

## The Link - Quarterly Newsletter to Alumni and Friends



### news



#### LETTER FROM THE DEAN

Join me in welcoming the class of 2014 to the ranks of College of Liberal Arts alumni! As you will read, the class of 2014 impacted the campus positively in many ways over the past four or five years.

*[Read Dean Epperson's letter](#)*

#### GRAPHIC COMMUNICATION UNVEILS PRINTED ELECTRONICS DEGREE

Printed electronics, a set of printing techniques used to create electrical devices, are changing conceptions of what printing is and

#### COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

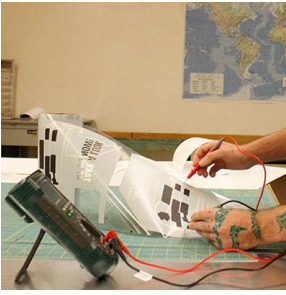
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what it means for the 21st century. Cal Poly now offers a master's degree and professional certificate program in printed electronics and functional imaging.

[\*Read more about the new degree programs\*](#)



## ART & DESIGN SENIOR HOSTS OPEN SCIENCE CAFÉ

In true Learn by Doing fashion, Cal Poly seeks new ways to empower students by providing them opportunities to become involved and make a difference. For art and design senior Ali Albiani, Open Science Café was a platform to make a tangible impact on campus.

[\*Read about the Open Science Café\*](#)



## POLITICAL SCIENCE JOURNAL JOINS LIBRARY OF CLA STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

In an effort to give new purpose to what students do in class every day, several CLA departments have developed undergraduate journals as publication outlets for students.

[\*Read more about CLA student journals\*](#)



## ORIGINAL MUSIC PRODUCTION BRINGS THE SPIRIT OF CABARET TO CAMPUS

Cal Poly audiences were given a taste of true devotion to art, dancing, singing, poetry and spectacle with the Theatre & Dance Department's original spring show, "Black Cat Cabaret."

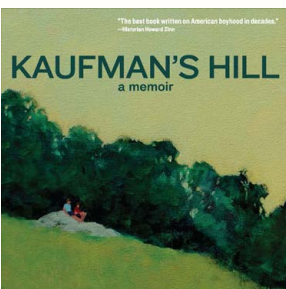
[\*Read more about "Black Cat Cabaret"\*](#)



## CAL POLY DEBATE TEAM BASKS IN A SUCCESSFUL SEASON

The Cal Poly Debate Team is enjoying the feeling of success after emerging with top wins at major tournaments this year — continuing a strong tradition of excellence.

[\*Read more about the Cal Poly Debate Team\*](#)



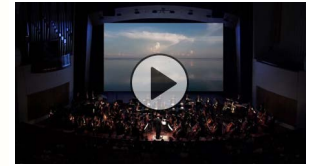
## NEW BOOKS UNITE SCHOLARSHIP AND TEACHING FOR ENGLISH PROFESSORS

Memoir, mystery and Merton are the topics of new and forthcoming books by English professors John Hampsey and Robert Inchausti.

[\*Read more about new books from English professors\*](#)



PICTURES AT AN EXHIBITION



**STUDY**  
**25-35**  
**Hours/Week**

2 HOURS / UNIT / WEEK

**Find Out More**



## ALUMNI COUPLE FINDS A WAY TO FULFILL THEIR DREAMS THROUGH HISTORY

Cal Poly's history program put alumni Justin Housman and Margaret Donoghue on the road to finding their dream careers and life partner.

[Read more about CLA grads pursuing their passions](#)

### events

- ▶ SEPT. 15-21: WEEK OF WELCOME
- ▶ SEPT. 22: FIRST DAY OF FALL CLASSES
- ▶ NOV. 1: HOMECOMING
- ▶ NOV. 1: HOMECOMING FOR THE MIND

### previous editions



*Winter 2014*



*Fall 2013*

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## A Letter from the Dean



Dear Alumni,

Join me in welcoming the class of 2014 to the ranks of College of Liberal Arts alumni! This group of approximately 500 future leaders received degrees from our programs on June 14 in Spanos Stadium with traditional Cal Poly pomp and ceremony.

The class of 2014 impacted the campus positively in many ways over the past four or five years. The campus achievements of these future leaders included organizing the first [Open Science Café](#), developing a [new political science journal](#), and [succeeding in competitions \(the Debate Team\)](#), and so much more.

