

YALE DEPARTMENT OF FRENCH

FALL 2016

GREETINGS FROM THE CHAIR



I'M DELIGHTED TO BEGIN THIS newsletter with word of two faculty hires, each of which was long in the planning.

PIERRE SAINT-AMAND, the renowned specialist of 18th-century literature, joined the faculty this July as the Benjamin Barge Professor of French. The Barge chair, intended for a native speaker of French, was held by Naomi Schor until her death in 2001. It is especially meaningful to us that Pierre should succeed her, since they were close friends and colleagues at Brown University. Pierre joins the ranks of a long and distinguished cohort of 18th-century French scholars at Yale, going back to Henri Peyre and including his mentor Georges May, whose portrait hangs in the French department's hallway. Pierre's many books and scholarly editions have challenged us to think differently and more deeply about the Enlightenment, to look at its shadows and its margins, to read closely. His integrity as a theorist based in close reading, his elegance as a writer, and his critical generosity are among the

qualities that have distinguished him as the truly incomparable candidate in his field, and as a leading intellectual across the humanities in general.

A second hire at the junior level was also cause for rejoicing. **JILL JARVIS** (below with Pierre Saint-Amand), our new assistant professor in North African literature, works on Maghrebi literature written in French and Arabic. Her hire brings to a conclusion our determined search for a vibrant scholar who works in both linguistic and cultural traditions. Jarvis's dissertation, "Absent Witness: The Politics of Fiction in the Postcolony, Algeria 1962-2001," engages with Algerian literary history as a site for the critique of state violence. She is interested in the transformative powers of literature, beyond what area studies or development discourse might accomplish. Her article "Remnants of Muslims: Reading Agamben's Silence" won the 2014 Ralph Cohen prize from the journal *New Literary History*, awarded to the best essay by an untenured scholar. Jill lived in France as a child, but her first formal study of the language was via our own "French in Action." Stay tuned for sightings of Robert and Mireille in Algiers...

Among many memorable lectures and events of the season, **KAMEL DAOUD's** lecture on "*Meursault et l'arabe: une robinsonnade malheureuse*" stands out. During a week when the campus was engaged in protests over issues of race and free speech, at the dawn of an important Black Lives Matter movement, Daoud (*top right*) addressed hard questions of what it means to be "othered." Over 120 students



attended his lecture, given in French—a sign among many that francophone culture on our campus is alive and well. Daoud, author of the international bestseller, *Meursault, contre-enquête*, spent his last morning on campus working with the original manuscript of Camus's *Le Mythe de Sisyphe*, one of the treasures of the Beinecke. He later wrote about the experience in *Le Point*. Daoud's Yale lecture is available with English subtitles on [YouTube](#). Support from the Whitney Humanities Center, the Poynter Fellowship, and the Macmillan Center allowed us to provide this resource to students reading Daoud in English translation.

During this last eventful year as chair, I was supported by a truly excellent team: **CHRISTOPHER MILLER**, returning as DGS, **CHRISTOPHER SEMK**, returning as DUS, and **RUTH KOIZIM**, in her first year as the Language Program Director. In July, I passed the reins of the Department to **MAURICE SAMUELS**, who brings to the job his many talents and achievements: a former French DGS and former member of the Humanities Divisional Committee, he is also the Director of Yale's Program for the Study of Anti-Semitism (YPSA). Maurice Samuels is a dynamic and admired teacher at the graduate and undergraduate levels as well as a prize-winning scholar in 19th-century literature and culture and in Jewish Studies. Maurice's leadership at Yale and in the profession at large will consolidate our recent gains and take the department in exciting new directions.

— Alice Kaplan

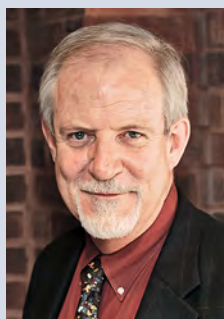


RETIREMENT TRIBUTE—THOMAS M. KAVANAGH

THOMAS KAVANAGH, B.S. Holy Cross College, Ph.D. Yale University, faculty member at SUNY Buffalo, the universities of Colorado, Michigan, and California Berkeley, and Augustus R. Street Professor of French at Yale since 2002: your capacious mind and eloquent voice have dominated our understanding of the culture of the French Enlightenment over the last four decades. You had the courage to tackle neglected aspects of the 18th century, to synthesize the study of literature and the social sciences, to reconcile esthetics, philosophy, and literature in a series of influential books, articles, and reviews focused on the major figures of the period—Diderot, Rousseau, Voltaire, Casanova, Graffigny, Watteau, Poussin, Boucher, and Fragonard. In your first book, *The Vacant Mirror*, you used French theory to revise our understanding of the mimetic conventions of storytelling. Your second book, *Writing the Truth*, contained a startling psychoanalytic interpretation of Rousseau's combined literary, political, and personal writings. In your third free-standing volume, *Enlightenment and the Shadows of Chance*, which won the Modern Language Association's prestigious Scaglione Prize, you traced with consummate brilliance and erudition the coincident growth of the novel as a form and of the probability theory that made us mathematically modern. Your move into the field of art history in your 1997 volume *Esthetics of the Moment* embraced the various ways the Enlightenment valorized the present moment—as an Epicurean, an epiphanic, a supra-historical, or a fortuitous experience of the here and now. At the apex of a distinguished career, you not so much indulged your life-long love of gambling as made playing the numbers worthy of genuine intellectual inquiry. Your 2005 volume *Dice, Cards, Wheels: A Different History of French Culture* and your 2010 *Enlightened Pleasures: Eighteenth-Century France and the New Epicureanism* make the history of French literature richer, more challenging, and more pleasurable.

Yale's French Department has benefitted immensely from your wisdom as an undergraduate teacher and mentor of graduate students, and from your twinkly, equanimous, steady hand as departmental chair. As you retire from this faculty, your colleagues, proud of the multiplicity of your gifts and your achievements, celebrate your significant and original contributions to French studies, literary studies, and to the humanities writ large.

R. HOWARD BLOCH



GOUVERNEMENT 2016-17

Chair: **MAURICE SAMUELS**

DGS: **CHRIS MILLER** in the Fall,
R. HOWARD BLOCH
in the Spring.

DUS: **TOM CONNOLLY**

LPD: **RUTH KOIZIM** will continue as the director of the Language Program.

MERCIS

We're grateful to:

EMILY BAKEMEIER, Deputy Provost, Dean of Faculty Affairs of FAS

TAMAR GENDLER, Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences

AMY HUNGERFORD, Chair of the Humanities Divisional Committee in FAS

JOHN MANGAN, Senior Associate Dean of FAS

DOREEN NEELANS, Operations Manager

IAN SHAPIRO, Director of the MacMillan Center, for providing research fund support for faculty and graduate students in French

for their support of our many endeavors, and their gift for problem solving and open dialogue. We feel lucky to work with such an excellent team.

JALONS

We are delighted to welcome **VANESSA VYSOSIAS** to the rank of senior lecturer 1



Vanessa Vysosias (l) and Lauren Pinzka (r)

and to announce that **RUTH KOIZIM** (right) was reappointed as senior lecturer 1.

TOM KAVANAGH

was named professor emeritus. R. Howard Bloch wrote a wonderful tribute. (See box)



CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Newsletter published annually by
the Department of French.

**Your comments, suggestions and
news are most welcome!**

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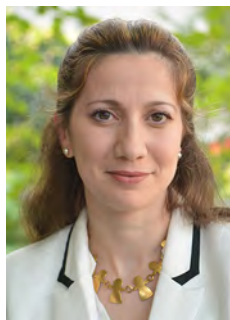
Nathalie Batrville and Ayah Elarabi
(Special events)

Michael Marsland (Faculty portraits,
departmental group photos, and HGS)

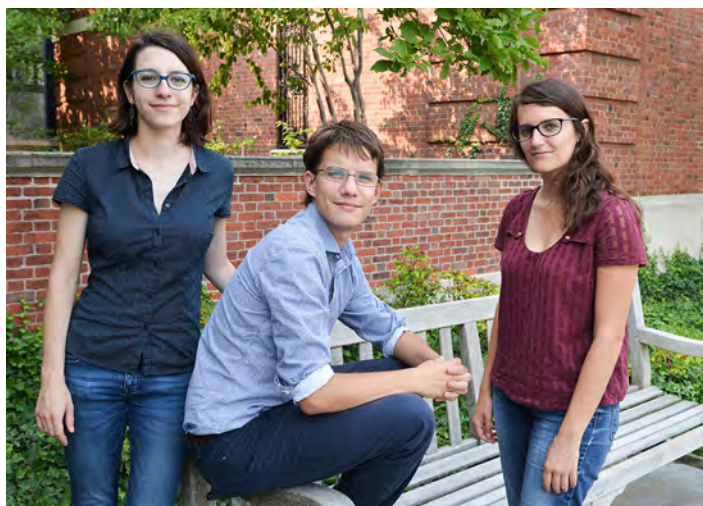
Designer:

Elaine Piraino-Holevoet/PIROET

MERCIS AUSSI



to our colleagues **RAMLA BEDOUI** (left), who added so much to our language curriculum and was a vibrant member of our intellectual community, and **NATASHA LEE**, who taught a graduate seminar in the Fall which asked how political, scientific, and religious discourses marked individuals as “others” in the 18th century; and to **LAURA BERGOUNOU** (below left), **PAUL LANGLOIS** (center), **EMILIE POLAK** (right), and **FRANÇOIS EXPERT** (missing from photo), the students from the Ecole Normale Supérieure participating in the exchange program between the department and the ENS, for their active contribution to our Language Program.



