

# Romance News, Spring 2013

So many of you responded to the spring call for news with joyous and impressive new happenings in your lives! This roundup gives you some idea of what our thriving extended family has recently accomplished. We are extremely proud of all of them. As you look over the following pages, remember that word from our AMs and PhDs, whether you just received your degree or hung it in your office many years ago, is always welcome. Since we don't produce a newsletter in hard copy anymore, we are able to work these updates in year round. So please send a few lines about your promotions, publications, activities, marriages, and families to [flindsay@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:flindsay@fas.harvard.edu)

Thanks,

Frannie Lindsay  
*Editor, Graduate Coordinator*

## Graduate Alumni

**Professor Marva A. Barnett (PhD French ' 80)**, Founding Director of the Teaching Resource Center Department of French at the University of Virginia, was recently named a *Chevalier de l'Ordre des palmes académiques* by the French government. [email: [marva@virginia.edu](mailto:marva@virginia.edu)]



*Victor Hugo scholar Gérard Pouchain and Professor Marva Barnett*

**Gene H. Bell-Villada, (PhD Spanish ' 74)** writes in:

The paperback edition of my volume, *Writing out of Limbo: International Childhoods, Global Nomads and Third Culture Kids* (co-edited with Nina Sichel), was issued by Cambridge Scholars Publishing last fall 2012. The book is a collection of 30 essays—personal memoirs, academic studies, and cultural reflections—all of them dealing with the strange experience of being raised outside one's passport country. My own essay in the anthology intermingles past recollections with a personal look at Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* and Barbara Kingsolver's *The Poisonwood Bible*. In addition, I presented a lecture synthesizing these issues, entitled "Growing Up Internationally, and How It Shapes a Child," as the keynote address at two conferences: the Massachusetts Foreign Language Association (MaFLA) in October and the New England Translators Association (NETA) in May. Prior to that, a second edition, revised and expanded, of my *Garcia Marquez: The Man and His Work* came out in translation in Mexico and (of all places) Turkey! [email: [Gene.H.Bell-Villada@williams.edu](mailto:Gene.H.Bell-Villada@williams.edu)]

**Erik Camayd-Freixas (PhD Spanish '95)** published two books this past academic year: an anthology of essays entitled *Orientalism and Identity and Latin America: Fashioning Self and Other from the (Post) Colonial Margin* (University of Arizona Press, 2013), and *Etnografía imaginaria: Historia y parodia en la literatura hispanoamericana* (Guatemala: F&G Editores, 2012). Professor Camayd-Freixas is Professor of Hispanic Studies and Director of Graduate Studies at Florida International University.  
[email: camayde@fiu.edu]

**Gabriela Carrión (PhD Spanish' 03)**, previously on the Spanish faculty at Bard College, is now Assistant Professor of Spanish at Regis University in Denver, Colorado.  
[mailto:gcarrion@regis.edu]

**Daniela Difrancesco (PhD Italian' 04)** still considers Rapallo, Italy, to be her home. She is enjoying her editorial job in the Foreign Languages Department of DeAgostini Scuola as well as a busy family life. In August 2011, her short story "Two Seas" was awarded the La Piazzetta Literary Prize for Short Stories. The prize, organized by the cultural organization La Massocca, was held in in the Cinque Terre town of Framura. Daniela received a cash award, and her story is forthcoming in an anthology published by Internos, a small Ligurian press. The competition's jury included Mauro Bersani, editorial director at Einaudi, and Bruna Miorelli, a literary critic at Radio Popolare.

Daniela and her husband hope to celebrate her 40th birthday with a brief holiday abroad.  
[email: danieladifrancesco@hotmail.com]

**Mehdi El Hajoui (AM French '06)** joyfully announces his marriage to Brigitte Hurtubise. He met Brigitte over four years ago at Penn, where she was an undergraduate studying Romance Languages and Anthropology. His wife-to-be was sitting outside reading *Le Père Goriot* when Mehdi approached her, and the rest is history. Mehdi is still with the Boston Consulting Group, where he now serves as a Project Leader. He lives in Philadelphia.  
[email: elhajoui@gmail.com]

**Jonathan Gillman (AM French)** reports that his book of poems, *My Father, Humming* was published earlier this year by Antrim House Books. The publisher had this to say about the collection:

