Leaning Back with the Chair
by Ken Cissna
Professor and Chair

Despite the challenging times for higher education this past year—and indeed, for the country and the world—the Department of Communication has continued to excel and prosper, and I appreciate the opportunity to brag on us a little here in Rapport.

Although we have no new faculty to report this year, we do have a most welcome addition to our departmental family. Kohana Pal Basu, daughter of Ambar Basu and Mahuya Pal, was born on October 7, 2009. Congratulations to Mahuya and Ambar, and please welcome Kohana to the USF class of 2032!

Remembering Barney Downs

Barney Downs (left) with Jillian Tullis and David Payne at the Communication Day banquet in April 2008.

Grad Students Crossing Boundaries
by Meagan Araujo and Chris Patti
Co-Presidents, Graduate Student Association

Over the past year, our grad students showed the value of communication scholarship that crosses disciplinary and social boundaries. We watched many of our colleagues graduate and enter competitive PhD programs and earn tenure-track.
Faculty Hits Keep Happening
Awards, Publications and the Good Life in Abundance

Ambar Basu received a $1,500 International Travel Grant from USF’s College of Arts & Sciences. Ambar traveled to Kolkata, India to continue his research on sex work and HIV/AIDS with a commercial sex worker community. Ambar has also been appointed to the Editorial Board of Health Communication.

Garnet Butchard received the Top Paper Award from the Semiotics and Communication Division of the National Communication Association.

Ken Cissna and Elizabeth Bell were both named Centennial Scholars by the Eastern Communication Association: Ken for his career-long work in Applied Communication; Elizabeth for coauthoring (with Kristin Langellier) a chapter in ECA’s A Century of Transformation, a volume celebrating ECA’s 100th anniversary.

Ken was also the recipient of the Gerald M. Phillips Award for Distinguished Applied Communication Scholarship presented by the National Communication Association.


Art Bochner was named Distinguished University Professor, USF’s highest academic honor.

Publishing Up a Storm


Art Bochner co-edited, with Lynn Harter, a special issue on Narrative Medicine in the Journal of Applied Communication Research. He published “Vulnerable Medicine” in this special issue.


Carolyn Ellis’s coedited collection, Music Autoethnographies: Making Autoethnography Sing / Making Music Personal was published by Australian Academic Press. The book includes chapters by Carolyn as well as Communication Department faculty member Stacy Holman Jones, doctoral student Chris Patti, and alumni Chris McRae (MA, 2008, currently a doctoral student at Southern Illinois University).


Keynotes, Workshops, Guest Gigs and Such

Carolyn Ellis presented a two-day Music and Autoethnography Workshop in September at Queensland Conservatorium, Griffith University, in Brisbane, Australia. While in Australia, she also gave the Queensland Conservatorium Research Centre Twilight Lecture entitled “Bringing Reflexive Writing and Personal Storytelling to the Creative Arts.”

Carolyn Ellis in Brisbane, Australia.

Ken Cissna facilitated two Department Chairs Workshops at the Institute for Academic Leadership in Howey-in-the-Hills, Florida. Ken also presented the keynote address, “Studying Interpersonal Dialogue,” at the Hope Conference, the NCA Institute for Faculty Development. This year’s conference was held at Randolph-Macon College, Ashland, Virginia.
Fred Steier and PhD student Daniel Blaeuer have been funded by USF’s Teaching Opportunity Program to participate in the Social Media Collaboratory at Stanford University’s Media X program in Palo Alto, California. Fred and Daniel conducted a workshop for USF’s Center for 21st Century Teaching Enhancement on the same topic: Developing Community in the Online Classroom.

In the spirit of USF’s commitment to interdisciplinarity, Fred Steier is also teaching an experimental studio course with USF’s new Designer in Residence, Franco Lodato (who has designed things from Maseratis to cell phones and wearable devices). The seminar, Communication and Design, focuses on communication issues in the design process by actually engaging in the design of a wearable device to benefit elderly.

Jane Jorgenson, Stacy Holman Jones, PhD students Rachel Silverman and Chelsea Tanner are the local arrangements crew for the 2010 conference of the Organization for the Study of Communication, Language and Gender (OSCLG) to be held here in Tampa Bay. “The Good Life” will be the theme at the appropriately “good life” site, the Tradewinds at St. Pete Beach.

Out and About

Loyd Pettegrew returned to his Pacific Ocean surfing roots with a month at a rental one block from the beach in Encinitas, CA. His twice a day surfing adventures included a big south swell that brought overhead-plus waves to Southern California.

