

Final Written Report
Professional Development Grant

“Unmasking Murder from the Spanish Civil War in Carme Riera’s ‘El reportaje’”

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Dana Derrick Ward, Ph.D.

This final report addresses the results of a professional enhancement project funded in part by an ATU Professional Development Grant. This report follows the instructions provided in the Guidelines for Professional Development Grants.

A. Title Page (see above)

B. Restatement of Professional Enhancement Opportunity

Abstract of conference paper presented:

My research and presentation explore the pact of silence that covered up many of the atrocities of the Spanish Civil War in the story “El reportaje” by the contemporary feminist Spanish author, Carme Riera. The author utilizes a detective genre within the framework of a story within a story to unravel a generation-old mystery that stems back to the days of post-war Spain when relations between Franco’s traditional conservative Spain and the outside world were still strained. Riera distances her audience by utilizing various methods of *distantiation* literary techniques to create mystery surrounding events in the 1930s and to unravel the plot gradually through the eyes of a feminist reporter who is on assignment in Spain to investigate the rumors of an intriguing legend of two Americans and a Spanish woman who disappeared on the beach and were found brutally beaten the next day. I analyze the story from a Brechtian standpoint to illustrate how the author succinctly unmask the reality of the events that many Spaniards felt ashamed of remembering or fearful of expressing due in part to the prevailing censorship of General Francisco Franco’s regime (1936-1975). Finally, I reveal how Carme Riera’s story intersperses real people with fictional accounts to lend an air of ambiguity to the conflicted

sentiments of the Spanish people as they strive to hide their recollections of forgotten crimes of the post-civil war period in Spain.

C. Brief Review of Professional Enhancement Opportunity

I attended the 70th Annual South Central Modern Language Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana. I flew out of Little Rock on October 2, 2013, and I presented my paper entitled “Unmasking Murder from the Spanish Civil War in Carme Riera’s ‘El reportaje’” on October 4, 2013 in the Spanish II Session: Spanish Literature After 1700. I also attended many literary sessions and the presentation by the keynote speaker of the conference as well as gathering new material for my classes and meeting with other professors from the region. At the end of this very informative conference, I returned to Russellville on October 6, 2013.

D. Summary of Experiences

At the conference, my paper was well received in the Spanish session and led to a panel discussion with many distinguished professors of Spanish from diverse universities such as Baylor, Louisiana Tech University, and the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville to name a few. Also, I met the publishers of a Spanish drama literary magazine entitled *Estreno*, and I hope to

discuss more ideas for publication with them in the future. All in all, I benefited greatly from the commentaries and observations from the other professors who attended the session, and I was able to glean new ideas from the presentations and sessions that I attended as well. This conference proved to be a very valuable experience in allowing me to develop my expertise in nineteenth and twentieth-century Spanish literature and culture. The knowledge that I gained at this conference will allow me to enhance the learning experiences of my students in these areas.

E. Conclusions and Recommendations

In addition to receiving positive feedback in regard to my paper and making valuable connections for future publication and scholarship at the South Central Modern Language Association, I was able to attend other literary sessions related to my fields of study. At the conference I was elected to serve as secretary for the 2014 Spanish II Session which will take place at the next SCMLA Conference in Austin, Texas. Also, I am in the process of pursuing my research and writing as I anticipate expanding my tentative book on post-war Spanish literature. I am very grateful to the committee for awarding me the funds that helped to make my trip to the conference possible, and I will continue to use the material from my research not only for my future writing project but for background material for my classes of Spanish Short Stories, Spanish Literature, and Spanish Culture and Civilization.

Thank you for your support.

Copies to: Dr. Carl Brucker, Department Head, English and World Languages

Dr. Jeff Woods, Dean, College of Arts and Humanities

Dr. John Watson, Vice-president, Academic Affairs