As you may already know, a liberal arts degree opens many doors. It can take you anywhere in your career and in the world — Justin Housman and Margaret Donoghue, [husband and wife Cal Poly history graduates](#), are a case in point. Read in this issue how the same degree led Justin to a career writing for Surfer Magazine and Margaret to a career with the Australian Trade Commission.

Class of 2014: As Justin and Margaret demonstrate, don't limit yourselves; your outstanding education and your passion for excellence will take you far.

Additionally, we are excited to announce a new master's degree and professional certificate program in [printed electronics and functional imaging](#) within the Graphic Communication Department.

Finally, enjoy a few stories and updates regarding some of our literary and artistic faculty members. Two English professors, [Larry Inchausti and John Hampsey](#), [added to their list of published works](#), while assistant professor of dance Christy McNeil wrote, choreographed and directed the spring Theatre & Dance Department original production, "[Black Cat Cabaret](#)."

All alumni, please [update us](#) on your lives and activities, and [stay connected](#) with the CLA story.

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Enjoy the summer season.

Best,

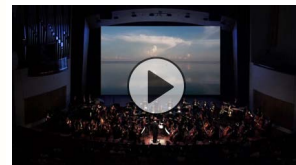
Doug Epperson

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2013 Student  
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PICTURES AT AN  
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## *Ethnic Studies Celebrates 20 Years on Campus*



Ethnic studies students conducting an interview to capture the rich, undocumented histories of communities in San Luis Obispo county as part of Grace Yeh's Re/Collecting project.

Within the College of Liberal Arts' academic community is the [Ethnic Studies Department](#), a small division of dedicated professors and students with a heightened awareness of social and cultural issues and a hunger for positive change. The department is cultivating an increased public presence, yet remains one of the college's hidden treasures.

A fairly new department by university standards, Ethnic Studies celebrates its 20th anniversary on campus this year. Over two decades, the department has grown in both vision and impact and is now a key player on campus and in the community.

"The discipline comes out of an activist spirit and operates with a critical gaze on scholarship, research and teaching. Our department has sought to apply that spirit to Cal Poly's Learn by Doing approach and offers a transformative educational experience," said Denise Isom, professor and chair of the Ethnic Studies Department.

The Ethnic Studies Department boasts a set of truly interdisciplinary programs. The ethnic studies minor began in 1994, a comparative ethnic studies major was approved in 2007, and a new minor in indigenous studies in natural resources and the environment was added in fall 2013. All of the programs incorporate the arts, humanities and sciences to provide students with a curriculum that emphasizes a broad range of critical methods of inquiry to the complex areas of race, culture and ethnicity, as well as their intersections with gender, socio-economic class, and transnational identity.



"To some degree, ethnic studies is reflective of a

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broader social movement. It engages multiple disciplines and ways of thinking to increase our understanding of social structures, systems and ideologies and, ultimately, equips change agents and develops scholars,” Isom said.

The audience of the Hip Hop Symposium, in March, enjoyed watching some breakdancing alongside discussion of poetics and politics.

The department has extended its reach across campus, actively contributing to the current development of four new Science, Technology and Society (STS) minors that examine how science and technology influence and are shaped by social, political and ethical issues.

As a discipline, the major is committed to evolving and tackling social issues head-on in creative and innovative ways. With these goals in mind, the department facilitates various campus events and projects that contribute to the discipline’s mission of social engagement.

In March, the department sponsored a Hip-Hop Symposium in connection with Professor Jenell Navarro’s Ethnic Studies 310 course, Hip-Hop, Poetics and Politics. The event featured Native American rapper Tall Paul and the Cal Poly Break Dancing Club for an evening of entertainment and discussion of important social questions.

With their innovative and wide-reaching approach to an interdisciplinary, liberal arts education, Ethnic Studies has also developed faculty-student projects like Professor Grace Yeh’s Re/Collecting project — a project that digitally captures the rich, undocumented histories of communities in San Luis Obispo county, such as the Filipino farmers who arrived in the United States in the 1920s.

This past year, Professor Denise Sheridan worked on gathering the histories of African American communities on the Central Coast, adding another branch to the Re/Collecting project’s expanding scope.

At the cusp of change, the Ethnic Studies Department is looking to expand in the years to come to improve awareness and increase access for interested students and instructors.

The department’s many aspirations include doubling the number of majors and minors, and revamping the current curriculum to further embody the spirit of the discipline and the growing needs of our global society.

