



A Word from the Assistant Director

Returns and Beginnings...

It was very nice coming back to the Humanities doctoral program after more than a year away. I left many friends and colleagues at the University of Milan, but it was a beautiful surprise to return and find myself completely at home among my friends and colleagues here, in Louisville.

I would like to spend a few words on the two main areas in which I have been working for the past semester. As Chair of the Admissions Committee, I am happy to report that the program is being recognized on a national level. The number of applications continues to be strong, despite the economic crisis, and the program is indeed attracting prospective students from all around the country. This year we received another University Fellowship, which speaks to the quality of our candidates (see article below). I look forward to welcoming, with our Director, Dr. Mary Ann Stenger, the new

group of graduate students who will be joining us in August.

Another initiative is a year-long lecture series, to be launched in Fall, 2011, that is dedicated to global issues in the Humanities. The lecture series inaugurates a new partnership between our PhD program and the Commonwealth Center for the Humanities, and I wish to thank its Director, Dr. Tom Byers, for his unhesitant support. With my best wishes for a relaxing summer, Simona Bertacco, Assistant Program Director. ♦



Association of Humanities Academics - AHA 2011

The second annual University of Louisville Graduate Student Conference, "Fanaticism: Recollections, Representations, Reactions," sponsored by the Association of Humanities Academics took place on March 25th, 2011. Dr. Nokes' keynote address, "Professor Awesome vs. The Nazis: Mythic Transference and Fanaticism," investigated the concept of "world-building" among various types of fanatics and the ways in which people construct idealized world to inhabit. Dr. Nokes, professor of Medieval Literature at Troy University in Alabama and longtime Dragon*Con attendee, received his PhD from Wayne State University in 2002. Our Graduate Student presenters included students from several universities across the country as well as from the University of Louisville.

AHA has decided to regularly sponsor the R^e conference, with the 2012 theme: "The Phoenix Effect: Regeneration, Rebirth, Reformation." For further information, e-mail:

ahalouisville@gmail.com or visit AHA's website www.ahalouisville.com. ♦

University Fellow

The School of Interdisciplinary and Graduate Studies awarded a 2011 University Fellowship to new Humanities Ph.D. Program student Jasie Stokes. ♦

Jasie Stokes is a native of Park City, Utah and received her BA in Humanities and MA in Comparative Studies from Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. She is currently finishing a Masters of Research in Humanities and Cultural Studies at the London Consortium.

Jasie's research interests range from Gothic and horror studies to British punk and post-punk music culture, from Italian Renaissance poetry to First World War art and literature, from Virginia Woolf to Monty Python. The common vein throughout most of her research is the representation of the broken, grotesque, and abject body, and all of the social, cultural, and political issues and questions that such a body...embodies. ♦



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Expanding the Horizons in the Humanities by D.A. Masolo

The world has changed significantly in the past three decades. Migrations have changed the demographic and cultural features of neighborhoods, and institutions, both academic and civil, have made strides in showing their notice and accommodation to, if not embrace of these changes. Hospitals and other service institutions frequently require translators and interpreters to cater for the growing multilingualism that accompanies the cultural and ethnic transformations in the make-up of their clientele. Whether we are travelers or indigenous, we have become aware that matters of life can no longer be conducted in the same old way regardless of how good it may have been. To paraphrase the title of a book by a good friend, we wake up on our streets and realize that we live in neighborhoods of strangers, thus turning localities once assumed to manifest elements of homogeneity into complex cosmopolitan mixes of diversity.

The changes that have engulfed our neighborhoods and institutions have revealed complex matters that we need to think about, even if we may not be as prepared as we need to be about adjusting to the implications that traveling cultures have brought to our doors. To be sure, the implied social and cultural changes of neighborhoods is not just what is happening in the West, although it may be by far the location of the biggest wave and most visible phenomenon of this change. One just needs to think of the fast-changing social and cultural transformation in such centers of global trade like Dubai, Mumbai, Johannesburg, or Hongkong. Shocks that come with living in places far away from home are not limited to realizing that menfolks there do not necessarily have to show respect to women by opening doors to them, or giving up their seats in their favor especially in public places. But while these are sure to jolt the visitor whose expectations of etiquette may be different, they are not as important as those matters that lead to how we think of the differences in our moral and political interactions.

