I’m happy to announce that the Italian Department at Rutgers has had a very active and fruitful agenda in the academic year that just came to a close. Besides hosting the well-established Graduate Students’ Conference in the fall and the first edition of the Independent Italian Film Series, we held six lectures on very diverse topics, as well as two Alumni Lectures, and four presentations in our ongoing lunch-time colloquia “Food for Thought” for faculty and graduate students. In the fall 2013 we had the pleasure of having Prof. Gregory Conti from the University of Perugia visit our department for one semester. Greg taught one course on Italian history from 1848 to contemporary Italy, as well as a very popular course on translation, which students had been requesting for a long time—and the high enrollment in the course showed how much they truly did want it. Greg is a well-known translator who has also done extensive research on the practice of translation and gave a well-informed and entertaining lecture on the topic in December. Sadly for us, this year we had to bid farewell to our much beloved language coordinator Daniele DeFeo, who has been hired as full-time lecturer at Princeton University. Pardon the cliché, but here no other expression could be more appropriate than “our loss is indeed their gain.” We are saddened that Daniele is leaving, but we rejoice because this is an important career move for him, reflective of his many talents. We will miss his balanced judgment, his problem-solving skills, his soft-spoken determination, and his rare wisdom. Among the many things Daniele did for our program was the creation of online courses, the supervision of a change of textbooks for 101 and 102, much-needed changes to the distribution of materials in the first two years of language instruction, and the creation and development of a new (and so far unique) online certificate in Italian for Reading Knowledge, for which he obtained a generous grant from the Entrepreneurial Office of the School of Arts and Sciences. But what Daniele created and brought with him, most of all, was a calming, reassuring atmosphere to the work place and to all of us who worked with him. I also take pride in pointing out that of the two colleagues who were hired away from our department in the last few years, one (Elizabeth Leake) went to Columbia University and the other to Princeton University. A loss is never an accomplishment, but it speaks well of our department that ivy league universities are poaching from us. Dr. Carmela Scala will replace Daniele as the next language coordinator, bringing with her the potential to do a superb job. She comes to us with a Ph.D. from CUNY Graduate Center and a lot of experience teaching and coordinating courses at Hunter College and St. John’s University in New York. Her scholarly interests are the Italian short story (her dissertation, now being turned into a volume, is on Giambattista Basile’s Lo cunto de li cunti) and Italian cinema (a book on Neorealismo came out with Cambridge Scholars Publishing in 2013). Faculty, instructors, and graduate students were all extremely impressed by Carmela’s background, by her academic and pedagogical
GRADUATE DIRECTOR REPORT

In the Academic Year 2013-14 four doctoral students defended their dissertations: Daniel DeFeo, Jaclyn Bevacqua, Letizia Bellocchio, and Francesco Pascuzzi. On November 8-9, 2013 the Italian Graduate Society held its Conference on Devotion. The event was very well attended and remarkably successful, involving doctoral students and scholars from prestigious national and international academic institutions. Several of our students obtained financial support from our generous donors, for whose continuous patronage we are extremely thankful.

Karen Ho received the Angelo and Anna Soriano Memorial Scholarship, which supports an MA student participating in a summer abroad program, while Gabriella Bellorio and Eleonora Sartoni were awarded the Joseph, Sr. and Clementina Coccia Scholarship, which will fund their research in Italy during the summer. Alberto Iozzia won the award for the best paper written in a graduate seminar in 2013-14 and Rossella Di Rosa was the recipient of the Laggini Scholarship. Brian Smith received the Paragano Scholarship, designed to support a full-time MAT student. All these awards were presented at our annual Alumni Reunion, which was held at the Eagleton Institute on May 9, 2014. We were lucky to have our donors or their representatives with us for this event, which crowns our academic year. The evening was initiated by a compelling lecture by Professor Rosetta D’Angelo, who proposed a mentoring program for our doctoral students, under the aegis of our alumni. In terms of external funding, Giuditta Cirmigliaro was awarded a summer Fellowship by the University of Konstanz. As a consequence of the financial strictures at Rutgers, our Graduate Program went through some momentous changes, which will bear profound consequences on its future. While we were subject to the significant loss of two and a half TAships, we obtained one more Excellence Fellowship for our incoming students. On the bright side, our Department was included in the Mellon Graduate Support Program, which will award Dissertation Completion Fellowships to Rutgers Ph.D. candidates, on a competitive basis. The endowment portion of the award comes with a 3:2 matching requirement: that is, the Mellon Foundation will contribute $2 for every $3 Rutgers raises from donors. SAS and the Departments benefiting from the program will need to raise $3 million dollars over the next three years in order to take advantage of the Mellon challenge. Therefore, our Department will be involved in a considerable fundraising effort. You will hear more on our initiatives to support this exciting program in the near future. In regards to our curricular activity, we revised the Reading Lists for our Comprehensive Ph.D. Exams, in order to align them better with our current seminars, to provide our doctoral students with the expertise required by an increasingly demanding job market, and to expedite the completion of their requirements. Finally, I am glad to report that this year we have accepted five new MAT students and that two incoming students will join our doctoral program in the Fall with Excellence Fellowships.

Prof. Andrea Baldi, Graduate Program Director

Have a great summer!  
-Alessandro
UNDEGRADUATE PROGRAM
Prof. Paola Gambarota, Undergraduate Program Director

ITALIAN NIGHT:
The fourth edition of Italian Night took place on April 16, 2014. A large number of undergraduate students took part in the event and gathered information about our Department, majoring and minoring in our two tracks, Italian Language and Literature or Italian Studies, participating in our Urbino Program or other study abroad experiences, and possible career paths a degree in Italian may open. We also gave out prizes for best papers written in undergraduate courses.

