Interview with Chairman Dana Gioia

Submitted by Cassandra Atherton

At the end of last year I was fortunate enough to be granted an interview with Chairman Dana in Washington D.C. My research on American public intellectuals has been grounded in a series of interviews that I have undertaken with some of the finest intellectuals in America. My interviews have focused on academics such as Professors Noam Chomsky, Harold Bloom and Camille Paglia. Not only is Gioia Chairman for the National Endowment of the Arts, he is a poet, critic, librettist, anthologist, translator, man of letters, as well as a family man. He rather contentiously posited his view on writers and intellectuals working in universities by stating: “I am not anti-academic. The university remains the scholarly centre of culture. The problem is that today the university often assumes it possesses a monopoly on literary culture… Anyone who wants to be a writer nowadays should go to the university but then get out of it.” He was a fascinating interviewee who believes that “tradition isn’t an intimidating marble temple. It is a romance that enlivens and enlarges your life.”

Janice Ollerton Special Commendation

Submitted by SJSC

Social Justice Social Change RC PhD candidate, Janice Ollerton recently received a special commendation prize for a paper she submitted to the 2007 International Institutional Ethnography Conference. The competition was open to an international scholars and researchers in the field of Institutional Ethnography, whose abstracts were accepted for presentation at the conference at Deakin University, in Geelong, Victoria, held in November 2007. Papers were examined by a panel made up of IE academics from the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia. Prizes, which included conference fees and accommodation, were awarded by Dorothy Smith an internationally recognised leader in this field, some would argue founder of the field. Janice was particularly thrilled to be given an opportunity to sit with Dorothy to discuss her research project and receive individual guidance from a world renowned theorist.

The College would like to congratulate Janice on her achievement.
Community Interpreting caterers for interpreters, interpreting students, educators and researchers as well as other professionals who work with interpreters. Sandra Hale provides a comprehensive overview of the field by reviewing its many complex facets from the differing perspectives of practising interpreters, lawyers and medical practitioners, interpreting educators and researchers. The author argues for a strong relationship between research, training and practice, where each informs the other. She shows how questions generated by the practice can be addressed by research, and the results of research can be incorporated in the training and professional development of interpreters in order to inform and improve practice.

Part 1 offers an overview of the key theoretical concepts and research issues. Part 2 explores the practical applications of theory and research, highlighting the voices of the different key participants. Part 3 provides a guide to undertaking Community Interpreting research, with concrete sample research projects, and Part 4 lists a comprehensive set of key resources for interpreters, students, educators and researchers.

About the Authors:
SANDRA HALE is Associate Professor and Leader of the Interpreting and Translation Research Node, University of Western Sydney, Australia. She has extensive experience as an interpreter, educator and researcher. She chaired the Critical Link 5 Congress held in 2007, and is the author of The Discourse of Court Interpreting.

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Palgrave Macmillan
The Writing & Society Research Group is pleased to welcome the distinguished authors Gail Jones, Nicholas Jose, Catherine Rey and Alexis Wright, to research appointments within the Group.

The WSRG is concerned with the social dimensions of literature, particularly Australian literature, and combines the practical business of editing and publishing, with the craft of writing and translation across the literary genres, and a scholarly interest in interpretation, literary traditions and readers.

Gail Jones is the author of two short-story collections, a critical monograph on The Piano, and the novels Black Mirror, Sixty Lights, Dreams of Speaking and Sorry. Twice shortlisted for the Miles Franklin Award, her prizes include the WA Premier’s Award for Fiction, the Nita B. Kibble Award, the Steele Rudd Award, the Age Book of the Year Award and the Adelaide Festival Award for Fiction. Appointed a lecturer at Edith Cowan University in 1988, she moved to Murdoch University in 1991 and then to the Department of English at the University of Western Australia in 1993. In 2001 she received an Australian Universities Teaching Award for Humanities and the Arts.

Nicholas Jose is a novelist, essayist and playwright, whose thirteen books include the novels Paper Nautilus, Avenue of Eternal Peace (shortlisted for the Miles Franklin Award), The Custodians (shortlisted for the Commonwealth Prize) and Original Face; a volume of essays, Chinese Whispers; and the memoir Black Sheep. After gaining his doctorate at Oxford University, he taught in the Department of English at the ANU 1978-1985. His monograph Ideas of the Restoration in English Literature was published in 1984. He served as Cultural Counsellor in the Australian Embassy Beijing 1987-1990. A full-time writer from 1991, he resumed his academic career as Professor of Creative Writing at Adelaide University in 2005. A past president of International PEN Sydney, he is general editor of the Macquarie PEN Anthology of Australian Literature. Professor Jose takes up his position in August 2008.