“The department’s faculty members are brilliant, passionate and driven,” Isom said, “We are full of energy, ideas and excitement for what we can build here at Cal Poly.”

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2013 Student Awards Reception



PICTURES AT AN EXHIBITION



STUDY  
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## Graphic Communication Unveils Printed Electronics Degree



Printed electronics have a number of amazing and innovative applications.

Printing technologies are no longer just about printing graphics on paper. The industry is progressively expanding to develop technologies that make possible science-fiction-like inventions such as books that light up when touched and clothes that contain electronic components.

Printed electronics, a set of printing techniques used to create electrical devices, are changing conceptions of what printing is and what it means for the 21st century.

Combining industry and academia, Cal Poly’s new master’s degree and professional certificate programs in printed electronics and functional imaging are positioning the campus for industry leadership in innovation.

“It’s a very new, emerging industry. There are many major companies watching what other people are doing,” said Malcolm Keif, graphic communication professor and graduate program coordinator. “Cal Poly is at the forefront of education in this area and will be among the thought leaders on this new technology and manufacturing methodology.”

The new program features a certificate and graduate degree option. The program offers fundamental core courses online to accommodate students’ busy lives, yet later in the program, provides classroom and laboratory activities for more hands-on and applied manufacturing.

“The approach is focused on how you make printed electronics products, how you produce them — the manufacturing side,” Keif said. “Our [undergraduate] program, which emphasizes printing technologies, has evolved over 70 years. Some of those existing technologies for graphics are applicable to functional printing. We are taking what we know and applying it to printed electronics.”

Keif further explained that the appeal of printed electronics is that they allow companies to create many new products. Cal Poly students have developed new

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items through this emerging area of study, most recently [a waterproof timer for surfboard rentals](#). Students' efforts on the project earned a [win at the 2014 Large-Area, Organic & Printed Electronics Convention \(LOPE-C\) in Munich](#) in the freestyle demonstrator category.

A team of Cal Poly faculty and students also collaborated to create an interactive printed electronics cover, among the first of its kind, for [Canvas Magazine](#).

Using electrochromic technology, the team developed a design featuring a maze drawn into a journal that was initiated by a dog-eared corner and continued with the use of metal coins as switches. By triggering the different parts of the maze, new information was revealed as the reader progressed through the maze design.

According to Keif, Cal Poly's participation in the magazine cover project helped kick-start the new degree program by showcasing the possibilities printed electronics has to offer and accentuating the need for the new degree.

"Printing has been around for hundreds of years and is very mature. Although traditional publication markets have declining printing needs, packaging, outdoor advertising, and other industrial printing remain strong. We are growing our digital media offerings for these applications, and we see printed electronics and functional imaging as the next big thing for printing applications," said Keif.

With that in mind, Cal Poly took action and is now leading both industry and academia in this emerging field. "To my knowledge, we are the first university in the United States to offer a *degree* in printed electronics," said Keif. "We felt like we needed to offer our students the most advanced exposure, and are now doing so."

For more information on the new degree program and graduate certificate, visit the [Printed Electronics and Functional Imaging Program website](#).

## FluxTime Youtube Video



### PICTURES AT AN EXHIBITION



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## Art & Design Senior Hosts Inaugural Open Science Café Event



Ali Albiani (far right), with Art & Design Department faculty mentor Charmaine Martinez and guest speaker, Steve Duenes, of the New York Times. | Photo: Robert E. Kennedy Library

In true Learn by Doing fashion, Cal Poly seeks new ways to empower students by providing them opportunities to become involved and make a difference. For [art and design senior](#) Ali Albiani, [Open Science Café](#) was a platform to make a tangible impact on campus.

As winner of the new campuswide competition, Albiani planned the inaugural Open Science Café event. The competition, offered by the Kennedy Library, awards one winning student proposal a \$3,000 budget and \$500 stipend to bring a speaker of choice to Cal Poly. Open Science Cafe encourages students to be proactive about their time on campus by creating their own college experiences and gaining proficiency in program management in the process.

Developed by Karen Lauritsen, communications and public programs coordinator for Kennedy Library, Open Science Café is an extension of Cal Poly Science Café, both of which provide interactive events for the campus and local community. Lauritsen, together with a panel of judges, selected this year’s winner and served as a mentor to Albiani, who organized and managed the event.

Albiani, with assistance from art and design Professor Charmaine Martinez, arranged for The New York Times’ Graphics Director, Steve Duenes, to come to campus. He spoke about his career trajectory, offered tips about his profession, and discussed the future of data visualization and information design.

