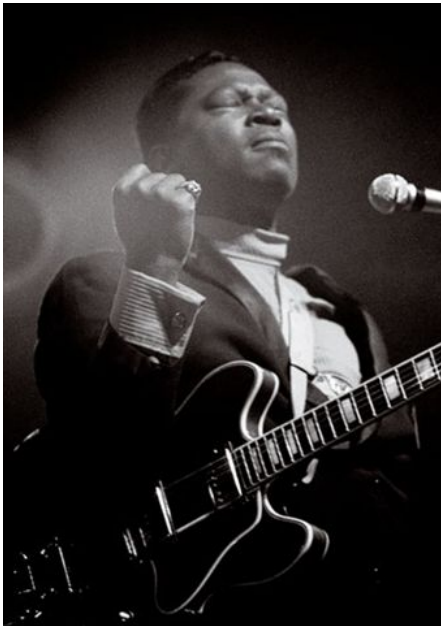


The Chronicle



A Newsletter for the Department of English and Foreign Languages at Texas Southern University/Spring 2006



McCleary Symposium Hits High Notes

The Department of English and Foreign Languages at Texas Southern University hosted the 8th Annual J. Marie McCleary Interdisciplinary Symposium on March 30-31. This year's program themed *Blues II: The Far Note* presented a wide range of papers, musical and dramatic performances, and readings associated with the theme of the Blues in the various arts. The highly successful and well-attended two-day program was the

result of the efforts of Dr. Shirley Walker Moore and the conference committee members. Drs. Michael Sollars and Ronald Samples coordinated the event which took place amid the impressive paintings and photographs in the TSU Museum. Mr. Gary Wilkins was a co-sponsor of the event. He was instrumental in bringing Conrad Johnson, Calvin Owens, Carolyn Blanchard, and Ricky Morris to TSU to take part in the symposium. Deans Merline Pitre and Richard Pitre offered introductory remarks and a warm welcome to the audience. Among the most interesting and entertaining presentations was that by the Booker T. Washington High School Thespians who performed scenes from August Wilson's *Jitney*. The Department would also like to acknowledge the scholarly presentation by Mr. Kamau Rucker. Mr. Rucker, from Virginia Polytechnic Institute discussed his research, "Everybody's Got the Blues: The Eternal Return of Loss." We commend the many presenters and panelists who contributed to the symposium. Special thanks are expressed to Melba Johnson for providing a sumptuous lunch for both days.

The Department would like to recognize TSU Television for taping the symposium proceedings. TSU Television will produce a two-part video series of Blues II: The Far Note. For additional information, call 713-313-7818. Separately, the Department will publish the text of the research papers presented in an electronic journal.

The 2006 McCleary Symposium has achieved a new milestone, coming in the form of a grant from the city of Houston. Dr. Moore has received a letter from Houston Mayor Bill White in which the city's top leader announced the approval of the Department's request for funds to assist the development of the TSU conference. Mayor White writes, "This project represents a special opportunity for Houston, and highlights the rich fabric of our diverse community. The award is for \$5,000." This grant is the first such funding for the J. Marie McCleary Interdisciplinary Symposium. Mr. Wilkins played a significant role in helping to secure this grant.

Presenters include:

Dr. John Sapp, Poet Laureate for the Department of English, "Jump Blues"

Mr. Mario Jenkins, Moderator, "Blues II: The Far Note"

Panelists: Ms. Natalie Bonner, Mr. Rob Edwards, and Mr. Mario Jenkins

Ms. Rhonda Brown, Moderator: "Poetry Sings the Blues"

Poetry readings by Dr. Rhonda Saldivar, Dr. Ronald Samples, Dr. Ramona Brown, Ms. Lana Reese, Dr. Michael Sollars, and Mr. William Miller

Moderator: Mr. William Miller, "Tribute to August Wilson"

Booker T. Washington Players present August Wilson's *Jitney*

Directed by Mr. Howard Bruce

Dr. Howard Harris, Musical presentation: "The Word and the Music"

Dr. Betty Taylor-Thompson, "The Spirit and the Blues"

Dr. Alexis Brooks de Vita, “Mythatypes in the Blues: Trees, Rivers, Crossroads, and the Crying Sky”

