

LETTER FROM THE ACTING CHAIR

Being Acting Chair this year brought to mind all the things that I loved and all that I hated about my ten years as the 'real chair' in the 1990s. I won't bore you with the latter though I'm sure that I'm not the only one who can think up more appealing activities than writing a dozen memos per day on topics ranging from course scheduling conflicts to appeals to the dean for more TAs. The most satisfying thing by far of

those ten years I wasn't given the opportunity to repeat this year — seeing assistant professors successfully through the tenuring process. I was thrilled (though, of course, not surprised) that Sharon Hargus and Toshi Ogihara got promoted to Associate Professor during my stint as Chair. The next best thing to tenuring an existing faculty member is hiring a new one. And I've had as much success in that regard in one year as I did in my pre-



vious ten. Four new people will be joining us! We had 60 applicants for our tenure-track syntax position and interviewed 19 of them in person or by phone. To our delight, our first choice,

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GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP UPDATE

by Jim Hoard, Linguistics Advisory Board Chair

Faculty, alumni, Advisory Board members and other Friends of Linguistics have responded generously to the Department's special fundraising campaign launched last fall. This is the Department's first attempt in its history to reach such a significant goal as the endowment of a graduate student fellowship, and the fact that donors have already contributed or pledged nearly one-quarter of the \$150,000 threshold is being taken as a very positive sign.

As state support for the University of Washington remains shaky — it is now at 13% of the overall UW budget — the Department must increasingly cope with the question of how to sustain its record of educational excellence. Especially critical is funding for graduate students, for whom the University provides no designated fellowships. The best avenue for ensuring the continued success of the graduate program is thus to endow a graduate fellowship that will provide the means for attracting and retaining top quality students who could not otherwise pursue degrees in the Department.

While we are still a considerable distance from our fellowship threshold, we are off to a very satisfying start. The continued generosity of current donors — and of others who have not yet participated in this effort — will carry us forward until we reach our goal.

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Editor's note

Is there some way the newsletter could better satisfy your interest?

Do you have a story idea or a suggestion about something else that could be included?

I would very much like your feedback.

Jim Armagost
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STUDENT NEWS

Since the Oct 2004 newsletter two students have earned doctorates and a third is poised to do so within a few days. Dissertation title and advisor follow students' names.

Lesley Carmichael, Situation-based intonation pattern distribution in a corpus of American English (Wright).

Setsuko Shirai, Lexical effects in Japanese vowel reduction (Wright).

Jeremy Waltmunson, The relative degree of difficulty of L2 Spanish /d, t/, trill and tap by L1 English speakers: Auditory and acoustic methods of defining pronunciation accuracy (Beckford Wassink).

"And the third ingredient, nice if you can get it, is a sense of humor," says Lakeside School's Bernie Noe about what his students want in their teachers (Seattle Post-Intelligencer, 4/17/05). Jeremy (Jay) Waltmunson amply exhibits Noe's "third ingredient." We hope readers will enjoy learning a little about this recent graduate.

Jay was born in Florida. He moved to Kentucky and then to Ohio, where he completed his BA at Denison University in 1995 with a double major in Spanish and Economics. That BA included a year's study in Salamanca, Spain.

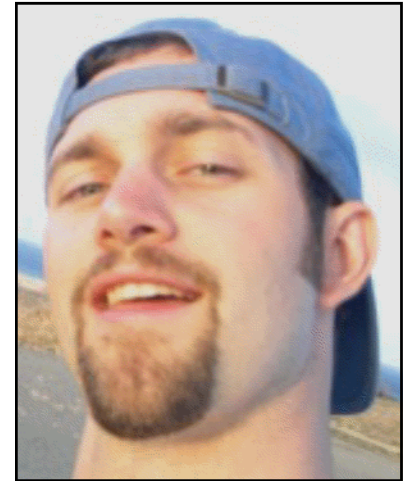
Prior to enrolling in graduate school at UW Jay worked as a waiter, camp counselor, horse wrangler, ski-lift operator and Peace Corps volunteer (Bolivia). He began his graduate study in the fall of 1999, earning an MA in Romance linguistics in 2001 and a PhD in linguistics this March. Along the way he taught 100-level Spanish for three years and worked for the Language Learning Center for two years.