Below: The Yale Department of French, Fall 2016



Gouvernement: Chris Miller, DGS; Maurie Samuels, Chair; Tom Connolly, DUS

DISTINCTIONS



French Department alum **BENJAMIN HOFFMANN**'s (left) fourth novel, *American Pandemonium*, was published by Gallimard. Please see the review published by “*Le Monde des Livres*” [here](#).

PATRICK WEIL (right) received the 2016 Jean Zay Prize, a literary prize awarded to a work reflecting the values of the French Republic, for his book *Le Sens de la République*. The book has been adapted into an illustrated version by Grasset jeunesse.



REMEMBERING NAOMI SCHOR THROUGH THE NAOMI SCHOR MEMORIAL LECTURE SERIES



The Naomi Schor Lecture Fund was established in 2002 to honor and perpetuate the memory of Professor Schor by bringing to the Yale community distinguished speakers on the broad range of topics represented by her teaching and research. **NAOMI SCHOR** was a scholar of 19th-century French literature and culture, whose writings focused on the novel, but whose interests spanned a much wider area, including feminist theory, women's and gender studies, the visual arts, interdisciplinary approaches to literature and history, and the relationship of universalism, human rights, and citizenship to the more particular national ethnic, and immigrant identities of America and France.



September 23, 2003

JOAN WALLACH SCOTT

Princeton University

Naomi Schor Inaugural Memorial Lecture :
"French Universalism in the Nineties"

November 9, 2004

FRANÇOISE GASPARD

Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences
Sociales, Paris

"Universalism and Diversity—
French Feminism and the Veil"

October 10, 2005

PEGGY PHELAN

Stanford University

"Political Details, or, The Distraction of
History in the Age of Performance"

November 12, 2007

LINDA NOCHLIN

New York University

"Dislocating Tradition: Women Artists and
the Body, from Cassatt to Whiteread"

April 13, 2009

JUDITH BUTLER

UC Berkeley

"What Does Gender Want of Me?"

April 7, 2010

ALICE KAPLAN

Yale University

"Susan Sontag's Parisian Year"

March 1, 2011

PATRICK WEIL

Paris 1-Sorbonne, Yale Law School

"Being French: The Four Pillars of Nationality"

November 5, 2012

ROYA HAKAKIAN

Writer, journalist, human rights activist

"9/17/1992: The Political Assassination,
Stubborn Prosecutor, and Historic Verdict
that Shook Iran and Europe"

November 5, 2013

GRISELDA POLLOCK

University of Leeds, UK

"Crimes, Confession and the Everyday:
Challenges in Reading Charlotte Salomon's
Leben? oder Theater? 1941-42"

April 15, 2015

SUSAN SULEIMAN

Harvard University

"How to Become a Famous Woman Writer in
Interwar France: Irène Némirovsky's Choices,
1920-1939"

April 12, 2016

MAURICE SAMUELS

Yale University

"The Right to Difference: French
Universalism and the Jews"

April 4, 2017

PIERRE SAINT-AMAND

Yale University

TBA

ÉVÉNEMENTS

2015

September 24

PATRICK WEIL

Yale Law School, CNRS, Université Paris-1
“After the Paris Attacks: Is There a Future for the Jews and the Muslims in France?”

September 28

DOMINIQUE KALIFA

Université Paris-1
“The True Story of the Belle Époque”
(co-sponsored by the Dept. of History)

October 29

PIERRE SAINT-AMAND

Brown University
“*Trouble dans la mode: Petits-maîtres et fats au XVIIIe siècle*”

November 3

MARTINE REID

University Lille-III, France
“*La France à l’heure du ‘genre’*”

November 9

KAMEL DAOUD

Writer and journalist, Yale Poynter Fellow
“*Meursault et l’arabe: une robinsonnade malheureuse*”



2016

January 21

JILL JARVIS

Princeton University
“Untranslatable Justice: Yamina Mechakra’s Fiction for the Future (Algeria 1973-1999)”

February 4

PAULA AMAD

University of Iowa
“‘The World’s Heavy Gaze:’ Cin-aereality in the Post-War French Avant-Gardes”

February 8

CHRISTOPHER CARSTEN

Translator

“Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Fable: Jean de La Fontaine in a New English Version Translation”

April 5

ALBAN CERISIER

Archiviste, historien, éditeur et auteur aux éditions Gallimard,
“*Un siècle d’édition française: quelques vues sur les archives inédites des Editions Gallimard*”

April 12

MAURICE SAMUELS

Yale University
Annual Lecture in Memory of Naomi Schor
“The Right to Difference: French Universalism and the Jews”



April 15-16

Displacements/Déplacements:

A graduate conference hosted by the Yale French Department.



Guest speaker:

ANDREA GOULET (left)

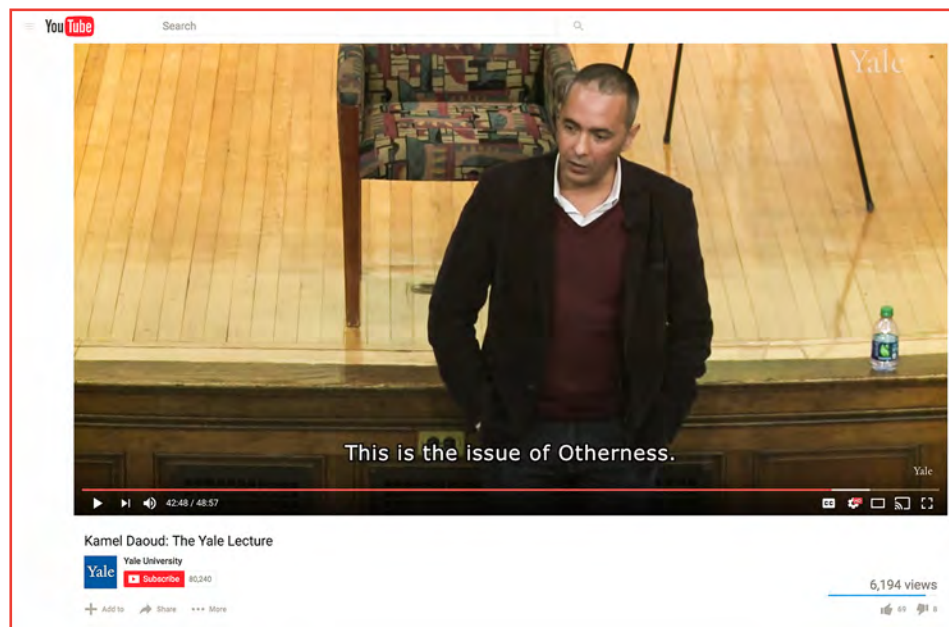
University of Pennsylvania
“*Les Drames de la Rue: Politics, Theater, and Crime in/off the Streets of 19th-Century Paris*”



April 28

MICHAEL LUCEY

UC Berkeley
“Proust and Bourdieu, Distinction and Form”



FACULTY NEWS

HOWARD BLOCH chaired Medieval Studies during the 2015-2016 academic year. His book on Stéphane Mallarmé, *One Toss of the Dice: The Incredible Story of How a Poem Made us Modern*, was published in November 2016 by W. W. Norton. At present he is working on a MOOC entitled "The Age of Cathedrals."

MORGANE CADIEU

completed the manuscript of her first book on Georges Perec, Samuel Beckett, Sophie Calle, Italo Calvino, and Anne Garréta called *Marcher au hasard: déterminisme, clinamen et libre-arbitre en littérature au XXème siècle*. In her next book project, entitled *Rewriting Rastignac: How to Make It in the Contemporary French Novel*, she will explore the renewal of the motif of the "transfuge" as well as the representation of classes and social mobility in narratives from the 1970s onward with a focus on liminal figures of emancipation such as maids, cashiers, and security guards. She was awarded a Griswold fellowship to start the archival research for her new project this summer in Paris, Angers, and Caen, where she consulted the manuscripts and correspondence of Jules Vallès, Octave Mirbeau, Christine Angot, and Nella Nobili. Her article, "Stratification of the Urban Space in Contemporary Paris: Modiano, Vasset, and the Data Centers of Memory," is forthcoming in *Sites*. This past year, she taught courses on the history and aesthetics of trains, French fiction since the 1990s, social mobility, and literary versions of consumer society. At the Nineteenth-Century French Studies Colloquium at Princeton last fall, she unearthed the social mapping of the cholera in George Sand's Parisian novels. In the spring, she delivered the keynote address at Brown for the graduate student conference on intermediality. Based on her 3D printing of Emile Zola's train in *La Bête humaine*, she examined what



happens when a textual machine escapes its original support. She led a panel at the 20th/21st Century French Studies Colloquium, "*D'une classe à l'autre: 40 ans de mobilité sociale à la française*," and showed how Annie Ernaux and Edouard Louis profile the social deserter either as an unattainable exception or as a reproducible example.

DIANE CHARNEY's reviews, "Elisabeth Louise Vigée-Le Brun and the Art of Seduction" and "Supreme Sensations: James Tissot exhibit at The Chiostro del Bramante in Rome" appeared in

Versopolis, a new European review of poetry, books, and culture sponsored by the European Union. She also translated four articles by French author Jacqueline Raoul-Duval: "France Pays Homage to Elie Wiesel," "Her eyes already half closed: Bettina Rheims in all of her stages," "Who Am I?" and "Paris, Never More: Schubert, after the Shooting." Diane's book, *Letters to Men of Letters*, which takes inspiration from Alice Kaplan's wonderful *French Lessons* and *Dreaming in French*, is slated for publication in 2017.