Moderator: Dr. Haiqing Sun, “The Blues from yet another Aspect”

Mr. Kamau Rucker, “Everybody’s Got the Blues: The Eternal Return of Loss”

Dr. Michael Zeitler, “Tea Cake Walker: His Life and Music”

“Poetic Blues”

Professor Donna Kilgore-Kimble, Mr. Ron Hull

Moderator: Professor Shirley Walker Moore: “Mixing it Up”

Presenters: Lawrence Redd, Calvin Owens, Conrad Johnson, Carolyn Blanchard, and Ricky Morris

Conferences and Awards

TSU Well Represented

And Honored at SCAASI

Drs. Ronald Samples and Betty Taylor-Thompson represented the department at the annual Southern Conference on African American Studies, Inc. (SCAASI) in Savannah, Georgia. Professor Samples served as moderator and panelist for a session on “Making My Course Relevant While Keeping it Academically Sound,” and participated in a session on creative writing. Dr. Taylor-Thompson presented her research paper on “Place and Space in Toni Morrison’s *Paradise*.”

Dr. Alexis Brooks de Vita has announced that four students in her freshman and world literature classes received honors at the 2006 SCAASI Convention. The students submitted essays in the 2006 Hornsby Memorial Essay Contest and swept all four places. The annual contest is open to all college-level students. The essay topics were on the theme of the SCAASI Convention: Social Justice: Community Commitment and Responsibility. The students who won awards include LaKeshia McBride (1st place); Danielle Grayson (2nd place); Kevin Howard Penn (3rd place); and Duke Chweya (4th place). The students received the awards in absentia, as they were unable to attend the conference. The minimum length of the papers was 10 pages. The Hornsby Memorial Essay Contest is not conferred every year, but only when academic excellence is apparent in the submissions.

Dean Merline Pitre was honored in particular by being named the 2006-2007 president of the Southern Conference on African American Studies, Inc. This conference, which meets each February, was founded at TSU in 1980 by Professor Howard Jones, who at that time was a member of the TSU faculty. The 2007 SCAASI meeting will be held in Baton Rouge.

Rooster Calls, Pirates, and the Caribbean

Dr. Keith Jardim has been invited to read a short story and take part in discussions on the genre of the short story at The 9th International Conference on the Short Story this June in Lisbon, Portugal, home of his ancestors. “Apparently,” Dr. Jardim opines, “we were Barbary Coast pirates and spent much of our time causing havoc throughout the Mediterranean area. Why, in light of this, they should invite me to read at the most distinguished of conferences (so they say), I do not know. I’m quite concerned about being arrested and taken to Hague to answer for crimes against humanity by my [pirate] ancestors.”

Dr. Jardim, our own reputed pirate of the Caribbean, is also scheduled to attend the Caribbean Literary Conference scheduled to be held at Padre Island.

Promoting Department On Annual Tiger Day

Members of the Department volunteered to take part in TSU’s Annual Tiger Day on April 7. This is a noteworthy program that promotes TSU as the college of choice to high school students who are college bound. Professors Michael Sollars, Michael Zeitler, and Bill Miller, helped to organize materials and staffed a table in the Plaza area.

Masterful Achievement: Two Defend MA Theses

Congratulations to Brian Mack and Eric Thompson who successfully defended their masters’ theses on March 30. Mr. Mack’s thesis work was on “Themes of Protest in the Speeches of Malcolm X.” Mr. Thompson’s thesis research examined “The Opposite of Brotherhood is Death: Analysis of the Cain/Abel Theme in Charles Johnson’s novel *Dreamer*.”

Timely Book Orders Yield Student Scholarship

Elizabeth Musuva, Textbook Manager at the TSU Bookstore, has announced that Dr. Michael Sollars has won a \$250 scholarship for a student of his choice. All instructors who submitted their Fall book orders by the official date of April 15th were entered into a raffle for the scholarship. “This is our way of saying thanks for timely orders and putting money into the hands of a deserving student,” remarks Ms. Musuva. “We want to extend our appreciation to all faculty members who have submitted their orders and encourage the remaining 40% to please provide us with their book orders.”