Catherine Rey is a French-Australian author whose novels include L’ami intime, Les jours heureux, Eloge de l’oubli, Lucy comme les chiens, and Ce que racontait Jones, which was shortlisted for the Prix Femina and the Prix Renaudot, and published in Australia as The Spruiker’s Tale in 2005. Her most recent book is Une femme en marche, which is to be published in Australia as A Woman on the Move in 2008. In 2005 she received a PhD from the University of Western Australia for her dissertation on the adoption of French as a literary language by the Eastern European writers Emil Cioran, Milan Kundera and Andrei Makine. She has taught at the University of Western Australia and Edith Cowan University.

Alexis Wright is a member of the Waanyi nation of the Gulf of Carpentaria. She is the author of the novel Carpentaria, which won five national literary awards in 2007, including the Miles Franklin Award. Her first novel Plains of Promise was shortlisted for the Commonwealth Prize; her other books are Grog War, a study of alcohol abuse in Tennant Creek, the short story collection Le Pacte de Serpent, and as editor, Take Power, a collection of essays and stories celebrating twenty years of land rights in Central Australia. She has written widely on Indigenous rights, and organised two successful Indigenous Constitutional Conventions, ‘Today We Talk About Tomorrow’ (1993), and the Kalkaringi Convention (1998).

The new research appointments join existing WSRG members Ivor Indyk, critic, editor and publisher of HEAT magazine and Giramondo Books; novelists and researchers Jane Goodall and Sara Knox; writing and new media specialist Hazel Smith; scholars of modernism Anthony Uhlmann and Chris Fleming; and literary theorist Anna Gibbs.
Innovative New Approach to Music Therapy widens its appeal

Submitted by Garth Paine

A clinical trial begins this week for an innovative new video tracking system to allow highly disabled clients to engage in music therapy. The project is an industry partnership between UWS School of Communication Arts, MARC Auditory Labs and Nordoff-Robbins Music Therapy Australia.

On March 6th five clients of the Golden Stave Music Therapy Centre, all of whom have severe physical disabilities, will commence participation in trials of a new realtime gesture sonification system. The project examining the applications of interactive music systems in improvisational music therapy. The project is led by Dr Garth Paine from the University of Western Sydney’s MARCS Auditory Laboratories and School of Communication Arts and Dr Alan Lem, Lecturer in Music Therapy at the UWS School of Communication Arts and music therapist for Nordoff-Robbins at the Golden Stave Music Therapy Centre.

It is widely understood that physical disability, whether permanent or temporary, has a profound effect on the level people engage in the life of their community. Interactive music therapy has been used since the beginning of the 20th century to address this issue, but it is only in the last two decades that technology has benefited people with serious physical disabilities. Indeed, sonification devices such as Soundbeam (http://www.soundbeam.co.uk/) have become a medium through which even profoundly physically disabled individuals can become relatively communicative by using music and sound. Unfortunately, all currently available sonification systems are not sensitive to the dynamic qualities of movement, which naturally restricts the scope of personal expression. The innovative system developed by Doctors Paine and Lem with assistance from RA Jon Drummond calculates the dynamic of change in the observed gesture every twenty five millisecond. The dynamic data is used to control layers of sonification so that the quality of the sound closely mirrors the dynamic qualities of movement and its meaning as a means of emotional expression with people who have severe physical disabilities, especially those resulting from acquired brain injuries and cerebral palsy. Of particular interest to the investigators is the extent to which dynamic, real-time video-tracking and multi-media systems will increase an understanding of the relationship between movement and emotional expression with this population group.