Michael LeVan pursued experiential research for his courses on travel & tourism, public memory, and visual culture by visiting roadside attractions, faded tourist destinations, and a national park. Most of these were one-tank trips in Florida to places like Dade City, Bok Tower Gardens, the ruins of Bongoland theme park in Port Orange.

Ken Cissna wandered much farther and used more than a tank of gas in his summer trip to Paris. Jane Jorgenson and Fred Steier traveled to Norway in June to visit their son, Rolf, who is spending the year there on a Fulbright grant.

Lori Roscoe and Eric Eisenberg spent some time in northern Michigan, a yearly tradition. In addition, they went to New York City to see Dharshini Tambiah, USF faculty member (and Lori’s piano teacher) perform in a solo recital at Carnegie Hall.

Above: Loyd Pettegrew, wife Carol, and friend Rick Thomas with their backs to the perfect 5 foot wave at the beach in Encinitas, CA.
Below: Carolyn Ellis, Tony Adams (PhD, 2008), and Art Bochner on the Appalachian trail
Graduate Student Awards
Recognition for Excellence in Scholarship

Robin Boylorn (PhD, 2009) received the Illinois Distinguished Dissertation Award as the outstanding dissertation in the "Experimental" category. Her work is titled “Southern Black Women: Their Lived Realities.”

Jillian Tullis Owen (PhD, 2009) and Robin Boylorn (PhD, 2009) received the Distinguished Graduate Achievement Award from USF’s Graduate Professional Student Council and the Graduate and Professional Student Council’s Graduate Student Achievement Award.

Eric Paul Engel was selected to participate in the 2009 NCA Doctoral Honors Seminar on the theme of “Communication as Engaged Scholarship,” which was held at West Virginia University.

Doctoral candidates Roger Pippen and David Lee received a Research Fellowship from the Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education. They are working on Emergency and Risk Communication under Dr. Marsha Vanderford at the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

Several communication graduate students had papers accepted for USF’s “Global Challenges for the 21st Century” Graduate Student Research Symposium, including Amina Iraqi, “Communication and Culture in the United Nations,” Dana Schowalter, “Marital Naming ‘Options’ and Identity Construction,” and Ardis Hanson, “Within and Beyond the Limits of Disability: Hope as a Global Mental Health Paradigm.”
Graduate Director’s Chair
by Stacy Holman Jones
Associate Professor and Graduate Director


Also in 2008, five students began work on their master’s degrees: Joey Bartell, Laura Deruvo, Marissa Dodson, Shelby Forbes, Jaclyn Lannon, and James Webb. These 11 students were admitted from an applicant pool of more than 70 prospective students.

This fall, nine doctoral students joined our ranks: Kristin Blinne, Summer Cunningham, Patrick Dillon, Jacob Jenkins, Sheila Gobes-Ryan, Libby Jeter, Mark McCarthy, Chelsea Tanner, and Allison Weidhaus.

And in the past year, nine students joined the MA program: Brandon Conrad, Ed DiMarco, Marissa Dodson, Amanda Hargen, Blake Paxton, David Purnell, Nick Riggs, Athena Simpson, and Alex Young. These 18 students were admitted from an applicant pool of more than 60 prospective students.

As you can see, interest in the USF graduate program remains keen and our students are certainly the cream of the crop!

Also in the past year, we launched the new graduate Student Handbook, created a jazzy brochure for the graduate program, and participated in not one, but two recruiting fairs at NCA in San Diego.

This fall we’re gearing up to participate simultaneously in the first-ever USF Graduate and Professional Recruitment Fair and the NCA’s Graduate Open House in Chicago. Plans are in the works to put together the inaugural recruitment weekend for prospective students in Tampa for Spring 2010 (pending funding).

Look for more news on graduate program scheduling, recruitment, and events, as well as for updates on all of the good work our graduate students are doing on our website’s graduate program page:
http://www.cas.usf.edu/communication/programs.html

See you in Chicago!
Alumni News & Notes

Keysha Williams emailed all 73 of our doctoral alumni asking for “updates,” defined by Keysha as “any new babies, marriages, jobs, promotions, publications. Any thing you would love to share.” Here are updates, in the order they arrived.

Third Person Accounts

Janna Jones (PhD, 1998) was appointed Director of Cinema and Visual Culture Studies and continues her work as an Associate Professor in the School of Communication at Northern Arizona University. Janna and Mark Neumann found the time to work on their summer house in Bucksport, Maine and to organize the 2009 Northeast Historic Film summer symposium. This year’s theme was Ways of Watching, and they had scholars from England, Scotland, Norway and Sweden as well as scholars from across the US.

Peg Ostrenko (PhD, 2002) recently was sworn to Federal Service as a social scientist for the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, completing her four-month training in Kansas City to become an “academic embed.” She is slated to go to Iraq mid-November as part of a Human Terrain Team. She says, “The intercultural training here merged academics with army culture alongside Middle-Eastern analysts. It’s been a challenge.”