Awards, Publications, And Presentations

Sun Rising

Dr. Haiqing Sun presented her paper entitled, "The Relativity of Civilization in Borges's Vision," at the Annual Conference of American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA), at Princeton University, March 25, 2006. Dr. Sun also has had her paper, "El misterio de China en la narrativa borgesiana," accepted for presentation at the 52nd International Congress of Americanists at the University of Sevilla, Spain, July 14-21, 2006.

Hardy Handshake

Dr. Michael Zeitler announces that his book, *Representations of Culture: Thomas Hardy's Wessex and Victorian Anthropology*, is under contract with Peter Lang Publishing. Also, Dr. Zeitler's paper, "Language, Origins, and Poetic Production: The Case of Gerard Manley Hopkins," has been accepted for presentation at the October 2006 South Central Modern language Association (SCMLA) annual conference.

Crespil's Crescendo

Dr. Marcel Crespil presented his paper, "TSU Language Initiative," at the Department of Defense Leadership Symposium in Austin, on February 24, 2006. Dr. Crespil hopes that his proposal will lead to a grant from the government to strengthen the study of foreign languages at TSU. In April Professor Crespil made a similar presentation to the MOLIS program for Research Week. Separately, Dr. Crespil was invited to talk about the foreign language program at TSU during the "Food for Thought" portion of the International Festival. Ms. Carolyn Hughes of the School of Business invited Dr. Crespil to that event.

In April, Dr. Crespil attended a Houston Community College faculty workshop to promote the Foreign Language program at TSU.

De Vita's Diversity

Dr. Alexis Brooks de Vita was awarded first place in Speculative Fiction for her novel, *Blood of Angels*, in the Colorado Gold Writing Contest, in September 2005. Also, in the Griot, the *Journal of the Southern Conference on African America Studies, Inc.*, Fall 2005 edition, Dr. de Vita published her work "In the Matrix of Becoming: A Triplicity of Women in a Mississippi Shack."

ISBN for *Compendium of 20th Century World Novels*

Jeff Soloway, Senior Editor of Facts on File Publishing, has announced that the *Compendium of 20th Century World Novels* now has an ISBN number 081-60-62331, an integral step in the final publishing process. Dr. Michael D. Sollars has been working under contract on this major international collection for several years now and looks forward to submitting the final draft of the over 500 entries by the several hundred contributors at the end of the summer. Arbolina Jennings, who is assisting in the editing of the *Compendium*, met with Jeff Soloway in the New York offices of Facts on File during Spring Break to discuss the selection of authors and the publication timetable. Among those who have already completed either authorial biographies or novel treatments are Professors Butler, Brooks de Vita, Jardim, Sun, and student Cathy Clay, in addition to Jennings and Sollars. Contributions are expected from several other colleagues and will be duly noted in the next edition of this newsletter. Please contact Professor Sollars at sollars_md@tsu.edu if you would like to contribute an entry to this collection.

New Area and Genre Concentrations

Members of the Department of English and Foreign Languages have been active in establishing two new minor fields of concentration in the College:

Organized in September 2005, the Latin American Studies Committee (hereafter LASC) currently consists of Dr. Daniel Haworth (Department of History, Geography, and Economics), Dr. Haiqing Sun, Dr. Carmen García, Ms. Arbolina Jennings, Mr. Thomas Erwin, and Ms. Anna Pearl Barrett (Department of English and Foreign Languages). It has also benefited from the input of Dr. Sean Herlihy (Department of Political Science). Dr. Antonio González, faculty advisor for the Hispanic Students' Association, will join the committee in the spring. Latin American Studies comprises a vital part of the University's ongoing international programming initiative. It also speaks to the University's goal of recruiting and retaining more Hispanic students. Conversely, Latin American Studies provides the rest of the University's predominantly African American student body with access to the Hispanic world.

Alexis Brooks de Vita, Donna Kimble, Arbolina Jennings, Haiqing Sun, and other members of the Department of English and Foreign Languages are assisting Dean Merline Pitre and Associate Dean Fennoyee Thomas in proposing an Interdisciplinary Women's Studies Minor.

New Tools from Instructional Technology: Turnitin.com & Respondus LockDown Browser™

Turnitin.com

Two important teacher tools are now available to faculty and students at Texas Southern University to improve the security and to verify authenticity of their online examinations and outside research papers: **Turnitin.com** and **Respondus LockDown Browser**.