NEW COURSES:
This year, Professors Baldi, Marsh, and Welch created inspiring new courses that will be launched starting next semester. In the fall of 2014, Prof. Welch’s course on the popular genre of the Mafia Movie will offer the opportunity for a critical discussion of the ways in which the Mafia has been represented in international cinema and for an in-depth analysis of its essential elements (character types, film techniques, and narrative conventions). In the coming semester, Prof. Marsh will teach a course on Italian Opera that promises to be a true event combining musical and verbal arts. Prof. Baldi will soon launch his new course entitled “The Renaissance at the Movies and in Popular Culture,” examining how the revolutionary discoveries and artistic achievements that laid the foundation of Western secular culture are reinterpreted in contemporary popular art forms.
Our language program holds as its main objectives: (1) to introduce you to the target language and culture; (2) to promote the development of your communicative competence in the language; and (3) to develop your intercultural understanding. In the attempt to train students to comprehend, communicate, and compare these aspects (as stated on our syllabi) we have now started to phase in a new curriculum that slows down the amount of grammar covered per semester in the attempt to construct a program that also focuses on literacy in the language classroom. The hope (as Richard Kern contends) is that we will culminate the gap that may exist between language classes and upper level literature and cultural courses through the frequent use of literary and cultural texts, as well as film, art, and other forms of realia. Linking this to our communicative and collaborative framework will increase students’ cultural and linguistic competencies as well as create continuity through the elementary and intermediate levels and beyond. Additionally, this renewed focus will help develop critical thinking skills and show students how to analyze and evaluate language in particular contexts from the very beginning levels. The curriculum will be fully phased in by Fall 2015.

An important addition to our program this year was that of the Head TAs for each language level: Marino Forlino, 101; Donata Panizza, 102; Alberto Iozzia, 131; and Lucia Vedovi, 132. Their reworking of quizzes, coordination of activities and overall feedback has been fundamental for the other TAs as well as for me. They have done excellent work and have made great improvements to our program. Alberto Iozzia, also headed our tavola italiana this year and with the aid of our other TAs and instructors has completely revamped it, turning it into a sought-after gathering that saw 160 attendees throughout the various sessions. Students were entertained and treated to a variety of games from Wheel of Fortune, Memory, to Trivial Pursuit (just to name a few), all in Italian, while also conversing and meeting other students and instructors. Kudos to Alberto for turning the tavola italiana completely around!

This year we have seen a marked growth in our online language courses. We currently offer 101 and 102 online and will expand to 131 and 132 by the Fall of 2015 (when the new curriculum has been fully implemented). We use Pearson’s eCollege as our platform and also implement other online tools such as Voicethread, Blackboard Collaborate, and our textbook’s Supersite for synchronous and asynchronous activities. With the help of TAs, we have continuously changed the format of these courses, and have reached a point where the student success rate is very high as well as the retention rate. The key was discovering that online courses cannot mimic traditional face-to-face ones. The tools and gatherings are of a completely different nature. Therefore, we came to understand that the world of online education is still establishing its parameters, expectations and methodologies. We now feel confident that our program is on the right track and that it is succeeding to do just that, establishing the much needed methodology of online language pedagogy.

ONLINE ITALIAN FOR READING KNOWLEDGE CERTIFICATE:

The department was awarded a SAS Entrepreneurial Grant for the creation of an online Italian for Reading Knowledge Certificate. The project consists of developing an online version of the courses “Italian for Reading Knowledge 105 and 106” in order to provide certification for reading competency in the target language. This in turn allows us to branch out from the Rutgers community and provide service to both undergraduate and graduate levels. Our goal is to award a certificate of Italian reading proficiency to undergraduate honor students needing to fulfill requirements, as well as to graduate students from various disciplines who may need Italian for purposes of research and/or as a Ph.D. prerequisite. It surveys Italian vocabulary and idiom, syntax and grammar, helping students acquire the language skills necessary to appreciate everyday writings, such as newspapers to the works of important Italian authors as they were written. The online platform allows the instructor to work with individual students on material from their particular areas of concentration without interfering with the group as a whole. In other words, though the class may be working on specific grammar points essential for the acquisition of reading comprehension, different students may work on texts that are relevant to their specific needs.
Essentially, the online platform allows us to tailor the course to the individual, creating a dialogue that permits the student to have input in course content by having instructors work on texts that at times will be chosen by the students themselves. From a student working in the fashion industry, to another working on letters from the Renaissance figure Giovanni Bentivoglio, to various art history Ph.D. candidates, we are encountering numerous students who are benefiting from a more direct focus on their material. It is precisely this luxury that the online setting would allow us.

AWARDS

BEST UNDERGRADUATE PAPERS:

The following students were awarded prizes for the best papers written in their category: 
Mohamed Bahri for best essay in the Advanced Composition and Stylistics Course
Nicoletta Romano for best essay in a 300-Level Course
Mihaela Sanderson for best essay in a 400-Level Course
Cristina Porzio for the best Quaderno Digitale in Prof. Welch’s course Cinema and Literature.

COCCIA FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP:

Our student Cecilia R. Schiavo received the Coccia Foundation Scholarship for her academic performance, for being an active member of the Italian Club, and for studying abroad in Italy this summer. This scholarship is not restricted to Rutgers, but is open to applicants from other universities. Cecilia will use her scholarship money to take part in the Department’s Urbino program this summer.

BEST GRADUATE PAPER:

A prize for the best Graduate Paper in 2013-2014 was awarded to Alberto Iozzia for a paper he wrote in Prof. Rhiannon Welch’s class. The paper was entitled “Mirror Images, Nostalgia, Vanishing Frames. Imperialist Photography of Native Americans and Italian Colonies in Africa.”

LAGGINI SCHOLARSHIP:

The annual Joseph E. & Marie E. Lagginis was awarded to Rossella DiRosa for 2013-2014. This prize is given to a graduate student who has excelled academically, has been a stellar instructor, but has also demonstrated a special commitment to the Department and all its activities.

PARAGANO FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP:

The Paragano Family Scholarship for 2014 has been awarded to Brian Smith, who is a full-time M.A.T. student in our department and plans to start a career as teacher of Italian language when he has completed his degree.

COCCIA FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIPS:

The Joseph, Sr. and Clementina Coccia Memorial Scholarship for 2014 has been awarded to Gabriella Bellorio and Eleonora Sartoni. This scholarship, which was established by the Coccia Foundation a few years ago, is awarded to Ph.D. candidates who excel academically and who plan to travel to Italy to complete their proposed project during the summer.

The Angelo and Anna Soriano Memorial Scholarship for 2014 has been awarded to Karen Ho. This scholarship, which was established by the Coccia Foundation a few years ago, is awarded to M.A. candidates who excel academically and who plan to travel to Italy to complete their proposed project during the summer.

SPECIAL AWARD:

Daniele De Feo was awarded a certificate of recognition for the excellent work he did while language coordinator in the last two years.