"In this moving series of poems, which reads like a novel, Jonathan Gillman depicts his father's drift into dementia, the strong feelings his father evoked in his family, the author's often turbulent relationship with him, and their gradual acceptance of each other. *My Father, Humming* is a book that will resonate with everyone. It speaks of the things that are so deep in us we don't have words for them." The book seems to be helpful to many people—so many are dealing with the same kind of decline in those they love—and to make them feel less alone. More information can be found at:  
[www.myfatherhumming.com](http://www.myfatherhumming.com)

[email:gillmanj@comcast.net]

**Kristin (Hennessy) LeMay's (AM French, '03)** recent book, *I Told My Soul to Sing: Finding God with Emily Dickinson* was published by Paraclete Press in November 2012. Blending biography, memoir, and theological meditation, the book looks closely at twenty-five of Dickinson's rarer poems, to uncover the riches of Dickinson's spiritual life and tell of LeMay's own search for God between the lines of the poems Dickinson called "hymns." Visit the book site at [www.kristinlemay.org](http://www.kristinlemay.org).

*Excerpts from a few of the reviews:*

"LeMay elegantly combines accessible literary analysis with her own spiritual memoir of search, doubt, and faith."—*Sojourners Magazine*

"In her portrait, LeMay allows Dickinson the dignity of being first of all a person—with all the complexity and contradiction that being human entails."—*Books & Culture*

"Creative and soul-stretching... Many of those who identify themselves as spiritual but not religious might adopt this American poet as their patron saint after reading this fascinating book."—*Spirituality & Practice*

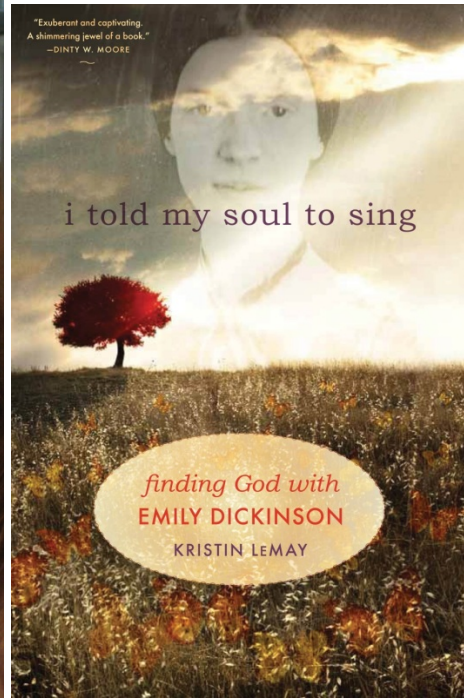
"The kind of book we wish we saw more often. . . . We have to agree with *Parnassus* editor Herbert Leibowitz; this cross-genre gem is "a smart, seriously playful, winning, and readable commentary". . . . Widen your understanding of the highly personal ways in which art and faith intersect."—*Image*

"This is great stuff—knowledge and data mixed with insight and imagination, which informs and enriches not only our reading of the poem, but our way of understanding God."—*Thinking Faith*

Kristin tells *Romance News*: I am still working at Society of St. John the Evangelist [Episcopal monastery in Cambridge along the banks of the Charles], even though we now live in Ohio! Eric got a job at Ohio University in the wonderful little town of Athens in the Appalachian foothills, where I also teach now. Last year a course on literary translation; this year on Christian spiritual practice. It's been great. In the meantime, I keep up with the monks [at St. John], whom I miss very much in person, but join for meetings via Skype and other technological devices. [email:kristinlemay@gmail.com]



Kristen Hennessy LeMay



**Andrea Flores Khalil (PhD French' 99)** was a Fulbright Scholar in Tunisia during the 2012-2013 academic year. She is editing the manuscript from that research now. In the coming months, she will be guest editor for a special issue of *The Journal of North African Studies* called "Women, Gender and the Arab Spring".  
[email:Andrea.Khalil@qc.cuny.edu]

**Joyce Block Lazarus (PhD French' 74)** has published a memoir *Hiding in Plain Sight: Eluding the Nazis in Occupied France*, Sarah Lew Miller and Joyce B. Lazarus (Academy Chicago, 2012). The narrative is of her coauthor's experiences living with her family in German-Occupied France. The coauthors have given talks at Brandeis University, Framingham State University, and forthcoming at Orchard Cove Senior Residence in Canton, Massachusetts, on October 19; and Temple Shir Hadash, in Newton on October 28.