The Academic Affairs Office is pleased to announce the acquisition of a new account with “Turnitin,” recognized worldwide as the standard in online plagiarism prevention. After creating a profile at www.turnitin.com, the instructor adds his semester classes to the profile. Then the instructor gives students the class ID and the class enrollment password. Next the student goes to the site and is able to submit his electronic work. The teacher and the student receive a diagnosis of the authenticity of the student paper by checking for plagiarism in the extensive online website.

Every paper submitted is returned in the form of a customized Originality Report. Results are based on exhaustive **searches of billions** of pages from both current and archived instances of the Internet, millions of student papers previously submitted to Turnitin, and commercial databases of journal articles and periodicals.

See an instructor’s demo (needs [Macromedia Flash](#) installed) at this site:
http://www.turnitin.com/static/training_support/instructor_training_intro.html

Use account ID: 42883
account join password: tsufaculty17

Follow this link to sign on and create your profile
http://www.turnitin.com/newuser_type.asp

Use account ID: 42883
account join password: tsufaculty17

Students will need the attached PDF file to the students and/or the following video for training purposes: http://www.turnitin.com/static/training_support/student_training.html

Respondus LockDown Browser™

Texas Southern University has obtained a campus-wide license for Respondus LockDown Browser. Respondus LockDown Browser™ is a customized browser that increases the security of test delivery in Blackboard. When students use Respondus LockDown Browser to access an exam, they are unable to print, copy, go to another URL, or access other applications. Once an assessment is started, students are locked into it until it is submitted for grading. For a complete list of features, visit the Respondus web site, at <http://www.respondus.com>.

Committee Formed For Chair Search

A new committee has been formed to function as the search panel for a new chairperson of the Department of English and Foreign Languages. Members of the committee include Billy Turner, Thorpe Butler, Michael Sollars, Marylise Caussin, and Karen Kossie of the Department of History. Professor Turner is the chair of the committee. The committee will review qualified candidates and send a list of recommended applicants to Dean Merline Pitre. The candidate selected for the post of chair will be hired in a full-time

administrative capacity, not subject to the three-year elective term as previously defined for the chair.

Lambda Iota Tau

To Name New Members

The upcoming meeting of the Lambda Iota Tau Honor Society will serve as the formal induction of new members, according to Dr. Rhonda Saldivar, TSU's representative and adviser of the Delta Alpha Chapter of the national honor society. Faculty to be inducted into LIT include Dr. Shirley Walker Moore, Dr. Alexis Brooks de Vita, Dr. Haiqing Sun, and Professor Iris Lancaster. The Department is also pleased to announce that the students Debra Johnson, Rosalind Hubbard, and LaKeisha McBride will also be inducted. Dr. Saldivar explains that for graduate and undergraduate students to be qualified for admission into the honor society they must have completed ENG 131, ENG 132, and four or more courses in literature with an overall grade point average of B or better. (Note that the courses in literature may include those in French, Spanish, or Swahili literature.) For more information, please contact Dr. Saldivar at x7667 or esaldivarii@aol.com.

The LIT initiation and ceremony is scheduled for April 26, 2006, 11-1 in the MLK conference room 111. We will also celebrate the 35th anniversary of the Delta Alpha Chapter of LIT at TSU.

NCATE Work Reaches

Another Success Level

Congratulations to Drs. Rhonda Saldivar, Michael Sollars, and Ronald Samples for their work in completing standards for the NCATE accreditation. The Department completed Standard V, consisting of six elements. This action represents another stage in completing the necessary information for accreditation of TSU's education majors. Once NCATE gives its approval, TSU is recognized as having national certification standards in the areas of professional education, leadership, and teacher certification. Departments across the TSU campus have worked to secure this accreditation.