And in the First Person

Shane Moreman (PhD, 2005): “Marriage? It’s still illegal.”

Dennis Leoutsakas (PhD, 2003): I’m still at Salisbury University, tenured, associate professor, just finished 4 years on the advisory board of CDC and HRSA's HIV programs and just finished a sabbatical doing research in Ecuador (lived in an Ecuadorian orphanage for part of the time). Jan is well, and we have a new granddaughter (our 2nd) born 9/2.

Virgil “Pete” Moberg (PhD, 1995): I'm still at JU [Jacksonville University]. Jan Brown became my spouse this spring in May. Snowbird Jan Moberg practices elderlaw in Harrisburg PA half the year. We met at the UU church basement in St Augustine. We live in St Augustine beach during the semester and at our 20-acre farm with five bedroom house near Berkeley Springs in the Alleghenies during breaks and holidays.
friends welcome. A beagle and collie - no kids.

June Wang (PhD, 2006): Yes, I received a promotion again recently to VP of Wireless Terminals, ZTE USA Inc. ZTE is the largest public Telecommunication equipment company in China, about 65,000 people globally. I currently work at their U.S. operations. My husband is fine and my son Andric is now 6 and in the 1st grade this year!

Adi Thelan (PhD, 2007) sends very sad news: I continue to battle cervical and uterine cancer. I am under going treatment again, and my doctor believes it is looking good. I had to take a medical leave from teaching at Dixie State College in St. George, Utah. I plan to get right back to it as soon as I am better. My prognosis is not great, but that is OK...I feel good and am engaged to a great guy who did not run when I told him I had cancer. The bulldogs are still doing great and yes they are still alive! Steve the ex hubby is back in Tampa and doing well. We continue to be close.

If you’d like to get in touch with Adi, she writes: I am very open about my cancer and am more than happy to educate people or just chat about it. I can be reached at thelen@dixie.edu.

Leigh Berger Serrie (PhD, 2000): I am still living in Atlanta, GA with my husband, Jonathan and six-year-old son, Liam. I continue to study and write about Christianity. I am also an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Communication at Kaplan University.

New Books
We’ll have to make more room on the Alumni book shelf in the departmental office. Cris Davis (PhD, 2005) has two books coming in November: Straight talk about communication research methods (with H. Powell-Gallardo and K. Lachlan)—published by Kendall-Hunt, a communication research methods textbook and Death: The beginning of a relationship (published by Hampton Press), a narrative ethnography of her research at hospice and her dad’s death.

New Jobs
Jay Baglia (PhD, 2003) is back on tenure track, leaving Lehigh Valley Hospital, to accept an Assistant Professor position in Health Communication in the Department of Speech Communication and Theatre at Kutztown University.

Emmett Winn (PhD, 1999) is now the Associate Provost at Auburn University.

New Performances
Chris McRae (MA, 2007) will soon open his one-man show at Southern Illinois University. Here’s the blurb for Miles away from “The Cool:” This solo performance combines stories of reading about, listening to, playing, and researching Miles Davis. The legendary musician and trumpet player was born and raised in Southern Illinois, just miles away from Carbondale. Using musical structures and forms, this performance weaves the autobiography, the music, and the local significance of Miles Davis together to compose a piece about music, personal narrative, and performance that is always miles away from “the cool.”

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Speaking of Alumni

Department to inaugurate an Alumni Lecture

The Department voted last month to begin an annual, honorary Alumni Lecture series in which one of the Department’s outstanding alumni would be invited to return to USF to speak to the faculty and students.

Each year the lecture would be delivered by one of the Department’s alumni who has distinguished him or her self in research, teaching, or community service.

The first Alumni Lecture is slated to occur October 2010, and nominations for the first lecturer are invited, as well as donations to support the lecture. We hope eventually to attract sufficient donations to endow the lecture.

Contact Ken Cissna at kcissna@cas.usf.edu to learn more about the lecture series, to submit nominations, and to make donations.
Sampling Dissertations
The Lives of Southern Black Women
by Robin Boylorn

We invited our most recent PhD graduates to share their dissertation research with Rapport. Here’s Robin Boylorn’s report.

brown-skinned
country girl
with poetic passions
bare feet on red mud roots
& intellectual ambitions

I come from a place out in the middle of nowhere, where dead end dirt roads named after deceased family members meet intersections and ancient churches. It was both exciting and terrifying to return “home” to conduct research for my dissertation, a study about the lived experiences of rural black women. The goal of the project was to collect life stories of rural black women to better understand their lives beyond stereotypes and prototypes. I was interested in how rural black women communicate their experiences. Because I am more of a poet than a formal theorist, I relied on their words to make sense of their world and used poetic narrative to represent their experiences.