Video: How to use data and design to tell stories

“I chose to bring him to campus because I liked his collaborative background. He works with such an eccentric and diverse team that has a lot to offer, and I feel we have the same idea here at Cal Poly,” Albiani said. “Whether you’re working with engineers, English

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majors, journalism students or designers, we all have something to offer to create an end result.”

Grounded in ideas of creativity, interaction and collaboration, Albiani’s event combined a lecture with hands-on activities that allowed attendees to apply what they learned. After Duenes’ talk, audience members were asked to visualize mock data using ideas he had shared. Despite the high-tech topic, participants were given only paper, pencils, markers and Post-its to emphasize the importance of fundamental brainstorming techniques.

“It was really interesting to see how the participants were so creative. I loved the whole collaborative aspect,” Albiani said. “At the end of the day, that’s where you start — with pencil and paper — and it really put into perspective how you would begin.”

As the first Open Science Café, the library continues a tradition of interdisciplinary collaboration. The event bears testament to Cal Poly’s commitment to Learn by Doing.

“We encouraged students to dream big, to not limit their thinking,” Lauritsen said. “I think that Ali’s project set a really high bar, and of course, I would love for that to continue. She’s been thoughtful and organized. It was a high-quality, creative and interdisciplinary event.”

For Albiani, the key to making a dream a reality is simply hard work and dedication.

“I hope I set a tone of just going with your dream. If you have an idea, go with it, pursue it, and be persistent. Persistence is key,” Albiani said.

As part of the program, Albiani created an interview video with Duenes and summarized the event in a blog post. Hear from Duenes, and [read about Albiani’s experience](#).

## Images from Open Science Cafe: How to Use Data and Design to Tell Stories

Photos from Steve Duenes' talk at the Open Science Cafe and the audience workshop.

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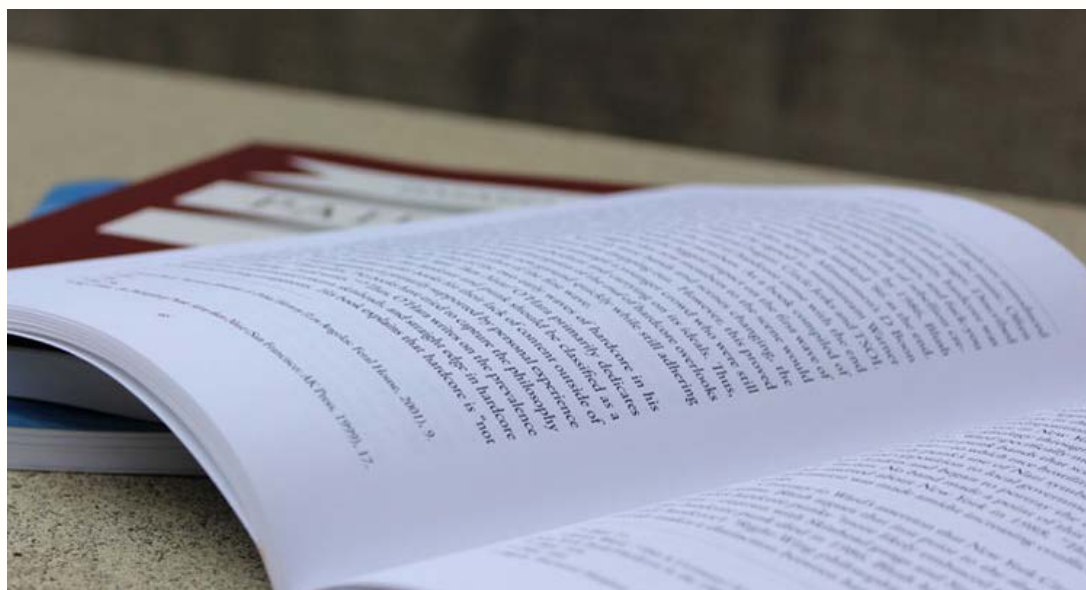
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## Political Science Journal Joins Library of CLA Student Publications



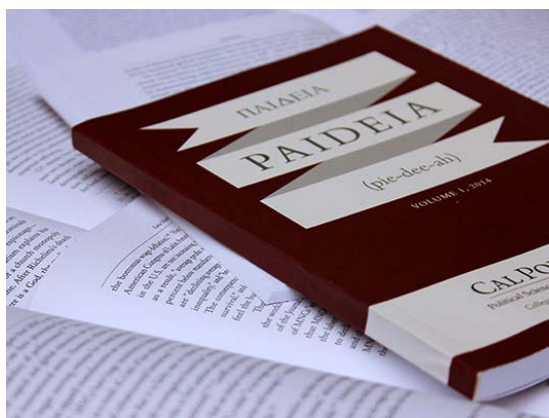
The Political Science, English and History Departments all produce academic journals, featuring the work of students.