Joyce describes the process of the book's coming into being:

"Sarah Miller contacted me after she had read a previous book I had published, *In the Shadow of Vichy: the Finaly Affair* (Peter Lang, 2008) since she thought that the story of Jewish survival in German-occupied France was related to her own family's story. She told me about her large family of Orthodox Polish Jews who had emigrated to France in 1937 and survived the German occupation through help from Christian neighbors and the Resistance movement. We decided that the book we would write together would be more than just a memoir about her family. We wanted to write about their story in the larger context of French and European history. I researched the topics of living conditions in France during the Occupation, of Resistance movements and of how Christians aided Jews during the 4 1/2 years of the Occupation. We then interwove two stories, her personal one, and the larger one, so that the final memoir is the tale of a teenage girl—Sarah and her family—but also that of France as a nation. We were completely co-authors in the project."

[email: carljoyce@comcast.net]

**Viviane Mahieux (PhD Spanish '04)** recently got tenure and was promoted to Associate Professor at the University of California, Irvine. Viviane says she still misses the east, but the change has been good. Her daughter, Amelia, was born on November 20.

[email: vmahieux@yahoo.com]



*Amelia, celebrating her mom's tenure*

**Brian Martin (AB '93, AM '99, PhD French '03)** has been on sabbatical in Montréal this semester and will travel in France this summer before returning to the Berkshires in the fall. But his very big news is that he has been awarded the Laurence Wylie Prize in French Cultural Studies for his book *Napoleonic Friendship: Military Fraternity, Intimacy, and Sexuality in Nineteenth-Century France* (Durham: University of New Hampshire Press, 2011).

Created in 1995 to honor the memory of Laurence Wylie, Professor of French Civilization at Harvard, the Wylie Prize is awarded biennially to the best book in French social or cultural studies and is recognized as one of the most prestigious book prizes in the field. The jury for this year's prize chose *Napoleonic Friendship* from among 65 books under consideration. Martin received the Wylie Prize at NYU's Maison Française this spring, when he gave a lecture titled "Queer Napoleon: from Napoleonic Friendship to Gays in the Military."

One of the first books on gays in the military published following the repeal of Don't Ask Don't Tell in 2011, *Napoleonic Friendship* examines the history of male intimacy in the French military from Napoleon to the First World War. It is the first book-length study on the origin of queer soldiers in modern France. Martin's book has been praised as "the postmodern military history that Foucault never wrote" (*H-France Review*); "a seminal text in understanding the cultural production of masculinity and homosocial relations [and] a protestatory gesture against the silencing of gays in the military" (*South Central Review*); "one of the few academic books where the author's prologue is a genuinely moving testimony and explains much of the passion of what follows" (*French History*); and "a remarkable contribution to historical, literary, military, and queer studies" (*American Historical Association's Committee on LGBT History*). *Napoleonic Friendship* was also nominated for a prestigious *Lambda Literary Prize* in LGBT Studies in 2012. Brian is Associate Professor of French and Comparative Literature at Williams College, where his teaching and scholarship focus broadly on gender and sexuality in France and on Nordic masculinities from Scandinavia to Québec. For more info, please visit <http://cflc.williams.edu/profile/bmartin/> and [http://communications.williams.edu/news-releases/1\\_25\\_2013\\_martin/](http://communications.williams.edu/news-releases/1_25_2013_martin/)  
[email: Brian.Martin@williams.edu]



*Professor Brian Martin*

**Susan (PhD Italian '86) and her husband John Michalczyk (PhD French '72)** have been very busy on all fronts, both professionally and personally. Their daughter was married last October, and each of their three children has pursued graduate studies and maintains their connections to Italy.

Their youngest, Miriam, taught in Mantua for a year following her graduation, through a program with the Italian government. She then continued her studies at NYU Florence (Master's degree in Italian, concentration on food studies and culture). Their son, John, a doctoral candidate at the New School, is writing his dissertation on sociology, with a focus on disabilities, hidden and visible.

Susan and John are still at Boston College, John in the Fine Arts Dept., as Director of Film Studies and Susan, as the Assistant Director of the A&S Honors Program. They premiered their latest documentary, "Who Takes Away the Sins: Witnesses to Clergy Abuse" on May 1<sup>st</sup> at the Museum of Fine Arts. John has recently completed a book, *Through a Lens Darkly: Films of Genocide, Ethnic Cleansing and Atrocities*, with Peter Lange Publishing. He was editor of the manuscript and author of 8 essays in the book. In April, John presented at Georgetown University's Gulag Conference and screened his documentary, "Confronting Amnesia: Frozen Memories of the Russian Gulag."

