

# Citings

Department of Rhetoric and Writing Studies Newsletter

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## 2000 Crisis Carnival Graduate Student Conference Examines Ethics in Humanities

The Eighth Annual SDSU Graduate Student Conference "The Crisis Carnival" was held on October 6 and 7, 2000 at Aztec Center. The theme of this year's conference was "After the Fall: The Future of Ethics in the Studies of the Humanities."

Topics of papers and discussions included the intersection of intellectual inquiry, ethics, and social responsibility; the role and nature of public intellectuals today; the need for an ethical component in literary, rhetorical and other humanistic studies; ethical re-

sponsibilities of students and teachers in the humanities; and related issues. The conference drew graduate students, faculty, and invited guests for a day of discussion, deliberation, and fun.

The opening event was a public presentation by Emmy-Award winning documentary filmmaker Paul Espinosa, who spoke about "Documentary Filmmaking and the Public Interest: Intersection at the US-Mexico Border." Espinosa's talk was illustrated by selec-

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*MFA Roundtable Discussion*

## DRWS On-Line Journal Proposed

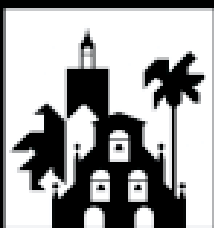
Chris Werry is working on setting up an on-line journal for the department. The provisional title for the journal is "Lore" (after Stephen North's idea of "practitioner lore," or the important traditions of teaching and research that seldom make their way into published writing.)

The journal is intended to publish works that represent the broad range of writing, teaching and research carried on by members of the department. The journal's focus would be wide - everything from teaching strategies and practices, to research projects and papers people are working on, to cre-

ative writing, reviews of books/software/web sites, etc. The journal would publish short, informal pieces, as well as longer, more polished works. It is hoped that the journal will be useful in sharing writing, resources and ideas, and can provide a place for people to test drive work for presentation at conferences, and for publication elsewhere.

Chris is looking into getting technical and monetary assistance for the journal from several different sources. He would like to hear from people interested in being co-editors, reviewers, or working in some other way (including web-work) with the project.

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## Retreat Planned for RWS 100 and 200 Instructors

DRWS will be hosting a retreat for all instructors of RWS 100 and 200 on January 22nd and 23rd. Because of an emerging interest among instructors, several groups in the department have met over the past three semesters to discuss the teaching of argument, to plan assignments focusing on argument, and to develop approaches to discussing argumentation with students. These initiatives have led to broad general support for incorporating argument into our 100 and 200 courses. Participants have recommended giving RWS 100 an emphasis on the rhetorical analysis of argument, and RWS 200 an emphasis on understanding arguments in the context of multiple sources and research. While retaining our current strengths, this focus would help us to create courses that

are distinctive to rhetoric and writing, to develop a more concrete vocabulary for describing and analyzing writing, and to articulate more precisely what the two courses are designed to do.

The retreat will be an opportunity for instructors to pool their ideas for creating this distinctive focus in our courses, and to envision ways for the department to support our teaching in the Lower Division Program. To these ends, instructors are invited to consider the following three questions in preparation for the retreat.

How would you imagine adding an emphasis on argument to the 100/200 courses that you already teach? If you already focus on argument, what terminology do you use, and what approaches to analysis and writing?

What combination of resources and events would best orient you to teaching argument in your courses and generally support you as a teacher of 100/200?

If 200 involves analyzing and writing about arguments in context, using multiple sources, what skills (rhetorical, analytical, writing) would you like to see your students bring to the course from 100?

All instructors of RWS 100 and 200 (including Flex classes and IC packages) are invited to attend. They may choose one of the two days, as each day will offer the same agenda. Instructors who wish to attend, and who have not already "reserved" one of the dates, may do so by leaving a message with Ellen Quandahl.

## Spring Graduate Courses Scheduled

DRWS will offer the following three graduate courses in the Spring.

### **RWS 601: History of Rhetoric**

Prof. Ellen Quandahl. Wed. 3:30 - 6:20. The course takes up selected works of rhetoric from antiquity through the nineteenth century, and considers how these works inform pedagogy and public life. The course also looks at the relationship of historical texts to contemporary rhetorical practices. There will be special emphasis on texts from classical rhetoric, which raise many of the questions that have shaped the discipline. Beyond the classical period, we will sample from the extensive canons of medieval, Renaissance, Enlightenment, and nineteenth-century rhetoric. As much as possible, we will discuss the relationship between theory and practice.

