

La Gaceta Internacional

College of Arts & Sciences Alumni Association

Vol. 14/Fall 2008

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Scholar-in-Residence shares experience, ideas

Professor **Carme Riera**, of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, was this year's departmental Scholar-in-Residence. In Spain, Riera teaches 20th-century Spanish poetry and has enjoyed a distinguished career as an award-winning novelist and short-story writer and as an eminent poetry scholar.

She was in Bloomington to give a lecture on "La perplejidad de la escritora ante su obra," sharing with her audience the experience of being a creative writer and molding her ideas into written form. She also gave two workshops. The first, on "El *Quijote* y el nacionalismo catalán," marked the third in the series of annual Catalan Lectures. The second was a poetry workshop on "La Escuela de Barcelona," a movement of mid-twentieth-century Catalan poets who wrote in Spanish. Riera also talked about her writings and research with graduate students and faculty at lunches, dinners, and more informal gatherings. Her visit was intense, stimulating, and most enjoyable; she is a very engaging conversationalist.

Born in Palma de Mallorca and a resident of Barcelona, Riera is one of Spain's — and Catalonia's — most distinguished contemporary writers. She is the author of such novels as *Qüestió d'amor propi* (1987), *Joc de miralls* (1989), *Dins el darrer blau* (1994), *Cap al cel obert* (2000), *La meitat de l'ànima* (2003) and, most recently, *L'estiu de l'anglès* (2006). She is also widely recognized as a

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Note from the chair

Moving forward with gratitude

Dear alumni and friends,

Even the most casual perusal of this newsletter will indicate that this has been a year marked by sadness. We learned of the deaths of two emeriti professors, **Merle E. Simmons** and **Daniel Quilter**. Many of you will remember them or, if not, can learn something about them in the memorial notes in this issue. One of Professor Simmons' former students, **August Aquila**, MA'70, PhD'73, (profiled in our last issue), has instituted a scholarship to honor his teacher, and those alumni who were taught by Dr. Simmons are urged to consider a contribution to the fund.

Sadder yet was the death by automobile accident of undergraduate student **Rachel DiPietro James**; a scholarship also honors the memory of this bright and enthusiastic young woman. Our thoughts are still with the spouses, parents, children, and loved ones of those who have departed "la vida terrenal," as medieval writers once put it.

Of course "terrenal" life goes on, and not just figuratively: there have been and are a foreseeable number of births and adoptions among our faculty and staff. And so we can rejoice in the sempiternal renewal of life. On a less cosmic scale we welcome one addition to our faculty, **Edgar Illas**, who is also featured in this newsletter. He will take the reins of the Catalan program as well as teach Spanish as I did, because, and this is a bittersweet development, the department has seen one retirement and will see another one in my imminent departure. **Consuelo López-Morillas** became emerita this past July and I will join her in that rank at the end of the calendar year.

The department is sure to continue on a good footing and prosper under new lead-



Emeritus Professor Russ Salmon with incoming chair Catherine Larson.

ership beginning January 2009 with **Catherine Larson**. Larson will become chair and bring to the front office her experience both in the department and in the College of Arts and Sciences, for which she has served a four-year term as associate dean. Her team will have both new and continuing members: **Steven Wagschal** will resume his post as director of graduate studies after his sabbatical this semester; **Clancy Clements**, recently promoted to full rank (as were professors **Reyes Vila-Belda** and **Alejandro Mejías-López** to associate rank), will reprise his role as director of undergraduate studies.

As I close this letter and indeed my active tenure at IU, let me express my gratitude to students and faculty for the opportunity of having served as chair. I would like to add a very special thanks to the outstanding staff we have in the department who have made my job not only bearable but pleasurable. Thanks indeed then to **Karla, Jane, Jennifer, Tresa**, and **Tracy** for all your help and understanding.

And a happy new year to all. Remember, alumni, to keep in touch.— *Josep Miquel Sobrer*, spanport@indiana.edu

Events & Lectures

Guest Lectures

The department hosted several guest scholars last year. The visits provided a wide range of opportunities for learning and collaboration within the walls of Ballantine Hall as well as for the broader university community.

Guests and talks included: **James Walker** (York University, Canada), "Frequency and Lexical Effects in Phonological Variation" and "Ethnicity and Language Variation in Toronto"; **Elizabeth Wright** (University of Georgia-Athens), "Intimations of Imperial Foundations: A Cortés Letter and a Vernacular Livy for a New King and His Restless Subjects (Zaragoza, 1520-23)" and "Enemy Incarnations: The Epic Stratagems of Joannes Latinus, an African-Andalusian Freedman Navigating an Age of Mass Enslavement (1570-73)"; **Fernanda C. Pandolfi** (Universidade Estadual Paulista, São Paulo, Brazil), "Imprensa e Política no Brasil no Século XIX"; **Licia Fiol Matta** (Lehman College, CUNY), "'Chencha's Gait': The Politics of Voice in Myrta Silva";

Ryan Shosted (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), "Design and Implementation of an Aerodynamic Experiment" and "Aerodynamic Phonology: The State of the Art"; **Claire Fox** (University of Iowa), "Latin American Universalism"; **Sophia McClellen** (The Pennsylvania State University), "The Global Phenomenon of the 'Three Amigos': The Border Crossing of Recent Mexican Cinema"; and **Severino Albuquerque** (University of Wisconsin-Madison), "Dentro e fora: reflexões sobre o corpo no teatro brasileiro contemporâneo."

In addition to these guest lecturers the department also hosted the Brazilian Film Festival, *Semana de cine español contemporáneo*, and two Brown Bag Lecture Series, one in Hispanic linguistics and the other in literature and culture.

Upcoming Event: Simmons Lecture

The 13th annual Merle E. Simmons Distinguished Alumni Lecture is set for Feb. 27, 2009 with **Frances Aparicio**, BA'78, as our invited speaker. Aparicio is a professor in the Latin American and Latino Studies Pro-

gram at the University of Illinois, Chicago. Aparicio earned a BA from our department and comparative literature in 1978 and was a student of Professor Merle E. Simmons, in whose honor the MESDA lecture series was established. Aparicio received her MA and PhD from Harvard University and is a recognized scholar of Latino and Caribbean literature.

