



# Center for Teaching and Learning Newsletter

Vol. 13 No. 8

April/May 2008

## Dates to Note!!

### JOURNAL CLUB

Thursday, June 5

Thursday, June 12

Thursday, June 19

Thursday, June 26

Wednesday, July 2

12:45 to 2 p.m.

Library room 110 in the  
Academic Commons

### CONVERSATIONS ON TEACHING

Monday, August 4

*Organizing the Course*

10 a.m. to Noon

Bent Hall 277A

Thursday, August 7

*Organizing the Course,*

*Active Learning, and*

*Classroom Management*

9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Flynn Hall Board Room

Staten Island Campus

Monday, August 11

*Active Learning*

10 a.m. to Noon

Wednesday, August 13

*Classroom Management*

10 a.m. to Noon

Bent Hall 101A

Monday, August 25

*Organizing the Course,*

*Active Learning, and*

*Classroom Management*

9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Bent Hall 101A

To **RSVP** phone us at ext.

1859 or email us at

CTL@stjohns.edu.

## 2008 Teaching Award Recipients

The Center for Teaching and Learning is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2008 Teaching Awards, which will be presented at commencement. The University is fortunate to have such gifted and dedicated faculty members, and the Center is proud to be able to honor them this year.

The **Teaching Excellence Awards** are given annually to professors who have established a record of continued excellence in teaching and scholarship. The recipients this year are:

**Dr. Sue Marie Ford**, Associate Professor of Pharmaceutical Sciences in the College of Pharmacy and Allied Health Professions, will receive the award for **Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching**. Dr. Ford is known for the rigor of her courses and her commitment to excellence. She is admired by her students for her encouragement and her tireless efforts on their behalf. She has also done a great deal to develop the Toxicology Program at the University.

**Dr. Ralph Terregrossa**, Associate Professor of Economics in the Peter J. Tobin College of Business, will receive the award for **Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching**. Dr. Terregrossa is considered a master teacher by both his students and his colleagues. One of the keys to his success is his ability to treat his students as individuals and bring out each student's strengths. He is also known for his work as a mentor of business students.

**Dr. Joanne Robertson**, Associate Professor of Literacy in the School of Education, will receive the award for **Excellence in Graduate Teaching**. Dr. Robertson is committed to supporting teacher development and encouraging reflective practices. An expert in literacy studies, she emphasizes a variety of research methods that her students can use during their education and in their classroom practice.

**Dr. Ales Vancura**, Professor of Biology in St. John's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, will receive the award for **Excellence in Graduate Teaching**. Dr. Vancura combines excellent teaching skills with an impressive research record. He sets rigorous standards for laboratory work and yet does so with a sense of humor. His commitment to quality is reflected in the high caliber of his doctoral students.

**Dr. Chieh-Mei Wu**, Adjunct Associate Professor of Music in St. John's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, will receive the award for **Excellence in Teaching for Adjunct Faculty**. Professor Wu brings a wealth of professional experience to her music classes at St. John's. An accomplished opera singer, she introduces her students to the joys of opera, and they respond enthusiastically to her approach which includes attendance at live performances.

## Center for Teaching and Learning

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Maura C. Flannery

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Elaine Carey

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### 2007-2009 FELLOWS:

Florin Catrina

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Kristin Prevallet

### 2006-2008 FELLOWS:

Olga Hilas

Steven Mentz

Stephen P. Miller

Susie Pak

Kathryn Shaughnessy

Victoria Shoaf

Ellen Tufano

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*This newsletter is published monthly during the academic year by the Center for Teaching and Learning.*

### Managing Editor:

Lisa Getman

## Interactions between Muslims and Non-Muslims

### Vincentian Mission: Opportunity and Responsibility-XVI in the Series

Karen A. Leal (College of Professional Studies, lealk@stjohns.edu)

