



French Department Newsletter March 2024

Greetings! This has been a busy year, and below you'll get a glimpse of some of the events and activities we've been engaged in. We recently underwent a major academic program review that concluded that the Berkeley French Department is "distinguished by the rigor, vitality, and creativity of its scholarship and is incontestably among the top handful of French and Francophone programs in North America." But we are not resting on our laurels. We have joined forces with the Institute of European Studies and the France-Berkeley Fund to create an interdisciplinary [French Center of Excellence](#) that, with the generous support of the French Embassy, has already funded four major projects on the Berkeley campus, one of which is our new [Internship Program](#) that offers the possibility of earning a certificate in French for Professional Purposes (see description in newsletter below). We have taken initial steps toward the creation of a [Center for Translation Studies](#) through the leadership of Professor [Mairi McLaughlin](#) (see more below). We have greatly benefitted from [Debarati Sanyal](#)'s directorship of the [Center for Interdisciplinary Critical Inquiry](#) (see, for example, the Demos Anxiety symposium in Events below). Our undergraduate and graduate students are extremely happy to be back to in-person classes and are more creative than ever in their studies. Despite the worrisome decline in language study nationwide, we have managed to maintain better enrollments than many of our peer departments. Our faculty members continue to be extraordinarily productive and have won prestigious awards recognizing their work. And with recent hires, we have grown to the largest faculty that we have had in many years. It is a pleasure to introduce the two exceptional colleagues who have joined our faculty this year...

New Faculty Members!

Medievalist **Henry Ravenhall** joined the faculty in August and has enjoyed his first one-and-a-half semesters at Berkeley, teaching courses on monstrosity in early French literature and on medieval manuscripts. His articles on “textile curtains” in medieval French manuscripts and on smell in Old French devotional poetry have appeared in print (*Digital Philology, New Medieval Literatures*). A co-edited volume in memory of Simon Gaunt (a former Pajus Distinguished Visitor) has just been sent to the publishers (Viella in Rome). Henry has been awarded an Advancing Faculty Diversity in the Arts & Humanities New Faculty Fellowship for a project on “Sensory Medievalisms,” which will start a conversation about the cultural and political importance of sensory experience in modern and contemporary remediations of the “medieval,” especially in the US (and Californian) context.



Our new modernist **Liesl Yamaguchi** also joined the department this past August. Her book *On the Colors of Vowels: Thinking Through Synesthesia* examines color terminology in nineteenth-century poetic and linguistic discourses, drawing connections between those discourses with the emerging science of synesthesia. The book was awarded a Helen Tartar First Book Subvention from the American Comparative Literature Association and will appear with Fordham University Press in late 2024. Professor Yamaguchi is also a prolific translator, and has published works by Murielle Macé, Arlette Farge, Jean-Luc Nancy, and Jean-Claude Milner, as well as eleven essays in a collection entitled *Fernand Léger: Modern Art and the Metropolis*, which won the Dedalus Foundation: Exhibition Catalogue Award. Most significant is her 466-page translation of Väinö Linna’s Finnish classic novel *Tuntematon sotilas* into English (*Unknown Soldiers*), which was published by Penguin Classics in 2015.

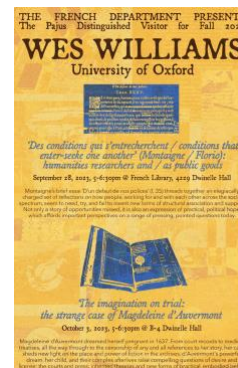


EVENTS

Since last year’s newsletter the French Department has hosted over 30 lectures, conferences, seminars, workshops or other events—all of these can be found on our website in our [Events archive](#). Here are a few highlights:

- In collaboration with the Institut des Études Genre at the Université de Genève, Professor **Will Burton**, former graduate student **Ty Blakeney** (now at Northwestern), and Comparative Literature graduate student **Mary Mussman** organized a two-part conference entitled [Monique Wittig: Twenty Years Later / Vingt ans après](#) (in Berkeley in March 2023 and in Geneva in June 2023) that has stimulated transatlantic and international exchange about Wittig’s work. The organizing committee will be publishing a volume based on the conference in the near future.
- Each year the graduate students invite a speaker to give the Rex Lecture, in honor of our late colleague **Ted Rex**. Last April, Professor **Joëlle Papillon** of McMaster University gave a lecture on “Indigenous Texts as Teachers” and this spring Professor **Therese Banks** of Middlebury College will give a talk entitled “Scintillating Whiteness: Stories of Saint Louis Across the Centuries” on Wednesday April 3 (5-6 pm) in the French Department Library (4229 Dwinelle).