Black women use language as a coping mechanism and strategy for their lives, which means that the stories they tell and how they tell them are useful resources for understanding black women’s communication. I aspired to tell stories that would resonate with readers and allow them to get to know and empathize with the characters. I humanized them, exposed their flaws, relished in their strengths, and told stories to make sense of their lives. I considered and centered their raced, classed, and gendered positionalities.

I have always found myself curious about the silenced yet intriguing lives of black women in the south. The beautifully un-intellectual way they have with words, the unintentional sashay of their walk, the unchallenged wisdom and strength they demonstrate in their families. Those curiosities and interests merged in my dissertation research.

My time in the field was wrought with ethical and moral complications because of my dual role as participant and researcher. I was simultaneously daughter/cousin/sister/friend and researcher. My “outsider-within” positionality complicated the collection of data and it also influenced how I interpreted it. I was constantly negotiating my role as a participant-observer, a rural black woman and a rural black woman scholar.

I researched how rural black communities have been often overlooked in studies of black communities and how the lives and voices of women, particularly working-class, uneducated, black women are often forgotten. My study was a recovery of a community embedded within a landscape of controversies and loss, contradictions and successes.

My project took an ethnographic approach to help give voice to marginalized black, rural, southern women by enacting research grounded in their and my own experience. The study was also a personal investigation of who I became through the process of writing the stories.

Robin Boylorn is an Assistant Professor in the Communication Department at the University of Alabama. Dr. Boylorn can be reached at: rboylorn@bama.ua.edu
Sampling Dissertations

On a “Good Death” for Patients and Family

by Jillian A. Tullis

We invited our most recent PhD graduates to share their dissertation research with Rapport. Here’s Jillian Tullis’s report.

Dying and death are subjects that most people avoid, but this was not the case for me. I spent 300 hours with a hospice in the Tampa Bay region. Despite what some people think, hospice is not a place where people go to die, but a range of services designed to support people with life-limiting illnesses and their loved ones. With financial and professional support from USF’s Center for Hospice Palliative Care and End of Life Studies, I spent over a year following nurses, counselors, chaplains, and home health aids, all members of a hospice team, and observed while they interacted with patients and their loved ones.

While the work of hospice is serious and sometimes sad, there is a lot of laughter and joy that accompanies caring for people at the end of life. I mixed research with pleasure while shadowing the team members and even making friends with patients. I heard stories about returning from the Korean War, chauffeuring celebrities from Miles Davis to Elton John, and running a family-owned jewelry business. These patients’ stories and the way team members responded to them became the basis for understanding how people at the end of life communicate about spirituality, dying and death. By reflecting upon their pasts, many patients offered clues about what gave their lives meaning. Some patients revealed secrets from their youth for the first time and others expressed the hopes and concerns they had for the family members they were about to leave behind.

In addition to observing patients and the members of their hospice team communicate during in-home visits, I attended hospice training sessions, team meetings, and interviewed team members about their experiences caring for people with terminal illnesses. Training sessions and team meetings broadened my awareness about the socialization and daily communication practices of hospice team members and influenced my interpretation of patient and team member interactions. Interviewing team members helped clarify observations from in-home visits, while shedding light on hospice staff members’ understanding of what role communication plays in helping patients and their families achieve a good death, a death free of physical and spiritual pain.

At the conclusion of my dissertation research, I returned to the hospice team I worked with and discussed a few ways to improve communication about spirituality, dying and a good death. My recommendations included redefining and broadening team members’ working definitions of spirituality and introducing the concept of spiritual care using less religious terms. I also encouraged team members to talk more openly with patients and their co-workers about what constitutes a good death.

The idea of conducting research with people who are dying may seem morbid, even frightening, and the idea of hospice conjures up images of a place where people go to die. The generosity of hospice patients, their family members, and hospice team members, however, illustrates that hospice is a philosophy that guides care for patients at the end of their lives. Once I dispel some of the myths about hospice and conducting research with people who are dying, I usually tell people about the interesting people I met, the times I shed tears, and the times I laughed.

Jillian A. Tullis is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication Studies at University of North Carolina at Charlotte. She can be reached by e-mail at: jowen22@uncc.edu
positions in a highly competitive job market. We welcomed a gifted incoming group of colleagues bringing new ideas and experiences to our community. With interests ranging from activism to tailgating, we worked on events, public service, and scholarship.