The lecture will take place at 2:30 p.m. at the Indiana Memorial Union's University Club. Visit the "news and events" link on our Web site, <http://www.indiana.edu/~spanport/>, for more information about this and other upcoming events.

Find more news & events at www.indiana.edu/~spanport or call (812) 855-6142.



Scholar-in-Residence

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short-story writer, having authored such collections as *Te deix, amor, la mar com a penyora* (1975), and *Contra l'amor en companyia i altres relats* (1991), among others. Professor Riera writes her fiction in Catalan and then "versions" it in Spanish, so that she is the author of both the Catalan and Spanish versions of her novels and short stories.

Riera is a widely recognized author in both Catalan and Spanish. Her novel *Dins el darrer blau* received the Josep Pla, Joan Crexells, Lletra d'Or, and Elio Vittorini Awards in addition to Spain's *Premio Nacional de Narrativa*, the first time a novel published originally in Catalan received this award.

Cap al cel obert received the Generalitat de Catalunya's Premi Nacional de Literatura Catalana and the Premi de la Crítica for narrative in Catalan, while *La meitat de l'ànima* garnered the Premi Sant Jordi.

A full professor at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Riera is one of Spain's top scholars of contemporary Spanish poetry. Her groundbreaking book, *La*



Scholar-in-Residence Carme Riera and Professor Maryellen Bieder

escuela de Barcelona: Barral, Gil de Biedma, Goytisolo: el núcleo poético de la generación de los 50 (1988), inaugurated her reputation. Subsequent scholarly publications include *La obra poética de Carlos Barral* (1990) and *Hay veneno y jazmín en tu tinta: aproximación a la poesía de J. A. Goytisolo* (1991). She has also edited several collections of poetry: Carlos Barral, *Poesía* (1991); Carlos Barral, *Poesía completa* (1998); José Agustín Goytisolo, *Poesía* (1999); and Jaime Gil de Biedma, *Las personas del verbo* (2002).

New visiting assistant professors

The department is pleased to welcome four new visiting assistant professors for 2008-09: **Alberto González-Valdés**, University of Connecticut, does research on contemporary Cuban popular culture; **Javier Puerto Benito**, University of Kentucky, focuses on medieval studies with an emphasis on IT applied to the humanities, medieval historiography, the evolution of ideas, and descriptive translation studies; **Anna Witte**, University of Texas at Austin, studies contemporary theatre with a main interest in theatre and second language learning; and **Chrystian Zegarra**, University of California, Los Angeles, who researches 20th-century Latin American literature. **Luis Intersimone**, in his second year with us, completes our team of visiting assistant professors.

In Memoriam: Merle E. Simmons

Professor Emeritus **Merle E. Simmons** passed away on April 4, 2008 at the age of 89. In his memory, we celebrate his life and his contributions to ours.

Merle Simmons was a quiet man — dedicated, persistent, and especially diligent. “Diligent” is an apt word in reflecting on Merle. Webster’s Unabridged Dictionary defines the word as “steady; constant in the effort to accomplish what is undertaken; assiduous; attentive; industrious; not idle or negligent.” Or consider these words from Proverbs 22:29, “Do you see a man diligent in his work? He will stand before kings.”

There were three major endeavors to which Merle dedicated himself in his quiet and humble, but decisive, way: studying Colonial Spanish American literature and Hispanic folklore; leading in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese — in his many years as professor, director of graduate studies, and ultimately, as chair; and promoting study abroad.

Merle’s research and teaching focused on Colonial Spanish American literature and on Hispanic folklore. As a teacher and mentor he passed on these passions not only to many talented students but also to younger faculty. His interests extended from the study of the early chroniclers of the Spanish conquest in America to the later quest for independence. It was that latter research, which occurred after his retirement, that earned him outstanding recognition. In 1984, in recognition for this work, Merle was named “Individuo Correspondiente” of the Venezuelan National Academy of History. Then in 1989, the government of Peru awarded him the highest honor that it can confer on a foreigner, the “Order of the Sun” with the rank of “oficial mayor”.

Merle was among that generation of scholars here at Indiana University who created and defined the discipline of folklore. Fellow folklorist **John McDowell** wrote in a fitting tribute, “He was a gentle soul and a wonderful scholar. His connection to folklore came through his interest in the traditional song of Spanish America, and he made major contributions to the study of the Mexican *corrido* ... An important episode is Merle’s 1963 exchange with **Américo Paredes** in the pages of the *Journal of American Folklore*. The debate concerned the antiquity of Mexico’s *corridos* — Simmons argued that heroic verse resembling the *corrido* had been bouncing around Latin America for centuries; Paredes responded that only in Mexico did this traditional verse take root to foster a ballad tradition. As befit the temperament of these two gentlemen, this debate was carried out in a manner both earnest and genteel.”



Simmons

Merle’s administrative endeavors within the IU College of Arts and Sciences also had a triple thrust. The first was his great desire to improve the teaching of Spanish in the state of Indiana. In this regard, for many years, he directed Spanish teacher training. But he also built very strong personal relationships with teachers all over the state through the Indiana chapter of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese. There was a time when the majority of Spanish teachers in Indiana knew Merle personally and esteemed him as their mentor.

From 1967 to 1976, Merle was director of graduate studies in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. Then he accepted the chairmanship in 1976 until illness slowed him down in 1981. In recognition of his awareness and pursuit of excellence in its graduates’ development, the department, then chaired by Professor **Darlene Sadlier**, established the annual Merle E. Simmons Distinguished Alumni Lecture Series in 1996.

He believed very strongly in the internationalization of young people’s education. In the 1940s, he took the first group of students from Indiana University to Mexico in order for them to experience living and studying abroad. The annual IU Mexico Program grew from that first trip. Thus, Merle laid the foundations for what would become the Office of Overseas Study — and he projected Indiana University into the forefront of promoting study abroad programs across the United States.