Some of the Awardees

http://italian.rutgers.edu
EVENTS & LECTURES

Professor Sherry Roush during her talk entitled Petrarch: On Identity Theft? On April 9, 2013

FOOD FOR THOUGHT:

The usual four sessions of “Food for Thought,” the faculty and graduate student lunchtime talk series, took place in the course of the 2013-2014 academic year:

This informal forum helps us keep up with our colleagues’ research.

LECTURES GIVEN IN THE DEPARTMENT DURING 2013 – 2014

October 15, Ann Goldstein, Translator, Editor at the New Yorker, “Translating Primo Levi” (in Prof. Conti’s class).
October 22, Elisa Biagini, Poet, Translator, Professor, “Translating and Being Translated: Elisa Biagini Talks About Her Poetry.”
November 21, Paolo Fasoli, Associate Professor at Hunter College, “Cattivi maestri: su alcuni trattatisti protoliberthini.”
December 3, Michael Reynolds, Translator and Editor-in-Chief, Europa Editions “Translation and the Literary Market Place.”

Lunch before Prof. Rouch’s Lecture

December 4, Gregory Conti, Professor at Università di Perugia, “Sisyphus or Ella Fitzgerald: Reflections on a Patron Saint for Translators.”
April 9, Sherry Roush, Associate Professor at Penn State University, “Petrarch: On Identity Theft?”

ALUMNI LECTURE SERIES:

We are continuing to host lectures by our former graduate students and it is a great pleasure to hear them talk about their current research, as well as catch up with what is happening in their lives. This year we invited Johanna Wagner from Penn State University, who presented on “The Poetics of Exile: Mothers, Migration and the Italian Metropolis” on October 2, 2013. The second presentation of the series was given on May 9, 2014 by Rosetta D’Angelo, who spoke of her current research on women during the Resistenza when she delivered a paper entitled “Teaching and Researching in a Changing World.”

ALUMNI REUNION:

Prof. D’Angelo’s lecture took place on the occasion of our (by now traditional) spring alumni reunion, to which we invite all former students in the Ph.D. program, current graduate students, donors, and friends of the department. The lecture was followed by an Award Ceremony and a dinner to celebrate all our accomplishments, current projects, and future plans. The event is held at the Eagleton Institute of Politics on the Douglass Campus.
NOTES IN BRIEF

DANIELE DEFO:

My experience teaching and working at Rutgers is one that I will never forget and one that I will bring with me throughout my professional career. It is here that I have been challenged and stimulated as a professional, a teacher, a student, and a colleague. It is here that I have grown and matured thanks to my experiences with students, instructors and faculty—and for the support and love that I have felt throughout my years (no matter the role) I will be eternally grateful. So, as I look back I can only think of the people at Rutgers: the students that I saw grow and that in turn taught me more than I could have ever taught them; my fellow graduate students and instructors that have always had patience with me and allowed me to make mistakes—their contributions have been unquantifiable and invaluable; the faculty that believed in me and gave me an opportunity that, when I first came in as a masters student many years ago, would have seemed impossible. The support and encouragement they have provided me, both as a student and as faculty, have been and always will be indispensable. Being part of the Italian Department at Rutgers will always remain one of the best decisions I have made in my life.

GREGORY CONTI:

My fall semester 2013 at Rutgers was incredibly rich. Even in a dietary sense. I was invited to so many lunches and dinners at Edo, Rafferty’s, and Sahara that I came back home to Perugia even more overweight than when I left.

But even richer than the food was the food for thought that the Italian Department offered me during my stay. The dinner at Sahara, to cite one outstanding example, took place on an evening in October following the conclusion of the two-day conference organized by the Dept.’s graduate students on the theme of Devotion. The organization was impeccable, the papers invariably stimulating, and the atmosphere was both friendly and intellectually vibrant. The fall semester was my first stay on an American university campus in almost thirty years, and that conference, along with a host of other experiences during the four months, made me realize once again how special those campuses are. There was a lot of talk on campus last fall about “distance learning” and internet courses. Fine, but let’s not overdue it. As Joni Mitchell once warned, “Don’t it always seem to go that you don’t know what you’ve got till it’s gone?”

Even more than the conference and dinner conversations, however, the most stimulating and productive experience for me were the six hours I spent each week with the students in the two courses I taught: “Italy 1848-1948” and “Experiences in Literary Translation”. The courses gave me the chance to share and develop ideas about both topics, and the translation course particularly was an opportunity to re-examine the underlying principles and objectives of the translating profession. The students were bright, eager, and ready to take risks in their work and that encouraged me to do the same. In addition, we all learned that translation is also a very effective instrument of language learning, perhaps even more so with respect to one’s native tongue than the foreign one. Finally, the Department gave me the “occasione” to synthesize and express some of the ideas that were developed during the translation course in a talk for an audience of students and faculty, whose questions and comments added spice to yet another fine post-lecture meal.

My heartfelt thanks to everyone in the department for a wonderful semester.
RUTGERS DAY

On April 26th the Italian Department participated in the Rutgers Day celebrations. Our booth on Voorhees Mall on the College Avenue Campus was a major attraction because of its language games, quizzes, cultural questionnaires, but especially with its tasty food. We did a very good job of reaching out to the community!
NOTES FROM ITANJ (ITALIAN TEACHERS ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY) by Teresa Sengel

This spring the Italian Teachers Association of New Jersey has been busy promoting Italian language and culture with teachers and students of Italian in New Jersey.

On March 26th, the fourteenth annual Italian Language and Culture Day took place. This is the seventh year that the Italian Teachers Association collaborated with the Coccia Institute to insure the success of this event! This year’s theme “Un viaggio nel tempo; ieri e domani” was employed with much creativity on the part of the fifteen schools that attended. From presentations entitled “Mezzanotte a Roma” to “La trasformazione della Società” both middle and high school students showcased their fine Italian language skills and demonstrated a broad understanding of the Italian culture with pizzas, humor, and aplomb! All 350 people attending enjoyed this wonderful promotion of our beloved Italian language and culture.

The winners are:
Middle School Category
1st Place - Frelinghuysen Middle School
2nd Place - Grover Cleveland Middle School

High School Category
1st Place - Columbia High School
2nd Place - St. Peter's Prep
3rd Place - Hawthorne High School

During the month of March, the Association also held its annual essay contest for high school seniors. This year fifteen schools entered forty-five students who answered a prompt about Papa Francesco. The winner, Michael Radice, who hailed from Ridge High School in Bernard Township, won a $250.00 cash prize for his excellent writing skills.