A week after graduation Jay landed his dream job as a Program Manager for Text to Speech at Microsoft. He

says he's thrilled to be living in Seattle, looking forward to being a father this summer and excited that he'll be able to witness faculty karaokeing at future UW linguistic parties. (We hope he'll have his camera handy!)

Now on to Jay's humor, with a caveat. At his website (<http://students.washington.edu/jmunson/>) Jay attributes what follows to himself and friends, which leaves us uncertain how to allot the credit or blame.

- The linguist got out of jail and declared to his friends, "I'm back on parole!"
- The grammarian was having so much difficulty with contracted compound relatives that he decided not to pay both his cousins for helping to paint the house.
- Following the talk on Minimalism there was triggered movement of the crowd into the reception area.
- "Pardon me," says the student. "I'd like to raise a tense question." The linguist responds, "What's that? You mean you have a qu[i]stion?"
- What kind of relation do you get with "A linguist holding candies that melt in his hand?" M&M command.
- "The rock and roll star led his manager to drugs." The AGENT is now the PATIENT.
- A student confused about syntax asked the linguist, "With what do you recognize Pied Piping?"
- What do you call it when two linguists engage in very intense kissing? [+ATR].
- Tonight! Live! High pitched Linguist Musicians ... starring Glottis Tight and the Lips.
- BATHING SUITS FOR NOT-SO-SMART LINGUISTS: Get a really good tan with a Dip-thong!
- AFRO-ASIATIC CONSTRUCTION: We know Hausa.



- What did the sine wave say when he got all stretched out? "Now I Hertz more than before!"
 - "You look ugly," said the girl to a linguist in a bar. The linguist replied, "Careful, you just used ugly as a compliment."
 - HERTZ RENT-A-BIKE: Renting one cycle per second.
 - Did you hear about the linguist who is also an OBGYN? He deals with difficult births and calls himself an obstuentician.
 - Three academics go to Heaven and at the gates St. Peter asks the question, "To play football well, what do you need?" The economist says, "Oh that's easy, you need to make lots of money." The theologian says, "No, no. You need to have faith in God." And the linguist says, "To play football well? You have to have a PRO."
- (And with apologies to those who don't know Spanish ...)
- ¿Por qué el armario no cruzó la calle? Porque no tenía los cajones.
 - For the linguist studying Spanish, if you want an imperfect washing of your clothes, use "ERA."
 - ¿Qué dice una oveja para que te muevas? "Vaaaaaa."

REFLECTIONS

A year ago Julia Sableski Falk inaugurated this occasional feature in which graduates look back at their experiences in the Department, the University and the field. Our thanks to Ralph Patrick, a near-contemporary of Julia's, for this installment.

Let me begin by thanking Julia Sableski Falk for all the memories she awakened with her description of the era preceding my five years at UW linguistics. I don't recall whether we ever met, though I had just completed my first year at the department in June 1968 when Julia returned to defend her dissertation.

And what a first year that was.

When I arrived in Seattle in the fall of 1967 I had an inkling of what linguistics was all about but not much more. As an undergraduate in English at North Texas State University, I took linguistics-related courses to the extent the curriculum and department requirements allowed. These included history of English and a course in the structure of English in which I learned a few things about structuralism and transformational grammar.

After a year at UW, I had somewhat more than an inkling — enough to know that linguistics would be a really exciting field to be a part of. My first quarter included an introduction to linguistics taught by the department chair, Sol Saporta. I believe that Sol's teaching exemplified the Socratic method, or at least what most people mean when they use that term, better than anything I encountered later in three years of law school (law school? yes, but that's another story). Another course I really enjoyed that year was Nina Gove's course in comparative and historical linguistics, given in the winter quarter. To this day I associate Grimm's Law with cold, damp weather.