Events
In celebration of our department, colleagues, and the discipline, Comm Day 2009 was a night to remember. The day began with PhD student Emily Ryalls’s second annual Speak Out event, filling the performance lab with exemplary undergraduate speeches and a packed house. UT Austin professor Dana Cloud delivered the annual Grazier lecture and challenged us to consider issues of “labor and/or communication.” Dr. Cloud joined the department later that evening as we continued Comm Day festivities at a new location: Bernini’s in Ybor City. The evening was a formal affair and saw faculty and grad students dressed to the nines, led by Dr. Cissna in his tuxedo.

Doctoral candidates Liz Edgecomb and Sarah Dykins Callahan put on a “Sophisticated Night of Performance”, a title that perfectly fit the bill. Edgecomb and Dykins Callahan are taking their expertise to a new level by creating an undergraduate class, Production Practicum, putting on a full-production

From Comm Prom 2009 (clockwise from top): MCs for the evening Dana Schowalter and David Lee; Steve Schoen and Carly Geisler; Emily Ryalls and Steve Phelan; Lori Roscoe and Liz Edgecomb. They all clean up real good.
performance of “Forbidden Brides of the Faceless Slaves in the Nameless House of the Night of Dread Desire.” This highly anticipated show opens in early November. Robyn Boylorn (PhD 2009) also organized the second annual poetry night, Speak II, featuring powerful performances from undergraduate and graduate students.

In April, David Lee and the GCA organized the “Speaking of Method” graduate research symposium. This two-day event in the Marshall Center brought together graduate researchers from Communication and Mass Communications for a dialogue about research methodology. Other graduate presenters came from Sociology, Women's Studies, Library and Information Sciences, Second Language Acquisition, and Instructional Technology. Way to go, Dave!

Exercising our sporty side, we tailgated—rooting on our USF Bulls football team as they trampled the competition: “Go Bulls!”

Public Service
In April, Doctoral Candidate Sarah T. McGhee and members of the USF Chapter of STAND, a student anti-genocide coalition of the Genocide Intervention Network, hosted the STAND UP AGAINST GENOCIDE soccer tournament, raising over $800 for civilian protection programs in Darfur, Sudan, and Burma.

Graduate students, organized by Ally Rhodes (M.A. 2009), also made a strong showing at USF’s annual Stampede of Service. The “communication elves” (Jillian Tullis Owen (PhD 2009) and Liz Edgecomb) struck again, for the third year in a row, adopting a migrant worker family for the holidays. With the help of faculty and students, they collected over a thousand dollars in cash and gifts contributing to the holiday celebrations of families in need.

As temperatures in Tampa soared, Master’s student David Purnell hosted his annual “Christmas in July” fundraiser. This event collected school supplies for the Joshua House.

Top: Sarah McGhee (center) at STAND Soccer Tournament. Below: Stampede of Service Grad Students. From left (kneeling) Amanda Firestone, Ally Rhodes. From left (standing): David Lee, Korrie Bauman, Antoine Hardy, Joey Bartell, Chris Patti, David Steinweg, and David Steele.
and Hope Children’s Home charities.

For the second year in row, NITE, led by Doctoral Candidate Rachel Silverman, won the award for best student organization at USF. NITE’s annual event, Walk A Mile In Her Shoes, drew nearly 600 participants to spread awareness about domestic violence. The event was named best community program of the year.

NITE's annual event, Walk A Mile In Her Shoes, drew nearly 600 participants to spread awareness about domestic violence. The event was named best community program of the year.

Scholarship

Our graduate students have also crossed boundaries with their scholarship. Doctoral Candidate Rachel Silverman traveled to Germany to participate in a program called “Germany Close Up: American Jews Meet Modern Germany”, to foster communication between contemporary Jews and Germans. Silverman and Mary Gould’s (MA, 2002) essay, “Making History Public: Germany’s Efforts to Remember its Past,” was awarded second place and published by the sponsoring program.


Consulting in the Community

In October 2009, graduate students Sarah T. McGhee, Meagan Araujo, Patrick Dillon, and Amelia Ayers consulted with first year medical students at the USF Center for Advanced Clinical Learning. The training aids medical students in developing critical communication skills necessary for effective doctor/patient relationships.

This fall, PhD student Meagan Araujo was invited to present on “Medical Interpretation, Cultural Competency, and Older Patients” at Geriatric Grand Rounds at the James A. Haley Veteran’s Hospital.

In fall semester 2009 Dr. Ellis’s Illness, Grief, and Loss graduate seminar is focusing on interviewing Holocaust survivors in the Tampa Bay area. Taking full advantage of this opportunity, our oral history project is an example of scholarship that pushes boundaries. In collaboration with the Florida Holocaust Museum and the USF Libraries, the project has sparked attention from the University at large. The USF magazine is interviewing PhD students.
Chris Patti and Kristen Blinne and Master’s student Brandon Conrad for an upcoming article about the project. Doctoral Candidate Steve Schoen’s Media Production undergraduate class is also making a documentary of the research project.