He established the IU/Lima, Peru, Program in 1959 as the university’s first foreign

study program and the first United States foreign study program in South America. It was recently announced that the Office of Overseas Study is inaugurating the Merle E. Simmons Scholarship for an undergraduate student to study each year in Lima. In 1964, Merle established IU programs in Spain, France, Italy, and Germany. Also in the late 60s, he developed the longstanding connection with the Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City. In addition to the IU program there, Merle, along with CIC Director **Fred Jackson**, created the CIC Summer Program in Mexico for advanced undergraduate study. The concept was born and the Office of Overseas Study was on its way to its current offerings of 100 programs.

Notes from former students express deep appreciation and respect. **Julie Greer Johnson**, MA’70, PhD’75, wrote “I met Merle Simmons in 1965, when I went to the IU campus for an interview for the Junior Year Abroad Program in Peru, a meeting for which I will be forever grateful. From that time until his death, he was a true friend and wise mentor to me. He was the best teacher I ever had. His careful, comprehensive instruction provided a solid foundation for my career in research and teaching, and his diligent counsel inspired me to always do my best.”

Marcia A. Hakala, PhD’70, said, “Dr. Simmons was a brilliant, yet unassuming, scholar, an outstanding professor, and an extraordinary human being. He challenged students to question and to excel academically by his own example and through his high expectations for them. He was my inspiration as well as my mentor ... the one after whom I tried to model my own professional career. It was an honor to have known him.”

From **Kay E. Raymond**, PhD’83: “Dr. Merle Simmons was special to me as a very careful scholar who was an excellent mentor. His insights into Mexican culture and literature were helpful, and his personal relations were always kind and generous.”

In 2007, in recognition of Merle’s mentorship and friendship, **August Aquila**, MA’70, PhD’73, initiated the Merle E. Simmons Travel Fellowship for Research on Latin American Literature, a lasting memorial to a distinguished educator.

On a personal note, Mexico was Merle’s love, and he found love in Mexico! In the great City of Mexico he met, courted, and married his lifetime partner **Concepción Rojas**.

My times with him included learning the meaning of discipline and, yes, diligence;

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In Memoriam: Daniel Quilter

Associate Professor Emeritus **Daniel Quilter** died May 29, 2008 due to complications from Parkinson's disease. We remember a talented teacher and administrator — a colleague who gave selflessly to his students for 31 years.

Born in Ohio in 1933, Dan graduated *summa cum laude* from the University of Toledo (1951) and earned his MA and PhD degrees in Spanish from the University of Illinois (1956, 1962). His first college-level teaching position was at Northwestern University; he came to IU in 1964, retiring in 1995. Yet, even in a retirement defined by the challenges of his illness, Dan continued to express his passion for teaching, offering Spanish classes at the Bloomington Adult Community Center and leading several travel tours to Spain.

Dan considered himself first and foremost a teacher. A generalist, Dan's teaching interests were in the three diverse areas of Cervantes (and especially *Don Quixote* — no small coincidence, given his initials), Spanish culture and civilization, and grammar/applied linguistics. He often said he considered it a privilege to be able to work in an institution that allowed him to focus on three such different areas, and he further espoused the belief that his research and travel abroad should be directed towards improving the quality of his courses. He gave the S411 (culture) course that he taught for so many years a strong focus on sociology, history, politics, and art. Required for many years of all students planning to study in Spain and chosen by many others who would never get there physically, S411 brought Dan's love of all things Spanish to life. His multimedia class presentations and course materials, collected over decades, helped turn abstract ideas into tangible realities for his students. And long before it became pedagogically fashionable to do so, he created a way to capture the energy of returnees from our study abroad programs in Spain by integrating Honors College interns into the course design. **Christopher Anderson**, MA'75, PhD'82, who is now a professor at the University of Tulsa, elegantly described Dan's teaching at his memorial service:

"For those who never had the pleasure of taking a class of Dan's, you should know that it was always an academic challenge *with* a daily performance thrown in, a little piece of theater which enhanced the learning process, since the classroom was Dan's stage. Taking student comments, weaving them into a stimulating conversation, and going places where no one would have dreamed when the 75-minute period began. That was Dan's goal, that was Dan's passion, that was Dan's class, a constant challenge to think

outside-the-box, a constant intellectual nudge, or if you will, a constant mischievous provocation."

Anderson continues, "If you took Spanish Civilization or just had the opportunity to look at his binder, you realized how far ahead of the pedagogical curve he was. An advocate of multimedia before the word was commonly used, he prepared materials that took advantage of every piece of technology that existed, and he pushed the boundaries of the university's classrooms in search of what he required in order to teach his classes as he wished. In short, he needed what is now called a smart classroom, long before the rest of the world was smart."

Such attention to teaching and learning marked all the courses that Dan authored or influenced during his long career in the classroom, especially courses such as *Don Quixote*, Spanish in the Business World, Spanish Grammar, and Applied Spanish Linguistics. Materials that he collected and refined over a lifetime of teaching Applied Spanish Linguistics were published by McGraw-Hill in 1993 as *Spanish: Analysis for Advanced Students* (now available online). Dan also had a popular *Don Quixote* reader that was used for a number of years in high schools across the country.

During his career, Dan served in several key administrative positions in the department: he was director of language instruction for 10 years and director of undergraduate studies for 16 years. In both of those roles, he supervised dozens of courses and hundreds of associate instructors, helping to frame the department's approach to undergraduate education and to train graduate students for their futures in the profession. For eight years, he evaluated Advanced Placement exams for the Educational Testing Service. He also served on the Bloomington Faculty Council (including the Student Affairs and AI Affairs committees), the College Advisory Committee, Dean of Students Advisory Committee, and numerous other College of Arts and Sciences and university-level committees.

Perhaps most importantly, Dan was instrumental in encouraging and overseeing study abroad opportunities for students. He served as resident director of IU study abroad programs in Mexico City, Salamanca, and Madrid (the latter on three separate occasions), and of the University of Louisville summer program in Segovia. He was the first IU director of the Madrid program, which has now been in existence for 43 years. He was indefatigable in promoting overseas study. As someone whose first experience abroad occurred as an adult, Dan



Daniel Quilter in his Ballantine Hall office.

was committed to helping undergraduate students discover the joys of overseas study, and he chaired dozens of selection committees for the Office of Overseas Study.