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FROM PIERRE SAINT AMAND

I presented at Cerisy-la-Salle this summer on Roland Barthes on the occasion of the centenary of his birth. It was the last event of the Barthes celebration, arriving a little beyond the anniversary year (2015). For me, it was the occasion to return to Cerisy where I had been for the first Marguerite Duras conference in 1993. I was pleased to be back to this mythical place, this Normandy *château* dedicated uniquely to intellectual exchange. This was the second Roland Barthes conference at Cerisy. The first one, organized by a young Antoine Compagnon in 1977, famously included Roland Barthes himself (a Cerisy tradition is to have the person being paid homage present during the debates). This 2016 celebration, I have to admit, felt a little strange: it centered a lot on Barthes's semiological writings. It made evident however how the writings of Barthes had impacted the world. There were scholars from Brazil, Eastern Europe, Spain, Belgium. I was honored to be the one representing the United States (and Yale—my first presentation under my new affiliation). And I was pleased to have another take, different from the semiological and the "genetical" Barthes (his writings read and corrected in light of his seminars). I spoke on eroticism in Barthes, the way it is brought out by the Neutral (one of Barthes's key late concepts). Some might have seen an American influence in this choice of topic with its deliberate gender inflection. Indeed, Eros in Roland Barthes escapes the violence of dichotomy, of binary. The Neutral opens up a space for an eroticism of the surface, of contact, of delicacy. It reconfigures relationships in terms of tenderness.



A sad intrusion made its way into the serenity of Cerisy when the news of the Bastille Day attack in Nice reached the *château* the following morning. In the distance of Normandy, the event felt strangely far, detached from the tumult of the twenty-four hour news cycle. However, we were able to pay homage to the victims on the day when France stood for the minute of silence. The conference stopped its work. This place of debate and discussion became solemn as it froze in silence.

THOMAS CONNOLLY returns from a Morse fellowship to serve as DUS. Last year, he published articles on Baudelaire and prose poetry in *Romance Notes* and on Mallarmé and temples in *French Studies Bulletin*. He has articles appearing on Rimbaud in *PMLA*, and on musical ekphrasis in *Mosaic*. His book on the late work of the poet Paul Celan is scheduled to appear with Legenda in 2017. This year, he is teaching courses on Mad Poets, Mallarmé, and Ekphrasis, and continuing research on aniconism and North African francophone poetry.

ALICE KAPLAN's *Looking for The Stranger: Albert Camus and the Life of a Literary Classic* was published this fall by the University of Chicago Press and by the Editions Gallimard (French title: *En quête de L'Etranger*). She enjoyed teaching WWII French Cinema this past spring, assisted by French/Film and Media Studies graduate student Sean Strader. In the spring semester, in addition to chairing French, she acted as interim director of the Whitney Humanities Center during Gary Tomlinson's leave. She continues to enjoy writing occasional pieces on French-American topics: "Le rêve de Nohemi Gonzalez," *Nouvelle revue française* (no. 617, March 2016); "Greil Marcus et Bob Dylan," *Contreligne* (fall 2015), and "Ode to the Pagode," *The Paris Review Daily* (November 11, 2013).

LAUREN PINZKA has enjoyed her ongoing role as course co-chair of FREN160 while teaching two different versions of "Introduction to Literature in French." She also happily returned to teaching the "Advanced Writing Workshop." After teaching FREN160 in Paris for the first time, she completed an article entitled "Teaching the French Revolution: Myth and Memory in Modern France" for the MLA's *Approaches to Teaching the French Revolution*. Her chapter, "Teaching Historical Myth and Memory in Indiana," appeared in 2015 in the MLA's *Approaches to Teaching Indiana*. She enthusiastically continued in her role as Branford fellow and freshman and sophomore advisor and regularly attends CLS pedagogy workshops. She also served as treasurer and occasional salon

moderator for the Center for Independent Study. This fall she is embarking on a yearlong review of gateway introductory French-language literature courses outside of Yale.

Thanks to a Guggenheim Fellowship, **MAURICE SAMUELS** was able to take a leave in 2015-16 to complete his new book, *The Right to Difference: French Universalism and the Jews*, which will be published by The University of Chicago Press in November 2016. He is looking forward to his new role as chair of the French Department.

CONSTANCE SHERAK

once again served as chair of our intensive elementary French course last fall and enjoyed revising and teaching FREN198, "Applied Advanced French Grammar," in the spring, a new course she designed that seeks to refine advanced students' skills through grammar review, stylistic analysis of literary works, translation, and the writing of fiction pieces. She chaired a session on "Somatic Thresholds: Some Ways of Looking at the Body" at this year's Nineteenth-Century French Studies Colloquium in Princeton and is currently preparing a paper on anachronism and aesthetics in Balzac that she'll present at this year's NCFS Colloquium at Brown. Constance continued in her role as sophomore advisor and also as co-referee, with Françoise Schneider, for the annual Montaigne Prize. She attended several teaching workshops at the Center for Language Study that inspired revisions to her own teaching. This summer, she taught FREN50, "Advanced Language Practice," in Paris during the Yale Summer Session where floods and train strikes contributed to an added "cultural experience" for her students. Constance is currently at work on an article on the pedagogy of the Francophone literary *patrimoine* through film.



CANDACE SKORUPA, senior lecturer, continues her work in telecollaboration and the development of a related larger-scale methodology for the curriculum of

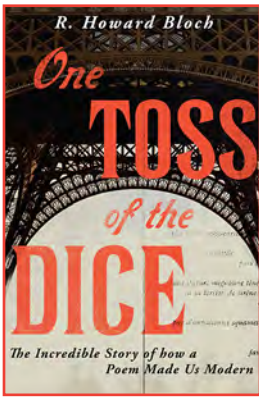
the FREN 145 intermediate intensive course. Sustained teamwork with her Parisian partner teacher, Sophie Petrucci, at the *grande école* Télécom-ParisTech, benefits students on both sides of the Atlantic with weekly, authentic communication in the target language.

At the GLAT conference in Padua, Italy, in May, Candace presented a paper on telecollaborative mediation, "Cross-Cultural Connections," to commemorate the 14 years of the telecollaboration project that she spear-headed at Smith College in 2002 as well as to celebrate the imminent retirement of her long-term project partner, James Benenson at Télécom-ParisTech. She was joined at the conference by both of her teaching partners at Télécom-ParisTech, Benenson and Petrucci, as well as two of her successors at Smith College, Christiane Métrai and (virtually) Mohammed Mack. At Yale this year Candace presented other aspects of her telecollaboration work at a CLS Brown Bag luncheon as well as her recent experience with two new applications ("Zoom" and "Padlet") at a CLS Tech Talk.

In conjunction with the "Focus on French Cinema" in Greenwich, CT, in February, Candace invited the French film director Alix Delaporte to her FREN145 class and to a department tea for a discussion of Delaporte's latest film, *Le dernier coup de marteau*. FREN145 students also joined Candace on a field trip to the United Nations in NYC for a special event and screening of the documentary *Demain*.

At the 2015 Nineteenth-Century French Studies Colloquium at Princeton, Candace chaired a panel on "The Syphilis Plague: Prostitution and Hygiene in Fin-de-Siècle France," building on her interest in prostitutes in 19th-century literature.

FACULTY BOOKSHELF



Publisher W. W. Norton writes about **R. HOWARD BLOCH's** new book: "Renowned scholar R. Howard Bloch decodes the poem still considered among the most enigmatic ever written. Creating a shimmering portrait of Belle-Époque Paris with a cast of exotic characters—Napoleon III, the Lumière brothers, Whistler, Rodin, Berthe Morisot, even an expatriate American dentist—that recalls Roger Shattuck's classic *The Banquet Years*, Bloch positions Mallarmé as the spiritual giant of late nineteenth-century France. Featuring a new translation of the poem by J. D. McClatchy, *One Toss of the Dice* reveals how a masterpiece shaped our perceptual world."



control over the fate of their published books: Camus felt this acutely in the 1950s when a schoolboy in Melun who had murdered his classmate claimed to an examining magistrate that Meursault was to blame. The victim's father wrote to Camus asking if he would testify for the prosecution by arguing that his novel couldn't possibly provoke a murder. He refused: "If I deny firmly, with no exceptions, that *The Stranger* can incite crime, this book,

nevertheless, like all my other books, illustrates, in its own way, my horror of capital punishment and my anguished questions at any suspicion of guilt." Camus would never testify for the prosecution.

When it was time to publish *The Stranger* in paperback, he hesitated. He was comfortable with a paperback edition of *The Plague*, but *The Stranger*? 'It isn't a book for everyone,' he told his publisher. 'Maybe later.'

Today, as we know, *The Stranger* is the best-selling paperback novel in French publishing history, running neck and neck with *The Little Prince*. Seventy-four years after its first publication and over a century after Camus's birth, over 10.3 million copies of *The Stranger* have sold in France alone. As long as people keep reading novels, *The Stranger* will live on: that's more of a guarantee of an afterlife than any author, and most books, can hope for."