I was fairly certain by the end of my first year that syntactic theory was the direction in which I wanted to go. What gave me the biggest nudge in that direction was the three-quarter morphology and syntax course taught by Heles Contreras. Some of us were dying to get to the Chomskyan paradigm — it was only

about two years since the publication of *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* — but we had to be responsible to what had gone before. Heles patiently and skillfully led us through the structuralists (we read a lot of Hockett, I recall, or perhaps it just seemed like a lot)



before we finally turned to Chomsky: first *Syntactic Structures* and then a careful exposition of the *Aspects* framework. And — something I enjoyed as much as the theoretical discussions — we worked through many exercises in morphological and syntactic analysis, using a workbook that gave me my first real look at the wealth of grammatical features and patterns found in the world's languages.

Another thing that made graduate study in linguistics at UW so much fun was the company of my fellow students. When I started at UW, linguistics shared a graduate student lounge

in Padelford Hall with the Romance languages department, but it soon became apparent that the epicenter of linguistic thought at UW was a nondescript seminar room in the same building whose number, A-216, is forever etched into my memory. With a table, some chairs and (most importantly) a chalk board, A-216 was the place we met between classes to catch our breath, have some coffee and talk about the exciting things that were happening in the field that we were so fortunate as to have chosen for graduate study. Of course, we talked about many other things: politics, the war, organic gardening and, undoubtedly, the weather (often a topic of interest in Seattle), and our recorder group practiced there, but I recall that, as often as not, when I would walk into A-216, someone would be at the board, furiously drawing a tree and asserting that in order to account for the occurrence of this sentence and the non-occurrence of that one, you had to posit this underlying structure, or that constraint on WH-movement, or whatever.

Something I remember with special fondness is the UW Linguistics Society. Meeting bi-weekly on Wednesday evenings, the Society provided a forum for students, faculty and guest speakers to share and get feedback on their latest research efforts. In a department where the general atmosphere could hardly have been called stuffy, the Society's meetings were markedly informal and conducive to animated discussion and debate. And there were peanut butter cookies.

When the "official" part of the Society meeting was finished, we usually adjourned to a local tavern, continuing a tradition already in place in Julia's time. Fueled by ample quantities of

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REFLECTIONS, from p. 3

local beer, we carried on discussions deep into the evening, on topics reflecting our own, special view of things.

Here's just one example: As you know, some city names, such as The Hague or The Dalles, begin with a definite article. Also, a city name will sometimes appear in a context that requires a definite article, such as, "That's not the Paris I was talking about" (I was talking about Paris, Texas). You can see where this is going. On one Wednesday evening, I recall, this weighty issue was the basis for a discussion that raged on until closing time.

And we sometimes sang.

The department grew a lot during my time there. In my second year we were joined by Stamatis Tsitsopoulos, who, among other things, conducted a linguistics analysis laboratory in which we elicited data from a speaker of Telugu to be used as a basis for a grammar of a fragment of that language. In that same year I gained my first acquaintance with *The Sound Pattern of English* from a visiting professor of phonology from Iceland, Sigrid Valfell. Then, in 1969, came Fritz Newmeyer, who brought new and exciting perspectives on current linguistics issues, especially in syntax. Despite a high degree of intelligence and an analytical quickness that sometimes awed me, Fritz was always accessible and generous with his time. If my work — especially my dissertation — sometimes reflected more enthusiasm than discipline, it is not because Fritz didn't try to instill the latter quality in me.

Notwithstanding the department's growth, the interdisciplinary character of linguistics study at UW that Julia noted continued during my time there. As I recall, we were not only allowed but encouraged to take courses in other departments, something that further enriched our experience. A seminar in mathematical linguistics inspired me to take courses in the mathematics and philosophy departments in set theory and logic. In the Asian languages department I studied Mongolian for a couple of

quarters and audited a course on the Mongol Empire. A major part of my exposure to generative phonology during my graduate study (Michael Brame arrived on the scene a bit too late for me) was a course in the Slavic languages department in which we worked through Ted Lightner's dissertation on the Russian sound system.