When papers are returned after an assignment and students ponder the hard work that went into writing them, they might wonder if there's a way to legitimately share those ideas with others. In an effort to give new purpose to what students do in class every day, several CLA departments have developed undergraduate journals as publication outlets for students.

### Political Science Department — Paideia

The newest CLA student journal, Paideia — from the Greek for moral self-development — is a [Political Science Department](#) publication that debuted in May.

Created by political science seniors Katelyn Magnus and Joi Sullivan, the journal includes alumni profiles and student work from their first through last years at Cal Poly, giving readers insight into the student writers' development. Readers can experience how students' thinking develops as they become exposed to different ideas, cultures and lifestyles, giving meaning to the journal's name and its focus on personal development.



“Throughout our time here as political science students, we are trying to build our core beliefs. You come to school with certain beliefs, and they’re challenged, knocked down and rebuilt. We’re developing our own personal beliefs as we go through this program,” Magnus said.

Paideia is the new Political Science Department student journal.

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Magnus and Sullivan planned their publication to serve as a testament to the hard work and serious introspection of political science students on campus.

### History Department — The Forum

The Forum, the [History Department's](#) student journal, was created in 2008 to showcase student endeavors in exploring the complexity of the discipline.

First and foremost a historical journal, the publication seeks to serve as a testament to the multidisciplinary aspect of the department's vision, showing how historical work is relevant and valuable in disciplines across campus. It aims to present the work of students beyond the department and college by offering an open-submission process.

The journal's title, The Forum, represents the discipline's belief that it develops through communication, debate and continuous conversation — that history does not stand alone.

Including approximately seven student articles, the journal covers a diverse set of topics that shows the wide-reaching impact of the discipline. The spring 2014 issue features essays on topics ranging from the impact of the New York City hardcore punk and straight-edge community to Perestroika propaganda in the Soviet Foreign Press.

The publication is a reminder to the campus community that history is more than an examination of the past, contemplated in solitude. Rather, the area of study is interactive and invigorated with urgency and modern purpose.



The Forum explores the complexity of history as a discipline.

### English Department — Byzantium

Established in 1990, the [English Department's student publication, Byzantium](#), provides a space for students of literature and composition to publish poems, short stories, and other creative works. The journal celebrates some of the university's best poets and writers, as well as the dynamic creative efforts of the Cal Poly English majors who work to put the publication together.

Each year, two English majors are chosen as co-editors and are responsible for the publication, including editing, fundraising, design, distribution, and coordination of the final reading celebration. Carly Demetre and Jenna Korver were selected as co-editors and collaborated with student art director Bryn Hobson (art & design) to produce the 24th edition of the annual in 2014.

Writing selections are chosen from the university's annual [Al Landwehr Creative Writing Contest](#), which receives submissions from undergraduate and graduate students from throughout the university. Two separate judging committees — one for poetry, one for fiction — comprised of English Department faculty members read the entries blind. This year, professors John Bartel, Brad Campbell and Dustin Stegner judged the poetry, while professors Carol Curiel, Erin Martin-Elston and Jonathan Gotsik judged the fiction.

See a list of this year's [Al Landwehr Creative Writing Contest winners](#) featured in Byzantium.

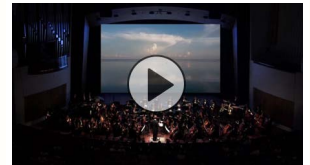


Byzantium is a well-established journal where students' creative writing continues to flourish.

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Contact the individual departments for more information about current and past issues of the featured publications.

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## Original Musical Production Brings the Spirit of the Cabaret to Campus



The cast of "Black Cat Cabaret" served up a spectacle of song, dance, poetry and art. | Photo: Ian Billings

Cal Poly audiences were given a taste of true devotion to art, dancing, singing, poetry and spectacle with the [Theatre & Dance Department](#)'s original spring show, "Black Cat Cabaret." The cabaret review transported viewers back in time to a world of Parisian artistic sensibility and dreamy glamour, but with modern twists.