MAURICE SAMUELS says of his new book: "Universal equality is a treasured political concept in France, but recent anxiety over the country's Muslim minority has led to an emphasis on a new form of universalism, one promoting loyalty to the nation at the expense of all ethnic and religious affiliations. My new book offers a fresh perspective on the debate by showing that French equality has not always demanded an erasure of differences.



Through close and contextualized readings of the way that major novelists, philosophers, filmmakers, and political figures have struggled with the question of integrating Jews into French society, I draw lessons about how the French have often understood the universal in relation to the particular.

I demonstrate that Jewish difference has always been essential to the elaboration of French universalism, whether as its foil or as proof of its reach. I trace the development of this discourse through key moments in French history, from debates over granting Jews civil rights during the Revolution, through the Dreyfus Affair and Vichy, and up to the rise of a "new antisemitism" in recent years. By recovering the forgotten history of a more open, pluralistic form of French universalism, I point toward new ways of moving beyond current ethnic and religious dilemmas and argue for a more inclusive view of what constitutes political discourse in France."

Of her new book, nominated for the Prix Médicis, published in both English (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, October 2016) and French (Paris: Gallimard, September 2016), **ALICE KAPLAN** writes: "*The Stranger* has been a staple of the French literature curriculum at Yale as early as the first issue of *Yale French Studies* in 1948, through Pierre Capretz's lessons on the *passé composé* and several generations of lecture courses on The Modern French Novel. In my new book, *Looking for The Stranger: Albert Camus and the Life of a Literary Classic*, I set out to write what I think of as the life story of that book. How did Camus, who in 1940 was the unknown author of one unpublished novel, hit upon the voice and figure of Meursault, the man who says I, not to bring us closer to him, but to keep us away. How did Camus's short, trenchant tale become a classic? What can explain its power over its readers? I wanted to get as close as I could to Camus's own situation and process—and even state of mind—in writing this puzzling, gripping novel.

A working class neighborhood in Algiers, a beach outside Oran, a publisher's archives: these are some of the places I visited to understand *The Stranger's* genesis. I read the Algerian press from the 1930s, looking at crimes and trials that Camus covered in his work as a young court reporter at *Alger-Républicain*. I found the "house above the world" in the heights of Algiers where he first tried his hand at writing fiction. And I walked through the former Hôtel Poirier on the rue Ravignan in Montmartre, where Camus finished his first draft in a few short months, feeling as if the novel were already traced within him.

Studying the reception of *The Stranger* in the spring and summer of 1942, in a France split in two by the German occupation, I understood in a concrete way what the theorists mean by "the death of the author." The first responses to *The Stranger* were often bizarre and funny—such as the critic who thought Meursault had spent the day after his mother's funeral in a swimming pool. Authors have no



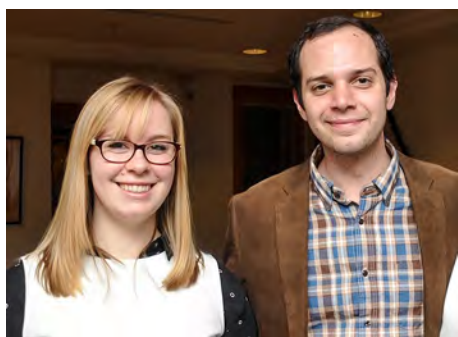
GREETINGS FROM THE DGS

THIS YEAR FOUR OF OUR STUDENTS completed their PhDs. Here are their new positions as well as their dissertation titles:

NATHALIE BATRAVILLE is now a postdoctoral fellow at Dartmouth's Society of Fellows: *"Révolution poétique et isolement politique: l'avant-garde littéraire, haïtienne 1957-1971."*



COLIN FOSS, assistant professor of French at Austin College in Sherman, Texas: "Literature under Siege: Reading and Writing during the Siege of Paris (1870-1871)."



ANNIE DE SAUSSURE, now visiting assistant professor of French at Willamette University in Salem, Oregon: "Global Brittany: Breton Literature and the Francophone World."



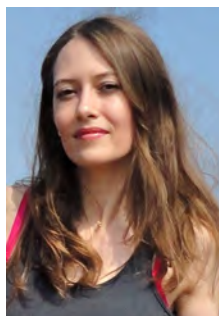
AARON SCHLOSSER, who works in information technology in San Diego: "The Ethics of Literature: Representations of Exile in the Works of Abdelkébir Khatibi, Nabile Farès, Hélène Cixous, and Jacques Derrida."

In addition, further defying a bizarre and unpredictable job market climate this past year, two of our recent PhDs who were on postdocs found tenure-track jobs:

ANNABEL KIM, who was a provost's postdoctoral associate at Duke University, is now assistant professor of Romance Languages and Literatures at Harvard University.



KRISTIN GRAVES OKOLI, formerly a Mellon postdoctoral fellow at Tulane, is now assistant professor of French, African and African-American Studies, and Gender Studies at the University of Central Arkansas.



We learned with pleasure that **AWENDELA GRANTHAM** (Combined PhD in French



Robyn Pront and Jennie Carr

and African American Studies, 2012) is now assistant professor of African American Studies at Virginia Commonwealth University, where she also teaches dance and visual arts theory.

On the opposite end of the process, we brought in five outstanding new students:

CHANDLER ABSHIRE from Wellesley College.

SOPHIA HELVERSON from Reed College, who worked as a language assistant in Orléans.

JASON HONG from UCLA.

AARON KESTLE, with a BA from Brigham Young and an MA from the University of Utah.

HANNAH KOSMAN, BA from Swarthmore and after two years as a language assistant in Lyon.

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New Grad Students: Aaron Kestle, Hannah Kosman, Jason Hong, Chandler Abshire, Sophia Helverson

JOSEPH ACQUISTO '03 PhD became chair of the Department of Romance Languages and Linguistics at the University of Vermont. In 2015, he published a co-edited volume entitled *Poets as Readers in Nineteenth-Century France*. His new book, *Proust, Music, and Meaning: Theories and Practices of Listening in the Recherche*, is forthcoming in early 2017.

JEAN-VINCENT BLANCHARD '97 PhD is happy to announce that his story of Maréchal Lyautey and the Foreign Legion will be out in February 2017 at Bloomsbury. He recently published an article on Corneille and martyr plays and became the editor of the *Cahiers du dix-septième: An Interdisciplinary Journal*. Hopefully this fall he'll find some time to polish and publish a book-length manuscript on the rhetoric of architecture under Louis XIV.

NATASHA BOAS '96 PhD, an international independent curator and consultant writes: "I have been nominated to the Yale GSAA for a three-year term. I participated in the Beat Generation Primary Sources symposium at the Bibliothèque Kandinsky/Musée national d'art moderne/CCI Centre Pompidou *Les sources au travail. Bricolages et contre-cultures à l'ère de la reproductibilité technique, 1950-1970* (June 23-July 2) presenting primary research from the San Francisco Rat Bastards and Mission School with a publication with Bibliothèque Kandinsky."

KARIN (HARMAN) BOHLEKE '96 PhD, Director of the Fashion Archives & Museum of Shippensburg University, opened her inaugural exhibit in the newly renovated facility. "Walking the Aisle in the Latest Style: Wedding Fashions from the Eighteenth Century to Today" runs through December 15, 2016. She published two articles in the 2015 *Daguerreian Annual*: "Identifying Stages of Grief in Nineteenth-Century Images" and "It Was Not Supposed to Turn Out This Way: Sewing and Fitting Errors as Indicators of Social Class." In addition, she recently presented her work "*The Sterb-Spiegel: A Fashionable Eighteenth-Century Dance of Death*" on an extremely rare text from 1704—only four surviving copies known—at the Costume Society of America's annual symposium in Cleveland, OH. For a special topic panel at the C19 conference in State College, PA, she shared her recent work in her paper "Foreign Origins: African-American Women and Contemporary Fashions in Early Photographs." She will be teaching a new course in the fall for the theater

department: "Costume History through Plays." Her French background will be put to good use, for the students will be reading Molière, Racine, Hugo, Ionesco and others (in translation) as they study the interplay of the history of dress and theater combined with characterization and plot.



VICTOR BROMBERT '53 PhD, the Henry Putnam University Professor of Romance and Comparative Literatures emeritus at Princeton University, lectured in Berlin (Germany), in Cleveland, and in the *Hudson Review's* "Writers in the School Program." He was interviewed on "American Warrior Radio" about the Battle of the Hürtgen Forest during World War II. A section of his recently completed memoir appeared in *The Hudson Review* under the title "Between Two Worlds."

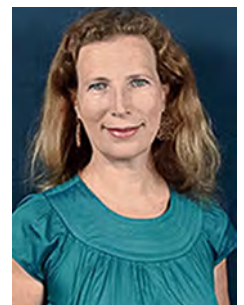
LORNA BULLWINKLE BRODTKORB '65 PhD writes: "It is amusing to be asked for my news as a Yale PhD as no one left on earth in my 'real' world knows this about me. I went over the wall, after teaching at Wesleyan, to Wall Street, where my Yale degree probably helped my entry. In 1974, men on Wall St. did not know any women with PhDs yet. Back then—the 60s and 70s—becoming money people was pretty much the thing we despised the most. My academic friends had a tendency to treat me like the whore of Babylon when I went to Wall Street. But I had fallen in love with cycles and they were what sucked me in. I still love the beautiful charts that I send my clients. I retired from that, after our dotage was secured, and have now lived for some decades in the Connecticut village

where my family have lived for generations. My French degree does not go unused! I have French friends, even a Belgie. And I read lots of French fiction. I even finally got around to reading Patrick Modiano." She adds, talking about the Newsletter: "I still read every word of it. It's lovely to see how alive French is at Yale today."