In the initial stage the researchers have been developing an infrastructure/framework for the development of the system that allows one to extract a number of pieces of information from the video tracking data including the rate of movement, the period of time movement is within a certain range, the direction and acceleration characteristics of the gesture. Following a careful selection of participants, 5 clients of Golden Stave Music Therapy Centre have been chosen. They will attend 8 weekly sessions during which Dr Lem with the assistance of Jon Drummond will work on the selection of the most appropriate levels of sensitivity to achieve robust levels of sonification, while at the same time refining the system and its possibilities. Assessment will involve both qualitative and quantitative measures looking at the quality of movement, motivation and specific feelings and emotions that have been worked on.
CFP ‘Contact’: Australia and New Zealand/Aotearoa

Postgraduate Conference, 25-26 September 2008

Parramatta campus, University of Western Sydney

This conference is sponsored by the Cultural Studies Association of Australia, Centre for Cultural Research (University of Western Sydney) and Centre for Research on Social Inclusion (Macquarie University)

The aim of the postgraduate conference is to establish a forum for Australian and New Zealand/Aotearoa postgraduate students and young researchers, working under the broad rubric of Cultural Studies, to present and discuss their ongoing research with peers, academics and professionals in their given areas of interest. Papers are invited from a range of discipline areas exploring themes around ‘contact’. With a particular focus on Australia and New Zealand/Aotearoa, this conference proposes to complement as well as draw on the already vast literature devoted to exploring the consequences and forms of increased human interaction as a result of accelerated trends of globalisation.

Some issues include (but are not limited to):

• Encounters with the stranger/the Other
• Racism/inter-ethnic solidarity
• Diaspora and diasporic formations/homeland
• ‘Contact zone’ in the postcolonial context
• Tourism and ‘contact zones’
• How do new media and technologies facilitate/inhibit contact?
• Relationships between contact and conflict
• Methodological concerns for the researcher in establishing trust and ‘breaking in’
• Asia Pacific Cultural Studies contact with globalisation

Submission Guideline

An abstract (250 words) to be accompanied by presenter’s biography (150 words). To be submitted to Joanna Winchester, 16238943@student.uws.edu.au by 10th May 2008.

CCR Seminar Series 2008

The Centre for Cultural Research’s Seminar Series re-commenced for 2008 with a very busy February calendar that featured three speakers from the UK. Professor Charlotte Brunsdon (University of Warwick), Professor David Morley (Goldsmiths College, University of London) and Dr Marta Herrero (University of Plymouth) have set the tone for the Seminar Series in the year ahead, with thought-provoking, engaging and wide-ranging presentations. The wide variety of subjects, illustrating the multidisciplinary breadth that is CCR, continues throughout the year with papers ranging from digital storytelling to the politics of recognition to citizenship deficits to refugee and asylum children in the UK. Speakers are made up of CCR researchers and final-year Higher Degree Research candidates as well as speakers from outside UWS. Forthcoming international visitors include Professor Don Ihde (Stony Brook University, New York), Professor Sandro Mezzadra (University of Bologna, Italy and UWS Eminent Research Visitor), and Dr Rutvica Andrijašević (Oxford University, UK). Events are well-attended and RSVPs are advisable. We look forward to seeing you there!
## CCR Seminar Series 2008

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<td>Associate Professor Brett Neilson (CCR, UWS), Professor Sandro Mezzadra (UWS ERVS visitor, University of Bologna, Italy) &amp; Dr Rutvica Andrijasevic (Centre on Migration, Policy and Society, Oxford University, UK)</td>
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Convenor: Professor Kay Anderson; Co-convenor: Dr Cameron McAuliffe
In November 2007 the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia (ASSA) inducted CCR’s Professor Kay Anderson as a fellow at the Great Hall in University House, Australian National University, Canberra.

The Academy is an autonomous, non-governmental organisation, devoted to the advancement of knowledge and research in the various social sciences. It consists of 471 fellows who have been elected by their peers on the basis of having made a distinguished contribution to one or more disciplines of the social sciences. This is the pinnacle of recognition in this field in the Australian context.

The president of the Academy, Stuart Macintyre, Ernest Scott Professor of History at the University of Melbourne and Australia’s highest profile academic historian and author of The History Wars, inducted Professor Anderson into the Academy.

Since 2004, Professor Anderson has also been an Academician of the Academy of the Social Sciences (United Kingdom). The (in 2008, 463) Academicians are elected to this Academy also by virtue of their eminence in one or more of the social sciences.

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A spy in the house of Rand

By Kieryn McKay

We all know that as researchers we sometimes find ourselves in prickly situations. But how many times has an archivist accused you of being a spy?