- Following last year's Pajus visit by **Anne Garréta** (see our 2023 Newsletter), this year's Pajus Distinguished Visitor was **Wes Williams**, Professor of French Literature at Oxford University and former Director of The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities. During his two-week stay in late September 2023, Professor Williams gave a seminar entitled “‘Vivre sa vie’: Essays in voluntary servitude” as well as two public lectures (“Des conditions qui s’entrecherchent/ conditions that enter-seeke one another’ [Montaigne/Florio]: Humanities researchers and/as public goods” and “The imagination on trial: the strange case of Magdeleine d’Auvermont”).
- This year's Distinguished Alumn.ae.i Lecture was delivered in September by Professor **Ann Delehanty** of Reed College and was entitled “Literature as Skeptical Inquiry: The Case of the Early Modern Novel.”
- Last October, **Debarati Sanyal** organized an interdisciplinary symposium entitled [Demos Anxiety: Great Replacement Theory and Democracy](#) featuring **Eric Fassin** along with **Cécile Alduy**, **Dorian Bell**, **Sarah Bracke**, **Donna Jones**, **Lawrence Rosenthal**, **Aarti Sethi**, **Christy Wampole**, and **Patricia Williams**.
- In November, in collaboration with the Townsend Center for the Humanities, **Mairi McLaughlin** and **Tim Hampton** organized a conference entitled “Literalism, Lateralism, Letteralism: Concepts and Technologies of Translation” that involved the participation of **Ambika Athreya**, **Polina Barskova**, **Vincent Broqua**, **Eric Falci**, **Deniz Göktürk**, **Léa Huotari**, **Rick Kern**, **Andrew Leong**, **Beth Piatote**, **Valeria Ramírez-Castañeda**, **Rebecca Tarvin**, **Diana Thow**, **Paula Varsano**, and **Liesl Yamaguchi**.
- We have had a number of author visits during the year: Cameroonian author **Hemley Boum** (*Le Rêve du pêcheur*) visited in October; Goncourt Prize Winner **Mohamed Mbougar Sarr** (*The Most Secret Memory of Men*) spoke to the Department in November; in February, **Line Papin**, author of *Les os des filles*, was publicly interviewed by French undergraduate **Mel Kritikopoulos**; and this coming April 17, **Constance Debré** (*Play Boy; Love Me Tender; Nom; Offenses*) will speak in the Library of French Thought (4229 Dwinelle, 5-6 pm).



- In connection with her French 137 (French for the Professions) course, **Claire Tourmen** organized a “Hot Topics in Social Sciences” Speaker Series in French on campus and online last fall, which will resume in Fall 2024. Stay tuned !
 - Just this past week, the Department enjoyed a pair of lectures by Oxford scholars **Ann Jefferson** (“‘Quel siècle à mains!’ Hands under the spotlight in 19th-century France”) and **Michael Holland** (“‘Je n'ai pas d'archive...’ Making sense of the Maurice Blanchot Papers”) along with a joint panel discussion on Biography and Criticism.



PEOPLE

Congratulations to PhD graduates **Ty Blakeney** (now Assistant Professor at Northwestern University), **Rupinder Kaur** (now Assistant Professor at Vassar College), **Patrick Lyons** (Postdoctoral Associate in French Studies at Duke University), **Jacob Raterman** (French and Humanities teacher at Salesian High School in Richmond, California), **Trevor Sanders** (Visiting Assistant Professor at Georgetown College, Kentucky), and **Rachel Weiher** (now Equitable Assessment Consultant at the UC Berkeley Center for Teaching & Learning).

