of firsts: my first time behind the bar, my first apartment in a big city, and—unexpectedly—my first surgery under anesthesia.

UNC's French program created many meaningful learning opportunities for its students and challenged them to embrace new perspectives

beyond their lived experiences. I remember Dr. Rudosky guiding our FREN 374 class discussion on the contemporary French novel *En finir avec Eddy Bellegueulle* by Édouard Louis, a memoir in which the author unpacks the trauma of growing up poor and gay in rural Northern France. There was a universality to his stories that inspired empathy and fostered a sense of closeness with us as readers despite our geographic estrangement from the text—a point which was driven home when Louis stopped by our class to discuss his memoir. I was marked by Louis' approachability and willingness to engage with us. That class taught me a lot about the proximity of those people behind the page—even those living half a world away—to us as readers.

I returned to *L'Hexagone* after graduation with the Teaching Assistant Program in France (TAPIF), where I taught English in Saintes. Placed in the coastal Charente-Maritime region—home of Cognac's eponymous white wine brandy and the beautiful port city of La Rochelle—I explored nearby caves following maps I unearthed online through regional speleology clubs. These mini-adventures culminated in a trip to the country's cave capital, Dordogne, where I descended into the basilic *Gouffre de Proumeyssac* and traversed *La Roque Saint-Christophe*, also known as the “Boulevard of Humanity,” a labyrinthine city and fortress recessed in the side of a limestone cliff.

Since then, I have returned to the US and worked many jobs ranging from customer service to freelance graphic design. At Lulu Press, I translated and wrote articles on publishing for [their francophone blog](#) and later went on to write [my own content for Medium](#). Most recently, I joined a forestry crew in Reno, Nevada, and assisted in their conservation, ecological restoration, and fire prevention efforts. I am currently applying to graduate schools to pursue a Master's in Environmental Journalism.

Over the years, my relationship with the French language has evolved. No longer is it a mere tool to communicate, but rather a teacher, friend, and even a second home. Now that I live in North Carolina, French serves as a reminder to keep taking chances and keep moving forward in this journey that first began in the Romance Studies department at Chapel Hill.

Grad Student Publications

- Booker, Sarah. "[Tracing the Apparatus: The Technological Mediation of Experiences in *Los astronautas de la cosmopista, o un viaje atemporal París-Marsella* by Julio Cortázar and Carol Dunlop.](#)" *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies*, vol. 29, no. 3, 2020, pp. 1-15.
- Booker, Sarah, translator. *Grieving: Dispatches from a Wounded Country* by Cristina Rivera Garza. Feminist Press, 2020.
- Brookie, Parker. "[Deconstructing Traumatic Memory in Post-Dictatorship Argentina: Graciela Sacco's Photographic Installations.](#)" *Chasqui: Revista de Literatura Latinoamericana*, no. 49, vol. 1, 2020, pp. 115-130.
- Bruhn, Maury. [Review of *Penser la couleur en littérature: Explorations romanesques des Lumières au réalisme* by Élodie Ripoll.](#) *Nineteenth-Century French Studies*, vol. 49, no. 1&2, Fall & Winter 2020-2021.
- Chen-López, Francisco Y. "Se hace camino al andar: La transgresión continuada del mundo chino en *Verde Shanghai* (2011) de Cristina Rivera Garza." *Revista de Literatura Mexicana Contemporánea*, vol. 80, 2021.
- ---. [Review of *Historia cultural de los hispanohablantes en Japón* by Araceli Tinajero.](#) *Ciberletras*, no. 44, 2020, pp. 97-99.
- Clemente, Cristóbal. "[La utopía americana en *Odas* \(1794, Madrid\), de Pedro Montengón.](#)" *Dieciocho*, vol. 43, no. 2, 2020, pp. 291-310.
- García Gutiérrez, Sandra. "Las princesas de Agustín Pérez Zaragoza: un acto de autoría rebelde". *Desde el siglo XIX: reescrituras, traducciones, transmedialidad*. Edited by Bianchi, Cimardi, de la Fuente Ballesteros, and Goñi. Colección Biblioteca Litterae, Calambur Editorial, 2020.
- Kim, Jeonghwan. "[The Contemporary Meaning of Melancholy: Based on the Virtue of Melancholy from Renaissance to Baroque.](#)" *Baroque Studies: Journal of the Korean Association of Baroque Studie*, vol. 3, Dec. 2020, pp. 71-98.

- Loftus, Ellynn. [Review of *Deported Americans: Life after Deportation*, by Beth C. Caldwell.](#) *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos*, vol. 37, no. 1, February 2021, pp. 157-160.
- Moehlenpah, Amanda. “Les assemblées qu’elle occasionne’: Danced Sociability in Enlightenment France.” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 54, no. 3, Spring 2021, pp. 577-93.
- Núñez Rodríguez, Rafael. [“Variaciones de un motivo de Charles Baudelaire: el hombre metropolitano en Karmelo Iribarren.”](#) *Monográfico. Poéticas frente a frente. España, siglos XX y XXI, Artifara: Revista de lenguas y literatura ibéricas y latinoamericanas*, núm. 20.2, 2020, pp. 145- 157.
- Smith, Katelyn. [Review of *Adapting Gender: Mexican Feminisms from Literature to Film*, by Ilana Dann Luna.](#) *A Contracorriente: una revista de estudios latinoamericanos*, vol. 17, no. 3, May 2020, pp.326- 329.
- Torres Silva, Diana. [“Implicaciones políticas de la violencia en lo privado en las series de mesas Unland \(1995-1998\) y Plegaria muda \(2008 -2010\) de Doris Salcedo.”](#) *Estudios del ISHiR*, vol. 10, no. 28, 2020, n.p. *Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas (CONICET) y Universidad del Rosario, Argentina.*

Graduate Awards

- Ryan-Headley Dissertation Fellowship for Medieval & Early Modern Studies—Toni Veneri
- Graduate School Dissertation Completion Fellowship—Sarah Booker
- Graduate School Summer Research Fellowship—Elena Peña-Argüeso
- Jacques Hardré Summer Award for French & Francophone Studies —Kirsten Kane, Jossette Bailey, Wendy Combs
- Buchan Summer Award for Iberian & Latin American Studies—Jhonn Guerra Banda
- Jennings Summer Award for Iberian & Latin American Studies—Ellyn Loftus, Colleen McAlister
- Kimberly Kyser Graduate Summer Award for Italian Studies—Megan Fenrich

- Falvo Graduate Award for Excellence in Italian Studies—Giuseppina Gemboni
 - McCulloch Research Travel Award for French & Francophone Studies—Jordan Bessette, Quentin Bouvier
 - Isabella Payne Cooper Research Travel Award for Italian Studies—Toni Veneri, Michele Cammelli
 - Dana B. Drake Research Travel Award for Iberian & Latin American Studies—Sandra García Gutierrez
 - Wilson Library Archival Research Fellowship for Italian Studies—Megan Fenrich
 - Buchan Essay Prize for Iberian & Latin American Studies—Francisco Y. Chen-López
 - Jacques Hardré Award for Excellence in Teaching French—Jordan Bessette
 - Dana B. Drake Award for Excellence in Teaching Italian—Valentina Graziuso
 - Dana B. Drake Award for Excellence in Teaching Spanish—Sarah Booker
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