In 2004 I took a trip to the US to conduct interviews with some key players in my doctoral thesis. My thesis (titled “The Cult Phenomenon: Literature, Music and Madness”) is very much concerned with obsessive behaviour, and I was at the time writing a chapter about the concept of “devotion” of a reader to an author, and the point at which this devotion crosses reasonable bounds. Of particular interest to me were instances where the devotee is/was intent on converting others to their cause.

As a case study, I had chosen to investigate the ‘followers’ of Ayn Rand, the engineer of Objectivism and author of The Fountainhead. In the US there exist two rival organised ‘sites of devotion’ set up in her name: The Ayn Rand Institute (ARI) and The Objectivist Centre. Both operate not-for-profit, both preach the word of their Author (their capital, not mine) to the existence of the “other” organisation, The Objectivist Centre. Without a word, he calmly placed his pen and paper to the side, folded his hands in his lap and sat back in his chair, studying me. He was silent for a moment, then ventured: “Do you have any affiliation with that organisation?” I answered a truthful “no”. “How do you know about them?” he asked. “I’m a researcher” I replied, before admitting “…actually, the internet. They come up in the first page on Google.” He uttered an involuntary “hmph”, and queried: “Do you intend to visit them while you’re here?” At this point I was thoroughly aware that there was a right and a wrong answer to that question, but I thought it best to expose myself, lest I be exposed by my flushed cheeks and jittery demeanour (I have never been a very good liar). “Yes, I’m heading to the East Coast in a month.” At that, he was up. Out of his chair, and out the door.

A little confused but determined not to over-dramatise the situation, I decided the timing of his departure was coincidental and waited patiently for his return. I was left, alone, for perhaps half an hour before the secretary came in to inform me that I was not permitted to leave the room until the archivist gave his approval. This, she expected, would be quite some time. I was not, she insisted, to speak to anyone who wandered into the room by mistake. If I required the bathroom I was to knock on the inside of the door until she came to escort me to the amenities.

Still puzzled, and now a little perplexed, I busied myself by transcribing the interviews of the day before. 2 hours later, the secretary returned. She informed me that the archivist had called an emergency meeting of upper management (read: gatekeepers) to determine whether or not I should be allowed to enter the archives. Believe it or not, this is the conversation that followed:

Me: “May I ask what their concern is?”
Secretary: “In case you’re one of them.”
Me: “One of whom?”
Secretary: “Do you work for them?”
Me: “The Objectivist Centre?”
Secretary: “Yes, are you their spy?”
Me: “Spy? Er… no. I’m a PhD student.”
Secretary: “Hmph. We’ll see.”

Those in the “emergency meeting” eventually decided I was not an immediate threat (though to be cautious they insisted that I only enter the archives with a chaperone). But, after a total of 4 hours ‘waiting in the hold’, I had no time left to get the information I had come for. When I left the ARI that evening, I was told that the investigation into my “case” would be ongoing, and that if I intended to revisit the ARI at any time in the future I should allow a significant length of time for approval.

I have since been sent an apology by the ARI and an invitation to visit them again. Apparently it turns out I wasn’t a spy after all. Of course I already knew that. Although there is still a breadth of information I would like to access in the ARI archive, I haven’t yet taken up the offer to revisit them. I think there is a small part of my brain that hasn’t quite recovered. Besides, sometimes experience can provide much more information than research ever will. On that basis I’ve got all the information I need for an article – perhaps one I could publish with The Objectivist Centre?

The ARI was my first stop. When I arrived, I was optimistic. In the foyer hung banners testifying to the Objectivist promotion of “free thought”, “individualism” and “open-mindedness”. This is important to remember when you get to the end of my story.

The first day was mostly note-unworthy. I spoke to four or five managerial staff and they were perfectly pleasant people. Perhaps the only outstanding moment was when their Communications Director explained to me the rationale behind ARI in-school proselytising (by in-school here I mean primary as well as high school). With not the slightest trace toward sarcasm, she stated: “we find it most effective to get to them as early as possible… while they’re young and impressionable. That way they don’t have time to make up their own minds.” Perhaps this should have been a red flag…

On day two I signed up to visit the ARI archives. About 4 hours into the archive “induction” (read: inquisition), I happened to mention to the archivist that I knew of the existence of the “other” organisation, The Objectivist Centre. Without a word, he calmly placed his pen and paper to the side, folded his hands in his lap and sat back in his chair, studying me. He was silent for a moment, then ventured: “Do you have any affiliation with that organisation?” I answered a truthful “no”. “How do you know about them?” he asked. “I’m a researcher” I replied, before admitting “…actually, the internet. They come up in the first page on Google.” He uttered an involuntary “hmph”, and queried: “Do you intend to visit them while you’re here?” At this point I was thoroughly aware that there was a right and a wrong answer to that question, but I thought it best to expose myself, lest I be exposed by my flushed cheeks and jittery demeanour (I have never been a very good liar). “Yes, I’m heading to the East Coast in a month.” At that, he was up. Out of his chair, and out the door.