The Italian Teachers Association of New Jersey is proud to announce our 2014 Teacher scholarship winner. The lucky teacher is awarded the “ITANJ Borsa di studio per Docenti,” which includes full tuition and lodging. Our winner, Marcella Di Benedetto Clatworthy, has taught at Frelinghuysen Middle School in Morristown for the last eight years. Marcella is the daughter of two Italian immigrants from Aquilona in Campania, therefore Marcella has always pursued her love of the Italian language. Marcella also investigated her love of Italian at Rutgers University, earning a B.A. in Italian and subsequently a Masters in Language Education with certification both in Italian and ESL at the Rutgers Graduate School of Education. She will enjoy two weeks of study this July at the Study in Italy Language Center in Genova in an intensive language, culture and pedagogy program. This program is directed by Prof. Suzanne Branciforte, the author of Parliamo Italiano. Marcella will follow up her study in Genova going south for a visit to Rome and the ‘patria’ of her parents, Campania, together with her new husband. Marcella will be keeping a blog of her adventures in Italy! Auguroni Marcella!

For up to date information on events, programs, and competitions sponsored by The Italian Teachers Association of New Jersey please follow us on twitter at #itanjchat or visit our website www.itanj.org.

http://italian.rutgers.edu
GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS

Rossella Di Rosa

Marino Forlino
I gave a paper at the NeMLA (Northeast Modern Language Association) Conference in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, in April 2014 entitled “Teaching Ar@bic with Technology,” in the panel “The Arabic Classroom and Technology.”

Jennifer Higgins
This year I presented a paper titled “Creating Space and Questioning Genre: Italian Women's Self-Representation in Literature During and After the Fall of Fascism” at two conferences. Here are the details: NEMLA 45th Annual Convention, Susquehanna University (Spring 2014) Panel title: “The Resistance in Italian Literature and Cinema” and ACLA “Capitals,” New York University (Spring 2014) Panel title: “The Poetics of Fascism.”
Alberto Iozzia
I took part in our conference Devotion/Devozioni last November by reading a paper entitled “Exhibiting the Intimacy: Strindberg, Bergman, and the (in)superable distance between theater and cinema.” I also presented another paper at the “Chiasmi” conference at Brown University (March 7-8, 2014), which was entitled “Mirror Images, Nostalgia, Vanishing Frames: Imperialist Photography of Native Americans and Africans of the Italian Colonies.”

Ida Marinzoli
I am continuing with my research, mostly overseas, on the subject of the identity of borderline writer Fulvio Tomizza. I have incorporated some of my findings in my presentation for the congress “Foibe Massacres,” which was sponsored by New Jersey Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission at Rutgers on March 1st. The conference was well attended by professors, graduate students, teachers, various representatives of associations such as the Unico Chapter of Kearny, NJ, and other guests. I also managed to bring over from Trieste eight books written by Fulvio Tomizza (four of them were donated by Tomizza’s widow, Mrs. Laura Levi, whom I contacted) and make them available to readers in the Italian section of Alexander Library. In May 2014 I attended the AAIS conference in Zurich, Switzerland in order to participate in the session “La letteratura triestina.”

Francesco Pascuzzi
In September 2013, I started working as a Scientific & Technical Writing instructor with the Rutgers English Writing Program. In March 2014, I was the recipient of a NeMLA Graduate Travel Award to present a talk titled “By Law and By Nature: A Politics of Motherhood in Tornatore’s The Unknown Woman” at the 2014 NeMLA Convention. I defended my dissertation, titled “Reshaping the Frame: Women, Body and Identity Discourses in Italian and European Film” on May 15, and I am co-editing an anthology titled Dreamscapes Projected: The Oneiric in Italian Film Culture.

Eleonora Sartoni
I participated in the conference organized by the Italian Graduate Society in November, when I read a paper entitled “Ribaltamento del Misticismo: dialogo tra Angela da Foligno e Pier Paolo Pasolini in L’Usignolo della Chiesa Cattolica” and in the NeMLA Conference in April (“The Assemblage of the Woman’s Body as Fear: Iginio Ugo Tarchetti’s ‘La Lettera U’”). I also won the Joseph Sr. and Clementina Coccia Scholarship for 2014. Thank you very much!

Jamison Standridge
I was involved as faculty advisor and mentor at the Rutgers F.I.G.S. (First-year Interest Group Seminars) program for a course on women and gender studies in the Fall semester (2013), for which I also received a certificate of appreciation. F.I.G.S. allows upper-class students (usually seniors) to teach a one-credit seminar to first-year students.

Lucia Vedovi
FACULTY NEWS

Andrea Baldi: has continued to serve as a member of the Academic Advisory Board of the Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission, which organized the Conference Remembering the Foibe Massacres, held at Rutgers on March 1, 2014. A member of the ‘Blue Ribbon Panel,’ Professor Baldi was among the scholars who selected the recipient of the Coccia-Inserra Award for Excellence and Innovation in the Teaching of Italian, presented at the Teaching Italian VI Symposium: Cinelezione (Montclair State University, October 18, 2013). He also sat on a panel of judges who evaluated high-school students’ performances in Italian at the Italian Language and Culture Day (Montclair State University, March 26, 2014). Professor Baldi continued to serve as Graduate Director and sat on the GSNB Fulbright Faculty Committee and on doctoral committees. He designed two new undergraduate courses, to be taught in English, which will be implemented in the next two years, The Renaissance at the Movies and in Popular Culture and Walking in the Metropolis. He published an essay, “Anna Maria Ortese tra giornalismo e letteratura,” Media allo specchio. Letteratura e giornalismo, E. Di Iorio and F. Zangrilli, eds., Caltanissetta-Roma: Salvatore Sciascia Editore, 2014, pp. 77-91. He also gave four papers, on topics related to early modern and contemporary literature: “Come resuscitare un condottiero del Cinquecento: l’affascinante storia di Giovanni delle Bande Nere,” Teaching Italian Culture Conference, Georgetown University, Washington D.C., October 19, 2013; “Playful Dissimulation in the Sienese Veglie,” MLA Annual Convention, Chicago, January 9-12, 2014; “Anna Maria Ortese tra giornalismo e letteratura,” International Conference Media allo specchio. Letteratura e giornalismo, organized by E. Di Iorio and F. Zangrilli, Firenze (Italy), January 16, 2014; “Anna Maria Ortese: La città e i percorsi della memoria,” NeMLA 2014 Convention, Harrisburg, PA, April 3-6, 2014.