Dan was honored with IU's President's Distinguished Teaching Award, the Indiana Foreign Language Professor of the Year Award, and the Indiana American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese Faculty Teaching Award. He often appeared on the list of favorite professors in surveys of graduating seniors.

Kathleen Sideli, Dan's beloved wife and now IU's associate vice president for overseas study has shared some of the many tributes she received after Dan's death. It seems fitting to let Quilter's students tell you about the impact he made on their lives.

A study abroad student notes that Dan "made a difference in a lot of lives, and I don't know that I would have appreciated getting to know the Spanish culture (or any culture, for that matter, outside Hoosierland) without him." A student who took a "culture option" course on *Don Quixote* observes, "He certainly left an indelible mark, from his professional involvement in many things that touched so many lives, but, also... these many years later, I still remember the force of his personality, his lively intellect, his rapier wit and the amused expressions darting behind those glasses of his."

A student who now teaches middle school writes, "I adored Dan's teaching style and passion for quality instruction whether it was talking about his beloved *personaje*, Don Quijote, or his infamous applied linguistics course. ... I model to this day many of his teaching techniques in my own classes." Still another student credits Dan's encourage-

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Faculty News

Faculty news

J. Clancy Clements was promoted to full professor.

Deborah Cohn received grants from the New Frontiers in the Arts and Humanities Program and from the College Arts and Humanities Institute for the organization of the “Blackness in Latin America and the Caribbean” conference this past April.

Luis Dávila, director of Chicano-Riqueño studies for the last 36 years and faculty advisor to the journal *Chiricú*, was honored by the IU Latino Alumni Association for his “many years of motivation and inspiration to countless students during good times and bad.” He was also given a special award by the La Casa/Latino Cultural Center for his contributions to the IU Latino community and support of La Casa.

Patrick Dove earned a New Frontiers in the Arts and Humanities Exploration Travel Fellowship to attend the “Comparative Imperial History” workshop at the University of Aberdeen, Scotland.

Silvana Falconi was elected as vice president of the Indiana Foreign Language Teachers Association for a two-year term.

César Félix-Brasdefer published *Politeness in Mexico and the United States: A contrastive study of the realization and perception of refusals*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2008.

Kimberly Geeslin received the Faculty Trustee’s Teaching Award for 2008. She has co-edited a special volume of original research articles in the journal *Bilingualism, Language, and Cognition* titled “Language Acquisition, Bilingualism and Copula Choice in Spanish.”

Alejandro Mejías López was recently promoted to associate professor with tenure.

New Faculty Profile

Edgar Illas

Edgar Illas is a new assistant professor in Catalan and Spanish. He studied at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, receiving his BA in Catalan philology and comparative literature in 1999. In 2007, he received his PhD in Spanish from Duke University.

Illas is interested in contemporary Catalan and Spanish culture, theories of architecture, and post-Marxism and deconstruction. His book project, *Postmodern Barcelona* (currently under review by Duke University Press), explores the symbolic transformations that redefined Barcelona during the 1980s in preparation for the 1992 Olympic Games by analyzing various materials such as political speeches, architecture and literary texts.

He has published several articles on contemporary Catalan culture and also published the novel, *El gel de bany sobre l’esponja* (Columna, 2003). Illas hopes to contribute to the progress of the Catalan program of the department. He believes that, given its peculiar political status and historical conditions, Catalan culture can be a particularly productive space to meditate on the ways the cultural, political, social and economic spheres are intermingled.



Illas

Kathleen Myers published *Fernández de Oviedo’s Chronicle of America: A New History for a New World*, University of Texas Press, 2007. She received a Moveable Feast of the Arts Grant (with Steve Raymer), a new IU initiative to support traveling exhibits around the state of Indiana. The exhibit, “In Cortes’ Shadow: from Veracruz to Mexico City”, will open at the Mathers Museum of World Cultures (IUB) in September 2009 and then travel to six other venues in Indiana. Myers also received a Summer Faculty Fellowship and a Multidisciplinary Ventures Grant for field work in Mexico. In addition, she earned the 2008 Outstanding Mentor Award given by the department’s

Graduate Student Advisory Council.

Darlene J. Sadlier published *Brazil Imagined: 1500 to the Present*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008.

Juan Manuel Soto-Arriví received the 2008 Trustees Teaching Award in a university-wide competition among senior lecturers.

Reyes Vila-Belda was promoted to associate professor with tenure this year. She was awarded a Summer Faculty Fellowship from the Office of the Vice Provost for Research and a College Arts and Humanities Institute grant in the form of a one-course release for 2008-09.

Quilter

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ment and “never-ending passion for the language and the Iberian peninsula” as motivations for his career in foreign language pedagogy. And a former student who is now a professor wrote, “Dr. Quilter was a great professor and even a greater man. I love him and miss him more than words can describe. I’d like to think that his professional legacy lives in me, but those are some mighty big shoes to fill.”

Those representative voices offer extraordinary tributes to Dan’s influence on so many lives. I certainly remember his gener-

osity of spirit when I was a young assistant professor, and I was the grateful recipient of some of his detailed course binders and files of Spanish realia, as well as his meticulous files in the department’s Undergraduate Studies Office. I have often been astounded by the number of former students — including reunion groups from his study abroad years — who would return to Bloomington to reconnect with him.

And last July, in a plane flying from Madrid to Chicago, I experienced one of those serendipitous moments that illustrates so beautifully that *el mundo es un pañuelo*. The plane was alive with dozens of IU Honors Program students returning from a summer

studying in Valencia; they had promised to speak nothing but Spanish, and they were doing exactly that, with high energy and enthusiasm. An hour into the trip, I began chatting with the woman next to me. She turned out to be an alumna of our department and a past participant in the Madrid program. That woman, Nancy Konvalinka, BA’83, now lives in Madrid, where she has worked with many other study abroad students in recent years. We spoke at length about how overseas study changes lives, and we talked about Dan Quilter. I believe that Dan would have been delighted to see the ways in which the things he did and the things he loved continue to live on.