### **RWS 609: Seminar in Theory and Practice of Teaching Composition**

Prof. Ornatowski. Tuesday, Thursday 14:00-15:15. Teaching written composition has evolved, over the last twenty

five years, into a diverse and intellectually challenging enterprise that has become fundamental to the process of education in America. The course covers theoretical issues that bear on the teaching of writing, including rhetorical theory, composing process research, various approaches to the teaching of writing, and the politics of literacy education.

Practical issues covered in the course include: planning and structuring a writing class; sequencing and designing writing assignments; responding to and evaluating writing; conducting and managing a writing class; conducting peer workshops and student conferences; and using available resources and technologies.

The course is designed for students who will teach writing, English, or other writing-intensive courses at the college level. It is required of students who wish to be considered for a Teaching Associateship in the Department of Rhetoric and Writing Studies.

### **RWS 744: Genre, Community, and Pedagogy**

Prof. Ann Johns. Wednesdays from 4:00-6:40 (NH 235). The course will focus upon theories relating to non-literary genres, the discourse communities and contexts in which genres operate, and the approaches to genre that have been applied to the teaching of reading and writing throughout the world. The class will examine the three major genre "schools," explore the issues and problems surrounding the terms "genre" and "discourse community," and help students and teachers analyze and prepare genre-based writing curricula for their classes.

Two of the courses, by an unfortunate coincidence, ended up being scheduled at the same time. The instructors will try to reschedule one of the courses in consultation with the students, so if you are considering taking both, please show up for the first half-hour of one, talk to the instructor, and then go to the other class and do the same. Or, simply talk to the instructors beforehand.

## Vietnam Veteran Addresses DRWS Students

Jerry Stadtmiller, a Vietnam War veteran, told an audience of 50 RWS 200 students and teachers about what led up to his serious wounding and how he recovered—physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

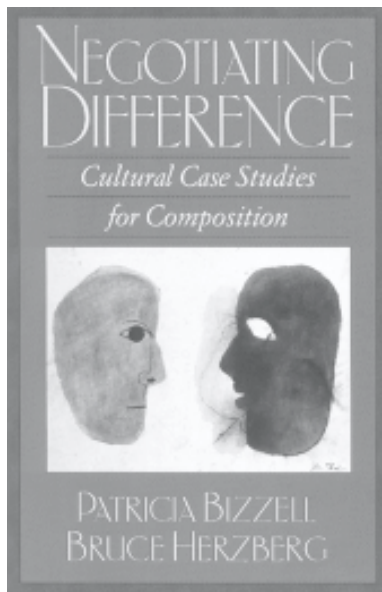
Speaking November 4th to members of classes of Sandy Fimbres, Stephanie Leftwich-Needham, Dawn Brown, and Richard Finn, Stadtmiller described how he and part of his squad of Marines were operating near Khe Sanh in June 1968, when he was struck by two bullets which smashed through the front and right side of his face. More than 150 operations later, Stadtmiller is an imposing figure, legally blind, with an eye patch and a strong voice.

He began by describing the 60's:

"There was so much confusion. . . . Our parents had just done World War Two. There was much trust in the American Government and identity. Some people could say, 'America-love it or

leave it.'"

There was much shouting but no dialogue between them and the "self-righteousness of the people for peace."



*This presentation developed by instructors teaching the Vietnam Unit in the text "Negotiating Difference"*

Stadtmiller said he was gung-ho when he joined the Marines, glad to leave college and his parents. He even enjoyed and excelled at basic training, "Boot camp was a snap; it was like getting ready for a football game."

His high spirits were dashed when he landed in Vietnam. He and other replacements looked out the aircraft windows at barbed wire and fortifications ringing the airport. "We got off the plane and saw the tanned, dirty troops waiting to fly home. They laughed at us."

Sent to fight with the 3rd Marines, 4th Battalion on Hill 689, Stadtmiller said he was nervous the entire time he was in combat. He found some U.S. soldiers had negative attitudes toward the Vietnamese they were supposedly defending. On two occasions he saw American aircraft mistakenly bomb American troops. In a four-hour battle, his friend, "Mac," was killed, shot through the chest, in the foxhole next to his.

He experienced an emotional numbing, something he recognized in many veterans he later counseled who suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder. He told himself, "To hell with democracy—I'm here to kill or be killed; I want to survive."

Later that day he was shot, evacuated, and operated on for thirteen hours. He took off his patch to show where his

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## Crisis Carnival

tions from his films. Other highlights included a roundtable panel discussion by faculty and invited guests on the topic of ethics in the humanities, an MFA Roundtable, as well as a special presentation by poet and performance artist Brandon Cesmat and dancer Terry Sprague.