Paola Gambarota: This year I participated in the commemoration of the liberation of Naples (October 1, 1943) giving a talk at a conference in Naples, Italy, that was part of a 15-day celebration, with a rich program of events. The President of the Italian Republic, Giorgio Napolitano, inaugurated the series of events. I continue to work on my book project, temporarily entitled Postcards From Naples 1944. Cross-Cultural Memories of an Occupation, currently focusing on the diaries of prominent participants in the Resistance and in the political reconstruction of the anti-fascist government of the South. I enjoyed very much teaching my new graduate seminar on Italian representations of war across different times and media. Many thanks to my students for their lively participation: I learned a lot!

Gentes (Against the Jews and Gentiles), to be published in the series I Tatti Renaissance Library edited by James Hankins of Harvard. Hankins has also proposed an edition of Leon Battista Alberti’s Intercenales (Dinner Pieces), which would offer a revised version of my 1987 translation together with the Latin text. My biggest project is an intellectual biography of Giannozzo Manetti (1396-1459), an important Florentine merchant, statesman, and humanist who wrote in Latin and Italian, and translated Aristotle, the New Testament, and the Psalter into Latin from the original texts. After some archival work in Italy this summer, I hope to complete the study next year. As for teaching at Rutgers, in the fall of 2014, I am offering a new course taught in English and titled “Sex, Death, and Damnation: An Introduction to Italian Opera.”

Alessandro Vettori: The big news from me this year is that I have been promoted to full professor. My book Giuseppe Berto, la passione della scrittura was published by Marsilio Editore last June. Two articles have appeared in the last few months: “Religio amoris. Il sesso come rituale religioso nel Decameron” came out in Testo & Senso in January 2014 and “The Tale of Zima,” Decameron III,5, Lectura Boccaccii, eds. Pier Massimo Forni and Francesco Ciabattoni, which was just released by the University of Toronto Press last month. I also completed two book reviews: Brian Moloney, Francis of Assisi and his ‘Canticle of Brother Sun’ Reassessed. (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013) for Modern Language Review and A Companion to Catherine of Siena, eds. Carolyn Muessig, George Ferzoco, and Beverly Mayne Kienzle (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2012) for Speculum, Journal of the Medieval Academy of America. I was asked to join the Board of Editors of Arena Romanistica. Journal of Romance Studies of the Department of Foreign Languages at the University of Bergen, Norway. I gave the following invited lectures: “The Lustful Poets in Dante’s Commedia” at Kent State University in Florence, in October, and “Poeti lussuriosi in esilio: Brunetto, Guinizzelli e Arnaut in Dante,” at Université de Savoie, Chambéry, France, in November; I also gave the following paper “Nel nome del Padre: La Paternità di Dio in Berto e Ammaniti” at the AATI Convention in Strasbourg, France, in May 2013. I was also supposed to present a paper entitled “The Garden of Eden Revisited. Issues of Ecological Approaches in Giuseppe Berto and Italo Calvino” at the AAIS Conference in Zurich, Switzerland, but I had to cancel at the last minute to take care of a family issue in Italy. I have now returned to my Dante project on prayer in the Divine Comedy, which I plan to complete as soon as possible. I also taught a new undergraduate class during the spring semester, which has received students’ approval, possibly (but, I hope, not only) because of its title, “Love and Sex Italian Style.” Despite its appealing name, the class focuses on very canonical texts, such as Dante, Boccaccio, Petrarch, Ariosto, and Tarchetti, but with a particular angle. I will spend the next academic year in London, UK, where my wife has been appointed Resident Program Director of the Fordham University Theater Program.

Rhiannon Welch: In the academic year 2014-15, Professor Welch published two articles: “Razza e (ri)produttività. Per una lettura biopolitica della razza nell’Italia postunitaria e contemporanea,” in Lombardi Diop and Romeo, eds., L’Italia postcoloniale (Le Monnier Mondadori, 2014: 77-90) and “Race and Colonial (Re)productivity” (Annali d’Italianistica. Special Issue on Work and Labor. Bouchard and Ferme, eds. Forthcoming 2014). Her translation of Antonio Negri’s “Karl Marx’s Grundrisse” is forthcoming in Rethinking Marxism. She also presented works in progress at two conferences: on a panel organized by Dana Renga (OSU) and titled “Italian Maladies” at MLA (Chicago 2014) and, on a panel alongside political philosopher Roberto Esposito, at the international conference Italian Theory existe-t-elle? at Université Paris Ouest Nanterre La Défense and the Sorbonne (January 2014). In addition, she participated in a round table discussion with Professors Ara Merjian (NYU), Alessandro Vettori (Rutgers), Gregory Conti (Università di Perugia) at the Rutgers Italian Graduate Society annual conference Devozione. Welch was invited to join the advisory board of the American Journal of Mediterranean Studies. This spring, in addition to organizing the Independent Italian Film Series along with doctoral students, she delivered a guest lecture on Pasolini’s film theory and practice in Prof. Fatima Naqvi’s (Rutgers) graduate seminar in film theory.
Laura Sanguineti White: Lectures and Professional Activities: Lecture in the series “Food for Thought”: “Insalatuzze d’erbucce”, Decameron I,1 (September 2013); Lecture on Food and Literature for the Accademia della Cucina Italiana in New York (October 2013). Part of the Board of Academic Advisors that organized the conferences “Italian Achievements in Medicine, Science and Technology” (November 2013) and on “Remembering the Foibe Massacres” (March 2014). Continued to serve as Commissioner of the Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission, as Vice-President of IACE (Italian American Committee on Education) and as Member of the Advisory Council for the Department of French and Italian of Princeton University. Publications: The manuscript on Boccaccio has been submitted for publication.
GRADUATE STUDENT CONFERENCE 2013

DEVOZIONE/DEVOTION:
Among the many events and occurrences of the Fall 2013, the graduate biennial conference, Devotion, was a great accomplishment. It is with happiness and pride that I write that the two-day convention, held at the Eagleton Institute of Politics on November 8th and 9th, was a resounding success, made possible thanks to the support of the Italian Department, with its outstanding professors and its helpful and dearest secretaries, the keynote speaker Prof. Ara Merjian, the graduate students, as well as the sponsorship of the Graduate School and the Rutgers Graduate Students Association.