New Students
We are also welcoming a bright new group of Master’s and Doctoral students into the department. Incoming Doctoral student Summer Cunningham received a Presidential Doctoral Fellowship and is currently working on publishing two book chapters including a co-authored piece with Amy Pearson (Arizona State) titled “Two Women, Two Stories: Complicating our Right to Choose” which will be included in Sara Hayden and Lynn O’Brien Hallstein’s Contemplating Maternity in the Era of Choice: Explorations into Discourses of Reproduction. Summer is representative of the talent and ambition of our new colleagues who join us from around the globe. They bring new perspectives to the department from fields ranging from medical anthropology to architecture.

It’s been a year of communicating across boundaries. On campus, across the country, and around the globe, we’ve shown what communication studies can contribute. We look forward to crossing paths with alumni and friends as we continue on our journeys!
Remembering Barney

with love and admiration for his graceful life.

He was loved and admired by his students on whom he bestowed the passion and joy of learning, and by his colleagues who remember him as a model of honesty, tenderness, and generosity. Upon his retirement, his colleagues initiated the Barney Downs Spirit Award, given to the graduate student who best exemplifies the spirit of community that he embodied. He was also designated an Emeritus Associate Professor.

Barney Downs made a thoughtful, graceful exit that was in keeping with his whole life. He is remembered as a master teacher because of his ability to touch the lives of so many students. His keen sense of the absurd lightened the discussion about large ideas that he inspired. His remarkable ability to listen intently reflected his enthusiasm for human intelligence and concern. He lightened the dark topics of grief, loss, and the human condition on which he often centered his inspirational teaching. A crafted performer himself, Barney taught and directed students with care and whole-hearted dedication.

We are consoled in our grief by the many stories of his wit and passion shared during an informal remembrance during the Communication Department’s Orientation Week.

A Memorial Mass and reception was held at St. Paul’s Church on Dale Mabry in Tampa, Saturday, August 29th at 2:00 p.m.

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Bernard (Barney) Downs died August 4, 2009, at a Tampa hospice. He taught oral interpretation and performance studies courses in the Department of Communication at the University of South Florida from 1970 until his retirement in 2001.

He received his BA from DePaul in psychology/sociology, a BFA from Goodman School of Drama in acting and directing, and his MA from Northwestern in oral interpretation. He also studied with the Second City Players in Chicago, the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London, and Shakespeare & Company in Lenox, Massachusetts. He was 79.
On the Death of a Mentor
a poem by Jay Baglia for Barney Downs

His Marine Corps haircut, broad shoulders,
creased trousers, lissome hands, jack knife eyes
You could make me feel so vital, so worthy, so beautiful
“Aren’t you marvelous?” you would say to me in a hallway and,
in that moment, I could believe that I was

An ability to transition from strident commentary to painful reflection
From an academic’s penchant for display to the depths of human truth

Your stories were unsolicited gifts
Your hope in possibility enriching
Your fortitude for fools and oafs prophet-like
It was your patience that fashioned convictions

And I don’t care that the sky is brighter upon your fresh arrival
For I am human – and a child – and I miss your presence here on this earth
Must we now wait for the rest of our lives for another such as you?

Know that you were the best of all
While I am a mere rough beast
Full only of passionate intensity

JB/Allentown, PA
August 2009

Jay Baglia (PhD, 2006) is an Assistant Professor of Speech Communication and Theatre at Kutztown University of Pennsylvania.
Leaning back with the chair
(Continued from page 1)

We are also welcoming Carolyn Ellis and Art Bochner back from their sabbatical leaves of last year. Art returned to campus enjoying his much deserved designation as Distinguished University Professor, USF’s highest academic honor.

Eric Eisenberg continues his position as Interim Dean, where, even as Dean, he continues to direct graduate students and to engage in research.

Job Searches This Year
We expect to have new colleagues next year, as we have been approved to hire an Assistant or Associate Professor in conjunction with the Department of Africana Studies. In addition, we have an Instructional Post Doc position for a teacher-scholar in organizational communication. Finally, we are participating in an interdisciplinary search for Post Doctoral Scholars in the humanities and social sciences working in the broad area of sustainable societies. More information about each of these positions is available from the department website: http://www.cas.usf.edu/communication/positions.htm. We hope all our alumni and friends will help us find these future colleagues.

Books Abound
We continue to be active in scholarly research. Check out the “Faculty Hits” section for all our recent works. This year, I’m happy to report how active our alumni have been on the publishing front.