The reason people have difficulties dealing with the unexpected is because we move around the world as products of the cultures that turned us into agents. We have expectations of ourselves and of others, mostly by the strength and trust of the norms we have internalized. Hence the jolting of the unfamiliar calls for the need to understand the nature of the constitution of ourselves and others as subjects in a world of diverse expectations as we travel and interact in this new global era. To overcome the difficulties that come with such diversity, we first need to understand that the way we live and organize ourselves are, as I have said above, the result of historically developed and evolving ideas and beliefs that we hold – ideas and beliefs which have value and thus reflect our ideas of norms, not only in morality, but a range of expectation in other domains of life as well.

My association with some of the most outstanding anthropologists of the twentieth and twenty-first century has led me to appreciate the fact that a life of good scholarship starts with appreciating, and honestly exploring, the existential and sociocultural predicament of Humanity as a means to finding ways to bridge the sometimes conflicting epistemological and moral standpoints that we all observe in the course of our travels and interactions with people from diverse cultures across the globe. In other words, understanding the nature of morality, moral motivation, and moral relations in global contexts requires an understanding of the diverse results from the role cultures play as molders of personality and behavior, and how these effects of cultures upon us are constantly percolating through our experience of one another.

While not precluding any perspective from how we need to chart new avenues to international relations, contemporary thinking is cautiously but relentlessly moving toward the position that no one cultural perspective, or any versions of it, need any longer to be taken as the standards of how arguments ought exclusively to be defined. To be more specific, just as an example, there is much consternation among scholars across the world that both the epistemology (concerning the nature and status of knowledge) and the ontology (concerning the nature and status of being or existence) of the dominant liberal traditions in Western moral and political theory resonate strongly in the so-called settled norms of international relations when, indeed, neither Kant's deontological moral theory nor the atomistic view that favors self-interest of actors or agents in society are what informs universally how everyone's ideals and aspirations are or ought to be defined.

The fact that people, all people, live by norms to attain a good life is nearly the most that can be claimed to be universal about values. The specific modalities and manifestations of a good life do however differ from one socio-cultural group to another across the world. The result is often the vast plurality of social structure and value systems, including the categories by which the values are explained or justified. It is not surprising, then, that with the onset of the movements of cultural liberation that accompanied political independence across the world since the end of WWII, it was normal for insurgent scholars of cultural liberation to not only engage in debates over multiculturalism by attacking the universalistic claims of those who subscribed to the values of a particular culture, the European in particular, but also to seek equal access to the curriculum of the modern university. The agenda then was to champion the study of non-European cultures as subjects equally valid as the study of European cultures and those descended from them. An excellent example is the now well-known stand among members of the African diaspora with the defense of Afrocentrism as an equal alternative to eurocentrism. As popular among cultural activists as that past has been, it was the easier path. While sharing the impact that awareness of other perspectives and traditions has on our convictions as to what may universally be considered true, the more challenging path, however, is one which is built not on the parallelism of perspectives, but on the view or observation that diversity of cultural perspectives has already influenced how disciplines in modern universities worldwide have evolved over the past century. A widely cited case, for example, is how the study of African cultures and social institutions by British social anthropologists led to the view that differences in knowledge produced by different groups across the world stems not from cognitive structures but from their social existence. Forms of social organization informs how the world is seen, almost literally; that people who live in a world in which external forces are the important ones could be expected to pay close attention to the environment and impersonal causal determinants. On the contrary, people, like the Azande of the Sudan (as described by E. E. Evans-Pritchard), who live in a world in which personal agency produces results might focus primarily on objects that they can manipulate to serve their own goals. In other words, different social realities tend to produce very different patterns of *seeing* the world.

While it may not have been a deliberate ideological stand, it is true that disciplines have aspired to achieve universal knowledge even as they visibly failed in that endeavor. No branch of the modern university is more visibly influenced and shaped by the domestic agendas of the societies in which they are located than the humanities. Appeals to self-interest are therefore common in the study of literatures, the arts, and other disciplines that reflect specific values in the modes of thought and practice of different groups across the world. Yet many people also argue that given today's social mobilities, appeals to broader human values prove more powerful, hence the view that the modern university cannot dodge the emerging global order in which different value systems inform the transformation from *we* to humanity as a whole as the focus of disciplinary quests and orientations. Let us be clear: the rejection of cultural hegemonies is not the same thing as destruction of cultures. Rather, it is a recognition of an international order in which every mode of expression is significant, not as parallels to one another, but as positions that inform a broader dialogue between them. Nor should the recognition of equal worth of other cultures lead or even be viewed as a drop in the rigors of study. Rather, the continued application of analytical and methodological rigors as quintessential tools for knowledge production in the academy should lead to liberation from frivolous beliefs, from shallowness, and from mere persuasion. Thus the credible justification to be offered for expanding the scope of the human sciences in the academy today is not only because voices, once excluded for reasons of race, class, or gender, now have risen to register their claims, but equally importantly because, for one, the university shares with the rest of society the membership in a national and international community; and two, that because fields of knowledge transform into disciplines by virtue of their aspiration to universal truths, they cannot make progress in pursuit of that endeavor unless they build on what every perspective, every culture, and every human experience contributes toward generalized understandings. This will require, to say the least, a reshaping of the idea and goals of those disciplines – like those in the humanities – which study modes of human expression and conduct as a way of addressing the real needs and aspirations of particular persons and groups and challenging those constraints – in belief and social structures – that aim at drawing boundaries of exclusion both within and between social groups. ♦

