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2014 Summer Report

Note from the Associate Director



Julia J. Heydon

It has been another full and rewarding year at the Oregon Humanities Center, thanks to you, our loyal friends, supporters, and audience members. Many of you were able to partake of the rich array of speakers we brought to campus during 2013–14. Our guests addressed our theme, “vulnerable,” from a wide range of disciplinary perspectives and points of view, starting with Jeff Duncan-Andrade, a dedicated and innovative educator from Oakland, CA. Duncan-Andrade kicked off the year with an impassioned and riveting lecture about what it takes to help inner-city kids—often the first in their families to go to college—flourish and succeed in high school, and go on to earn college degrees and then return to contribute to their communities.

During winter term, we hosted Dr. Victoria Sweet, a physician and an award-winning author and historian. Sweet spoke about health care in America, and about her long and inspiring career at Laguna Honda Hospital in San Francisco caring for some of the most vulnerable of our citizens—those who are desperately poor and chronically ill. She talked about how her doc-

toral research into the work of medieval herbalist and abbess Hildegard of Bingen shaped her views concerning the modern practice of medicine. Like Duncan-Andrade, Sweet

concluded that the key to making a meaningful difference in someone’s life—whether as a physician, a teacher, or in any other capacity—is simply to spend time with that person, to be open and responsive to who they are, and to hear what they (or their body) have to say.

In March we had the pleasure of hosting another great storyteller, science writer and intrepid adventurer Craig Childs. Childs packed Lillis Hall and held the audience in thrall with tales (accompanied by slides) of extreme landscapes reflecting some of the cataclysmic cycles from throughout Earth’s history, and their relationship to the climate instability and changing ecosystems we

are currently experiencing.

During the spring we explored the topic of justice and legal vulnerability with NYU law professor and Shakespeare scholar Kenji Yoshino, who described different modes of justice at work in *The Merchant of Venice*. We finished off the year with an enlightening and upbeat

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Clockwise from top: Jeff Duncan-Andrade meeting with educators from the community; Victoria Sweet; and Craig Childs



Aaron Rodriguez lands appealing tenure-track job

I was an Oregon Humanities Center Dissertation Fellow in the fall of 2013 while I worked on completing my dissertation, “The Echo of God’s Laughter: Aesthetic Experience and the Virtue of Openness within a Pragmatist Ethics.” As the title might suggest, some of my main areas of research are ethics and moral philosophy, aesthetics, and the intersections between art and our moral lives. In my dissertation, I make the claim that moral development is not so much a matter of learning absolute rules and principles, but is more about cultivating certain dispositions. One of the most important of these dispositions we can foster is, I believe, openness, or what the American philosopher John Dewey refers to as a “hospitality towards the new” or a “willingness to be affected by experience.” I then argue that engagements with works of art are especially primed to help cultivate this virtue, and attempt to show how openness manifests itself in our everyday ethical lives.

I cannot truly express just how grateful I am to have received an OHC dissertation fellowship. As I am dedicated



to my craft as a teacher, it was difficult during my graduate studies to prioritize my scholarly work over my pedagogical responsibilities. It was thus refreshing to have a term free from the demands of teaching to focus solely on my dissertation, and with that time I was able to make significant progress with my writing, as well as conduct important research for my final chapter. I am also very thankful for the space I had to work in at the OHC. Beyond having a quiet office with access to a computer and printer, I was always met with friendly smiles and warm hellos from those at the OHC, and I really looked forward to going there to work.

Finally, I should mention that having the fellowship at this point in my graduate career was extremely fortunate with respect to my search for an academic appointment. Without teaching responsibilities, I was allowed to balance my time solely between working on my dissertation and submitting job applications. And, in March, I was offered a tenure-track position as Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Morgan State University in Baltimore. This opportunity is especially appealing because as one of my primary duties, I will be developing their new program in public philosophy. The idea behind public philosophy is to bring the work of academic philosophers to bear on pressing societal issues, as well as to have those issues help dictate what problems we, as philosophers, are engaging. I have always maintained that not only philosophy, but humanistic studies in general, could serve this public function, and I am very excited about starting this new position.