*In this column, faculty from across the University share their experience in actualizing the Vincentian Mission through research, teaching and service. In this issue, Karen Leal, Vincentian Research Fellow and historian in the College of Professional Studies who is currently in Istanbul working on a research project, describes the manner in which Greek Orthodox Christians related with Muslims within the Ottoman State. She suggests the necessity for a re-examination of previously held assumptions about these relationships. This consideration of 17<sup>th</sup> Century Istanbul resonates with a period in St. Vincent's life (1605-1607) when as a slave in Tunis, he experienced "life with Mohammedans."*

The theme of Founder's Week 2008, "Vincentian Beyond Borders," has made me think of how the idea of boundaries, both on a conceptual and physical level, dovetailed with many aspects of my own research on non-Muslims, particularly the Greek Orthodox, in Ottoman society in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. I think that understanding the way non-Muslims functioned in a Muslim empire at the time when the Congregation of St. Vincent was being established in Europe provides a useful historical context in which to better appreciate the kind of society St. Vincent envisioned.

I would like to describe briefly my research on the spaces and places occupied by Muslims and non-Muslims in Istanbul, the capital of the Ottoman Empire, at the end of the seventeenth century. My aim has not been to examine the structures themselves but to consider their significance as points of interaction: where Muslims and non-Muslims on a regular basis physically reenacted, the numerous horizontal and vertical ties that bound them to their co-religionists, their neighborhoods, their fellow Istanbulites and the Imperial Divan, the empire's supreme judicial body, whose decisions exerted a crucial impact on how and by whom those spaces might be used. These concrete locales and the way the Ottoman state exerted its sovereignty over them in the late 1600s demand a re-examination of the traditional conception of the position occupied by non-Muslims on the individual and corporate level in the Ottoman empire — particularly in light of how that position has been portrayed in the narratives of the nation-states that succeeded the empire in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, such as Greece, Turkey, Bulgaria, and Romania. (The sometimes arbitrary borders established by nations and nation-states also require transcending!)

The churches where Greek Orthodox Christians worshipped and the homes and neighborhoods they inhabited represent two venues where non-Muslim subjects might be found on a regular basis in Istanbul at the turn of the eighteenth century. Meanwhile, a common desire to drink and relax often overrode distinctions of confession (though perhaps not of gender) as primarily male Greek Orthodox, Armenian, Jewish and Muslim patrons frequented neighborhood taverns known as *meyhanes*.

When Church walls crumbled and houses needed renovation, Greek Orthodox inhabitants sometimes rented and bought homes in Muslim neighborhoods where their presence might not always be viewed favorably. And the rowdy behavior of tavern patrons occasionally elicited complaints from Muslim neighbors about the sale of alcohol in the city. All of these situations required the intervention of the state authorities, which was later documented in the bureaucratic registers I consulted.

*(continued on page 5)*



## Faculty News

April/May 2008

**Professor Joseph Adolphe** (Fine Arts, [adolphej@stjohns.edu](mailto:adolphej@stjohns.edu)) art critic, Judy Birke, published a favorable review of his 'Deconstruction & Resurrection' show in the *New Haven Register* (February 2008); painted two portraits of the new Dean of the Law School for *USC Law Magazine*; also published a portrait of fund raiser Penny Pritzker for a front page article in *The Wall Street Journal* (March 2008).

**Dr. Frank Barile** (Pharmaceutical Sciences, [barilef@stjohns.edu](mailto:barilef@stjohns.edu)) published the book *Principles of Toxicology Testing* (2007).

**Dr. James Bethea** (Human Services and Counseling, [betheaj@stjohns.edu](mailto:betheaj@stjohns.edu)) presented "Displaced with a Disability: One Person, Two Perspectives" at the American Counseling Association's (ACA) Annual 2008 International Conference in Honolulu, HI.