MARY ANN RORISON CAWS '56 MA writes: "*My Miracles and Reason: the life and works of Blaise Pascal* (Reaction books, 2016) is in press. I am doing a small surrealist anthology for New Directions and preparing *Cocteau et le cinéma* for Jean-Michel Place in Paris (collection *Poètes et le cinéma*)."

TOM CONNER '85 PhD, professor and former chair of Modern Languages and Literatures and Donald B. King Scholar at St. Norbert College in Green Bay, Wisconsin, has accepted a visiting appointment at the Johns Hopkins Center of the University of Nanjing, China. His latest book about the Dreyfus Affair was nominated for the Shannon prize in European history. His two forthcoming books deal with French and German intellectuals in the 1930s and with the Norwegian Nobel laureate and collaborationist Knut Hamsun. His previous books deal with Chateaubriand and Gide. Over the last decade or so Tom has served as visiting professor at the University of the Philippines-Diliman and at Nihon and Tsuru Universities in Japan. In addition, he has created a nationally-recognized volunteer program in Cambodia to teach students English using his American students in French back in Wisconsin to tutor Cambodian students via Skype. His work in Cambodia goes back more than ten years when he began work as an observer at the UN-sponsored war crimes tribunal in Phnom Penh. At present, Tom is on special assignment at the Hamsun Center in Tromsø, Norway. He and his wife, Ikuko, live in Green Bay and Tokyo.

CATHERINE CUSSET '91 PhD écrit: "Un petit livre sur ma Bretagne, *Le côté gauche de la plage*, a paru aux éditions Dialogues (Brest) en novembre 2015; mon roman *Une éducation catholique* est sorti en Folio en février 2016; enfin, mon nouveau roman, *L'autre qu'on*



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In April our students, led by Carole Delaitre and Richard Riddick (*above, and matching!*), organized a successful conference, “Displacements/Déplacements.” For conference information and photos see page 5 of this newsletter and [here](#).

For this academic year, **ROBYN PRONT** is at the ENS in Paris.

Our graduate seminars in 2015-16 were:

OLD FRENCH

R. Howard Bloch

IDENTITY AND DIFFERENCE IN 18TH-
CENTURY FRANCE

Natasha Lee

FACT & FICTION IN THE ARCHIVES

Alice Kaplan

AIMÉ CÉSAIRE: ONE HUNDRED YEARS

Christopher Miller

SEMINAR ON THE PROFESSION

Christopher Miller

THE OLD FRENCH FABLE AND
FABLIAUX

R. Howard Bloch

MONTAIGNE ET D'AUBIGNÉ

Edwin Duval

THEATER CONTROVERSY

Christopher Semk

SOCIAL MOBILITY IN
CONTEMPORARY FRENCH
LITERATURE

Morgane Cadieu

— Christopher L. Miller

NOTE FROM A GRADUATE STUDENT

“Here, try this. It’s much better.” Our bartender smirks as he slides two dangerously full martini glasses across the bar. Throughout the evening, he has chosen to respond to us in English, despite the fact that we speak French fluently, not out of snobbism, but because this is the Parisian cocktail scene. Mixology has come to the banks of the Seine. “North American” is the implicit theme and anything “Brooklyn” has a certain caché.

But here in Sherry Butt on the edge of the Marais, authentic New York cool is not the goal. Our bartender’s thick accented English is barely audible over the DJ who is spinning EDM remixes of 80s pop in the corner. He explains to us that he has tried something a bit different with our Rye Manhattans and replaced the Angostura bitters with Peychaud’s and a touch of maraschino.

He was right. This Parisian Manhattan is subtler, less medicinal, more floral. A totally different drink. It was just this drink that made me realize that the burgeoning cocktail scene isn’t simply a copy of the New York or London version. By swapping the Angostura for Peychaud’s, he had Gallicized our drinks.

Both Angostura and Peychaud’s originated in the Caribbean. But Angostura packs a heavier punch than its Creole cousin Peychaud’s, which was created in a New Orleans apothecary at the turn of the 19th century from a recipe smuggled out of Saint Domingue on the brink of the Haitian Revolution. This was Manhattan by way of Francophonie.

The next day as I descended from Montmartre, crossing the Place Vendôme as I made my way towards the Left Bank for a seminar, I glanced up at the Ritz, boarded up, hidden behind the renovators’ scaffolding. Legend has it that the Bloody Mary was invented there for Ernest Hemmingway—a tonic to recover from the previous night’s indulgences.

It’s been almost a century since the writers of the Lost Generation haunted Parisian bars. Americans came to Paris and left new cocktails behind them. Now mixology has come to Paris, and has been changed by it. A subtler, more refined cocktail culture is emerging, and it speaks with a French accent.

LAURA JENSEN participated in the Exchange Program with the Ecole Normale Supérieure last year on a Fox Fellowship.



Current graduate students, left to right: Shanna Jean-Baptiste, Carole Delaitre, Jessica Kasje, Laura Jensen.

adorait, paraît à la rentrée littéraire 2016, toujours chez Gallimard. Il se passe en grande partie dans le milieu universitaire américain et décrit les cruautés du marché du travail. Il est nominé pour le Goncourt et le Renaudot.

COLIN FOSS '16 PhD is now assistant professor of French at Austin College.



The Wall Street Journal commissioned **RHONDA GARELICK** '91 PhD to do a cover story for its "Off Duty" travel section on the re-opening of the legendary Paris Ritz. Rhonda was the first journalist to stay at the hotel since its closure, and she spent several days there interviewing everyone from the owner and president to housekeeping staff. She sampled tea in the Salon Proust and sat under the deer antlers in the famed Bar Hemingway. The WSJ was especially interested in having a cultural and historical context for the piece, which allowed Rhonda to make use of a lot of the research she'd done for her biography of Coco Chanel—including material on the the Paris Commune, the history of luxury goods in France, literary modernism, and fashion. The article may be accessed [here](#).

PERRY GETHNER '77 PhD writes: "Recent publications include Volume 4 of an anthology of French women playwrights from the period pre-1800, for which I wrote the general introduction, and Volume 2 of an anthology of women playwrights in English translation. The latter volume won an award from the Society for the Study of Early Modern Women. Critical editions of plays by Rotrou and Thomas Corneille are expected to appear shortly."

H. GASTON HALL '59 PhD writes: "I have little to report other than sadness that Great Britain voted to leave the European Union at the instigation of N. Farage & B. Johnson—something like British counterparts to D. Trump. Last fall's trips to Bordeaux, to Millsaps College as scholar-in-residence and to New York for a week's worth of music mostly at Carnegie Hall and for birding in Central Park all went swimmingly. My article "Shakespeare's *Hamlet*: Tragedy as Ethics and Epic" was published (I am told) in the CNRS/University Paul Valéry electronic "A Dictionary of Shakespeare's Classical Mythology" in December, this fifth (and best!) piece on that wonderful play being likely my last."

SALLY HESS '91 MPhil sends another(incredible!) dance photo.



JOAN HINDE STEWART '70 PhD retired as president of Hamilton College in June 2016, after a 13-year tenure. She moved back to Durham, NC and has been appointed a 2016-17 resident associate at the National Humanities Center, where she will carry out research on Joan of Arc.

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NEWS FROM THE YALE SUMMER SESSION

CANDACE SKORUPA and **VANESSA VYSOSIAS** taught a group of motivated and enthusiastic students in the Yale Summer Session L1-L2 French language course. After four weeks of study in New Haven, the intensive class continued for five more weeks at L'Ecole Etoile on Boulevard Raspail in Paris. Highlights from the packed excursion itinerary included a *kir* at the Closerie des Lilas, a two-hour

private tour of the Catacombs, a wine tasting, a boat ride through all four locks of the Canal Saint-Martin, an evening outing to the Ballet de l'Opéra de Paris (works by George Balanchine and Justin Peck), coffee and dessert at Les Deux Magots, and an invigorating weekend of Roman, Renaissance, and 19th-century history in Lyon.

A Night at the Opera



GREETINGS FROM THE DUS



THIS YEAR SAW EIGHT SENIORS

graduate with majors in French: **SUSANNAH BENJAMIN**, whose senior essay analyzed the role of fantasy in Muriel Barbery's *La Vie des elfes* (dir. by Christopher Semk); Alexandro Gonzalez-Calvillo, whose senior essay examined cross-dressing and gender identity in Maghrebi literature (dir. by Christopher Miller); **ANTHONY JASPER**, with an essay on Amélie Nothomb (dir. by Maryam Sanjabi); **ELLEN JEWETT**, with an two-semester essay on Nathalie Sarraute's theater (dir. by Morgane Cadieu); **SEWON JUN**, with an essay that compared *fin-de-siècle* literature and contemporary film (dir. by Morgane Cadieu); **ANDREW STAUTZ**, whose essay examined the structure of *Gaspard de la nuit* (dir. by Howard Bloch); **PHILILE SHONGWE**, with an essay on the postcolonial Congo (dir. by Christopher Miller); and **JASON YOUNG**, with an essay on beauty and evil in *Les Fleurs du mal* (dir. by Christopher Semk). Congratulations to all on their hard work!

