

# Thompson smooths transition

## Liaison here to ease Clackamas-PSU switch for English majors

**Karlin Johnson**  
Feature Editor

Poet, rocker, adviser and instructor, PSU liaison Sydney Thompson is a welcome new face to Clackamas' English department.

A new program is underway for students interested in transferring to PSU in English, and Thompson is here to coordinate it and lighten the stress-load for transfer students.

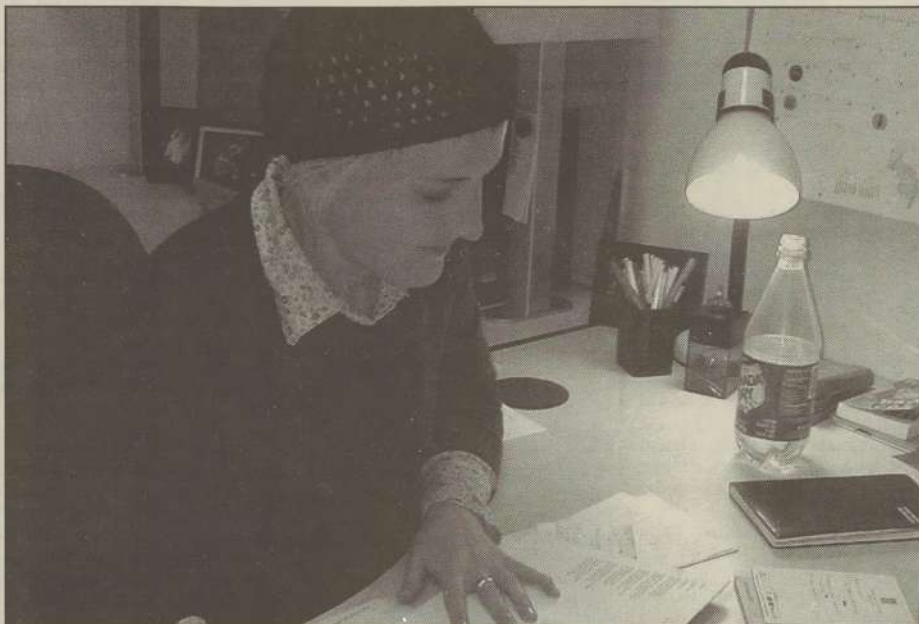
"It's a collaboration between Portland State and Clackamas that's been years in the making, so I saw a window of opportunity," said Thompson.

The program is basically an opportunity for English students who are planning to transfer to PSU to be able to finish a four year degree more easily. A 300 level or higher PSU class will be offered on the Clackamas campus at least once per term.

"I can help with everything from advising, to help planning your transfer, to letting you know where the secret parking places are downtown, to the best burrito on campus," said Thompson. "So that's my job—to make it easy, less intimidating and accessible, so that students have a place to talk to instead of just a list of numbers."

Along with her work at Clackamas, and with the PSU master's degree program, the Center for Excellence in Writing, Thompson also works at Portland Community College, teaching women's self defense. Self defense classes are something that she has been involved in for about 15 years, and she would like to be a part of the self defense program at Clackamas as well.

Although Thompson enjoys these jobs, college students aren't the only



Angela Gerhart Clackamas Print

Aside from coordinating a PSU transfer program for English majors, Sydney Thompson is a singer-songwriter and teaches song writing in grade schools. She can be found in RR223.

age group Thompson works with. For a few years now Thompson has been teaching song writing in elementary schools.

**"[Kids] don't care about conventions and rules and grammar; they just like words that sound cool together."**

**Sydney Thompson**  
PSU Liaison

"I liked teaching at the college level but then I really started enjoying working with the smaller kids," said Thompson. "Second and third grade is my absolute favorite, and they're the best poets."

Thompson has noticed that songs formed by the minds of children are very different than songs written by older writers.

"I just find that they are absolutely fearless with language, and as a poet

and a poetry editor I just find that so fascinating how we develop this fear of language as we grow older—we're afraid to put certain words together," said Thompson. "At [a young] age they're still interested in how words sound and how they sound strung together, and they don't care about conventions and rules and grammar; they just like words that sound cool together."