Welcome to our three new graduate students this year: **Lina Scally**, **Robbie Spratt**, and **Jesús Ramírez Silva** (RLL), to our ENS exchange graduate student **Lison Huet-Larrieu**, and to our incredibly dedicated new Graduate Student Affairs Officer, **Pichaya Kositsawat** !

Congratulations to **Daniel Hoffmann**, who received Berkeley's highest teaching honor, the [Distinguished Teaching Award](#), at the end of last year. Daniel has also made continuous refinements in our [Summer in Paris program](#) and has had record enrollments last summer as well as this coming summer.

Congratulations to **Claire Tourmen**, who passed her excellence review and was promoted to continuing lecturer status. Claire has been instrumental in creating new **professional pathways** for students of French interested in developing international careers. Students who take French for the Professions (Fr 137), perform an internship in French (locally or internationally) and take two other classes will now qualify for a *Certificate in French for Professional Purposes*. We envision paths leading to careers in Politics, Business, Cinema, Cultural Institutions, Education, Translation/Interpretation, and beyond, where students will combine a major in Political Science, Business, Global Studies, Art History, Journalism etc., gain proficiency in French in professional settings and develop their intercultural competencies in their field of expertise. This program, which received funds from the US French Embassy, UC Berkeley, and the Center of Excellence of French and Francophone Studies on campus, will be evaluated in 2025. Others involved in this effort are **Nina Rennert-Cohen**, **Déborah Blocker** (currently teaching a French 137 on Arts and Cultural Institutions in France and the Francophone World), **Vesna Rodic**, **Nick Paige**, and **Rick Kern**.

We conducted an alumni survey in 2023 that showed that our alumni use French in various professional settings, such as medicine, law, business, journalism, education, teaching, and research. We hope to keep working with our alumni and our growing network of local francophone partners, including the French Consulate in San Francisco, the Chambre de Commerce Franco-Américaine de San Francisco, Alliances Françaises, Ecoles bilingues, to offer internships in French and a broader range of experiences for our students.

If you work in a French-speaking environment and might be able to take on a student intern, please let us know !

Déborah Blocker and **Michael Lucey** recently received highly prestigious awards for their research. In November, the Académie Française awarded **Déborah Blocker** the [Prix Monseigneur](#)



[Marcel](#) for her book, *Le Principe de plaisir. Esthétique, savoirs et politique dans la Florence des Médicis (XVIe-XVIIe siècles)*. The prize, « destiné à l'auteur d'un ouvrage consacré à l'histoire philosophique, littéraire ou artistique de la Renaissance », was awarded at the Institut de France (see photo of Déborah with her husband Patrice and son Nathan immediately before the award ceremony). This past January, Déborah presented a 2-hour keynote address on “Les arts de la mémoire: figuration et effacement du passé dans deux monuments funéraires aristocratiques du XVIIe siècle” for a week-long doctoral seminar organized by the center *Culture et Histoire dans l'Espace Roman* at the University of Strasbourg and funded by

the European Commission. Déborah was also recently invited to join the [Deputazione di Storia Patria per la Toscana](#), the oldest and most prestigious professional society for historians and archivists of Tuscany. Congratulations, Déborah!

Congratulations also to **Michael Lucey**, who in January was awarded the [Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione prize for French and Francophone Studies](#) at the Modern Language Association Annual Meeting in Philadelphia. Here Michael is pictured

with Dana Williams of the MLA. Michael also recently contributed a chapter entitled “[Speech](#)” to a volume called *The Proustian Mind* (Routledge, 2023) and was invited to write a special essay for the latest issue of *Nineteenth-Century French Studies* (Vol. 52, 2024)

entitled “[Conceptualizing Trajectories of Readability](#).” Michael is currently translating Didier Eribon’s latest book, *The Life, Old Age, and Death of a Working-Class Woman*, and a [short segment from the translation](#)



Photo credit: Edward Savaria, Jr.

appeared in the most recent issue of *Granta*. Finally, Michael contributed to a special issue of [differences](#) devoted to Leo Bersani’s work, an issue to which **Damon Young** also contributed.