Two years ago, we added a shelf in the departmental showcase devoted to the books of our alumni (as well as current students). Recent books by USF alumni include Recording Culture: Audio Documentary and the Ethnographic Experience (Qualitative Research Methods) (Sage, 2008) coauthored by Daniel Makagon (PhD, 2001, Associate Professor, DePaul University) and former USF faculty member Mark Neumann, now Director of the School of Communication at Northern Arizona University; Engaging Crystallization in Qualitative Research: An Introduction (Sage, 2008) by Laura L. Ellingson (PhD, 2001, Associate Professor, Santa Clara University), and One More River to Cross: The Therapeutic Rhetoric of Race in the Post-Civil Rights Era (University Press of America, 2008) by Nigel I. Malcolm (PhD, 2005, Assistant Professor, Keene State College).
Enabling Student Success

Our undergraduate program continues to be strong. Undergraduate Director Elizabeth Bell reports that we had 108 students graduate with communication majors in December of 2008, 119 in May of 2009, and 84 in August.

Mariaelena Bartesaghi reports that we’ve inducted 30 students into Lambda Pi Eta, our chapter of the undergraduate honor society. Last year’s inductees (Fall 2008/Spring 2009) were Lindsey Marconi, Lillyannette Moller, Stephanie Honour, Richard Matos, Kristina Pagano, Kristin Ciaccio, Mercedes Lawler, Yolanda Moore, Brittany Conover, Ed DiMarco, Angela High, Amy Skulas, Megan Morin, Yvana Hepburn, Rebekah Reed, Jacqueline Westuba, Nitsa DeVore, Sarah Kupkovitz, and Brenda Martin. Christina Arias served as Vice-President, and Jennifer Whalen served as President of our Chapter.

This year’s inductees to Lambda Pi Eta are Ashley Beerbohm, Megan Morin, Kathryn Hendry, Allisson Kimball, Lakema Massey, Natalie Laroche, Kyle Leister, Amanda Conkel, Michel Shera, Katherine Schubring, Jessica Woolard. Our current president is the tremendously dynamic idea-woman Lillyannette Moller. Mariaelena says, “It is such an honor to be working with her!”

This fall, the new areas of concentration for undergraduates became available for students to enroll in: Cultural and Media Studies, Health Communication, Interpersonal Communication, Organizational Communication, Performance Studies, and Public Advocacy.

Our undergraduate students are very fortunate in having Leslie Tod as their advisor. Leslie was named Outstanding Undergraduate Advisor by the University of South Florida, a well-deserved honor.

Three doctoral students successfully defended their dissertations this year: Robin Boylorn defended her dissertation, *Southern Black Women: Their Lived Realities*, and accepted an assistant professor position in the Communication department at the University of Alabama; Bouziane Zaid successfully defended his dissertation, *Public Service Television Policy and National Development in Morocco*. He is now an assistant professor in the Communication Program at Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane, Morocco; Jillian Tullis Owen completed her dissertation *Communicating Spirituality, Dying and a Good Death at the End-of-Life: The Role of Hospice Interdisciplinary Team Members* and is now an assistant professor of communication at the University of North Carolina Charlotte.

Amina Iraqi successfully defended her MA thesis, *Communication as a Cultural Construct at the United Nations Arabic Translation Service*. Congratulations to all our students.

We Have Storage

We were able to complete several remodeling projects this year. Our performance faculty and students finally have a real storage and prop room that opens directly into the Performance Lab. Two new GTA offices were carved out of the Computer Lab, with the Lab also receiving a reorganization and three brand new computers. And the one-way mirror was removed from 3063, and its observation room was converted to GTA offices.

All in all, we feel pretty fortunate. We’ve had a good year, and are looking forward to more to come. We hope you’ll be able to join us for USF’s NCA party. We are returning to Blackie’s after a very successful gathering there in 2007. And for football fans, they’ve promised to have the USF-Rutgers game on in the back room. You’ll find the invitation on p.20. See everyone in Chicago!
For Your NCA Scheduling
Print this page, carry it to NCA, and join us.

Party with the BULLS at the NCA National Convention

Thursday November 12, 2009

@ Blackie’s (755 S Clark St, Chicago)
6:30-7:30 USF faculty, students & alumni
7:30-8:30 friends of the department

Join the University of South Florida Department of Communication at
Blackie’s
755 South Clark Street
Chicago, IL 60605
(312) 786-1161
Who was James Popovich?
And why do we have an award named in his honor?

Each year we give the “Popovich Award” to the outstanding master’s student in the department. But very few students or faculty know much about the man for whom the award was named. Exhaustive research in the departmental archives and an interview with Dr. Helen Popovich allows us some insight into this question.