Each year, the Department grants a number of awards to accomplished students from across the university. The Scott Prize "for best essay written in French" received many nominations and was awarded to three students. The upper-division prize went to **ELIAS BARTHOLOMEW** '17 for an excellent essay on Antoine Volodine's

heuristic devices. The lower-division prize was awarded to two students: **XINYU GUAN** '18, for an essay on *Ourika*, and **AARON ORBEY** '19, for a creative piece. The Montaigne Prize "for proficiency in speaking and writing French" was awarded to **PHILIP GROENWEGEN** '17 (1st place), **ANTHONY JASPER** '16 and **ELLEN JEWETT** '16 (2nd place), and **THOMAS AVILES** '16 and **CHLOE TSANG** '17 (3rd place). Last but certainly not least, the James T. King Prize for Distinction in the Senior Essay was awarded to **PHILILE SHONGWE**. Congratulations to all of our prize recipients!

This year's course offerings at the undergraduate level covered a range of periods, genres, and areas of the French-speaking world. In addition to the "gateway" courses that prepare students for further study in literature and culture, four courses were offered in French:

FRENCH POETRY: THE FIRST FIVE
HUNDRED YEARS

Edwin Duval

FRENCH FICTION SINCE THE 1990s

Morgane Cadieu

FRENCH CLASSICAL TRAGEDY

Christopher Semk

WRITERS AND ARTISTS IN PARIS
1780-1914

Marie-Hélène Girard

In addition to these, seven courses were offered in English:

TRAINS IN FRENCH LITERATURE, FILM,
AND HISTORY

Morgane Cadieu



King Prize winner Philile Shongwe with her mother

SHOPPING AND THE NOVEL

Morgane Cadieu

LOUIS XIV AND THE CULTURE OF
ABSOLUTISM

Christopher Semk

FRENCH CINEMA THROUGH THE
NEW WAVE

Dudley Andrew

WORLD WAR II IN FRENCH CINEMA

Alice Kaplan

MODERNITIES

R. Howard Bloch and Steven Smith

POSTCOLONIAL THEORY AND
LITERATURE

Christopher Miller

Some of these courses offered options for completing the readings in French and one course ("Louis XIV") included a Digital Humanities component in partnership with Yale's DH Lab.

— Christopher Semk

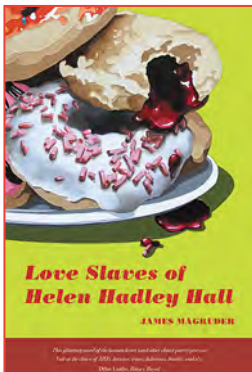
Yale Summer Session FREN130/140 group visits Brussels



ROBERT P. HOLLEY '71 PhD writes: "I retired a year ago on August 5, 2015 as a professor of Library & Information Science at Wayne State University. I spent 25 years as a librarian/library administrator at Yale, the University of Utah, and Wayne State University and 19 years as a professor/department chair in the School of Library & Information Science at Wayne State University, Detroit. The skills that I learned from getting my PhD in French served me well. According to Google Scholar, I have 159 publications, including seven edited books, research articles, opinion pieces, and columns for two library publications. I frequently reviewed French library publications for various journals. My research areas are: collection development, scholarly communication, academic libraries, self-publishing, and intellectual freedom with an emphasis upon the Humanities that is often lacking in library publications. I also selected French materials at the University of Utah and Wayne State University for the French faculty and served on Romance Language doctoral committees. I have held multiple positions of responsibility in the American Library Association and the International Federation of Library Associations where French was often an asset. I have maintained my French language skills by listening to the francophone radio station in Windsor, Canada, just across the river from Detroit; vacations to francophone countries; and reading novels, lately with an emphasis upon Quebec literature. I intend to keep up my scholarly interests in retirement."

ANNABEL KIM '16 PhD is starting her first year as assistant professor of Romance Languages and Literatures at Harvard University.

JAMES MAGRUDER '84 MA, '92 DFA, is pleased to announce the publication of his third book of fiction, *Love Slaves of Helen Hadley Hall*, in June 2016. A roman à clef twenty years in the making, *Love Slaves* is set at Yale in 1983-1984 and celebrates his first two semesters in the French department and on the third floor of the infamously randy and international graduate dorm at 420 Temple Street. He continues to teach dramaturgy at Swarthmore College.



THOMAS MARTIN '03 MPhil writes: "After ten years living in New York, my wife, Paula, and I now call New Orleans home. *La Nouvelle Orléans* is a fabulously strange place, and we have already dug in to its culture. True to my Francophile self, I participate in the Mardi Gras season by marching every Epiphany with the Krewe de Jeanne d'Arc, a parade dedicated to all things Joan and medieval France. True to my geeky self, the weekend before Mardi Gras, I march with the Krewe of Chewbacchus, a parade dedicated to everything sci-fi. For any Whovians out there, I've been roped into costuming as the eleventh Doctor Who. On an altogether different note, I am pleased to report that I will be returning to graduate studies in French at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. Since my time at Yale, too long ago, I have held several language teaching positions but always intended on completing my doctorate in literature. I anticipate a rewarding, new experience in research and teaching at LSU."



JULIA M. McNAMARA '80 PhD writes: "At its annual meeting in September 2015, the Board of Trustees of Albertus Magnus College accepted my decision to retire from the position of president. This change became effective on June 30, 2016. I'll be on sabbatical during the 2016-2017 academic year and have been given the honorary title of president emerita."

R. MATILDE MÉSAVAGE '79 PhD continues to teach yoga and study Japanese. She has recently returned from a three-month study period in Kanazawa, while on sabbatical. She published "*Le chaos du néant: théâtralité, musique et la magie du verbe dans Le Sablier de Sofia Guellaty*"; "*L'Espace onirique dans les romans d'Abdelhak Serhane*"; "*Voyage au bout de la nuit des temps: Ballade du séquestré académique de Najib Redouane*"; and "*Métamorphose de la mémoire: Le Rêve de Djamila par Fatiha Benatsou*."

HENRY PILLSBURY '58 BA, '60 MA has come out with a brief book of poetry, *Grace Damns*. He continues working in theater in France — mostly in production now.

MICHAEL J. PRETINA, JR. '67 PhD retired in 2005 from his position as executive director of the Camargo Foundation in Cassis and is still living in France. He writes: "Best wishes to all those who may remember me from our graduate school days at Yale."

AMY REID '96 PhD writes: "The start of the school year brought a new milestone: our eldest son has started high school — it's hard to believe how quickly time flies. On the work front, I'm happy to announce that I have two articles forthcoming in a volume of *Présence Africaine* on the work of the Ivorian author Véronique Tadjo: *Écrire, traduire, peindre*. The focus of my work continues to be on translation. My translation of Patrice Nganang's *Mount Pleasant* came out this spring with Farrar, Strauss & Giroux—the novel received a starred review from *Kirkus* and was recommended both by Oprah Winfrey's *O* magazine, in the May edition, and by *The New Yorker*, in August. I have also been awarded a NEA Translation grant to work on my next project, translating Nganang's *La Saison des Prunes* (2014), which focuses on Cameroonian civilians and *tirailleurs* during the Second World War."

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The Department of French will hold its traditional cash bar for alumni, faculty, and current graduate students at the annual meeting of the **MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION**. Please join us:

**FRIDAY,
JANUARY 6, 2017**

7:00-8:15 pm

**Franklin 9
Philadelphia Marriott**



COMMEMORATING THE 70TH YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF ALBERT CAMUS'S "HUMAN CRISIS" SPEECH

On March 28, 2016, Alice Kaplan participated in a unique event sponsored by the Maison Française of Columbia and the Camus estate: actor Viggo Mortensen performed the speech that Camus gave to a New York audience on his only American journey in March 1946, speaking in the same auditorium, and on the same date. After Mortensen's beautiful performance, the actor was joined in a roundtable conversation about Camus with Professor Kaplan and Professor Bachir Diagne, chair of the Columbia French Department. The auditorium was full and captivated by Mortensen's reading. Many listening to the speech were struck by the urgency of Camus's message from 1946, which speaks to so many of our concerns in 2016. You can access the speech, and the roundtable, at [this link](#).

What follows is Alice Kaplan's introduction of Viggo Mortensen, setting the scene for the reenactment:

Let's imagine the scene that late March evening of 1946...On stage, three writers represent the spirit of the French Resistance. France, cut off from the rest of the world during four years of Nazi occupation, has been free for a single year, struggling to find its way. How many people in the audience had relatives deported from France, who never returned; how many had made it out of the country just in time? How many were veterans of the North African landing or the Liberation of Paris? Nicola Chiaromonte was in the audience—he'd flown in Malraux's squadron in the Spanish Civil War, escaped Europe through Oran, where Camus was his host. Now he was writing for *The New Republic*. Jacques Schiffrin was there too, forced out of his job at Gallimard publishers by the anti-Jewish laws, and exiled in New York, where he founded Pantheon Books.

Whether they were Americans or French in exile, New Yorkers were starved for news from France. They wanted to hear about the recovery, but even more, they wanted to know what moral and ethical conclusions could be drawn from what had taken place. The three men on stage represented the intellectual standards of a struggle against evil, but no one more than Albert Camus. A decade younger than the other speakers, Camus, at age 32, was the star editorial writer for *Combat*, a daily newspaper whose motto was: "From Resistance to the Revolution." Army veterans, in a show of support, came to the lecture carrying copies of *Combat* they had brought home with them from France. In a week, Knopf would publish the first English translation of Camus's 1942 novel, *The Stranger*. In a full page ad placed in *Publisher's Weekly*, Knopf was promising an existentialist revelation.