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With the courageous formation of the Centre of Educational Research occurring late 2007, a diverse array of research interests were drawn together from a number of previous centres (e.g., SELF Research Centre), research groups (e.g., Education and Social Change) and research concentrations (e.g., Narrative Discourse and Pedagogy). This amalgamation of respected and professional UWS researchers and post-graduate research students has seen the creation of a diverse and productive research environment.

Research emanating from the Centre for Educational Research, although centred on the role of education in policy, political, individual, social and cultural contexts, also draws research directions from a number of other disciplines such as psychology, health, sociology, history and information technology. Presented below is a brief list of research projects and publications involving CER staff and postgraduate students that demonstrates the wealth of research emanating from the centre.

Professor Margaret Vickers and Dr My Trinh Ha have co-authored a chapter examining high school students’ gender stereotypes with regard to Computing and Information Technology (CIT) skills. Drawn from the results of a larger Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage research grant entitled “Gender and I.T.” (in collaboration with UWS researchers Dr Carol Reid, Dr Susanne Gannon, and Dr Kerry Robinson), Professor Vickers and Dr Ha found that despite females enjoying the use of emailing and instant messaging technologies, they were seen as being less competent than their male counterparts.

Associate Professor Geoff Munns and Associate Professor Wayne Sawyer currently have a project titled: “Teachers for a Fair Go: Exemplary teachers of students in Priority Schools”, which is jointly run by the Priority School Programs (NSWDET) and the University of Western Sydney. Within this study an emphasis will be placed on teachers in schools with high concentrations of students from low socio-economic backgrounds. Teachers with a strong record of engaging students in these schools will be identified to help better inform effective classroom practices for future teachers. By targeting teachers who have had success in engaging students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, significant steps will be taken in narrowing the social and education equity gap between low and high socio-economic students.

Current PhD student Linda Finger, under the supervision of CER’s Professor Rhonda Craven and Dr Alex Yeung, and Oxford University’s Herbert Marsh, is in the process of finalising her PhD thesis in which the monumental task of gathering five time-waves of data was successfully completed across a large number of NSW private primary schools. This extensive longitudinal study focussed on the effectiveness of a comprehensive whole-school bullying intervention which targeted not only students, but also teachers and parents. In short, this intervention increased the practical understanding of the diverse ways in which bullying may occur, and the often dramatic effects bullying can have on students. Importantly, this research has added significantly to students’, teachers’ and parents’ knowledge of effective strategies to prevent and address bullying. Overall, Linda Finger’s research has received strong, positive feedback from students, parents and teachers alike.

The Centre for Educational Research also has a strong emphasis on informed research into Indigenous Australian issues. For example, Gawaian Bodkin-Andrews has recently completed a PhD thesis (under the supervision of Professor Rhonda Craven and Dr Alex Yeung) in which varying dimensions of self-concept, motivation and perceived racial discrimination were examined to ascertain their influence on the academic outcomes of Indigenous and non-Indigenous high school students. Overall, it was found that what works (and does not work) for non-Indigenous students’ school success, also works for Indigenous students’ school success. As a result of these findings, and the surprisingly powerful negative effect racism can have on both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students’ educational outcomes, Gawaian Bodkin-Andrews recently won an ARC Indigenous post-doctoral fellowship to qualitatively examine the experiences of racial discrimination of older Indigenous Australians who have achieved high levels of success in their chosen field. In doing so, it is hoped that the psychological mechanisms of resiliency against the effects of racial discrimination may be identified and then applied to schooling interventions.
The Writing Experiment

Hazel Smith, author of the creative writing text, The Writing Experiment, shows us how it’s done in this spirited book of performance poems, collages, elegies, meditations, explorations of gossip, uncertain identities, bodies and the city, to say nothing of “acts of omission”. An accompanying CD-Rom includes new media and performance works by Hazel Smith and Roger Dean.