It would have been impossible for me to experience those wonderful five years had the department not been so generous with financial aid, including an NDEA Title IV fellowship covering my first three years. In addition, the department dealt flexibly with the fact that I was not quite a graduate student when I arrived in Seattle. I was scheduled to complete my BA by the end of summer 1967 but ended up three semester hours short. Afraid I would lose the NDEA fellowship and perhaps even my admission to the program, I telephoned Sol to explain the situation. He quickly assured me that I could finish my BA by taking an English course during my first quarter at UW.

It was, all in all, an exciting time for me, something the likes of which I haven't experienced since. In *Language Form and Language Function* (MIT Press 2000, 29-30), quoting a passage from *Aspects* in which Chomsky questions the role of semantic features in the functioning of syntactic rules, Fritz observes that this view "provided the main target for the generative semantic opposition to the *Aspects* model in the late 1960s and early 1970s," that is, roughly during the period of my graduate study and a bit beyond. It would not be appropriate here to go into the merits of the linguistics wars, as they were sometimes called, nor would I be well equipped to do so now. Sometimes, undoubtedly, the partisans of this or that side (usually the side I had embraced as my own) argued their cause with a great deal more zeal than reasoned analysis. But I believe that, for the most part, the passion inspired by that debate spurred many of us to give linguistics more of ourselves than we might otherwise have given, and, in that sense, it must have helped advance the field.

Ralph Patrick creates online help systems and assists in obtaining patents for a Philadelphia area company that designs aerospace software. After leaving Seattle in 1972, he taught linguistics for four years at the Freie Universität Berlin and then, in 1977, decided (for reasons he says he cannot now reconstruct) to study law. Graduating from Cornell Law School in 1980, he practiced intellectual property and international trade litigation in the Washington, DC area for eleven years. Ralph's email address is neogrammarian@yahoo.com.

The Linguistics Advisory Board welcomes comments from readers.

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LETTER, from p. 1

Barbara Citko (pronounced "Cheatko"), accepted right away. Barbara received her PhD in 2000 from the State University of New York at Stony Brook and has held visiting positions at the University of Utah, the University of Connecticut, and (this year) at Brandeis. She has published in *Linguistic Inquiry*, *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* and other leading journals and has taught courses on the interface between linguistic theory and psychology and neurology.

We were also enamored of another applicant for the position, Edith Aldridge. Edith received her PhD in Linguistics from Cornell University in 2004 and for the past couple years she has been a Visiting Assistant Professor at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. We all felt that it was worth the effort to try to hire both Barbara and Edith and — lo and behold — it worked! Edith has a two-year Mellon post-doc at Northwestern

that starts in the fall; after those two years she will become an assistant professor in our department. Both Barbara and Edith work in the forefront of syntactic theory, but in other respects they complement each other beautifully. Edith focuses on the languages of East Asia and speaks Chinese, Japanese, and Tagalog. She has also done field work on the aboriginal Austronesian languages of Taiwan.

You all know from the October issue of the Newsletter that we are starting a fee-based MA program in computational linguistics. Going along with that is authorization to hire two new faculty members, one tenure-track and one visiting for the year. Our first choice for the tenure-track position just accepted our offer. Her name is Fei Xia (pronounced more or less "Fay Shya"). Fei received her BA from Beijing University and her PhD in Computer Science from the University of Pennsylvania in 2001. Since her graduation she has been a Research Staff Member in Natural Language

Processing at the IBM T. J. Watson Research Center in Yorktown Heights, NY. She has many professional strengths. Even though her employment has been in industry, she has several publications in refereed journals and has co-chaired three international workshops. Her reputation in computational linguistics is very high, partly as a result of having been leader of the Chinese Penn Treebank Project, which is highly esteemed in the field.