Thompson's interest in song writing and music began after she got her master's degree in poetry at PSU, and some friends, who were trying to form a band, asked her to write lyrics for them.

"A couple of bands later and many years later, now I find that that's just my main mode of expression," she said.

Thompson is now the lead singer and a songwriter for her current band, Smidgen, which has been together for about three years.

"It's definitely a mixture of, I'd say, indie-pop and jazz influences as well, and maybe a tiny bit of alt country thrown in for flavor," said Thompson.

Working with children has been inspiring to Thompson's career in Smidgen.

"I've wanted to steal lines [from

the kids] many times, to use in my songs or something, because they really get the idea of rhythm and meter and syntax, just based on how they hear it."

Thompson is also a nationally published poet, and has read on National Public Radio (NPR) and KBOO, as well as working with a magazine.

"I edit a poetry magazine called Fireweed Poetry of Oregon and it's one of Oregon's longest-running poetry journals," she said. "I've been editing that for eight years."

Thompson's main interest right now is making the program at Clackamas work.

"Any person who feels interested in that whole process, it doesn't matter what program they are interested in going into, they can come talk to me and I can at least get them pointed in the right direction," she said.

In the long run, Thompson would just like to help students in general, and make a difference.

"I think with the rising cost of tuition, and there just seems to be so many roadblocks thrown up in the way for people to go to school and I think it's ridiculous," said Thompson. "I want anybody who wants to go to school to find ways to be able to do it, and it might sound a little bit idealistic but I just think that's the way it should work. If somebody has the desire to go they should be able to go. So if I can make that easier just for a few people, then great."

To speak with Thompson, please visit RR223.

## Hablando nuestro idioma

A weekly Spanish-language column

### ¡Club latino un espacio para todos!

**Norma Martínez**  
The Clackamas Print

El Clackamas Community College como institución en alta educación, ofrece diferentes actividades extra - curriculares o también llamados "clubs" a todo estudiante que forme parte de ésta institución. También da la oportunidad a otros, de formar sus propios clubs, y así compartir un espacio en donde juntos disfrutaran de un mismo pasatiempo.

Existen diferentes tipos de Clubs, hay para todos gustos y aptitudes, hay clubs de escritores, clubs de viaje, club francés, club alemán, y muchos otros más. Pero también existe un club en el que muchos deberíamos de formar parte, y éste es "El Club Latino" o también conocido como "Unidos Club". Este club está formado por estudiantes Hispánicos que desean compartir con la Sociedad parte de su cultura, y al mismo tiempo identificarse de una manera exitosa. El Club Latino es para estudiantes a los que les

gustaría involucrarse en proyectos que traigan a su campus tradiciones y experiencias de la cultura Latina, y al mismo tiempo interactuar con otros estudiantes con los mismos intereses. El Club Latino es un círculo de ideas abiertas, toda opinión es aceptada, así como todos pueden contribuir con sus talentos y a la vez aportar sus puntos de vista para mejorar éste proyecto.

Si quieres formar parte de éste grupo o simplemente quisieras saber más acerca de éste, puedes reunirte con ellos el primer y el tercer Miércoles de cada mes de 2 a 2:45 de la tarde en la Oficina de Servicios para Estudiantes Latinos que está localizada en el centro de consejería (Counseling & Advising center). Debido a que éste es un club

abierto, éste es manejado por los mismos estudiantes con la supervisión y apoyo de la consejera Guadalupe Martínez, la cual les brinda su apoyo en cada una de las sesiones que realizan.

Si quieres formar parte de éste grandioso grupo de estudiantes latinos, no te coivas por que aquí no hay requisitos para entrar lo único que tienes que demostrar es la disposición de trabajar en grupo y ponerte en contacto con su consejera al (503)657-6958 con la extensión 2717

y registrarte, no te arrepentiras y compartiras tu cultura con los demás. Ya verás que encontrarás más estudiantes con tus mismos intereses y te divertirás. ¡Unete al club Latino por que ellos te estan esperando, todos son bienvenidos!



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