Written, choreographed and directed by assistant professor of dance Christy McNeil, "Black Cat Cabaret" explored the complexity and flexibility of love. The show followed various characters as they sought love and learned about themselves in the process, all while building connections with one another.

Set to a soundtrack of music ranging from the 1980s to contemporary hits, the show took its cue from the 1881 Paris cabaret Le Chat Noir — a place where people, regardless of position, gathered to celebrate art for art's sake.

"The Le Chat Noir was a place where high society and low society could come together and co-mingle, take off their hats, and not have rank. There was a love of more than the normal — the desire to explore beyond the everyday life," McNeil said.



Christy McNeil wrote, choreographed and directed "Black Cat Cabaret." | Photo: Ian Billings

McNeil's show fully embodied the spirit of the Le Chat Noir, uniting students from different majors in a collaborative effort.

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PICTURES AT AN  
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“Last spring I was approached by the department to create a production that would bridge the theatre and dance programs a little more,” McNeil said. “I believe I can say this has never happened before, where they’ve brought the two programs together.”

The show’s cast of characters included romantic jugglers; shy storytellers; energetic dancers, poets and artists; and a drag queen hostess who lives for the spotlight. In the intimate space of the cabaret, characters showed off their talents, in turn seeking feedback, entertainment and an audience.

The production had no shortage of sequins, glitter and light spectacles. Yet audiences experienced an intimacy with the characters as each revealed their desires, or fears, of being loved.

“The show was historical and contemporary, with great influences by ‘The Great Gatsby’ and ‘Moulin Rouge.’ I’m a huge Baz Luhrmann fan — of the spectacle he creates, the color, the fast-moving plots, and the great dance numbers,” McNeil said.

“I wanted to have this quality of spectacle; I wanted audiences to be entertained. But yet there was the possibility for your heart to be touched. It might even have questioned your thoughts toward love due to the many representations of it.

The show’s greatest strength lay in its mixture of opposites — the blend of spectacle and the reality of love’s complexity, at once over-the-top and serious.

“A lot of people think that art and entertainment can’t go together. I’m hoping that this show succeeded at both. I hope audiences walked out energized and maybe with the desire to explore some performance avenues themselves,” McNeil said.

“If I have inspired someone, that would be amazing.”



"Black Cat Cabaret" took influences from Baz Luhrman's films, like "The Great Gatsby" and "Moulin Rouge." | Photo: Ian Billings

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## Cal Poly Debate Team Basks in a Successful Season

The [Cal Poly Debate Team](#) is enjoying the feeling of success after emerging with top wins at major tournaments this year — continuing a strong tradition of excellence.

In April, the team competed in both the America’s Cup Debating Championship and the United States Universities Debating Championship Tournament hosted by Purdue University. Four teams represented Cal Poly. Teammates Bryan Pride and Ryan Curtin advanced to the tournament’s elimination rounds, earning the title of octafinalists.

In 2013-14, the team placed as finalists at multiple tournaments, including the UC Davis and University of Miami tournaments. The team also won the title of Champion, debate’s highest honor, at the Loyola Marymount, Hawaii Cup, and the University of Hawaii’s Pan-Pacific Universities Debate tournaments.



From Back to front: Andre Fontana, Minnal Kunnan, Mike Dewitt, Emilio Horner, Makenna Miller, Kylee Hawthorne and Bryan Pride. Standing: Ryan Curtin.

The Cal Poly Debate Team’s success was spurred by switching to a different debate format that offered more opportunities for the team to showcase its debating prowess. The team moved from the U.S. Policy Debate format to the World University Debate Championship format, which, as its name indicates, is more international in scope.

“We now live in a multicultural, multinational world. The new format is a really exciting change,” said Chris Skiles, interim director of forensics.

Skiles notes that the format more accurately mirrors the way the world now works, with increased travel, growing international relations, and closely connected global economies. But the fundamental spirit of debate remains the same.

“What unifies all of this is the need to communicate ideas and defend them,” Skiles said. “The art of debate dates back to the ancient Greeks, and it’s a great way to teach students how to use the knowledge they are accumulating.”