**Dr. Barrett P. Brenton** (Sociology and Anthropology, [brentonb@stjohns.edu](mailto:brentonb@stjohns.edu)) undertook a two-year term as President of the Northeastern Anthropological Association; was appointed to a "Task Force on Global Food Problems" by the American Anthropological Association; published "Food Stamps" in *The Business of Food: Encyclopedia of the Food and Drink Industries* (Greenwood Press, October 2007), and co-published the abstract "Skeletal Pathologies Associated with Pellagra Mortality: A Comparative Analysis of Pellagrins from the Raymond Dart and Robert Terry Anatomical Skeletal Collections" in the *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* (April 2008); presented a paper on "Malnutrition and Selling the American Diet: What are the International Health and Policy Implications?" in the Presidential Symposium: The Public Interest and the American Food Enterprise: U.S. Legislative Issues, and presented "Food or Fuel?" in the invited session: Corn for Fuel: A 'Perfect Storm' for

World Food Imbalance by Thanksgiving 2007? at the American Anthropological Association Annual Meetings in Washington, DC (November 2007); presented with **J. Mazzeo** ([mazzeom@stjohns.edu](mailto:mazzeom@stjohns.edu)) the paper "HIV/AIDS and Food Insecurity: New Variant Famine in Southern Africa?" at the Society for Applied Anthropology Annual Meetings in Memphis, TN (March 2008); and co-presented a paper on "Paleopathology of the Plague of Corn: Skeletal Indicators of Pellagra from the Dart and Terry Collections" at the Northeastern Anthropological Association Annual Meetings in Amherst, MA (March 2008).

**Dr. Elaine Carey** (History, [careye@stjohns.edu](mailto:careye@stjohns.edu)) published "Women with Golden Arms: Gender and Narcotrafficking 1900-1970" in *History Compass* (2008); presented "Foreign Vices?: Gender, Modernity, and Drugs in Mexico, 1930-1960" at the Narco-Epics Conference, University of Pittsburgh (April 2008); and served as commentator for the panel "Transnational Vice in North America" at the Rocky Mountain Latin American Studies Association in Flagstaff, AZ (April 2008).

**Professor Judy Cooperman** (Fine Arts, [coopermj@stjohns.edu](mailto:coopermj@stjohns.edu)) her photographic work on women and the contemporary beauty culture is exhibited in "Are We There Yet? 30 Years of Feminism" at ARC Gallery in Chicago, IL and "Aging with Attitude" at the Slusser Gallery, University of Michigan, in Ann Arbor (February-March 2008).

**Dr. William DiFazio** (Sociology and Anthropology, [difaziow@stjohns.edu](mailto:difaziow@stjohns.edu)) gave the keynote address, "Poverty in the USA," at the AKD Sociology Honor Society at Montclair State University, NJ (May 2007); chair of Marxist Sociology Section of the American Sociological Association, presided over the Section Meetings at the Annual Conference in NYC (August 2007); presented "Community Struggles for Power in New York City" at the Catholic Social Science Association Conference at St. John's University (October 2007); received the Adam Veneski Award for Community Activism, Peoples Firehouse, Inc. (December 2007); presented "The Alienation, Individuation and Emancipation of Art Work in the Age of Global, Computed Aided Capitalism" and "Alan

Greenspan and the Myths of Global Free Market Capitalism: A Sociological Critique" at the Eastern Sociological Society Meetings in NYC (February 2008); discussant for the panel, "Making the Right: Strategies and Politics," at the Toward a Comparative Discussion on "Rightist" Movements Conference in NYC (March 2008); and presented "Precarious Labor," at the Left Forum 2008, NYC (March 2008).

**Rev. Patrick Flanagan, C.M.** (Theology and Religious Studies, [flanagap@stjohns.edu](mailto:flanagap@stjohns.edu)) co-edited with **Rev. Patrick Primeaux** ([primeaup@stjohns.edu](mailto:primeaup@stjohns.edu)) *Insurance Ethics for a More Ethical World* (Elsevier); presented a paper, "Reconciling the American Dream and God's Dream in 'Economic Justice for All,'" at Villanova University's School of Law's Annual Symposium on Catholic Social Thought and the Law; presented a paper, "Throwing the Baby Out with the Bath Water: Preserving Ethical Outsourcing," at the Annual Business Ethics Conference at DePaul University, Chicago, IL; and presented "The Magic of Lorna Doones: Stem Cells & the Roman Catholic Church" at the Queens County Catholic Lawyers Guild and the Brandeis Society annual meeting (March 2008).