— Catherine Larson

Sobrer looks forward to joys of retirement

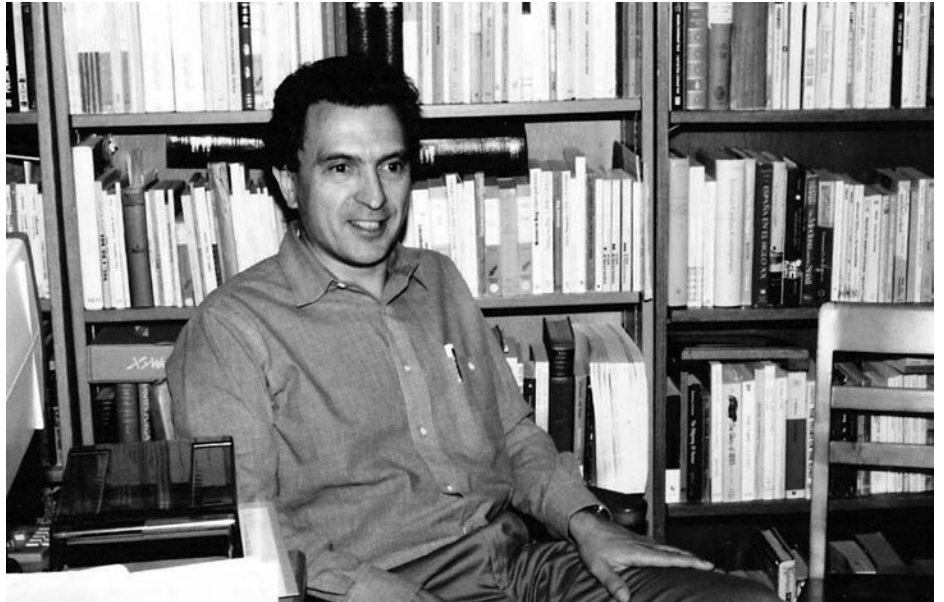
Josep Miquel Sobrer came to Bloomington in 1981 after the retirement of the late Josep Roca-Pons had opened a position in Catalan at IU. He will retire from departmental and university service on Dec. 31.

Sobrer attended the university in his birthplace of Barcelona where he studied with among others Martí de Riquer, the well-known medievalist and Provençalist. In 1968 he entered the PhD program at the University of Oregon in Eugene, Ore., where he completed an MA and a PhD with a dissertation on the 14th-century chronicler Ramon Muntaner, under the direction of Thomas R. Hart. Before coming to Indiana he taught at the University of Puget Sound (Tacoma, Wash.) and at the University of Michigan (Ann Arbor) where he felt his education was beginning, a feeling to which he still clings. He credits his colleagues and peers for having also been his teachers. That he also has learned from his students, he says, has seemed to him such a given that he almost forgot to mention the fact.

Guided by his love of letters and by the great American university principle of “publish or perish,” Sobrer has written a number of books and articles on Catalan and Spanish literature. He is now, in retrospect, thankful to that system for prodding him to a passable level of productivity.

His first book was an extension of his dissertation, including an examination of the work of another 14th-century chronicler, Bernat Desclot. The study pointed out the literary artifice in the supposedly factual writing of Desclot and Muntaner and was thus titled *L'èpica de la realitat*. A second scholarly book was devoted to a 15th-century Valencian poet. That book, *La doble soledat d'Ausias March*, had the virtue of being short (Sobrer has always favored understatement). After the publication of that volume he turned to more modern topics and issued a number of articles on Catalan authors and themes, including several essays on J. V. Foix. This 20th-century poet, like his 15th-century predecessor, has always puzzled Sobrer, and the puzzlement continues despite the writings.

Besides academic books and papers, Sobrer has published creative writings and a good number of translations. He began by translating from English into Catalan such authors as Ian Fleming, H. G. Wells, Sylvia Plath, and Mervyn Peake. After a while he began translating from Catalan into English, as his contribution to spread knowledge of his native culture in the English-speaking world, and he has translated some of



Above Josep Miquel Sobrer, in 1985 — four years after joining the department's faculty. At left, the professor in 2008.

his favorite authors: Pere Calders and Mercè Rodoreda. Of the latter he translated some stories and the novel *A Broken Mirror*. In the “creative”

category he published two books in Catalan: the prose poems of *El llibre dels oracles*, and the essays on cultural themes of *Desfer les Amèriques*. He says that the latter book enjoyed a notable critical success but is still looking for readers.

Sobrer contributed to the literary life of the community with a two-year stint as one of the Bloomington *Herald-Times*' “community columnists.” He also wrote and gave an on-air series for local radio station WFHB's Spanish hour program, *Hola Bloomington*. Sobrer's radio column was titled “Cinco minutos de soledad.”

Sobrer was one of the founding members of the North-American Catalan Society and served on the board of the society and was elected to its presidency for a term. He also served as editor, along with Professor August Bover of the Universitat de Barcelona, of the society's learned journal, *Catalan Review*. He is happy to see that the review is competing with him in longevity.

During his years in the department, Sobrer has served twice as chair and director of graduate studies, and is thankful to his colleagues for having borne with him during his tenure. He has of course witnessed many transformations in the university, and in the world, but he would rather not reminisce, as he “is no Proust.”

Facing retirement, he looks forward to devoting himself to his writing, to learning to make music out of his clarinet, and to reading. “I chose this profession,” he said once in what must have been a despondent mood, “to read books, and I find I only have time to read dossiers.” Surely it is time now for him to return to his love and to the multiplicity of his interests. He is fond of composing epitaphs for his tombstone; one of them reads: “Here lies J. M. S. He did not have a coherent research agenda.”

Sobrer loves Bloomington, where he plays tennis weekly with his good friend **Bill Hansen** and other racqueteers, but he misses his native Barcelona and the pleasure of feeling himself surrounded by people who speak Catalan, and where his accent passes unnoticed. He is very fortunate that his wife, Francesca, and their children Greer, Ryland, and Miró all love Barcelona, Catalonia, and Spain. So far as his health and his pocket-book can afford it, he plans to spend part of the year there — as he is postponing the decision of which city to grow old in, or finally grow up in. May that decision be years in the making.

López-Morillas retires after 31 years

Professor **Consuelo López-Morillas** retired from Indiana University on June 30, 2008, after 31 years on the faculty of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese.