The conference could rely on a conspicuous presence of panelists, both from inside and outside the Unites States, whose talks explored the varying semantic facets of the term “devotion”, while drawing upon several epochs and different bodies of literature. The investigations dealt with familial attachment, the sense of loyalty to a cause or to political ideals, and of course to the religious reverence or act of dedication. This broad and variegated spectrum was enriched by Prof. Ara Merjian’s insightful presentation on Pier Paolo Pasolini’s performance titled Intellettuale, staged by Fabio Mauri in 1975.

There are no words that can accurately describe the intellectual and vibrant environment of those days, and the very welcoming atmosphere which characterize our department. My personal gratitude goes to the other members of the IGS board, Tiziano Cherubini, Jamison Standridge, and Jennifer Higgins, who worked tirelessly with me to plan this event, to the moderators of the panels, Lucia Vedovi, Marino Forlino and Francesco Chillemi, to all the graduate students of the Rutgers Italian Department that supported with suggestions and comments, and to the participants who contributed to make Devotion an unforgettable experience. Furthermore, since it is the last year of my service as president of the IGS, I would like to take the opportunity to thank all the professors, Carol and Robin, friends and colleagues, who encouraged and motivated me throughout this wonderful adventure.

Grazie di cuore,
Rossella Di Rosa, President of Italian Graduate Society

Conference participants at the Devozione/Devotion conference in November 2013

Professor Ara Merjian, keynote speaker at the conference
ASSESSMENT REPORT

Paola Gambarota has been working so hard on the assessment program for our department that she needs to be commended and thanked by all of us for her accomplishment. She has gone above and beyond her duties to the point of transforming our department assessment reports into a model for other SAS departments. The message below was sent to me by Prof. Susan Lawrence, the Dean of Educational Initiatives and the Core Curriculum at SAS, and copied to Prof. Karen Dennis, Assistant Dean for Assessment. Congratulations, Paola, and thank you!

TO: Alessandro Vettori,

Chair - Italian

Dear Alessandro,

The SAS Assessment Committee recently met to review the annual departmental assessment reports that all SAS departments filed last June. The committee wishes to commend you for the exceptional progress your department has continued to make on assessment. Please feel free to share this correspondence with your department colleagues and your area dean.

Attached is a summary of the Committee's review of your report. The review summarizes its strengths, and offers suggestions for next steps. There's also a chart that shows where your department fits in the spectrum of SAS reports from AY 2012-13, and a brief glossary of some of the shorthand used in the review - such as CTL, for "closing the loop," i.e., taking action based on assessment results.

The Assessment Committee will be especially eager to learn of any changes your department has decided to make based on what you've found in your assessment results, as you continue this exemplary progress.

Thank you once again for your sustained work on assessment. SAS is clearly leading the university in moving forward with assessment, and these efforts have allowed the Assessment Committee to provide best practices examples and tips (also attached) to the other academic units as we continue to promote a culture of evidence-based decision-making.

As always, for assistance with any aspect of your assessment planning, implementation, and/or analysis, or to clarify the steps that have been recommended in this report, please contact Karen Dennis, at kdennis@sas.rutgers.edu or me at slawrence@sas.rutgers.edu.

Sincerely,

Susan Lawrence, on behalf of the SAS Assessment Committee

A special note of gratitude goes to Mr Albert Zdenek for his generous gift of $10,000 and his pledge to donate a total of $50,000 in five years for the benefit of our graduate program. The donation will increase the Laggini Scholarship Fund, which enables us to offer one fellowship a year to one deserving graduate student.
ITALIAN FILM SERIES

This Spring, Italian faculty and doctoral students hosted the Independent Italian Film Series in collaboration with NJ Media Arts Center and the Rutgers Film Co-Op, as part of the New Jersey Film Festival. The series was co-sponsored by the Department of Art History, the Program in Cinema Studies, and the Dean of Humanities of the School of Arts and Sciences. The Department hosted Italo-Ghanaian documentary filmmaker Fred Kuwornu for a screening of his documentary on 'second generation' Italians and citizenship rights 18 IUS SOLI. The Series, whose themes were folded into the undergraduate language and literature curriculum, also presented recent feature films by Francesco Falaschi and Gustav Hofer and Luca Ragazzi. Attendance at the Series by faculty, graduate and undergraduate students, and members of the New Brunswick community was promising, with roughly fifty in attendance each night.

![Image of Independent Italian Film Series 2014 poster]

**We and the Others (2011)**
Dir. Max Nardari

**18 IUS SOLI (2011)**
Dir. Fred Kuwornu

**This is Your World (2011)**
Dir. Francesco Falaschi

**Italy, Love it or Leave it (2011)**
Dir. Gustav Hofer and Luca Ragazzi

**I-Tweet (2012)**
Dir. Mario Pannucchi

**Carmela (2012)**
Dir. Orsa Cousin

All films are free and open to the public.

Screenings on Sundays in Voorhees Hall 105, 71 Hamilton Street, College Avenue Campus, Rutgers University.
Co-sponsored by the School of Arts and Sciences, the Departments of Italian and Art History, and the Program in Cinema Studies at Rutgers University, and the Rutgers Film Co-Op and New Jersey Media Arts Center.
For synopsis and full calendar please see back, see also: [http://www.njfilmfest.com](http://www.njfilmfest.com)
Joe Laggini grew up a child of immigrant Italian parents and worked in the local A&P supermarket as a produce manager. He knew how to pick a ripe melon and would do the family food shopping for the rest of his life, but he wanted more. So after WWII, the GI Bill of Rights made it possible for him to go to college at night to earn his bachelor’s degree. The story goes that when he told my nonna that he wanted to go to college, she was upset because he had such a good job at the A&P. Of course, when he graduated summa cum laude, went on to receive his master’s degree in education from Rutgers, and then received his doctorate of modern languages from Middlebury College in 1962, she changed her tune. Now he was “her son, the professor”! His dissertation research, funded by a Fulbright Scholarship, focused on the poetry of Lionello Fiumi.