**Dr. Maura C. Flannery** (Computer Science, Mathematics and Science, [flannerm@stjohns.edu](mailto:flannerm@stjohns.edu)) published an article, "Sheep on the Land," in *The American Biology Teacher* (March 2008).

**Dr. Donna Geffner** (Speech, Communication Sciences and Theatre, [geffnerd@stjohns.edu](mailto:geffnerd@stjohns.edu)) presented "Multi-disciplinary Test Interpretation of CAPD" at the Annual Convention of American Academy of Audiology in Charlotte, NC (April 2008); conducted a discussion group on interpreting with "Multi-sensory Test Results in the Diagnosis of CAPD" and presented a poster session with MA thesis student, Ewa Dynda, entitled "Comorbidity of Auditory Processing Disorders in Children with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder."

**Dr. Diane J. Heith** (Government and Politics, [heithd@stjohns.edu](mailto:heithd@stjohns.edu)) organized the Presidency Division Panels for the 2008 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association; presented "The Battle Online: Staying on Message in the 24 Hour News Cycle" at Hofstra

University's Kalikow Center's symposium "From Votes to Victory" (April 2008).

**Drs. Aliya Holmes and Brenda Lopez Ortiz** (Early Childhood, Childhood and Adolescent Education, [holmesa@stjohns.edu](mailto:holmesa@stjohns.edu) and [lopezorb@stjohns.edu](mailto:lopezorb@stjohns.edu)) were selected to participate in the FIPSE Making Connections: ePortfolio in Contemporary Higher Education Project administered by LaGuardia Community College (January-December 2008).

**Dr. Peggy Jacobson** (Speech Communication Sciences and Theatre, [jacobsonp@stjohns.edu](mailto:jacobsonp@stjohns.edu)) co-presented the posters "Applications of HLM to the Analysis of Data in Communication Sciences and Disorders" and "Oral Narrative Skills of Russian-English Bilingual Children" at the annual meeting of the American Speech-Language and Hearing Association (November 2007).

**Dr. Paula Kay Lazrus** (Discover New York, [lazrusp@stjohns.edu](mailto:lazrusp@stjohns.edu)) co-organized and chaired a symposium entitled, "All the Kings Horses: Looted or Unproveniented Artifacts and the Valid Construction of the Past," and was a judge for a second round of the Society of American Archaeology's Annual Ethics Bowl at the Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology; appointed the chairperson of the society's Committee on Ethics and elected to the board of the NYC society of the Archaeological Institute of America; and gave a talk entitled, "Power and Land-use in a South Calabrian Municipality during the Napoleonic Era," to the Montclair, NJ society of the American Institute of Archaeology and Montclair State University's Center for Heritage and Archaeology Studies (April 2008).

**Dr. Vivian Valvano Lynch** (Speech and English, [lynchv@stjohns.edu](mailto:lynchv@stjohns.edu)) chaired a literature panel, "Contemporary Local," at the *GRIAN* Irish Studies Conference "Cosmopolitical Ireland," Glucksman Ireland House, New York University (March 2008); published a review essay, "Irish Actors, American Films: A Review of Ruth Barton's *Acting Irish in Hollywood*," in *The Irish Literary Supplement* (Spring 2008).

**Dr. Augustin Riska** (Philosophy, [riska@stjohns.edu](mailto:riska@stjohns.edu)) published an article, "Hume's Dynamism: The Problem of Power," in *Organon F* (2008).

**Dr. Bradley Shope** (Fine Arts, [shopeb@stjohns.edu](mailto:shopeb@stjohns.edu)) published an article, "They Treat Us White Folks

Fine: African American Musicians and the Popular Music Terrain in Late Colonial India," in *Journal of South Asian Popular Culture* (November 2007).

**Professor Anne Tedesco** (Fine Arts, [tedescoa@stjohns.edu](mailto:tedescoa@stjohns.edu)) performed a piano benefit concert for the Fine Arts Scholarship Fund at St. John's University with solo piano works by Scarlatti, Bach, Schumann, Liszt, Debussy, and Chopin (March 2008).