The panel roundtable included Dr. Kathleen Jones, Professor of Women's Studies; Dr. Maria Nikolajeva, Children's Literature Professor from Stockholm University (currently a Fulbright Scholar in the Department of English and Comparative Literature); Dr. Cezar Ornatowski from DRWS; Rev. Craig Dorval of KPBS; Dr. David Smith, Sculptor and Professor of Visual Arts; and Vicki Wolf, Director of the Sushi Performing and Visual Arts Center. The panel was ably moderated by Marilyn Morgan.

The MFA Roundtable, moderated by

*Continued from page 1*

Jamie Madden, featured writers Caron Andregg, Chris Fell, Candyce Pelfrey, and Trissy McGhee.

As every year, the conference was prepared and organized by a graduate student steering committee and sponsored by the College of Arts and Letters and by the Departments of Rhetoric and Writing Studies and English and Comparative Literature.

The 2000 Crisis Carnival steering committee included Jamie Madden, Janet Templeton, and Freddie Ball.

Next year's conference committee will be headed by Michael Williams. Michael is looking for graduate student volunteers to help out on the steering committee, as well as with the many specific tasks associated with the conference. Please get involved and help out.

**Cezar Ornatowski**

## Check Out New Web Site

Ann Johns would like to draw the department's attention to the Center for Teaching and Learning Website: ([www.sdsu.edu/ctl/](http://www.sdsu.edu/ctl/)).

Ellen Quandahl and Melody Kilcrease spoke at the Center's new faculty lunches about "Expectations in the Lower Division Writing Classes," and they also made suggestions for improving writing assignments.

## Pedagogy Corner: Jeopardy Game Tests Students

I would like to share with my fellow writing instructors a game I created for my first semester of teaching RWS 100. The game was inspired by the recent game show craze on television and is a mix of "Jeopardy," "Win Ben Stein's Money" on Comedy Central, and "Family Feud." Its purpose is to test the students' knowledge on pertinent information in the class.

In most television game shows, the object is usually for an individual to win and pocket the profits. However, in a classroom setting this would obviously grow tiresome, so the students must work together as a team. In addition, the element of speed, being the first to hit the buzzer must be eliminated, since it is often too difficult to monitor whose hand was raised first and the students usually become rowdy and disruptive in this setting. Each team is instead assigned a question, and if one team fails at providing the correct answer, the question is then passed to the next team. I do not require the answer to be in the form of question and I allow no more than

one minute for the teams to give the correct answer.

For my MWF 50-minute class, I separate my students into two teams. The groups are quite large this way, but in such a short amount of time it is difficult to give three teams fair opportunity at answering questions. Also, I have found that my students work together well, combining knowledge to come up with an answer. If one student is the odd person out, he or she becomes my scorekeeper. No notes are allowed, though I do choose a scribe from each team to use a piece of paper and a pen/pencil to write down information.

I put different categories on the board, beginning with low points like 100, then move on to higher points when the easier questions have been answered. My categories, which were created from my course content and texts, include: My Syllabus, Miscellaneous Info You Should Know (such as resources at the Love Library, Quandahl's "How to do Things with Texts," opening and concluding paragraph techniques, etc.), MLA

Format, Vocabulary, Keys for Writers, Literacies, and the different essays I assigned them to read. I type out the questions for myself and check off the ones the teams answer.

If the teams are equally matched late in the game, I add in a Daily Double question, and at the end of the game I ask a Final Jeopardy question. I give my students candy as a prize, but coming up with a point system would be effective.

I have scheduled this game twice in the semester on a day when students have completed their final revisions for an essay and want something fun to do. The response has been positive and I plan to use the game again next semester. If anyone would like to have a copy of sample questions from my game, let me know. My e-mail address is jenyoun@aznet.net.

*Jennifer Young*

## Vietnam Vet Speaks

right eye had been, took out false teeth, and said that part of his nose had come from his hip.

After he recovered physically, he returned to a United States that treated "Vietnam vets as bastard sons," who were not treated as heroes until years later. This he described as a "self-serving dynamic—the U.S. was absolving itself of guilt."

"There was no way we could have won that war. We were supporting a corrupt government. We were the enemy."

Stadtmiller said an important part of his emotional and spiritual recovery came during a bicycle trip three years ago in Vietnam. He met a Vietnamese girl who told him the war was over and

the U.S. and her country would have a fine future. He visited the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Hanoi and prayed. He also visited the Vietnam War Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Stadtmiller said, "My way of handling Vietnam is to forgive." He feels his injury is a "gift," allowing him to get his message across. "My injury gives me implicit credentials."

Stadtmiller's visit is one of a set of activities and resources developed by many instructors, past and present, who actively teach the Vietnam Unit in *Negotiating Difference*. If you are planning for or interested in using this unit, please contact one of the teachers mentioned in this story.

*Richard Finn*

**SDSU**  
San Diego State University

### Citings

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