Karl Britto continues to serve as Associate Dean of Arts and Humanities. He recently published an article on Graham Greene’s *The Quiet American* and Anna Moï’s *Le venin du papillon* in *Representations*. In his role as a member of the Editorial Committee of the Diasporic Vietnamese Artists Network, he is working to support the translation of francophone Vietnamese diasporic literature into English. He just welcomed French Vietnamese author Line Papin to the Berkeley campus for a reading and discussion of her book *Les os des filles* (published last fall as [The Girl Before Her](#)).

Will Burton spoke at the 53rd annual meeting of the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, giving a talk entitled “From Names to Nouns: The Linguistic Origins of Sexual Difference,” looking at Rousseau’s *Discours sur les origines et les fondements de l’inégalité parmi les hommes* and his *Essai sur l’origine des langues*. Last summer, Will researched Claude Lévi-Strauss’s relationship with Buddhism in his papers at the Bibliothèque nationale de France for an article entitled “Structuralist or lesbian? Rousseau between Claude Lévi-Strauss and Monique Wittig,” forthcoming in *Modern Intellectual History*. Will has taught two packed sessions of “Man, Woman, Other,” a course charting the history of trans, intersex and non-binary people in French-speaking literature from the Middle Ages to the present. Will also taught a course called “Pronoun Wars,” in which students read a variety of literary, scientific, and activist documents to uncover the roots of today’s controversies around pronouns and gender-neutral language in the context of the 20th-century’s decisive

encounter between structural linguistics, experimental literature, and feminist, queer and trans activism.

While **Tim Hampton** was on leave during 2022-23, he wrote a memoir about the humanities and higher education called “Trespassing” and is currently reworking it into a publication. He also wrote “Folk Music and the Public Sphere” for the *Cambridge Companion to Folk Music*, as well as an essay on Marguerite de Navarre, for a collection published in France by Champion. He gave a seminar on Shakespeare at the Dahlem Humanities Center in Berlin, and taught a course on Joni Mitchell for the Stanford Continuing Education program. Tim’s [most recent book](#), on the history of cheerfulness, was reviewed in *The Atlantic* and *The Guardian* among other places, and he was a guest on Irish Public Radio and Australian National Radio to talk about the book. One of Tim’s music groups, “The Unheard Melodies Project,” released an EP on Spotify called “The Shortest Day.” His jazz combo, the Clifton Street Regulars, which features **Debarati Sanyal** on vocals, released their first album, “Standards,” which you can find on Apple Music or Spotify. Tim also published an essay on the sonnet in the online magazine, *Aeon*. That essay has been quite popular and is being used as a teaching tool by colleagues at several universities.

Lea Huotari (University of Turku, Finland) was a Fulbright Scholar during the fall and winter, working with **Mairi McLaughlin** on a project investigating translation as a journalistic tool and gave a Work in Progress talk on her research on the translation of foreign sources in media coverage of the French 2022 presidential elections.

Rick Kern has a number of forthcoming articles, including a position paper for a Perspectives issue of *The Modern Language Journal*, entitled “Twenty-first century technologies and language education: Charting a path forward,” that will be accompanied by responses from scholars in different regions of the world. Rick also recently co-chaired the Dean’s Task Force on Languages, Language-based Disciplines, and Global Citizenship, and was the Berkeley representative on a UC Systemwide Task Force on Open Educational Resources.