A native of Providence, R.I., Consuelo López-Morillas received her BA in Spanish from Bryn Mawr College (1965) and her PhD in Romance philology from the University of California, Berkeley (1974), where she wrote her dissertation under the direction of Yakov Malkiel. At Berkeley she also began the study of Arabic, which would remain an important component of her research and academic career. After an initial appointment in 1974 as assistant professor of Romance languages at the Ohio State University, she moved to Indiana in 1977, becoming associate professor in 1982 and professor in 1994. She was invited back to Ohio State as visiting assistant professor of Arabic in 1979, and at IU she was an adjunct member of the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures. In Spanish and Portuguese, she served as director of graduate studies (1993–96) and department chair (2000–06).

López-Morillas recalls that she was hired by **Merle Simmons** during his final term as department chair. “The atmosphere of the department was very different then from what it is now,” she said. “All of the tenured faculty was male, while the assistant professors were almost all female. Our teaching load was three courses per semester (though some semesters it was reduced), and classes at the 100 and 200 levels met every day. My first semester, I taught a 13-hour week. The university scarcely had policies yet to accommodate parenthood and family life, so that when my first child was born in 1980 I had to take a semester off without pay. Today, not only are university policies more enlightened but the department itself is much more democratic and less hierarchical.”

López-Morillas’s teaching encompassed a broad range of subjects at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. Early in her career she taught both general Romance Linguistics and Portuguese Historical Grammar, and sometimes shared the Spanish Historical Grammar course with Professor **Mary Clayton**. When she offered Hispanic Dialectology it was in its Peninsular, historical dimension (Mozarabic, Astur-Leonese, Navarro-Aragonese, etc.), and she developed the History of the Spanish Language course that came to replace the historical grammar requirement for students of literature.

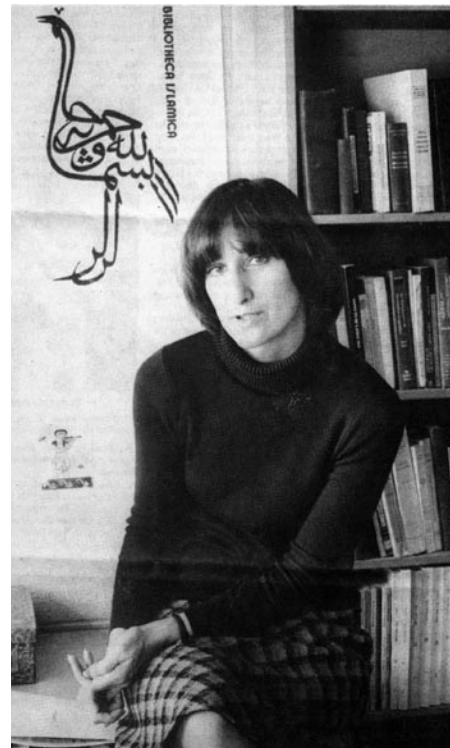
At the undergraduate level, she enjoyed teaching not only language courses like grammar and composition, but also some of the literature offerings, including The His-

panic World, the first half of the Peninsular survey, and The Craft of Translation. Her background in Arabic and Hispano-Arabic led to invitations to teach in both the Comparative Literature Department (on Arabic-Western literary relations) and in Near Eastern Languages and Cultures (research in classical Arabic texts, Hispano-Arabic poetry, and seminars on the *kharjas*).

In research, López-Morillas is known principally for her studies of the 15th- and 16th-century phenomenon of Aljamiado (Spanish written in the Arabic alphabet), and within it, of religious texts, particularly translations of the *Qurān*. Her interest in these texts was, initially, philological, as the titles of some early articles show: “Aljamiado *akošegir* and its Old Provençal Counterparts: Studies in the Romance Transmission of Latin CON-S-,” *Romance Philology* (1975); “Etimologías escogidas del Corán aljamiado,” *Actas Oviedo* (1978); “Aljamiado *desyerrar* ‘errar’ y el prefijo *des-* intensivo en el nordeste peninsular,” *Homenaje Rocapons* (1991).

But her work eventually came to encompass a variety of non-linguistic issues related to the transmission of Islam in Spain: “Hispano-Semitic Calques and the Context of Translation,” *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* (1990); “Language and Identity in Late Spanish Islam,” *Hispanic Review* (1995); “The Moriscos and Christian Doctrine,” *Christians, Muslims, and Jews in Medieval and Early Modern Spain* (1999), etc. Her two books to date are *The Qurān in 16th-Century Spain: Six Morisco Versions of Sūra 79* (London, 1982) and *Textos aljamiados sobre la vida de Mahoma: El Profeta de los moriscos* (Madrid, 1994), and a third, submitted in 2005, should see the light in late 2008 or early 2009: *El Corán de Toledo. Manuscrito T 235 de la Biblioteca de Castilla-La Mancha, edición y estudio* (Oviedo, Editorial Trea). She considers the article “The Genealogy of the Spanish *Qurān*” in *Journal of Islamic Studies* (2006) to be an important summing-up of her many years of research in this area.

She has also, as any Hispano-Arabist must, ventured into the thorny field of the Arabic *muwashshahas* and Romance *kharjas*, with “Was the *Muwashshah* Really



Consuelo López-Morillas, at top left in 2008 and above in 1979.

Accompanied by the Organ?,” *La Corónica* (1985); “Perspectivas árabes sobre las jarchas romances,” *Actas Madrid* (1991); and (with R. Hitchcock) *The Kharjas: A Critical Bibliography, Supplement I* (London, 1996). Among her other publications is the chapter “Language” in *The Literature of Al-Andalus* for the Cambridge History of Arabic Literature (2000).

Although López-Morillas had lived in the Middle East for short periods (Egypt in 1969 and 1984, Jordan in 1978), she says, “I had had to leave Arabic somewhat on the back burner, and though I read Arabic and used it in research, I didn’t speak it fluently and had always regretted that.”