**Dr. Charles M. ViVona** (Social Sciences, [vivonac@stjohns.edu](mailto:vivonac@stjohns.edu)) presented two papers: "Missing Vocabulary in the Sociology of Deviance" and "Observations of a Gold-Bug Sociologist" at the Annual Meetings of the Eastern Sociological Society, in NYC (February 2008).

**Dr. Charles Wankel** (Management, [wankelc@stjohns.edu](mailto:wankelc@stjohns.edu)) published the books *21st Century Management: A Reference Handbook* (SAGE, 2008) and *Alleviating Poverty through Business*

*Strategy* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); delivered an invited lecture to a group from the University of Florida Digital World Institute in the auditorium of his facility on Emgeetee Island in the Second Life metaverse on "Future Dimensions of Management Education in Three-dimensional Virtual Worlds" (March 2008).

**Dr. Richard Stalter** (Biological Sciences, [stalterr@stjohns.edu](mailto:stalterr@stjohns.edu)) presented the paper, "A Preliminary Study of the Plant Communities at Brookhaven National Laboratory, Long Island, New York," at the annual MACUB meeting (October 2007).

## Faculty News

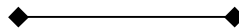
If you would like to send an entry to "Faculty News," the deadline for the September issue is **August 14**. We prefer that you email the information to [CTL@stjohns.edu](mailto:CTL@stjohns.edu). Please have your entries follow the style presented in "Faculty News." Material included in CTL Faculty News will be sent to Dominic Scianna for distribution in a news release.

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*(Interactions between Muslims and Non-Muslims continued)*

I argue, that in the decisions rendered in these decrees about the physical spaces occupied by Greek Orthodox subjects, it is possible to find evidence of two trends which were occurring in Istanbul at the turn of the eighteenth century: on the one hand, Greek Orthodox and Muslim subjects were becoming more alike in terms of the way they lived and conducted their daily lives; on the other hand, the Greek Orthodox community (or certain members thereof) was also becoming more aware of itself as an entity distinct both from other groups that comprised the empire as well as from the Ottoman state. The paradoxical situation reveals itself in how the more Greek Orthodox subjects avail themselves of Ottoman institutions such as the Imperial Divan (by submitting petitions concerning their churches, taverns, and homes and responding to Muslim complaints about those places), the more decisions rendered there create an environment which fosters a heightened sense of belonging to a distinct group. Ottoman administrative practice thus plays a hitherto little considered role in the emerging sense of a communal identity among the Greek Orthodox subjects of the empire in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

As indicated above, an awareness of the way seventeenth century Ottoman society functioned provides a useful context in which to compare and contrast St. Vincent's worldview. In addition, in an era when many would like to think in terms of clashing civilizations, I think that a more nuanced understanding of and sensitivity to the histories of non-western societies fit in seamlessly with the Vincentian conception of the way people should interact with one another in contemporary society.



## **CTL Fellows on Research in Teaching and Learning**

On April 10, the 2006-2008 CTL Fellows made presentations on their projects which deal with integrating technology into their teaching. Short descriptions of their projects follow.

### **Technology Enhancements to CUS1185 - Data Security and Cryptography**

**Ellen Tufano** (College of Professional Studies, [tufanoe@stjohns.edu](mailto:tufanoe@stjohns.edu))

The cryptography course was previously taught in lecture format, with paper and pencil application of various cryptography algorithms. Phase 1 of my CTL project was the development of a lab component to the course. I created 10 lab projects in which the students implement various encryption algorithms and perform cryptanalysis using spreadsheet software. The lab projects have led to the students' deeper understanding of the various cryptographic techniques, as well as the ability to analyze the algorithms to determine their relative strengths and weaknesses. Phase 2 of the project was the development of a course portfolio which associates the course objectives with samples of student work that demonstrate fulfillment of those objectives. The portfolio may be used as an assessment tool for evaluating the effectiveness of the course.