In the BC Honors Program, Susan still teaches sophomore honors seminars with a Comparative Literature approach. She also teaches advanced seminars on Autobiography and on Dante, while continuing as Director of the Senior Thesis Program. This year during Commencement weekend, she was selected by the students to receive the Phi Beta Kappa Teaching Award for 2013.

Outside of her myriad responsibilities in the Honors Program, she continues working with colleagues on the challenges facing higher education today, at the local level (President of the advocacy chapter of the American Association of University Professors, BCAAUP) and at the national level (2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President, AAUP). It has been a privilege to connect with so many faculty and graduate students across the country throughout the year on many important issues.

Susan A. Michalczyk, Assistant Director  
[Email: susan.michal@bc.edu]

**Carmen Oquendo-Villar (PhD Spanish' 08)** is currently an MFA candidate in Writing-Directing at NYU's Graduate Film Program. Her films, documentary and fiction, deal with race and gender issues in Latin America and in the Latino/a communities in the US. She has received funding as a Midcareer Fellow through the Guggenheim Foundation, and through the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Jacob Javits Fellowship program, Fulbright Fellowship program, the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies, WGBH, and NALIP (National Association of Latino Independent Producers).

She was recently awarded the 2013-2014 Robert Giard Foundation Fellowship for emerging photographers and filmmakers working on themes of gender, sexuality and the LGBTQ experience. Pulitzer Prize Winning playwright Tony Kushner (*Angels in America*) and Oscar-nominated screenwriter Steven Spielberg (*Lincoln*) will be the guest speakers at the May 22nd reception/benefit during which Oquendo-Villar will be officially named as the recipient of this year's Fellowship. More information can be found at <http://robertgiardfoundation.org/news/detail/save-the-date-may-22-2013-robert-giard-benefit-with-tony-kushner>

Carmen's films include: *Boquita* (2005), *Mizery* (2006), *The Needle* (2012), *Camil* (2013), *Carmelo* (in post-production) and *Santa Fe* (in development).

[email:coquendovillar@post.harvard.edu]

**Rosemary Peters's (PhD French' 03)** book, *Stealing Things: Theft and the Author in Nineteenth-Century France*, will be published this summer by Lexington Books.

[email:rpeters@lsu.edu]

**François Proulx (PhD French' 10)** happily reports that he will be starting as Assistant Professor of French (tenure-track) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in the fall.

[email:proulx@fas.harvard.edu]

**Felisa Vergara Reynolds's (PhD French' 09)** recent article "René Maran, Forgotten Father of the Francophone Novel" appeared in the Journal of African Literature Association Volume 7, Number 1 (Summer 2012/Fall 2012).

Felisa is Assistant Professor of French and Spanish, University of St. Thomas (TX).

[email:felisavr@gmail.com]

**Leyla Rouhi (PhD Spanish '95)** completed a translation of the first ever sci-fi time travel novel, *El anacronópete*, by Enrique Gaspar (1842-1902) with great guidance from UCLA Professor Michael Cooperson. It's a terrific read for sci-fi fans and those interested in 19th-century Spain. She also published a piece in *Motarjem* magazine (Teheran) on the translation of *Don Quixote* into Persian.

[email:Leyla.Rouhi@williams.edu]

**Claret Vargas (PhD Spanish/Portuguese' 03)** came back to Harvard to go to law school in 2007 in order to specialize in Human Rights, after having worked quite a bit on violence, indigenous movements and ethics in my scholarly endeavors. In 2010, she graduated and clerked for the Honorable Mark L. Wolf, then Chief Judge of the United States District Court for the District of Massachusetts. She then worked as a legal fellow at the Center for Justice and Accountability (remotely, since she had just had a little girl, Martina, who is now 2 years old). She then worked at an employment law firm focusing on class actions on behalf of workers. Just recently, however, Claret accepted an offer to be the Deputy Director of the Stanford Human Rights Center at Stanford Law School. She says: "I am thrilled to be focusing on human rights in a position that will allow me to coordinate and produce human rights scholarship from an interdisciplinary perspective. This really is the ideal job for me. I will be able to draw from my training in literature and cultural analysis and my training in law, all in the service of human rights." Claret will move to Stanford this summer; she can't wait to begin work there.

[email:claretvargas@gmail.com]

**Barbara F Weissberger's (PhD Spanish '76)** article " 'Es de Lope': Child Martyrdom in Cervantes's Baños de Argel," was published in the journal *Cervantes* last fall (Vol. 32.2). The Cervantes Society of America awarded it the Luis Andrés Murillo Prize for Best Article of 2012.  
[email:weiss046@umn.edu]