The one-year computational job will be assumed by Will Lewis. Will received his PhD in Linguistics from the University of Arizona in 2002, where his dissertation was co-advised by Terry Langendoen and Tom Bever. Since then he has been an Assistant Professor in the Department of Linguistics at California State University, Fresno. He has co-authored publications in *Cognitive Psychology* and *Journal of Child Language* and

See *LETTER*, p. 7

FOOLISHNESS by Jim Armagost

Exactly 38 years before Ralph Patrick began writing his Reflections piece (see p. 3), or perhaps a few months earlier, a handout found its way into the hands of a new linguistics graduate student at UW. It was titled 'Some things an adequate grammar should account for,' I believe. I kept it for many years but it wasn't in any of the boxes I unpacked after one of those moves halfway across the country. I have no idea, but maybe the nth iteration of that handout is still used today, or part of it.

I could probably reconstruct it from memory even now but want to mention just a single example. Within the category *Grammatical can be distinguished from ungrammatical* there occurred the following sentence:

a. Fools fools fool fool fools.

(My word processing program questions its grammaticality. Ha!)

I'm struck by the similarity between (a), a sentence consciously (one assumes) constructed by a linguist, and (b), which appears in a 1938 novel and is no less (one assumes) consciously constructed. In (b) I've minimally indicated elements as coreferential per the context, which I needn't go into.

b. Do you realize that [that fool]_j is going to let [that fool]_k make a fool of [him]_j again?

Ignoring irrelevant details, the subject of (a) is a stripped down relative clause version of (b) with plural nouns. Constructing the predicate of (a) is then not much of a brainer. (Go ahead, tell me you can't say that.)

I've gone beyond being struck by the similarity of (a) and (b). I also wonder whether there might be a historical connection as well. Perhaps someone with more intimate and extensive

knowledge of the early history of generative grammar, its players, their personalities and their reading habits might be tempted to take this up as a research topic, minor surely but perhaps of some interest. If so please let me know what you find out.

For now I want to lay down the following challenge:

Can anyone identify the novel from which I quoted (b)? I will buy the first person to email me the names of both the author and the novel some kind of cool prize. Heck, since it's a difficult question, I might even send a prize to the first person who emails me the name of the author and one to the first other person who emails me the name of the novel. Get digging!

WORLD LANGUAGES DAY

Every year on a Friday in early March UW Educational Outreach hosts World Languages Day.

This event attracts some 1,500 junior and senior high school students and accompanying teachers to the Seattle campus, where they can tour the Language Learning Center and other facilities, sample first year language classes and attend sessions on a wide variety of language and cultural themes presented by a cadre of university and other volunteers.

While we are not necessarily in the business of blowing Educational Outreach's horn, and we certainly have no data at hand to back up our opinion, it is hard not to believe that

World Languages Day is effective in opening the eyes of large numbers of high school students to a world of language and culture far richer and more diverse than they had ever imagined. To the extent that some number of them each year follow through by enrolling in college and university courses they otherwise would not have — a few, perhaps, even in linguistics — this is a very good thing.

The following faculty and others associated with the Department presented sessions this year.

Alicia Beckford Wassink
African-American English
(AAE/Ebonics)

Sharon Hargus
Native American languages

Jurgen Klausenburger
The Romance languages: How they are different

Kelley Kilanski (Teaching Assistant)
Analyze your voice

Jim Armagost (Advisory Board)
An ancient Mayan calendar

We want to recognize Karen Zagona as well for volunteering to present a session, although ultimately it was cancelled due to circumstances beyond her control.

FACULTY NEWS

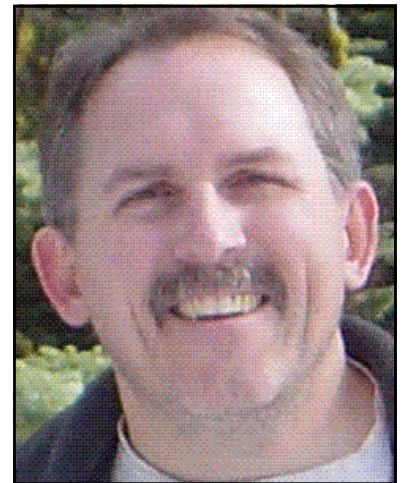
A warm welcome to our four new faculty (see *LETTER*, p. 1). This fall Citko and Xia will fill tenure-track positions and Lewis will serve as a one-year visiting professor. Aldridge begins a two-year Mellon post-doc at Northwestern this fall and will enter a tenure-track position with the Department in 2007.