Mairi McLaughlin has two books coming out in the next few months with Oxford University Press. [The Oxford Handbook of the French Language](#), edited by Mairi McLaughlin and Wendy Ayres-Bennett, will be the first comprehensive reference work in English on the French language. Across a total of 32 chapters, it offers a wide-ranging approach to the rich, varied, and exciting research that is taking place on French across multiple subfields. The other book is a co-edited volume called [Historical and Sociolinguistic Approaches to French](#), which showcases the most innovative current scholarship in historical linguistics, sociolinguistics, and in the burgeoning field of historical sociolinguistics which lies at their intersection. Both of these books have benefited from the input of many other members of the French department and the wider Berkeley community. They include chapters by three current and former students and faculty members: **Rick Kern**, **Jenelle Thomas**, and **Sophie Marnette**. Current and former students have also been involved in translating chapters from French and preparing the manuscript for publication: **Thomas Corbani**, **Emily Linares**, and **Patrick Lyons**. With **Tim Hampton** and **Rick Kern**, Mairi has been working hard to set up a Center for the Study of Translation at Berkeley. It’s still in the early stages but the “Literalism, Lateralism, Letteralism: Concepts and Technologies of Translation” roundtables organized by Tim and Mairi in November (see Events above) brought together people working on translation from disciplines as disparate as English and Integrative Biology! In the last few months, the [Berkeley Translation Initiative website](#) has gone live and we are excited to organize more translation events next year. Alongside this, Mairi has added two more courses on translation to the French

Department offerings this year: An Introduction to Translation Studies taught in English for students in the lower division, and a Freshman Seminar co-taught with a faculty member in the sciences called Breaking Language Barriers in the Academy.

Susan Maslan gave a talk entitled “Transformations of the Social Bond on the Revolutionary Stage: Equality; Judgment; Affect” at the Franke Institute for the Humanities, University of Chicago last spring. A version of the talk is forthcoming in a volume entitled *Le pouvoir en procès. Opinion publique et légitimité politique des Lumières au Premier Empire* to be published by Classiques Garnier. Her 2023 French Department Cal Day lecture, “Vive la Révolution!” sought to inspire enthusiasm for the French Revolution and for French Studies among prospective students, visitors, and the larger community. In April, she will participate on the fifth annual faculty panel “Speaking the Unspeakable: God” that brings together three or four Cal faculty members from different disciplines to discuss their scholarly and personal (or lack thereof) thoughts about God, sponsored by Berkeley Hillel.

Nicholas Paige has been getting used to microphones while teaching: last fall his class on the history of Paris grew to attract 150 students! This semester, he is trying his hand at our American Cultures course, pioneered years ago by **Karl Britto**, on the “Cultures of Franco-America,” while also directing six of our undergrads in Marivaux’s one-act play *Le Legs*, premiering this Saturday, March 16 at 5 pm in B-4 Dwinelle (and being performed again on Wednesday March 20 at 4 pm in B-4 Dwinelle. Research-wise, this year saw the publication of a brief history of the phrase “the voluntary suspension of disbelief,” and Nick has been giving talks (and sponsoring a workshop) that are part a project that seeks to model the *longue durée* evolution of cultural artifacts.

Debarati Sanyal co-taught a graduate seminar with **Rhiannon Welch** titled *Borders, Media and the Crisis Imaginary* (Fr 260/It 295/CT 290) in which they compared French and Italian responses to contemporary migration. As director for the Center for Interdisciplinary Critical Inquiry, Debarati organized a conference on *Borders and Crossings: Contemporary Arts and Techniques of Migration* (March 11-12, 2023) that gathered scholars working in migration studies from law, architecture, religious studies, anthropology, visual arts and literature. In Fall 2023, Debarati invited French sociologist **Eric Fassin** (Paris 8) as the inaugural CICI visiting scholar to give a talk and a graduate seminar on neoliberalism, neofascism and racism in France. As mentioned in the Events section above, she organized a follow-up symposium titled *Demos Anxiety: Great Replacement Theory and Democracy* to reflect on conspiracy theories about population replacement. Most recently, Debarati co-organized a series of events on *Imagining Beyond Authoritarianism: Race and Gender in our Times* and she published “Memory, Allegory and the Plague: Albert Camus on COVID-19” in *Critical Memory Studies: New Approaches* (Routledge, 2023).

