

## **Tribute for John Esling**

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John Esling was the Chair of Linguistics when I arrived at UVic in 2010. I learned a great deal from John about how things work in the Linguistics department, and at UVic generally. In particular, he showed me that UVic is a generous place, with plenty of room for compassion and benefit of the doubt. He showed a passionate loyalty to his concept of UVic, participating fully in the life of the university, and staunchly defending it against the onslaughts of bean-counters and budget cuts. I continue to find his vision an inspiring and hopeful one.

As Chair, John often spent time chatting with faculty members and students in the graduate students' lounge—a human touch that made an important difference in my experience of the department, especially in my early days at UVic. John's conversation and correspondence were (and are) always witty and challenging. He has certainly challenged me to discover and defend my positions on a number of issues, for which I am always (if sometimes belatedly) grateful.

One gets the sense that John regards those around him much as he might regard his bees: objectively, perhaps not uncritically—yet always with respect, and a joking camaraderie. I wonder what the bees think of John, as they go about their bee business; they probably aren't fully aware of the care and attention he lavishes upon their world, as he does upon ours. But they surely benefit from it all the same.

Thank you, John. Don't be a stranger.