### **Promoting Student Engagement with Personal Response Devices**

**Victoria Shoaf** (The Peter J. Tobin College of Business, [shoafv@stjohns.edu](mailto:shoafv@stjohns.edu))

In order to engage our students more fully in the lectures required to deliver the material in an Introductory Accounting course, each student in the class was given a personal response device that registered their individual responses to multiple choice questions injected at key points during the lecture. The collective responses to each question could be shown immediately as a bar chart, which allowed a quick appraisal of the groups' understanding of the material being presented. The responses made by each individual student during the entire class period were collected electronically and could be reviewed later and used to assess the level of each student's participation for that class. The personal response devices forced students to be attentive and enabled them to participate actively, while providing feedback that could yield immediate corrective action during the lecture, if needed, or indicate individual remediation upon review.

### **CIL Literacy and the Social Web**

**Kathryn Shaughnessy** (University Libraries, [shaughnk@stjohns.edu](mailto:shaughnk@stjohns.edu))

As part of my CTL fellowship, I focused on using emerging social software and web-based technologies to 1) facilitate Computer and Information Literacy instruction 2) foster a virtual-learning community with faculty and students in the Global Development and Social Justice Masters program, and 3) promote scholarly communication among faculty and students. My presentation covered the benefits and pitfalls encountered in initiating the use of Blogs, Wikis, Podcasts, RefWorks/RefShare, Del.icio.us, Skype (VOIP) and Captivate Tutorials.

### **St. John's Students Interview and Edit the Wider Writing Community through an Online Journal**

**Stephen Miller** (St. John's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, [millers@stjohns.edu](mailto:millers@stjohns.edu))

My creative writing students and I edit and contribute to *Critiphoria*, an online literary journal at [www.critiphoria.org](http://www.critiphoria.org) devoted to interactions between poetry and criticism that features prominent writers such as Bruce Andrews, Rachel Blau DuPlessis, Leslie Scalapino, Charles Borkhuis, David Shapiro, Norman Fischer, Denise Duhamel, Maria Damon, Abigail Child, Ewa Chrusciel, Wystan Curnow, Alan Davies, Nick Piombino, Joan Retallack, Brenda Iijima, Sean Singer, Stephanie Strickland, Eileen Tabios, Anne Tardos, Chris Tysh, James Sherry, Sueyeun Juliette Lee, Mary Mackey, Jill Magi and Bob Holman, whom St. John's students interview and help edit their work. The "Dialogues" section of the site features

transcripts of discussions between students and writers as well as pertinent writing by the students and the writers.

### **Shakespeare Commons**

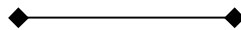
**Steven Mentz** (St. John's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, [mentzs@stjohns.edu](mailto:mentzs@stjohns.edu))

Publicity Paragraph: This web portal serves to introduce St. John's students to the multiple communities that involve Shakespeare at St. John's. On a local level, it introduces me, and the Shakespeare courses that I teach and have taught on the Queens campus to undergraduate and graduate students. Moving outward, it shows highlights of the local New York landscape of theater companies and productions. Crossing the ocean, it shows off a new course that we're offering in London for the first time ever during the spring of 2008, "Shakespeare's London: Page, Stage, and Place," which will bring a dozen intrepid and eager students to Shakespeare's Globe, Stratford, and several other English haunts. Finally, it also serves as a portal and guide to the vast web of Shakespeare resources on the internet, especially by guiding students to such mega-sites as the Folger Shakespeare Library and the British Library. Ongoing notices and mini-reviews on the Shakespeare Commons blog will also serve the University and the broader public.

### **Use of Electronic Portfolios in the Professional Development of Pharmacy Students**

**Olga Hilas**, (College of Pharmacy and Allied Health Professions, [hilaso@stjohns.edu](mailto:hilaso@stjohns.edu))

The goal of my CTL fellowship was to develop electronic student portfolios in order to provide an organized means of recording and maintaining professional documents and projects of pharmacy students throughout their experiential education period. After attending various seminars, obtaining certain resources and researching a number of software programs on electronic portfolios, I came across a unique program which encompassed all the main components necessary to create professional and pertinent electronic portfolios for pharmacy students. Currently, I am piloting this program with students attending my experiential site. To date, all students have stated that they find it easy to use and extremely helpful with recording and organizing their projects and activities.