Jim Popovich died on April 21, 1976, after a full day of teaching. He was extremely popular among his colleagues on campus and students, and when he died suddenly of a heart attack, people asked to be able to do something in his memory. His wife, Dr. Helen Popovich, established the endowed scholarship that bears his name, and many people from all over the country contributed to it—friends, colleagues, and former students.

Popovich received his doctorate in speech in 1955 from one of the top programs in the country, Northwestern University. His BA was from the University of Pennsylvania and his MA from University of Minnesota. He had a primary emphasis in oral interpretation and a secondary emphasis in children’s theater. Prior to coming to USF in 1962, he taught at the University of Georgia. He was the youngest faculty member ever to be promoted to full professor at Georgia. He was also the advisor to the first two black students ever admitted to the University. Feelings ran so high that the students needed to be escorted to class, and Popovich’s tires were slashed as the result of his active role in ending segregation there.

At USF he taught oral interpretation and directed many readers’ theater presentations. He loved the performing arts. When he was at Georgia, he traveled each year to Atlanta for the week when the Metropolitan Opera performed there. At USF, he and Helen used to spend a week in Daytona Beach each summer while the London Philharmonic played there. And during Christmas breaks, after the Speech Association of America and Modern Language Association annual conventions, which in those days were both held between Christmas and New Years, he and Helen would meet in New York and see plays, opera, and ballet each day until they had to fly back to Tampa for class.

Popovich became chair in 1964, and served in that role until 1973. He was president of the Faculty Senate at USF and served on a number of faculty and university committees. One year he sponsored and directed USF’s College Bowl team, which took second place nationally. He was named USF’s outstanding professor in 1974-75.

He was also active professionally, serving as President of Florida Speech Association, and as Vice President and President-elect of Southern Speech Association. He served as a member of the Legislative Assembly of SAA (now NCA), and was also a member of a number of theatre associations.

How Popovich chose to pursue a career in speech is unclear. His father was an immigrant from Croatia who had two sons. He wanted them to get good educations and to go into respectable professions. His brother went into law and eventually became the Chief Justice of the Minnesota Supreme Court. So, his father thought that James should go into medicine. Obviously not cut out for that profession, he dropped out of school and joined the military, serving in army intelligence. When he left the service, he went to the University of Pennsylvania and majored in international relations. His language was Bengali. Although seemingly destined for diplomatic service, he decided to go to Northwestern and do his doctorate.
in speech. His mother, who died when he was about 11 years old, had been a teacher, and perhaps her profession ultimately influenced his own.

One of his contemporaries at USF said that the graduate program was “a particular source of pride” for him and that “above all [he was] interested in his students.” One alumnus of the program wrote, “He cared for students and placed their needs above his own. He gave his valuable time and effort to helping students, and he helped my brother and sister make it through graduate school when the going was tough. He made the college life a little bit easier to experience, and he was an incentive to go on when quitting seemed the only answer.”

Helen Popovich described her late husband as “the most people-oriented person I have ever known.” She said that he seemed to remember every student he ever taught. He would see one of them years later and remember the person’s name, the class, and a host of information about the student. “It was remarkable.”

The Popovich Award was created shortly after his death. The award was first given the next year, 1977, and has been awarded every year since. Forty-two students have received the award over the 33 years (occasionally we’ve had co-winners); at least a dozen of those have gone on to receive doctorates and themselves become university professors. “Nothing would have made Jim happier,” said Helen, than knowing the award was still going on and helping students. “He was extremely proud of the Speech Department’s masters program.”

Dr. Helen Popovich, now retired, was Associate Chair of English at the time of her husband’s death. Seven years later, in 1983, Dr. Helen Popovich became the first woman to serve as President of a public university in Florida, Florida Atlantic University. Prior to that, she had been acting President of Winona State University in Minnesota for a year and a half. In her six years at FAU, she added freshman and sophomore students (previously, it had been an upper level college only), greatly expanded the number of African American and Hispanic students, and increased diversity among the faculty and administration. When the St. Petersburg Times in 2007 reported 19 “Key Dates on the Road to Diversity” in Florida, Dr. Helen Popovich becoming FAU President was the 11th of those key events.

In 1989, she left FAU and assumed the presidency of Ferris State University at Big Rapids, Michigan, where she served until her retirement in 1994. She has long been an active member of Delta Kappa Gamma, a professional honor society of women educators, serving state president in 1980. More recently, she’s served as the state chairman in Michigan and on its international Educational Foundation Board. In 2006, she was elected to a four-year term as a Member-at-Large on its Administrative Board.