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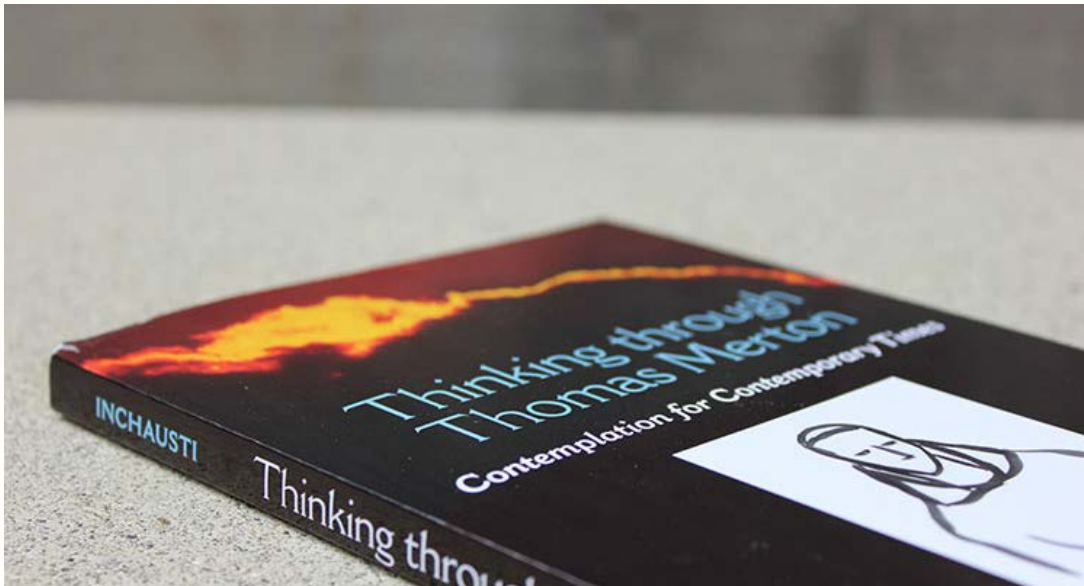
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## *New Books Unite Scholarship and Teaching for English Professors*



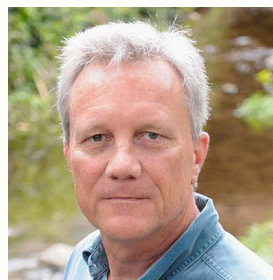
Robert Inchausti's new academic work, published by SUNY, considers the particular relevance of Thomas Merton for modern times.

Memoir, mystery and Merton are the topics of new and forthcoming books by [English](#) professors John Hampsey and Robert Inchausti.

### Professor John Hampsey — ‘Kaufman’s Hill’ and ‘Soda Lake’

Hampsey’s memoir, “Kaufman’s Hill,” will be released in hardcover in January 2015 by Bancroft Press. Set in Pittsburgh between 1961 and 1968, “Kaufman’s Hill” begins when the narrator is 7 years old. It focuses on the threshold period between the late 1950s and the counter-cultural world that arrived after 1968, as well as on the graphic yet mythical world of boyhood that vanishes into the twilight of adulthood. Each chapter, in fact, has a key scene occurring at twilight.

After the release of “Kaufman’s Hill,” Hampsey will focus on completing “Soda Lake,” an existential mystery novel mixed with imaginary portraits. The text follows the disappearance of a man at Soda Lake in Central California after a visit to Painted Rock, an ancient Chumash Indian site.



Hampsey's new memoir will be published in January 2015.  
| Photo: Eric Johnson

Hampsey received a 2014 CLA Summer Research Stipend to complete a key chapter of the “Soda Lake” manuscript. The chapter Hampsey is writing this summer is set in Donegal, Ireland, and was also supported through a sabbatical trip there in 2013 to gather geographical and cultural information.

Hampsey’s past and upcoming publications are tied in intimate ways with his teaching. “My teaching often informs my scholarship and publications,” said

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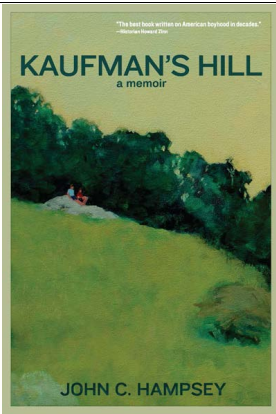
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Hampsey. "In fact, much of the content of my last book, 'Paranoia and Contentment, A Personal Essay on Western Thought,' came directly from teaching classes on classical Greece, the British romantics and Victorians, and existentialism."