### **Mental Architecture**

**Maura C. Flannery** (College of Professional Studies, [flannerm@stjohns.edu](mailto:flannerm@stjohns.edu))

I am of the opinion that teaching and research cannot be separated, that very frequently what is good for one is good for the other, that something you learn for one, helps out in the other. I had a recent experience of this. I am a biologist, so I try to at least browse *Nature*, a British general science journal, each week. A couple of years ago, I came across an article called "What Henslow Taught Darwin" (Kohn, et al., 2005). Henslow was one of Darwin's professors and mentors at Cambridge, and the authors argue that Henslow's way of collecting and preserving plants, which emphasized variation, was probably an early influence on Darwin's view of species.

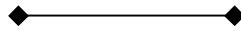
Since my research is on the visual in biology, this article was worth keeping. I also teach about evolution, so I had still another reason for filing it away. Last fall, I reread it because I was writing an article on observation. Among the things that struck me after more careful study of the piece was a comment toward its close. The authors see a link between Darwin's studies with Henslow and Darwin's later comments on bird variation in *The Voyage of the Beagle*. They note that Darwin doesn't cite Henslow's work here, and they explain this with the remark: "We do not cite our teachers for the fundamental ideas they transmit. Rather, they are part of our mental architecture. It seems this was the case with Darwin and Henslow" (p. 645).

The term "mental architecture" really struck me. I began to think about the idea that teachers are involved in helping their students create such architecture. Suddenly an article that I had been reading for my research leapt over the fence between parts of my life and landed in the teaching domain, to say

nothing of the fact that the photos of specimens in the article were great examples of plant variation within species that I could share with my students.

But it was the mental architecture idea that really fired me up. It relates to the concept of scaffolding, a popular education term at the moment. It means creating learning experiences that assist students in forming a structure for their knowledge. An educational scaffold is a learning aid that makes it easier for students to develop cognitively by providing support for understanding. For example, if you provide questions to guide students' reading, you are "scaffolding" their interaction with that text and helping them to get more out of it than they would if they were just dangling from the paragraphs unaided.

In New York lately, scaffolds and other building technologies seem to be less that foolproof and the same is true for teaching scaffolds. How strong they need to be obviously varies from student to student, and there is always the danger that a couple of students will still teeter on the edge of disaster. But in most cases, scaffolds are not only comforting but essential to substantial and long-lasting learning. And look at the edifices which can be built with them: students who become not only accomplished in a field but also life-long learners, even when the scaffolds are removed. Or perhaps it is better to say that what we have done for them is help them to create their own scaffolds in the future, ask their own questions, figure out their own ways of approaching the intellectual challenges they will encounter. They are ever building additions to their mental architecture.



## Summer Journal Club

### Lunch and Learn

The CTL will be hosting a lunch and learn series. Each week we'll discuss articles dealing with issues in teaching and learning. These lunches will be very informal and provide a chance to relax and spend time talking about what we all love—teaching. Please **RSVP** so we will have a lunch for you.

**Date: Thursday, June 5**

**Article:** "Do Your Students Really Understand Your Assignments?" is available at:  
<http://cgi.stanford.edu/~dept-ctl/cgi-bin/tomprof/posting.php?ID=857>

**Date: Thursday, June 12**

**Article:** "The Myth of First-Year Enlightenment" is available at:  
<http://chronicle.com/jobs/news/2008/02/2008020101c/printable.html>

**Date: Thursday, June 19**

**Article:** "Access without Support is not Opportunity" is available at:  
<http://facpub.stjohns.edu/~flannerm/access.pdf>

**Date: Thursday, June 26**

**Article:** "PowerPoint and Pedagogy" is available at: <http://facpub.stjohns.edu/~flannerm/power.pdf>

**Date: Wednesday, July 2**

**Article:** "The 'Why' of Class Participation" is available at: <http://facpub.stjohns.edu/~flannerm/class.pdf>

**Time:** 12:45 to 2 p.m.

**Location:** Library room 110 in the Academic Commons

**To register:** Call the CTL at ext. 1859 or email us at [CTL@stjohns.edu](mailto:CTL@stjohns.edu)