Exhibition by a Ph.D. Alumna : Sara J. Northerner

Sara J. Northerner graduated from the University of Louisville with her doctorate in December 2011. Her dissertation, *From Edmund Husserl's Image Consciousness to Maurice Merleau-Ponty's *Flesh* and *Chiasm*: The Phenomenological Essence of the Contemporary Image* was defended with honors. Since the fall of 2011, she is a Visiting Assistant Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies at Western Kentucky University.

Throughout my studies in the Interdisciplinary Humanities PhD program, I tried to embrace some of the intellectual and tangible changes that manifested themselves in my creative process. As a visual artist, aesthetically addressing both my own and the viewer's sense perception and the need to reflect upon these perceptions to clarify the entire field of awarenesses required to work successfully in contemporary art became most important. In the end, my creative doctoral dissertation and accompanying critical essay presented the philosophical concepts of Edmund Husserl and explored the phenomenological project of Maurice Merleau-Ponty as rendered in a series of large-scale photographic artworks. Within the images, I worked to disclose the possibilities of Husserl's image-consciousness as perceived through Merleau-Ponty's concept of the embodied viewer in intimate communion with the world. Through the overwhelming size of the photographic pieces, physical characteristics within the artwork and corporeal relationship required for the viewing of each image, I placed emphasis on the phenomenological theories as embedded within or illuminated by the artwork.

In total, the series consisted of eleven images ranging in size from 3' x 4' up to 4' x 8' of three specific males with the ages of 25, 53 and 81 in varying degrees of dress/undress to reflect the presentation of *body image/body schema*. Within each photographic image and the entire body of work, the deciphering of both Husserl's image-consciousness and an aesthetic experience becomes a continuous process of perceiving, sensing and constituting. The tangible and intangible ideas of vision, touch and embodiment are manifested in the physicality of materials and the transparent nature of the images. For example, in some works, an excessive building of the surface through various coatings of varnishes and waxes give a unique, skin-like appearance to reinforce Merleau-Ponty's dialogue of *flesh*, where all forms of perception intertwine. In others, the coatings or chine collé techniques give a luminous quality to the work and allow montaged images to fuse together in the manner of how the texture of the world (*flesh*) visually makes itself known. Throughout each of the pieces, a repetitive knotting and hand sewing of images also served as a metaphor for binding or securing our perceptions of both body and image. In the end, whether it is in one image or the entire body of work, all are considered as part of a predetermined horizon or world that can only be constituted by the embodied viewer as his or her consciousness and world are synthesized or intertwined. If you would like to view the resulting artworks, the images are currently installed at the Hite Institute's Dario Covi Gallery located in Schneider Hall on the University of Louisville's Belknap Campus. The exhibition runs throughout the summer.