So she decided to devote her last sabbatical in 2006–07 to intensive study of the language. She attended the summer Arabic School at Middlebury College for a nine-week immersion course, and then obtained a fellowship from the Center for Arabic Study Abroad in Cairo that’s intended for professors who want to refresh their skills. “The four months I spent there, essentially as a student taking private tutorials with professors from Cairo University, did wonders for my confidence in speaking Arabic,” she said. “In 2007–08, while I was resident director of the Wisconsin-IU-Purdue Overseas Study Program in Madrid, I continued to take classes in Arabic composition and

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Student News

Graduate news

We welcome 19 new MA and PhD students into our ranks this year, continuing a strong graduate program with approximately 80 students pursuing degrees. Add to that a group of 22 visiting lecturers and outside associate instructors and, as to be expected, there is much happening in Ballantine Hall and beyond.

As in past years, our graduate students have proven, and been recognized for, their exceptional skills in quality of research and teaching effectiveness.

Noteworthy congratulations go to **Andrew Reynolds**, recipient of a 2008-09 Dissertation Year Research Fellowship and Russell A. Havens Scholarship in Foreign Languages, a College of Arts and Sciences full fellowship. Reynolds also received a College of Arts & Sciences Travel Grant and a research grant from the Program for Cultural Cooperation Between Spain's Ministry of Culture and United States Universities.

Catalina Méndez-Vallejo was awarded the Tinker Field Research Grant by the College of Arts & Sciences and the Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies and received the Agapito Rey Academic Year Fellowship. **Zak Montgomery** received the Agapito Rey Summer Dissertation Fellowship and a Faculty Podcasting Initiative Grant to introduce podcasting in the foreign language classroom this fall. **Eli Ansa-Goicoechea** was awarded the Department of Spanish and Portuguese Outstanding Associate Instructor Award and **Erin McNulty** received honorable mention for this same award.

José Espericueta received the first annual Merle E. Simmons Travel Fellowship for Research on Latin American Literature. With these funds, Espericueta was able to spend two weeks at the Archivo General de la Nación in Mexico City, researching Indians in 16th-century Mexico and how they interacted with the colonial government. **Cara Kinnally** and **Lauren Schmidt** were co-recipients of the JM Hill Award for Outstanding Graduate Student Paper; Kinnally was also awarded a Foreign Language Area Scholarship (FLAS) from the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies. **Stephen Fafulas** was awarded a FLAS from West European Studies. **Justine D'Amico** earned a College of Arts & Sciences Travel Grant.

Congratulations to the following who have recently completed the PhD: **Aarnes Gudmestad**, **Viktoria Hackbarth** (Kadas),



August Aquila and Jose Espericueta

Paul Malovrh, **Jason McCloskey** and **Giovanna Urdangarain**. One step closer to finishing degrees by completing PhD qualifying exams are **Mario Bahena**, **José Espericueta**, **Erin McNulty**, **Catalina Méndez-Vallejo**, **Vicent Moreno**, **Moraima Mundo-Ríos**, **Manuel Ostos**, **Andrew Reynolds**, **Elena Schoonmaker-Gates** and **Olena Shkatulo**. Recent MA graduates are **Marcus Erickson**, **Francisca Escoriza-Gallardo**, **Nick Phillips**, **Laura Reid**, **Amina Shabani**, **Ryder Timberlake**, **Cesarina Viñas** and **Stephaney Wright**.

Undergraduate news

The Indiana University Elvis J. Stahr Distinguished Senior Award is given to only three to five undergraduates each year, students who have excelled academically while serving as active student leaders. This year, **Janet Hamilton**, a triple major in Spanish, mathematics, and economics, earned the prestigious Stahr award. Hamilton is from Zionsville, Ind.

The Ashley Crouse Memorial Scholarship was awarded to **Kristina Anderson** for study in the summer program in Cuernavaca, Mexico. Anderson is a Spanish minor and said she hopes to improve her communication skills while fully experiencing a new culture and normal daily life with a host family. **Nichole Wells** received the department-sponsored Theodore Dorf Scholarship for summer study abroad in Cuernavaca.

The 2008 recipient of the CIEE Rachel DiPietro-James Scholarship award is **Elaine Harris**, a communication and culture major with minors in Spanish and religious studies. She is in Buenos Aires this fall. Harris previ-



Anderson

ously lived in Mexico with a host family and during high school spent a month with an exchange family in Barcelona.

Katherine Hopkins completed her honors thesis this spring, writing "What Women Want: An Interdisciplinary Approach to *Love in the Time of Cholera* and *Like Water for Chocolate*" with faculty advisor Professor **Gustavo Sainz**.

Students inducted into Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society were **Katherine Ely**, **Timothy Gross**, **Jacqueline Gruber**, **Holly Jones**, **Maria Parmer**, **Lauren Silinsky**, **Sarah Smith**, **Kyle Sturges**, **Allison Walker**, **Colby Wilson** and **Katherine Wood**.



VIDA group continues to thrive

In February 2008, Grupo de Teatro VIDA presented its second major performance, *Magia, misterio, amor y desamor*, as a part of the Bloomington Area Arts Council 2007-08 Performance Series. The show combined the following one-act plays: *La cueva de Salamanca* (Cervantes), *Amor de don Perlimplín con Belisa en su jardín* (Lorca), and *Vayamos a lo profundo* (Gambaro). The show played to sold-out crowds including a group of students who traveled from Wabash College to see the performance.

VIDA, now in its third season, has continued to grow and seek out opportunities to bring learners and native speakers of Spanish together to create theatrical productions. This year the group will present its third major performance at the John Waldron Arts Center and perform at the Friday Fringe Festival in Indianapolis.

Alumni Notebook

1970s

Debbie J. Melloan, BA'73, is a counselor for the sexual-assault crisis service at the IU Bloomington Student Health Center. In April she received the 2008 Outstanding Staff Award from the IU Office for Women's Affairs, citing her 18 years of assistance to students who have been victims of sexual assault and honoring her leadership in developing sexual-assault awareness and prevention programs at IUB. A frequent speaker on these topics, Melloan is also the author of a play about sexual assault titled *Puzzle Pieces*, which is performed during IU's Rape Awareness Week. She is a member of the university's Commission on Personal Safety and the GLBT Anti-Harassment Team. Melloan lives in Bloomington.