Camus had been in New York for two days. The trip began badly. When his ship, the S.S. Oregon, docked in the New York harbor on March 26, he was detained by immigration officials for four hours of questioning, to which he responded with utter silence, until a young attaché from French cultural services came to rescue him. J. Edgar Hoover had gotten word of his arrival and asked an agent to investigate his possible links to the Communist Party: the FBI's most reliable source turned out to be an article in *The Nation* by Hannah Arendt, explaining that existentialist writers were having more fun than anyone, writing serious philosophical novels that read like detective stories. The Columbia student newspaper, too, promised in a March 26 article that Camus "appears to live happily within the absurd, and not to sacrifice his lucidity and contentedness at the altar of metaphysical revelation." Justin O'Brien, Camus's host



Photo: Getty Images, Ben Gabbe

Columbia professor Souleymane Bachir Diagne; actor, poet, and musician Viggo Mortensen; and Alice Kaplan

in the Columbia French Department, called him "the boldest writer in France today."

Camus was on an official government mission to promote French culture—and he answered to Claude Lévi-Strauss, the great anthropologist who directed the cultural services of the French embassy in New York. "Exclusively literary topics please!" the young writer was warned. "I never thought my talks in the U.S. would be of a political nature," Camus replied, "Of course I can talk about strictly literary matters, but I really don't think that any of the artistic problems of the day can be considered apart from their human consequences." They finally settled on a general topic, "The Human Crisis," that could be as literary, or philosophical, as he wanted.

A French friend in New York warned Camus that Americans don't like ideas: "That's what they say," he wrote in his diary, "I'm not so sure." He was incapable of talking down to any audience—and indeed the concrete examples in his talk are shored up with challenging abstractions, references to the Hegelian dialectic and the Absurd.

Six hundred people were expected at the MacMillan theater; 1500 showed up, crowding into every available space. Proceeds from modest ticket sales were supposed to go to a fund for French war orphans, but someone stole the cash box; Professor O'Brien made an announcement, and people dug into their pockets to replace the stolen funds. Camus was struck by the New Yorkers' generosity. "Their hospitality, their cordiality are like that too," he noted—"spontaneous and without affectation. It's what's best in them."

Like Viggo Mortensen, Albert Camus was an editor, an artist, and an actor—a seasoned performer: "In the evening a little stage fright," he reported in his diary, "but I throw myself into it right away and the public is hooked."

This reading was part of a series of events (March 26–April 19) organized by the Maison Française of Columbia in partnership with The Albert Camus Estate and taking place in New York on the theme of "Camus: A Stranger in the City" commemorating the 70th year anniversary of Camus's visit to the United States.

SYLVIE ROMANOWSKI '69 PhD, professor emerita of French, writes: "My principal news is that I am retired from Northwestern University's Department of French and Italian after 44 years. I am now emerita and looking forward to more time for reading, research, possibly some travel, and generally more freedom to set my own schedule."

**ENGLISH
SHOWALTER**

'57 BA, '64 PhD, professor emeritus of French, Rutgers University, writes: "In April 2016 the fifteenth and final print volume of the *Correspondance de Madame de Graffigny* was published by the Voltaire Foundation. I was the general editor for this volume, and have been some sort of editor for every volume



from the first, which appeared in 1985. I am now assisting in the production of a virtual volume 16. It is a work in progress, but it can already be viewed [here](#).

DAVID SIPFLE '58 PhD sent an obituary for his wife Mary Alice Slauson Sipfle, who died in November 2013. The two met when they were both graduate students in the department.

SUZANNE TOCZYSKI '94 PhD is professor of French at Sonoma State University. Subsequent to the publication of her recent article on St. François de Sales in *Spiritus*, Suzanne's current work examines representations of biblical women in the *Traité de l'amour de Dieu*, which she will present at the Salesian Scholars Seminar in October.

JONATHAN WEISS '73 PhD writes: "I haven't yet figured out what 'retirement' means. I'm still at it...in Dijon...running Colby College's fall program there, and teaching a

course on French institutions (pretty far away from 20th-century literature, but interesting nonetheless). We've got an apartment in the historic center of town (an 18th-century townhouse). There's good food, wine, theater, cinema, concerts, friends...Why retire?"

ELÉONORE M. ZIMMERMANN '56 PhD writes: "The time of research has passed for me, I feel. I still occasionally enjoy that of others, like an unexpected article on Mallarmé in the *New Yorker*. But the writing time now has come for memoirs. I have been going through some papers we saved from the 40s, when I was in *école primaire*, then in *lycée* in Morocco. I am trying to find whether anybody might be interested in what they tell us about the French education at that time. It was deeply grounded. Its distinct pedagogical philosophy did not change for many years and did a lot to prepare the educated class for the difficult years which followed the Second World War."

IN MEMORIAM: GRADUATE ALUMNI

YVES FRANÇOIS DALVET '68 MPhil died on November 10, 2015 in Portland, Maine. He was born Yves Francois Delapierre in Laval, France, where his parents had a bookstore. During World War II he went into hiding in the south of France to avoid German work conscriptions and worked as a prefect in Catholic schools under the pseudonym Ysambart Duplantier. He later enlisted in the French army and served in the forces occupying Germany. After demobilizing he became a Catholic priest; he was eventually posted in the United States. After some years he left the priesthood, got married, and then moved back to France to work as an interpreter for an American company. He changed his name to Dalvet as a symbol of a new beginning and returned to the US with his wife and infant son. He received an MA in French from NYU, came to New Haven to teach at Southern, and enrolled at Yale. After earning an MPhil, he moved to Maine to join the faculty of the University of Maine Portland-Gorham, where he taught French and Italian and chaired the foreign language department. He was fluent in many languages and enjoyed walking, sailing, art, film, and music.

ALAN EDGAR KNIGHT '65 PhD died on September 27, 2015 at his home in Berkeley, California. He was professor emeritus of French at Pennsylvania State University and a recognized expert on medieval French drama. His research culminated in the editing and publishing of *Les Mystères de la Procession de Lille*, a five-volume collection of 72 previously unknown 15th-century plays, a project that took 26 years

to complete. This work was supported in part by three grants from the National Endowment of the Humanities. Alan was a talented cook and collector of fine wine who loved to entertain. Also an avid gardener, he was particularly proud of a cultivar of spearmint he started propagating when he was a student at Yale; several years ago Earthbound Farms accepted one of his mint plants for sale, dubbing it "Knight Mint." A highlight of Alan's retirement years was his friendship with actress Joan Fontaine, who asked him to be a guest speaker at a salon she hosted shortly before her death in 2013.

ROBERT MAPLES '65 Grd died on February 6, 2016 in Williamsport, Pennsylvania. He taught French at the University of Rochester, at the University of Michigan, and then at Lycoming College in Williamsport. He taught at Lycoming for 30 years and also served as the college's director of institutional research.

ALEXANDER ARTEM SOKALSKI '70 PhD died on April 22, 2016 in Regina, Saskatchewan. He was professor of French at the University of Saskatchewan for over 25 years. After retiring in 2007, he continued to do research and teach classes at the University of Saskatchewan and in Regina. Alex was instrumental in starting the Saskatoon Opera Association and served on its board for many years. He was actively involved in his church and community and was a board member of the Mendel Art Gallery and CPF (Canadians Parents for French) Saskatchewan.

NICOLE FLENDER '80 BA writes: "I am enjoying my work in residential real estate with the Corcoran Group and I would love to help all alumni and friends buy, sell, or rent an apartment in New York City. I am happy to help clients *en français*. I just took an amazing safari in South Africa with my amazing daughter, Pauline Chalamet. She currently lives in Paris and is part of the theater company Le Studio-ESCA. My son Timothée Chalamet is also part of our acting family. He recently won the Lucille Lortel Award for the John Patrick Shanley



play, *Prodigal Son*, at Manhattan Theater Club. And, I too recently did a short play with the Greenhouse Ensemble in New York, portraying the title role of Angela in *Angela Kay Harbanks*.

MARISA GALVEZ '99 BA writes: "I have been promoted to the rank of associate professor in the Division of Literature, Cultures and Languages (French) at Stanford effective September 2016. My book published in 2010 [received a prize](#) for the best first book in the field of medieval studies from the Medieval Academy.

Starting this year, I will be co-director of the Stanford Center for Medieval and Early Modern Studies. I continue to teach undergraduate and graduate courses on medieval lyric and culture and am currently working on a book about crusade lyric and romance. I also continue to develop the project Performing Trobar, a digital project that incorporates live performance and new digital tools for the study of medieval lyric and manuscripts. Through events by contemporary musicians, interdisciplinary colloquia, and a [multimedia website](#) integrated with my courses on medieval lyric both at Stanford and in France (Bing Overseas Studies), the project aims to expose students to the rich aural and verbal texture of the medieval world and to address the interpretation, performance, and adaptation of medieval lyric both in academia and the contemporary world."

This fall, the newest book of **HEATHER HENDERSHOT** '89 BA, *Open to Debate: How William F. Buckley Put Liberal America on the Firing Line*, was published by HarperCollins.



VINICIUS LINDOSO '13 BA writes: "I have passed the UN Young Professionals career exam and am now working for UNESCO as a digital communications officer for ocean science and policy. I've also recently become a member of the Yale Club of France's executive committee, charged with organizing lectures and seminar dinners with Yale faculty, doctoral students, and eminent alumni passing by or living in France. We are eagerly looking to host tea and dinner lectures with doctoral students and faculty coming to France, or with the ENS fellows that go to Yale on exchange.