2011 Conference Papers by Ph.D. Students

<i>Author</i>	<i>Paper/Presentation or Publication Title</i>	<i>Conference</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Date</i>
Todd Edmonson	"The Comforts of Apocalyptic in Contemporary Fiction"	Humanities Education & Research Association	San Francisco, CA	Mar. 2011
Justy Engle	"Mary Magdalene: Exploring Identity through Coptic and Medieval Texts and Images"	Kentucky Philological Association	Frankfort, KY	Mar. 2011
A.C. Frabetti	"Graffiti and Misconceptions of Signification"	Kentucky Philological Association	Frankfort, KY	Mar. 2011
A.C. Frabetti	"The Graffiti Tag: Critical Practice or Masculine Rite of Passage?"	Gender Matters Conference	Chicago, IL	Apr. 2011
Jim Grote	"Two Theories of Desire: Girard and Buddhism"	Association for Practical and Professional Ethics	Cincinnati, OH	Mar. 2011
Leslie Harper	"Performing Masculinity and Proving Womanhood: The Role(s) of Gender in 'The Clerk's Tale'"	University of Louisville Association of Humanities Academics Graduate Conference	Louisville, KY	Mar. 2011
Leslie Harper	"Saved by the Sea: The Death of Rachel Vinrace"	Kentucky Philological Association	Lexington, KY	Apr. 2011
Brandon Harwood	"Mad Mystics: A Theoretical and Cultural Examination of the Disease Experiences of Teresa of Ávila, Ekaku Hakuin, and Hildegard of Bingen"	Pop Culture Association / American Culture Association	San Antonio, TX	Apr. 2011
Brandon Harwood	"Mizoguchi Burns a Temple: Mishima's Kinkakuji and Zen Koans for our Global Age"	Common Ground Publishing's Religion and Spirituality and Society Conference	Chicago, IL	Feb. 2011
Brandon Harwood	"The Same World Anew: Straus' Life-Historic Phenomenology and the Mystic Experience of Siddhartha Gautama"	The Interdisciplinary Coalition of North American Phenomenologists	Arlington, VA	May 2011
Tiffany Hutabarat	"Mad Clothes for a Crazy World: Analyzing the Fashion of Vivienne Westwood"	Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association	San Antonio, TX	Apr. 2011
Tiffany Hutabarat	"The Library and Popular Culture"	Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association	San Antonio, TX	Apr. 2011
Jeremy Killian	"That Deceptive Line: Plato on Linear Perspective and Visual Perception"	Kentucky Philosophical Association	Lexington, KY	Apr. 2011
Jeremy Killian	"Faulkner on Descartes: <i>The Sound and the Fury</i> and the Mind/Body Problem"	Association of Humanities Academics 2011 Graduate Student Conference	Louisville, KY	Mar. 2011
Jeremy Killian	"The Walking Dead: An Application of Corpse Theory to John Donne's Monument and Lavinia in <i>Titus Andronicus</i> "	Massachusetts Center for Renaissance Studies 2010 Graduate Conference	Amherst, MA	Oct. 2010
Erin McCoy	"Hallelujah! His soul is marching on!": The Transformation of the Soldier as a National Symbol in America During the Vietnam War"	Humanities Education & Research Association	San Francisco, CA	Mar. 2011
Sara Shafer	"Kafka, Abraham, and Echoes of the Self"	Echoes: Across Disciplines, Texts, and Times	Pittsburgh, PA	Mar. 2011
Lisa Shugoll	"The Rhetoric of Race in Riddle 12 of the <i>Exeter Book</i> "	Kentucky Philological Association	Frankfort, KY	Mar. 2011
Katherine A. Wagner	Creative Fiction: "Selling Happiness"	University of Louisville Association of Humanities Academics Graduate Conference	Louisville, KY	Mar. 2011
Katherine A. Wagner	"The Thrill of Your Life: The Amusement Park in Fantasy Cinema and <i>Zombieland</i> "	Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association	San Antonio, TX	Apr. 2011

Reflections on the Program by a Current Student

When I consider how my light has been spent in this program I immediately remember those final classroom days in Gottschalk with Dr. Blum and my comprehensive exam cohorts, and the way the light would filter in through the windows of that little conference room. In that course, in that time we had together, everything I had been studying started to knot together like the plot points do in the last five minutes of a really superior film. I saw it happen for the rest of my classmates before it happened for me, watched them pick up bits and pieces of all the learning we had done and start to make something from them. I sat in awe of the things my peers presented. I learned things about our course of study that I would never have imagined if it had not been for 699 and the way Dr. Blum taught the class.

As the days shortened and the light ebbed, I began to see the same palate of core courses being used to paint such dissimilar pictures. It was a surprise how a lecture could fall on another student's ears differently than it had fallen on mine, or how someone could take a lesson I had cast aside and use it as the central focus of his or her study. I began to see the embodied human in humanities and reflected on how each of the figures we studied once existed in that way, instead of as a sketch in a text book. I wondered if any-



Diane Batts

one would ever study one of us in the future.

After that course it was more about how my night was spent than my light. The journey through comprehensives is a long and lonely one, and found me sitting up many nights on my own to the wee hours. However, there was light during that time too. A million aha! moments of enlightenment dawned as I read and wrote, a good chunk of them coming from the actual exam taking, and most of them coming when there was total darkness outside my window. Those hours of study are equal parts comforting and fearful, the best spent curled up reading a book that fascinates you, the worst wondering if what you discover or write will mean anything to anyone outside of yourself and the people who have graciously offered to read your scribbles.