Throughout this time, my father was a married man who had four of his five children while he was completing his degrees, the fifth to arrive later. In fact, my mother was pregnant with me while they were in Verona with Fiumi for the Fulbright year, and she had to fly home in her ninth month while my father traveled home on the ship with the other 3 children. My mother supported my Dad, typing his dissertation and (in those pre-computer days) re-typing whole chapters whenever his advisor tore sections apart.

After receiving his doctorate, my father became a professor of Italian at RU, and later Associate Dean of Instruction for Rutgers College, as well as Acting Dean for a year. My favorite part of having a father who was a Dean was the ability to gather all my friends’ drop-add forms, skip the lines at Milledoler Hall, and bring them all straight to him to be signed. It made me a hero with my friends.

My father was a great advocate of Italian American issues and tried to educate people about the damage caused by stereotypes and bigotry. He designed “The Italian-American Experience” course and I used his notes when I created a similar course at Temple University decades later. He was the founding member of the UNICO in Somerville, NJ and in 1984, the Elizabeth Chapter of UNICO National named him the UNICO Man of the Year. For my father, helping Italian Americans succeed in life was part of who he was, and I remember many a time when an older Italian American gentleman would sit at our table with my father, while Dad helped him with paperwork or writing letters or figuring out how to get things done in America.

My parents were passionate too about music. My father played the violin from a young age and my mother had a trained operatic voice. They performed in Somerset Valley Players theater productions, sang in parish shows and in the church choir. So of course, Dad figured out how to combine his love for music with his love for RU. He convinced his colleagues to participate in a “Faculty Follies” variety show, for which he was director and conductor. The Ledge was packed to the rafters with students there to see their favorite profs perform. Dean Gorman performed a comedy skit called “Cinderfella” and professors from Engineering played in a jug band. Sidney Simon, the feared Business Law professor, did the soft shoe, ending in a cartwheel, and the students roared with appreciation and delight. My father, in tux and with the conductor’s baton in hand, beamed as the profs brought down the house.

When Dad retired, the ballroom at his retirement dinner was filled with colleagues, students and alumni who had come back to New Brunswick to join in honoring him, and that night the Joseph E. and Marie E. Laggini Scholarship for Graduate Scholars was born. When he passed away, more than 400 people came to pay their respects. The flag on Old Queens flew at half-mast. My father’s love for Rutgers lived on through his children, many of whom attended Rutgers (and a granddaughter as well) and all of whom follow Rutgers sports. His love for his Italian heritage lives on in the scholarship named for him and my mother. My brothers Bob and Chris and my sisters Marge and Teresa and I are always pleased that a deserving graduate student of Italian receives an award that supports their study. It is a most fitting way to honor my father and mother, and makes us feel that his spirit still lives on the banks of the old Raritan.
LETTER FROM AN ALUMNA

The Way We Were…
by Anne Milano Appel

The years I spent as a graduate student at Rutgers are so far back in time (1965–1970) that it is difficult to imagine how my recollections could be of interest to those of you studying Italian there today. Still, history and time are binding threads…

At that time the department of Italian was part of the Romance Languages Department (my doctorate is in Romance Languages and Literature) and Remigio U. Pane was the department Chair. Joseph Chierici taught Dante and was my dissertation advisor. The other professors I studied with were Umberto Mariani, Guido Guarino, Giovanni Sinicropi and Glauco Cambon.

The department was housed in an old house (I believe it was on Bishop Place) and all of our classes took place in the basement, around a large rectangular table. Offices were upstairs, and when I taught as a T.A. I was assigned a tiny room at the very top floor, with a slanted ceiling and a dormer window. I brought in a hot plate and used to make espresso there for my undergraduate students who dropped in during office hours to try to persuade me to give them a better grade.

I now realize that Italian had been offered at Rutgers since 1939 and that the department’s first doctorate was conferred in 1965, the year I started there, but at the time I was blissfully unaware of all that. What I do remember is the makeup of our class of graduate students: mostly male and mostly Italian-born, though there were some Italo-Americans (like myself). The professors were very Italian in their teaching style, which is to say they mainly lectured and we mainly listened. Despite the collegial table we gathered around, I do not recall much give and take. I do recall being a close-knit group: we often went to have a bite to eat together at a nearby spot (I remember Prof. Mariani balking when we wanted him to sit at the head of the table: “Perché, devo essere sempre in cattedra?”) or drove into New York to attend functions at the Italian Cultural Institute or Columbia’s Casa Italiana.

I also recall Prof. Pane bringing in a “toothbrush” made from a spliced twig to show us how people used to clean their teeth back in the day, and once he brought in a kind of gingerbread man which we had to pass around the table, each first taking a bite (never mind about germs). One of the students was a nun: imagine a nun in a class on Boccaccio! It was quite an eye-opener, especially for her! One of the most refreshing things about Prof. Pane was his down-to-earth attitude toward literary criticism and the ornate extravagance of its form of expression: “se leggete un critico e non ha senso,” he’d tell us, “probabilmente è perché non ha detto niente”.

I don’t know what the department is like today but I do know one area that has surely changed: the library. Our class spent hours in the Alexander Library, in pre-computer times. Reading material was kept in the reserve room, not online, and reading was done from books, not on a Kindle. Research was a nightmare, an excruciatingly slow crawl through printed indexes which – since they were generally printed annually – were never up to date, and which required multiple searches through numerous volumes. Finally, there was the laborious way a dissertation was prepared: typed on a typewriter! I hired a professional typist with a small borsa di studio I was lucky enough to have, then spent days at her house proofreading the pages as she typed them. If I found an error, the whole page had to be retyped! Oh yes, those were the good old days…

Anne Milano Appel, MA 1967, PhD 1970
www.annemilanoappel.com
ALUMNI NEWS

Elisa Biagini


Richard Bonanno

I have served since September 2012 as founding Program Director of Assumption College’s Rome Campus, which opened its doors in February 2013. I will transition to the role of Rome Campus Coordinator upon my return to Assumption’s Worcester campus. During the academic year I have delivered lectures and appeared as panel member at chapters of the Dante Alighieri Society in Cesena and Barletta. One lecture was entitled “Michelangelo Scrittore” and the other (at the Biblioteca Malatestiana with Prof. Luciano Margara, Coordinatore, Campus Universitario Cesena) entitled “Da studente a docente: Due sistemi universitari a confronto, Stati Uniti/Italia.”