Five IU alumni were among the seven Indiana school superintendents to be named 2008 district superintendents of the year by the Indiana Association of Public School Superintendents. Among them, **Kevin M. Caress**, BA'76, EdD'89, superintendent of Community Schools of Frankfort, was named Superintendent of the Year for North Central District III.

1980s

Betty Rouse Ferree, BA'80, is a self-employed massage therapist in Alexandria, Va., where she also lives.

Vanessa Alexander Clohessy, BA'86, lives in Elmhurst, Ill. Her family has a long history with IU: both her father, Donald Z. Alexander, BS'58, and her grandfather, Alexander Louis Zivic, BA'24, attended IU Bloomington.

Angela K. Herrmann, BA'89, is a freelance journalist in Indianapolis. The Indiana chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists recently recognized her with a second-place award for best

coverage of the environment in publications with a circulation of 40,000 or less. Herrmann's article "Eating Away at the Environment" appeared in *DisciplesWorld*, an editorially independent publication of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Herrmann's additional publication credits include *Branches Magazine*, *Nuvo News-weekly*, and *Outdoor Indiana* magazine. She lives in Indianapolis and can be contacted at ang@alumni.indiana.edu.

1990s

Aaron T. Brubaker, BA'92, is director of instructional technology at the University of North Carolina's School of Information and Library Science. He lives and works in Chapel Hill.

Kelly Smit Burns, BA'93, is a security analyst for the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, where she works with the school's computer security. Burns lives in Ann Arbor with her husband, Roger. Their daughter, Jessica Clara, was born on Jan. 26, 2008.

Amber L. Gallup, BA'96, MA'98, is director of Essential Language, which provides vocational Spanish and ESL training for labor unions across the country. She can be contacted through the Web site: www.essentiallanguage.com. Gallup lives in Washington, D.C.

John C. Couleur, Cert'98, BA'00, is a financial consultant for his father's company, John T. Couleur & Associates in Northfield, Ill. He also serves as treasurer for Illinois Shelter & Recovery Services Inc. in Northfield and as secretary for the 627 Ridge Condominium Association in Wilmette, Ill. Couleur lives in Wilmette.

2000s

Tracy L. Krogstie, BAJ'01, is marketing and promotions manager for Jewel-Osco in Melrose

Park, Ill. She writes that she designs advertising vehicles and executes integrated events that target the Hispanic consumer. Krogstie lives in Schaumburg, Ill.

Jessica M. Montalvo, BA'03, has taught Spanish at Homestead High School in Fort Wayne, Ind., for three years. She lives in Fort Wayne.

Crystal D. Mahoy, BA'04, completed a master's degree in forensic psychology at the Chicago School of Professional Psychology in June. She began a PhD in clinical psychology at Indiana State University in the fall. She lives in Evansville, Ind.

Lyla J. Britton, BA'06, is vice president of MDI Corp. in Martinsville, Ind. Her husband, Gabriel, BA'06, is a student in the IU School of Law-Bloomington. He plans to receive his doctor of jurisprudence degree in 2010. The couple lives in Martinsville.

Lindsey L. Cook, BA'06, MPH'08, writes that she is actively involved in local community organizations such as Hoosiers for a Common-sense Health Plan and Volunteers in Medicine. Cook enjoys cycling and jogging and lives in Bloomington, Ind. with her cat Olive.

Kaitlin R. Rice, BS/BA'06, is a student in the IU School of Medicine in Indianapolis. She plans to receive her doctor of medicine degree in 2010. Rice lives in Indianapolis.

Elissa Stransky, BS/BA'06, is a bioanalyst/biochemist for Advanced Testing Laboratories in Cincinnati. In May 2007, she received a master's degree in biology from Purdue University in Indianapolis.

Oscar I. Useche, MA'07, has been named a faculty fellow in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at Columbia University, where he is completing a PhD in 19th-century Spanish literature. Useche lives and works in New York City.

López-Morillas

(continued from page 7)

conversation. In retirement I plan to make Arabic study one of my main activities."

"As for what else I'm going to do in retirement," she adds, "I'm not sure yet, but I do want to turn from the kind of research I've always done to something entirely different. I'm interested in travel, translating, politics, and a host of other things that I hope to spend the next few months exploring." Her husband, **Enrique Merino**, is emeritus professor of Geological Sciences at IU, and together they plan to spend part of each year in Spain. Their two sons are Diego (28), who works for an international NGO in New York City and was married this year, and Miguel (23), a recent graduate in music from the University of Miami. "Our new daughter-in-law is Mexican, so we look forward to more travel to Mexico in our future, too."

In memory: Rachel DiPietro-James

In February 2008, **Rachel DiPietro-James** was tragically killed in a car accident. Rachel was a sophomore at Indiana University majoring in Spanish with a strong interest in Argentina. She was also enthusiastic about theatre, culinary arts, building friendships, and working with children as a camp counselor. She spent a year in Buenos Aires with her family while in high school, and was planning to return to spend her junior year of college there through the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE).

As a way to honor Rachel's memory, the Rachel DiPietro-James Scholarship in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese will be awarded annually to an undergraduate student who has been accepted into the CIEE's Study Abroad in Argentina Program. All alumni, friends, and students are invited to honor Rachel's memory by adding a contribution to this fund. See our department's Web site or the fund's direct link (<http://www.indiana.edu/~spanport/rdpj.shtml>) for more about Rachel, the Argentina Program, and how to make a donation.



DiPietro-James

Simmons

(continued from page 3)

through Merle, the discovery of the Casa González, a marvelous homey inn in the heart of Mexico City (the real delight for Merle was the wonderful pastry shop on the corner); and memories of trying to keep up with him while walking in the high altitude of Mexico City. I had to run to keep pace; I don't ever remember being in a taxi with him in Mexico City. To him, everything was walk-able, even one of the world's largest cities.

Merle Simmons was in many ways a difficult man to keep up with. He was a dear mentor to me. When he became too ill to teach, I taught Colonial Spanish American literature for several years. I worked with him administratively and in interdisciplinary ways, as well as with the Indiana teachers of Spanish, and I pursued his love for foreign study.

We will all miss Merle Simmons, but the shadow he cast is long and will remain indefinitely for those of us who knew him and worked with him. — *Russell O. Salmon*



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