That fear abides in me now still as I work on my dissertation. How could it not when my core courses focused so much on the proliferation of great works that existed before I was a twinkle? It is right that we Humanities scholars doubt ourselves, because we do see the big picture and all the little pointillist dots that make it. However, none of us can let that fear stop us from moving forward. Instead, we must trust in what another of our wise professors said, "if you care, odds are someone else will too." And if just one other person gets some enlightenment out of my hard earned understanding, I will consider my light in this program well spent. ♦

Dates to Note/Extras

- January 15, 2012 - The deadline for admissions and Graduate Teaching assistantships. Please contact the office for program questions or to get a GTA application.
- Congratulations to:

Julie Wade for winning the national Lambda Literary Award in Lesbian Memoir

Derek Penwell for receiving the Association of Humanities Academics' Alumnus of the Year

The 2011/2012 AHA officers:

Justy Engle, President;

Tiffany Hutabarat, Vice-President;

Leslie Harper, Secretary;

Jennifer Fraley, Treasurer;

Brandon Harwood, Webmaster;

A.C. Farbetti, Public Relations



University of Louisville Ph.D. Student Publications

Author	Publication Title	Journal or Book
Brandon Harwood	"Mizoguchi Burns the Temple: Kinkakuji, the Zen Kōan, and Yukio Mishima's Cultural Critique"	<i>The International Journal of Religion and Spirituality</i> . (forthcoming)
Jeremy Killian	"That Deceptive Line: Plato, Linear Perspective, Visual Perception, and Tragedy"	<i>Journal of Aesthetics Education</i> (forthcoming)
Sara Shafer	"Bound and Undetermined: Kafka, Abraham, and the Meaning of Suffering"	Published in the Ebook <i>Making Sense of Suffering</i> with
Julie Wade	Lyric essay "Eucharist" published in <i>Salamander</i> , Lyric essay "Baptism" published in <i>Seneca Review</i> , Lyric essays "7-11," "Food Giant," and "The Ghost" published in <i>Shadowbox: A Showcase of Contemporary Nonfiction</i> , Lyric essay "Call Me Fritz" published in <i>Brevity: A Journal of Concise Literary Nonfiction</i> , Poem "The Cartographer" published in <i>Cream City Review</i> , Poem "X" published in <i>Alaska Quarterly Review</i> , Poems "Postmodern Poem: Personal Ad" and "After" published in <i>Eclipse</i> , Poem "from the Subjunctive Fantasia series," published in <i>Columbia Poetry Review</i> , Poem "What Nimrod Should Have Known," was nominated for the 2012 Pushcart Prize and published by Cerise Press, Poem "Portrait of the Child After the Fall" published in <i>Cadillac Cicatrix</i> , Lyric essay "Mrs. Anderson [Or a Study of Apocalypse as an After-School Special]," won the <i>Passages North</i> Creative Nonfiction Prize and is forthcoming in <i>Passages North</i> , Lyric essay, "Reconciliation," was named a finalist for the X.J. Kennedy Nonfiction Prize and is forthcoming in <i>Rosebud</i> , Poetry collection <i>Postage Due</i> won the Marie Alexander Poetry Series in December, 2010 and will be published by Published by White Pine Press, Spring 2013.	
Amy Tudor	Anthology selection, poetry "What We Love" published in <i>Collective Brightness: LGBTQ Poets on Faith, Religion, and Spirituality</i> , Poetry, "Blue Night," "Loose Horses" published in <i>Connotation Press: An Online Artifact</i> , Poetry "What We Love," "Storm Damage," "Blind" published in <i>Still: The Journal</i> , Poetry "Mathew B. Brady Shows His Last Photograph" published in <i>WLA: The Journal of War, Literature & the Arts</i> , Short fiction "Elegy with Wings Rising Inside It" published in <i>Consequence Magazine</i> , Chapbook <i>The Professor of Bees</i> , forthcoming by Finishing Line Press.	

University of Louisville Humanities Program Dissertations

5/2011

Todd Edmonson -- *Priest, Prophet, Pilgrim: Types and Distortions of Spiritual Vocation in the Fiction of Wendell Berry and Cormac McCarthy.*

Nan Song -- *An Analysis of the shift in Understanding of Liberty in 1930's America*

It's Happening Here.