Elena Borelli

The book I edited, The Fire Within: Desire in Modern and Contemporary Literature has been published by Cambridge Scholars Publishing and is now available http://www.cambridgescholars.com/the-fire-within-7. I also obtained a grant by ILTEC Institute for Language Education in a Transcultural Context (http://ilet.c.commons.gc.cuny.edu/) for a research project on the teaching of Italian to heritage speakers of Spanish.
David Del Principe

It has been a busy year in the Italian Program at Montclair State University. My colleagues and I are in the initial planning stage for a revision of the Italian curriculum that is designed to base beginning and intermediate Italian language study on students’ chosen fields of study and career interests. In conjunction with the Inserra Endowed Chair in Italian and Italian American Studies, Dr. Teresa Fiore, we also offered numerous, well-attended cultural events, ranging from Italian American Food History, Music, Photography, and Architecture to Humanities-focused start-up companies. On a personal note, I taught a new Italian course, Italian Women Writers with a special focus on Italian Ecofeminism, completed my work as Guest Editor for a special issue of the British journal Gothic Studies, and presented a paper at the Northeast Modern Language Association Convention, participating in a panel with Eleonora Sartoni, a current Rutgers graduate student.

Eduardo Fichera


Joanne Frallicciardi Lyon


Samuel Ghelli


Eny Di Iorio

Julia Kisacky

I presented “The Figure of the Woman Warrior in Valeria Miani’s Celinda” at the Renaissance Society of America meeting in March in New York City.

Stephanie Laggini Fiore

Stephanie Laggini Fiore is currently the Director of the Intensive English Language Program at Temple University. After teaching Italian at Immaculata University and at University of Delaware, I landed at Temple, where I taught Italian from 2000 to 2010 and acted as head of the Italian program as well. While still in my department, I served as the Area Coordinator of the Human Behavior area of the new General Education curriculum at Temple. That meant that I helped faculty from across the university to create courses for GenEd, courses such as Bilingual Communities, Guerrilla Altruism and Kids, Community and Controversy from disciplines as diverse as Architecture, Spanish, and Education. It gave me a bird’s-eye view into what goes on in other departments and in other professors’ curricula, and I loved working with faculty to help them create a course that would engage and inspire students. That work led me to leave my department and become the Associate Director of the Teaching and Learning Center, the center on campus that is responsible for faculty development, helping faculty become better teachers. In that role, I ran programs for faculty from every college at the university. At a certain point, I became known as the “guru of clinical teaching.” How did an Italian professor become known for expertise in clinical teaching? It’s really no mystery – the principles of good teaching remain constant across all disciplines, and I just knew how to start the conversation. Most recently, I was hired to direct the Intensive English Language Program at Temple University. This role is a great fit as it combines my love for curricular issues around language learning with my interest in helping instructors do what they do better (I have 45 instructors in this program), as well as administrative work running a successful budget auxiliary program. I also love interacting on a daily basis with students from all around the world (some of them are even from Italy!) When I was a graduate student, I don’t think I could have seen this career trajectory, but I’m glad of the path I’ve taken and the experiences I’ve had.

Nicholas Patruno

co-edited with Roberta Ricci Approaches to Teaching the Works of Primo Levi, which was published by the Modern Language Association of America. The first part of this volume provides instructors with an overview of the available editions, anthologies, and translations of Levi’s work and identifies other useful classroom aids, such as films, music, and online resources. In the second part, contributors describe different approaches to teaching Levi’s work. Some, in presenting Survival in Auschwitz, The Reawakening, and The Drowned and the Saved, look at the place of style in Holocaust testimony and the reliability of memory in autobiography. Others focus on questions of translation, complicated by the untranslatable in the language and experiences of the concentration camps, or on how Levi incorporates his background as a chemist into his writing, most clearly in The Periodic Table. Prof. Alessandro Carrera, of the University of Houston, wrote the following blurb on the book: “This volume fills a gap, and it is easy to say that it will become a standard reference for undergraduate courses on Levi and even for graduate students who want to begin their research on Levi.”
Roberto Pesce

After three years at Tulane University, New Orleans, LA, as a Visiting Assistant Professor, I am currently working at Baylor University, Waco, TX, as a Full-Time Lecturer. I teach a variety of language, culture, and literature courses, being part of the newly created Minor in Italian. I have also been appointed Director of the Summer Study Abroad Program in Italy, helping our Department of Modern Languages and Cultures to expand Italian here in Texas. I am presently working on two different projects: The critical edition of a 13th-century manuscript in franco-venetian on Attila the Hun and his descent into Italy, and on Petrarch as geographer and his influence on the first physical drawings of the Italian peninsula.

Massimo Riva

In 2013, President Napolitano bestowed on Massimo Riva the title of Officer in the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic, for merit acquired by the nation in literature and the arts. Prof. Riva curated an installation of the Garibaldi on the Microsoft Surface project in the Italian pavilion at the 23rd General Conference of the International Council of Museums held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. He lectured on Boccaccio, Pico della Mirandola, the Garibaldi panorama and the digital humanities at various U.S. institutions, and the University of Manchester (UK), the University of Toronto (CA), the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos in Lima (Peru), the Italian Cultural Institute in Rio de Janeiro and the American Academy in Rome. His video-blog, Humanities Lab, is now a regular feature on the Italian online magazine TechnoNews. He is currently completing a book entitled: Italian Shadows: Casanova's Polemoscope and Other Tales of Imaginary Media.

Lorenzo Valterza

I have been reappointed as Visiting Assistant Professor of Italian at The University of Notre Dame. My article, “Dante’s Disputed Journey” was published in March in the premier issue of Le Tre Corone. In March, I participated as a discussant in Notre Dame’s conference in Rome entitled “Dante’s Intellectual Formation.” I have completed two book reviews and am working toward completing my own book on law and moral enquiry in the Middle Ages. In May I also presented a conference paper at the 49th Annual Medieval Congress at Kalamazoo. I have been invited to present at a conference entitled “Contextualizing Dante” at the University of Göttingen in May 2015. I am also co-organizing with Professor Franziska Meieir a 2016 conference on Cino da Pistoia.

We are happy to announce that Rhiannon Welch and Nathan Horrell will get married on August 2, 2014 in San Francisco. Auguri e… viva gli sposi!
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