Edith Aldridge
Syntax



Barbara Citko
Syntax



Will Lewis
Computational linguistics

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already has four grants to his credit. His specialty is corpus-based linguistics as is relevant to computational applications and hence he bridges the gap in an ideal way between linguistic theory and computer science. Everything else pales behind hiring four new faculty. I'll just mention one name that will be familiar to you even if you got your degree forty years ago and have been working in health care, law or professional sports since then: Noam Chomsky. As I write this, we are gearing up for his visit in a couple days. His main evening talk will be political, but he has agreed to spend an hour and a half with the linguists in the morning. We've been reading his latest paper and strategizing how best to bombard him with questions and comments about it.

Fritz Newmeyer

FELLOWSHIP, from p. 1

The Department very much appreciates recent contributions from the following donors.

Faculty (current and emeritus)

Heles Contreras
Julia Herschensohn
Richard Wright
Karen Zagona

Advisory Board (100% participation)

Nancy Ackles
Jim Armagost
Kristin Denham
Michael Gamon
Phil Harrison
Jim Hoard
Jeff Kallen
James Lyle
Tatsuya Suzuki
Alice Taff
Rick Wojcik

Alumni and friends

Marlene Bailey
Navavan Bandhmedha
Lois Bauer
Julia Falk
Hope Hensley
Chia-Hui Huang
Tetsuya Kagata
Vijai Luthra
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FACULTY NEWS continued**HARGUS ON TV**

In mid-November Sharon Hargus appeared in a short interview on KING-TV in which host Tim Robinson asked how 'Seattle' is really supposed to be pronounced. Astutely ignoring all but the intended interpretation of his question, Sharon modeled the pronunciation and taught Robinson to produce ("at least temporarily") the final voiceless lateral fricative.

She introduced Tim to the 1994 *Lushootseed Dictionary* by Dawn Bates (PhD '88), Thom Hess (PhD '67) and Vi Hilbert and, finally, talked briefly about the Puget Sound languages Lushootseed and Twana.

And how is 'Seattle' really supposed to be pronounced? Sharon reports that Dawn and others who have worked on Lushootseed told her that the final syllable of [siʔaL] gets the stress.

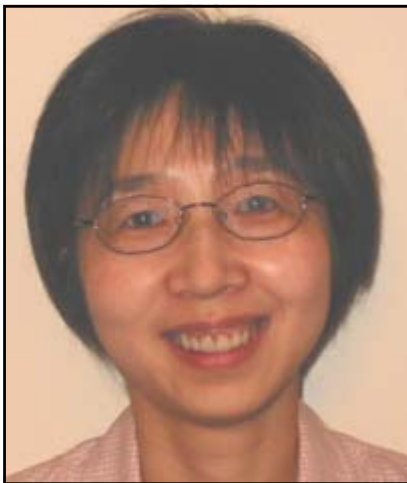
WHO IS THE EDITOR?

Jim Armagost was born in Southern California and raised there except for a few pre-kindergarten years spent in Renton. In 1963 he completed a BA in anthropology at the University of California at Santa Barbara, then served a two-year Army hitch in Germany before marrying and moving to Seattle a few years later.

He earned his MA in 1972 and his PhD in 1973, both in linguistics at U Dub, then took a position at Kansas State University, where his research focused on Comanche, a Uto-Aztecan language closely related to Shoshoni.

Jim is now retired and lives an hour north of Seattle. In partial repayment of the superb education he received in the Department, he serves on the Advisory Board and edits this newsletter.

His many years of fantasizing about having space to build a largish HO model railroad are about to come true as he finishes construction of "the train room," a second story addition to his house.



Fei Xia
Computational linguistics

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