Vesna Rodic continues to direct the French Language Program and develop new inquiry- and discovery-based curriculum. For a third year, she has been training students and instructors in discovery-based pedagogy through the Berkeley Discovery Initiative, together with **Rick Kern**, **Ramona Naddaff** (Rhetoric) and **Pat Steenland** (College Writing). Rick and Vesna shared their work at the Excellence in Pedagogy and Innovative Classrooms (EPIC) conference at UCLA in spring 2023 and at the 2024 MLA in Philadelphia. Vesna Rodic's work on curricular innovation, teaching, and instructor training on campus has been recognized by the 2023 Chancellor's Sustainability Award, and in January 2024, Vesna was selected as a Faculty Fellow at UCB's Center for Teaching and Learning for a fellowship awarded to educators with a demonstrated track record of

honoring and including diverse student perspectives in their classroom and for designing classes that engage their students in active and critical thinking in their disciplines. With **Rick Kern, Déborah Blocker, Claire Tourmen** and **Lydia Yoon, Vesna** is part of a team that has been awarded the campus 2023-25 Presidential Chair Fellows Award for the Professional Pathways in French project. Vesna's latest publication, an article on Bertrand's prose poetry, is forthcoming in *Revue Bertrand*.

Margot Szarke has an article forthcoming in the Journal of the Society of Dix-Neuviémistes, *Dix-Neuf*: "[Zola's Sense of Reality: Repetition, Deadtime, and Boredom in La Joie de vivre](#)." (currently online only, but it will appear in print later this year). Margot also has a new CD entitled [The Pearl and the Magpie](#), which is available on Apple Music, Spotify, and other venues. These are original songs and Margot is on vocals, guitar, piano, and mandolin, joined by her husband Josh on electric guitar, Matt Patrick on bass, pump organ, Marxaphone, and percussion, and Zach Miller on drums.

Soraya Tlati spent this last year working on her book manuscript on the relationship between Islam and psychoanalysis and worked in cooperation with BAMPEA to discuss two Algerian films on the Algerian war of independence: *Chronicle of the years of Ember*, by Lakhdar-Hamina, and *La Nouba des femmes du Mont Chenoua* by Assia Djebar.

In March 2023, **Damon Young** was a professeur invité at Paris 1, where he gave workshops and lectures with students in film studies and at the École des Beaux Arts. He was external fellow faculty at the University of Toronto and, in May 2023, holder of the residential MacGeorge Fellowship at the University of Melbourne. In December 2023, Damon organized a symposium at Berkeley honoring the work of Linda Williams in "porn studies," for the 10th anniversary of the journal of that name. This event brought together leading scholars of sexuality, performance, and media from around the world who engaged with Williams' œuvre and intellectual legacies.

Among our graduate students, **Kévin Drif** recently published a [review](#) of [Normporn: Queer viewers and the TV that soothes us](#) by Karen Tongson in the journal *Continuum*. Kévin will also publish a chapter he presented as a WIP in fall 2023, "Gender Dynamics and Spatiality in *Banlieue* Education Films" in an edited volume entitled *Gender in French Banlieue Cinema: Intersectional Perspectives*, which will appear later this year. Kévin will present a paper on humanizing immigrant stories via rap music this June at the 23rd International Conference on New Directions in the Humanities, and has just drafted a chapter entitled "When the *Banlieue* Meets the Third *Arrondissement*: Education, Hip Hop, and Emancipation in *Allons Enfants*" to be published in *Education in Contemporary French and Francophone Film* edited by Rhiannon Harries and John Marks. **Caroline Godard** has been a Berkeley Language Center Fellow this semester and has co-authored an [essay on the language of women's lands](#) that appeared very recently in *Public Books*. Two of the other three authors are also UC Berkeley PhD students. **Oliver Whitmore** has been engaged in an Occitan research project with the Berkeley Language Center related to his dissertation and was recently interviewed in French about his Occitan research: [Written Interview](#) (for Cheminez) and [Spoken Interview](#) (for Radio Occitania). Congratulations to **Alan Yeh**, who was awarded a Mellon/American Council of Learned Societies Dissertation Innovation Fellowship that has supported his dissertation research this year, and to **Alexis Stanley** and **Amber Sweat** for receiving the Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor Award at the end of last year. Amber was also (literally) in the [news](#) recently, talking about breakdancing in the 2024 Olympic Games!