### Professor Robert Inchausti — 'Thinking Through Thomas Merton: Contemplation for Contemporary Times'

Inchausti explores how spiritual contemplation can be relevant to contemporary society. Published in February 2014, his book centers on the spiritual life and thinking of Catholic Trappist monk Thomas Merton. Merton rejected the materialism of his society and advocated for a spiritual life as an alternative by creating a dialogue between Christianity, Buddhism and other world religions with modern thinking.

"Merton's life is a first-person witness and commentary on the re-discovery of spirituality in the 20th century. But he also keeps his literary love of irony, paradox and image with him throughout this journey," Inchausti said. "Studying literature made him a man of critical imagination. It saved his mind and renewed his faith and opened him up to dialogue with the best minds of his generation."

Inchausti's book takes a critical and thoughtful look at Merton as a thinker who sought to transcend the values of his time. The book serves as a sequel to an earlier work, "Thomas Merton's American Prophecy." That book sought to understand how Merton fit within American literature. "Thinking through Thomas Merton" focuses on the religious aspects of Merton's life in terms of the greater discipline of European philosophy.

"I think the life of Thomas Merton makes a brilliant case for literary education. Here was a guy who found himself reading Joyce and Blake and brought their complex, imaginative minds to bear on contemporary life," Inchausti said. "It didn't make him less of a thinker, it made him more of a thinker."



Inchausti believes that Merton's life makes a brilliant case for literary education.

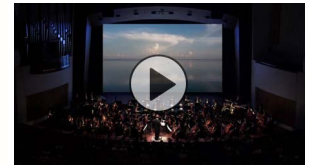
| Photo: Chris Barr

Research in the College of Liberal Arts is as active and diverse as ever. Professors John Hampsey and Robert Inchausti are just two of many faculty authors representing the college through their scholarly work.

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## Alumni Couple Finds a Way to Fulfill Their Dreams Through History



Justin Housman credits his history major with introducing him to his wife and setting them both on fulfilling career paths.

[Cal Poly's history program](#) put alumni Justin Housman and Margaret Donoghue on the road to finding their dream careers and life partner. Housman and Donoghue, who began dating while at Cal Poly, both graduated with degrees in history, in 2007 and 2006 respectively, but used their education to pursue very different career paths.

After graduating and spending time abroad, Housman made his lifelong passion for surfing a career by becoming a writer for [Surfer Magazine](#), the authoritative publication on surfing. Donoghue, on the other hand, used the knowledge and skills acquired as a history major to become an investment analyst for the [Australian Trade Commission](#), based in San Francisco.

“The cool thing about a College of Liberal Arts degree is that you’re prepared to do just about anything,” Housman said. “A liberal arts degree doesn’t hold you back but opens up the entire world for you. I know that’s cliché, but it actually is true.”

After graduating, the couple spent a year studying in Paris before moving to San Francisco. There, they were both accepted to San Francisco State University for graduate school and soon after earning master’s degrees, they discovered their current career paths.

Donoghue noted that she enjoys the perks of her job, which include meeting high-ranking diplomats and company leaders. She has discussed contemporary issues with the CFO of EBay, met the governor general of Australia, and dined with ambassadors.

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“I enjoy being able to tap into high-level people. Every day I get to use my mind, I’m constantly planning and strategizing, thinking, reading and learning. I really value that,” Donoghue said.

Housman and Donoghue say that a CLA degree prepares you for just about anything.

Donoghue noted that the education the History Department provided her is invaluable. “I don’t think a lot of people realize that my training, the experience that I bring, comes from a humanities background, specifically history.

“History involves taking an immense amount of information, finding all the core arguments, understanding them, and distilling everything into an informative paper,” Donoghue said. “And you’re charting and explaining change — that’s what I do every day at work.”

Housman added, “Most directly, my history degree prepared me for writing, just writing constantly. Even if you don’t think about it as practice for a career in writing, in history, you’re trying to prove a point constantly, which is extremely important for any journalistic field.”

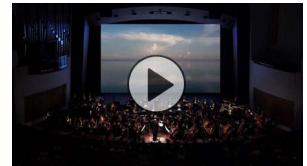
In addition to the practical benefits of their Cal Poly education, Donoghue and Housman have many happy memories of their undergraduate days, which rank among their top experiences in life.

“Everybody [at Cal Poly] seemed to be doing something really cool; everyone either had an internship planned or spent some time traveling abroad like I did. Everybody had a goal and a purpose — something definitive they really wanted to do and were really excited about. It was nice to be a part of that,” Housman said.

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