French and Spanish Culture

Add Delight to Open House

The faculty in the Foreign Languages division of the Department presented an open house—a get acquainted “Fiesta”—for majors and minors in Spanish and French on February 15, 2006. Professor Alfredo Samauo conducted the laboratory orientation during the event. Professor Marcel Crespil delivered a lecture on “Open Letter to our President in Washington.” Professor Marylise Caussin and students presented a discussion about the students' trip to Paris. Professor Carmen Garcia and Haiqing Sun were in charge of lunch services. Professors Tommy Erwin and Antonio Gonzalez were in charge of the raffle. Professor Miryan Boles directed the music and dance program. Congratulations to all for an entertaining and educational program. By the way, when is the next gathering scheduled? We want to put it on our calendar.

Women's History Luncheon: "Activism in the Community"

The annual Women's History Luncheon, sponsored by Dean Merline Pitre of the College of Liberal Arts and Behavioral Sciences, was held March 6 at TSU in the Tiger Room. The theme of this year's event was Women's Activism in the Community. The featured speaker was Jacqueline Rouse, Ph.D., Department of History, Georgia State University. She is the author of the books *Lugenia Burns Hope: Black Southern Reformer* and *Women in the Civil Rights Movement: Trailblazers and Torchbearers 1914-1965*. The luncheon honored community activists who have been influential in the Houston area. Participating from the Department were professors Donna Kilgore-Kimble and Arbolina Jennings. Donna Kimble presented an award to Jacquelyn Battise of People of Earth, Radio Host at KPFT. Arbolina Jennings honored Mary Jo May, Director of El Centro de Corazón, promoting health and education for families in Houston's East End. Donna Kimble provided commemorative plaques, Arbolina Jennings prepared rose bouquets for the honorees, and Melba Johnson organized a festive and sumptuous luncheon for the University community.

Who's Who And What's What

Congratulations to Iva Woods who has been nominated again to be honored in Who's Who Among America's Teachers, 10th edition. She was selected for this honor because she "made a difference" in the life of one of her former students. Students nominate their teachers for this prestigious honor. The only students invited to submit nominations of teachers are those who have distinguished themselves by being recognized for excellence in one of the student collections for students by the publishers of Who's Who editions.

Professor Woods' award reads, in part: "You should be aware that only 5% of our nation's teachers are honored in each edition of Who's Who and less than 2% are included in more than one edition. Your students are clearly sending you a message of how special you are, a tribute bestowed on very few teachers."

Dr. Jardim has also been included in Who's Who Among America's Teachers, 10th Edition, to be published in fall 2006. Keith Jardim is a specialist in creative writing and he is much in demand for workshops and special courses.

Dr. Alexis Brooks de Vita's son, Ceschino, has been accepted to the Harvard School of Law, beginning in the fall of 2006. Congratulations.

Publishing Opportunity For Grad Students

Professors can encourage graduate students to write and publish seminar papers. The Victoria College Division of Social and Behavioral Sciences invites graduate students in anthropology, English, economics, geography, history, political science, criminal justice,

psychology, and sociology to submit papers to its *South Texas Studies Journal*, an annual publication. Papers must focus primarily on the region of South Texas.

The most deserving paper will be published in the *South Texas Studies Journal* and an award of \$400 will go to its author. The winning author may also be invited to present his or her paper at the John W. Stormont Lectures in February 2007. For more information, go to www.victoriacollege.edu/dept/socsci/conference/graduateaward.htm. Deadline is November 1, 2006. Send papers to Dr. Edward Byerly, The Victoria College, 2200 East Red River, Victoria, Texas 77901.

Last thoughts

"Medicine in the hands of a fool is poison,
just as poison becomes medicine in the hands of the wise."

--Giovanni Giacomo Casanova

"It's wonderful when the people believe in their leader.
It's more wonderful when the leader believes in the
people!"

"If you want to lift yourself up, lift up someone else."

"I have learned that success is to be measured not so much
by the position that one has reached in life but as by the
obstacles which he has had to overcome while trying to
succeed."

"No man who continues to add something to the
material, intellectual, and moral well-being
of the place in which he lives,
is left long without proper reward."

--Booker T. Washington

The Chronicle, a Newsletter for the Department of English and Foreign Languages, is published each semester. To submit information for a future issue of the *Chronicle*, please send your topics and copy to the publication's editor Dr. Michael Sollars. The *Chronicle* results from the efforts of its contributors, writers, and editors, including Shirley Walker Moore, Arbolina Jennings, Ron Samples, Iva Woods, and Donna Kimble.