BENJAMIN MAPPIN-KASIRER '14 BA just completed a Master's thesis in Modern Languages at Magdalen College, Oxford. He wrote about asthma and art in *À la recherche du temps perdu*, with a particular focus on the long and surprising tradition of physicians writing about Proust in medical dissertations and scientific journals, from the 1920s until today. He will stay in Oxford next year to study in the University's medical division before returning to medical school in Canada. He writes: "Please let me know if ever you are in Oxford!"

PETER F. MAY

'87 BA writes: "I have been working as a lawyer in the international education and development assistance sector for 20 years, serving as general counsel to World Learning (formerly The Experiment in International Living) and the American University of Beirut (AUB) in Lebanon. I have loved using my French language skills professionally, especially in Beirut where French remains one of the official languages. Paris is still my favorite city! I keep up with fellow French major and Whiffenpoof of '87, David Code, through reunions, and have been lucky enough to return to campus in New Haven a lot to visit my son, Benson, who is Class of 2017 (and a Whiff of 2017!)."



BARTLEY SMITH GROSSERICHTER '88 BA writes: "After finishing my BA in 1988, I worked in the fashion industry in NYC for three years (Christian Dior, Bloomingdale's Executive Training Program, and a boutique start-up subsidiary of JC Penney) before moving to Paris for an MA with NYU. I chose the French Language and Civilization track and lived in the Cité Universitaire for a year and then in the 10th arrondissement. Having met and fallen in love with a German while at the Cité Universitaire (and not being able to get working papers in Paris), I moved to Munich in 1993 where I have been ever since. I worked in copyright licensing and merchandising, opening a subsidiary of Studio Canal (Groupe Vivendi/Canal+) for the German speaking territories (Germany/Austria/Switzerland). It was a serendipitous combination of living and working in Munich, selling British and American rights to German companies, while travelling to Paris for budget and strategy meetings on a regular basis. After the birth of my second daughter in 2003 I changed course and have been a stay-at-home mom, doing volunteer work at the schools and the occasional translation and/or strategy paper for former colleagues. I am lucky to use my French regularly as we have bought a vacation home in Cap Ferret at the Bassin d'Arcachon where I spend as much time as possible! As I write this, preparations are in full swing for the *rentrée littéraire* festival at the local bookstore next

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Please send news to:
agnes.bolton@yale.edu

week... I am also in the early, early stages of putting together an exchange possibility for Yale students in Germany that I hope to be able to write more about in upcoming newsletters!"

ELSIE SOWAH '13 BA writes: "I am working as the country manager in Côte d'Ivoire for mPharma, a health technology start-up founded in 2013. I've been based in Abidjan since June 2015, when I arrived with the task of launching our activity in mPharma's first francophone market. Many personal and professional challenges later, I feel at home in Abidjan and have managed to function (work and live) more or less 100% in French.

Among other things, I've had to hire local Ivorians to form a team, communicate to members of various ministries, present on our product countless times to various actors, and I've often had to translate documents of various types (related to our product, administrative documents for Ivorian government/regulatory bodies, portions of business contracts, etc.), for which I directly applied skills learned in my translation course at Yale. Having spent six months abroad in Nice during my sophomore year at Yale (2011), I had a good foundation of conversational French before moving to Abidjan. However, the experience of full and total immersion

— working and living in a francophone African country — is unparalleled and has allowed me to hone a fluency, of which the original foundation was formed in the Yale French Department. Abidjan is a colorful and vibrant city that is rising like a phoenix from the ashes of decades of civil war and political unrest. It is the business hub of francophone Africa and thus an attractive location for young francophone professionals as well as other expats working for international organizations and multinationals. There's no place I'd rather be at this age and time in my life, and there's no way I'd be here without the experience I had at Yale (and without professors like Constance Sherak and Christopher Miller, who imbued in me the love for the French language and francophone African history/culture!)."

NOTE FROM AN UG MAJOR

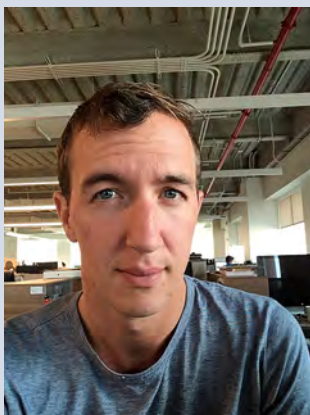
Recently, I listened to a guy on the beach explain his tattoo to a friend of mine. "It means, 'So far, so good,' in French," he said succinctly. I looked: "*Jusqu'ici, tout va bien.*" So far, so good; sure. But it meant something more, too: it's the last line of "*La Haine*," Mathieu Kassovitz's wrenching day-in-the-life movie about three young men from the Paris *banlieue*.

That's how it is with French. Speaking it is like seeing another color; it spikes the world with depth and contrast. In my work, it plays a more practical role, too. I write about architecture, urbanism, and public space, a field in which the francophone world is always good for a comparison, a model, or a warning.

I always get the same curious looks when I report from abroad. In Algeria, when I was working on my senior essay, the police couldn't believe I was photographing cornices and doorways in the service of an American university. City planners in Saint-Denis were surprised I'd come all the way there to hear about the new train station they were planning. And Serge Barto, an artist in Pantin who welcomed me to his studio last fall, was puzzled to find I'd ventured out there on the *Journées du patrimoine* instead of visiting the Hôtel Matignon or the Élysée Palace.

In part, stories like those are driven by my own interests as a reporter. But before I write them, I have to sell them to American editors. And when I publish them, if all goes well, I get to see them passed around in real time, on Twitter, by my compatriots who retain admiration and sympathy for France's successes

and failures as it struggles, as we do here, with the impacts of immigration, globalization, and terrorism. The country feels at once distant enough from the U.S. to fascinate—"No email on weekends? The French sure know how to live!"—and, in other ways, close enough to raise the hair on your arms.



HENRY GRABAR '12 BA (French and American Studies) is a staff writer at Slate magazine. You can find his work on his website, henrygrabar.com

LAURA CASSIDY TAYLOR, '86 BA writes: "I have switched from teaching law to working in the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division, Educational Opportunities section. The Section works to eliminate any kind of discrimination in educational settings, whether based on race, gender, religion, disability, or English learner status.

My husband and I live in Arlington, VA, and we will be hosting our third French exchange student through my children's high school in October. Two of my children are still in high school (sophomore and senior) and I have two in college (freshman at Penn and sophomore at Davidson). My husband and I spoke German when the children were small and we didn't want them to understand; now, between the children, there are two French speakers, two Spanish speakers, one Arabic speaker, and one who, as I have, will study American Sign Language!"

IKE WILSON '11 BA has served as the director of content and marketing at a New York-based education startup called Brainscape since graduation. He recently oversaw the completion of the company's new comprehensive French app, which relies on an adaptive flashcard algorithm that patterns the order of study on the user's strengths and weaknesses. The product can be found [online](https://www.brainscape.com) or on the Apple [App Store](https://apps.apple.com/us/app/brainscape/id1046884444).

WE'RE MOVING!

Twenty-six years ago, as many of you will remember with more than a twinge of regret, the Department of French moved from its ancient and storied home on the third floor of William L. Harkness Hall (WLH) to a cleaner but decidedly less distinctive home on the second floor of a renovated building unimaginatively but appropriately named “82–90 Wall Street.” Soon we will be moving again, back to a space with far more character and a much better location, in the building well known to us all as the Hall of Graduate Studies. The occasion for this move is a major renovation and “repurposing” of HGS announced in January 2015 by Provost Ben Polak. The plan was and remains to “transform HGS into a central home for the humanities at Yale.” The offices of the Graduate School would be moved elsewhere and graduate student residents would move to new apartments on Elm Street to make room for offices, classrooms, and meeting spaces for a large, compatible group of academic departments in the Humanities.

Having served in 2015 on the “HGS Humanities Exploratory Committee” and again in 2016 on the “320 York Street Planning Committee” (HGS having already ceased to be “HGS” in fact), I saw first-hand how much research and careful, creative thought went into crucial decisions, like which departments should and could form the core of the new humanities complex, what kinds of office and meeting spaces would be necessary and most desirable to those departments, what sizes and configurations of seminar rooms, lecture halls, and screening spaces would contribute most

effectively to teaching and research in those departments. The final result of those deliberations, I believe, will be a very comfortable, congenial space more conducive to good work than any the French Department has known. Renovations promised by the architects will transform the gloomy hallways of HGS into open, well-lit spaces where we will all be happy to teach, learn, and linger. Graduate seminars will take place in our own designated seminar room near our own offices. A large lecture hall with projection equipment built to the standards and the specifications of Yale’s Film and Media Studies Program will be conveniently located below the central court yard. The Whitney Humanities Center will have its home and hold its events in our own building. We will live in close proximity to many of the humanities departments with which we have the greatest shared interests. And a new York Street entrance to Sterling Memorial Library will beckon from right across the street.

The administrative offices of the Graduate School have already moved to other quarters and construction has already begun on new residences for graduate students. Renovation of the yet-to-be-named complex formerly known as HGS will begin as soon as graduate student residents are comfortably settled into a new home, in 2017 if all goes according to plan. Projected move-in date is fall 2020 — exactly three decades after our last move. We are all looking forward with great optimism to a new life in our new home!

NED DUVAL



The courtyard of the current HGS, our future backyard