Undergraduate Profiles

Here are three examples of how our remarkable undergraduates are making the most of their studies of French language, literature, and culture. Our thanks to Undergraduate Student Advisor **Nina Rennert-Cohen**, and our Faculty Undergraduate Advisor, **Nicholas Paige**, for all their efforts in energizing the community of French majors and minors.

Mel Kritikopoulos is a junior double-majoring in French and Comparative Literature and minoring in journalism. After studying at the Universite de Lyon 2 through the UCEAP program in the Fall of 2023, she found a deep interest in the exploration of French usage outside of continental France. In her senior year, she will be writing a thesis that explores the use of non-Vietnamese languages (English and French) to tell multigenerational auto-fictional stories of the Vietnamese diaspora through a comparative analysis of Line Papin's *Les Os des Filles* and E.M. Tran's *Daughters of the New Year*. As part of the preparatory work for this endeavor, she recently moderated a conversation with French-Vietnamese author Line Papin while on her book tour for her first English translation, *The Girl Before Her*. Mel is also a contributing writer at diaCRITICS, a literary magazine run by the Diasporic Vietnamese Artists Network (DVAN), where she continuously explores Vietnamese diasporic narratives through interviews and book reviews. She hopes to maintain her French language knowledge and background in her career after Berkeley, dabbling in museum work and ultimately hoping to become an educator.



When **Zoe Jean-Sprecher** decided to spend her third year studying abroad in France, she couldn't predict how wonderful her time there would be. After spending the Fall 2023 semester in Bordeaux, learning a lot, and enjoying the company of some great friends, she is currently in Lyon for the Spring, continuing to find her experience there just as enjoyable as it is educational. Zoe reports she will be sad to leave, but she will be glad to return to Berkeley with her French much improved and a lifetime of memories she'll always treasure. Here is a photo of Zoe in Parc Peixotto in Bordeaux.



Samantha Bonadio is a recent graduate with majors in French and Comparative Literature and a minor in [Applied Language Studies](#). Sam loved her time at Cal because of all the amazing opportunities she had to explore her interests. During her senior year, she took her first graduate seminar with **Mairi McLaughlin** on translation theory, and she also worked with **Maya Sidhu** on an honors thesis in which she studied the literary feminisms of Woolf and Cixous in “A Room of One’s Own” and “Laugh of the Medusa” (respectively), exploring the texts for instances political engagement even if their arguments are rooted in their more literary interests. Post graduation, she’s still local to Berkeley and has been able to audit a class on feminist studies with **Will Burton** and work on the French department’s play, “Le



Legs,” put on by **Nicholas Paige**. She has used her degrees to find jobs as an English instructor for a private after school academy and as a substitute teacher for [L’Ecole Bilingue de Berkeley](#)— where she gets to use French everyday! Sam hopes to pursue graduate studies in French in the coming years. She would like to thank everyone who made her time at Cal so special.

Passages

We are sorry to announce that we lost two emeritus colleagues this past year: Professor Emeritus [Basil Guy](#) and Professor Emeritus [Leonard Johnson](#). The links lead to their respective tributes on our website.



The Library of French Thought continues to grow as a space for undergraduate exploration, while providing faculty and graduate students with exceptional resources to pursue their research. Our recent graduate student librarians **Oliver Whitmore, Amber Sweat, Olivia Goldring,** and **Erin Dunbar** have made welcome changes that significantly improve visibility of and access to our holdings. We would like to thank the French department community-at-large for their donations to our collections. We would especially like to recognize the contributions from the estate of the late Professor **Leo Bersani**. We also thank Professors **David Hult** and **Larry Hyman** (UC Berkeley Linguistics), **Jay Siskin** (UC Santa Cruz), and alumni & community members **Mary and Terry Mayo, Jess Morton, Laurie Farber, Anne Dumontier,** and **Amanda Fox** for their donations. If you are interested in donating materials to the Library of French Thought, please send an email to frenchlibrary@berkeley.edu.

Please note that alumni are welcome to use the reading room in the library during hours of operation.

We would like to get more alumni news for our next newsletter – please send notes to me at rkern@berkeley.edu

Please consider supporting the French Department with a gift during this year’s **Big Give**. [You can make a gift here.](#)

Un grand merci !