—Aaron Rodriguez, PhD, Philosophy

Philosophy graduate accepts faculty appointment

Lucy Schultz, PhD, Philosophy, and 2012–13 OHC Graduate Research Support Fellow, has accepted an appointment as a tenure-track assistant professor of Philosophy at Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls, Texas. Schultz completed her dissertation in 2014. “Creative Climate: East-West Perspectives on Art, Nature, and the Expressive Body,” defends the need for a renewed conception of nature as seen through the lens of an artist engaged in artistic creation. By exploring the embodied foundations of the relationship between artists and their media as recounted by Kant, Hegel, Schelling, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, Nishida, and Watsuji, Schultz offers a way of thinking about artistic expression that recognizes the active, expressive character of artistic media and, more broadly, nature itself. Her work has appeared in journals such as *Philosophy East and West* and *Environmental Philosophy*.



2013–14 by the numbers

“vulnerable” events: 24

(collaboration with 12 departments)

OHC co-sponsored events: 84

(34 campus units; Orchestra NEXT, Eugene Ballet, and Eugene Natural History Society)

Attendance at OHC events: 1565

UO Today shows taped: 35

Fellowships granted: 16

(10 faculty fellowships, 6 graduate fellowships)

Work-in-Progress talks: 15

Website new visitors: 6,449

Website page views: 25,624

(from 90 countries)

Facebook friends: 222



Twitter followers: 71



YouTube videos: 37



RIG focuses on hidden treasures in UO Knight Library

The Oregon Rare Book Initiative (ORBI) research interest group (RIG) was co-founded by professors Marc Schachter (Romance Languages) and Vera Keller (Honors College). The goal of the group was to raise awareness and use of the stellar collections of rare books in Special Collections at UO Knight Library, large sections of which are not catalogued and are therefore inaccessible. Funding was provided by the OHC, the Clark Honors College, and Romance Languages. The target audience was diverse, including departments across the disciplines, faculty, students and the public. To that end, ORBI organized a series of speakers on such varied topics as medieval romance, Baroque travel literature, the history of science, exploration in the Pacific Northwest, Renaissance commentaries on lesbianism in the classical tradition, and the hidden work of intellectual servants in early modernity. Each of the talks was linked to relevant materials from UO Special Collections that were made available for viewing by the audience. The intent of the RIG organizers is that these materials will now be able to serve as a resource for future teaching and research. (blogs.uoregon.edu/orbi/)

ORBI's year-long efforts were capped in April of 2014 with a collaborative exhibition, co-curated by Vera Keller and Jennifer Burns Bright (English), which involved faculty, students, and the public with Special Collections. Titled *Recipe: The*

Kitchen and Laboratory in the West, 1400–2000, the exhibit explored the changing locales and gendering of expertise in how-to literature, which once blended culinary, medical, artistic and scientific forms

of knowledge. As part of this exhibit, a group of AAA letterpress students who were studying the historical techniques of image production and book-making created a beautiful artist's book related to the exhibition.

The students engaged deeply in the historical intersection between art, nature, and recipe culture by making their own paper and their own inks from botanicals through a process of trial and error.

All in all, it was a tremendously productive and successful year for the Oregon Rare Book Initiative!



Letterpress book produced by art students.

Associate Director's Note *(continued from page 1)*

though somewhat cautionary talk on internet security in a hyper-connected world with computer security guru Bruce Schneier from Harvard.

We hope you were able to join us in person for one or more of these exciting and stimulating lectures. Most of them are available on our website at ohc.uoregon.edu if you were unable to attend or would like to watch them again. We welcome your ideas and suggestions about future guests and topics.

During 2013–14 we also researched, produced and aired 35 new episodes of “UO Today,” our taped half-hour cable-access TV interview show, hosted by OHC director Paul Peppis and produced by Peg Gearhart. In addition to our visiting lecturers and several distinguished UO faculty members, UO Today guests this year included writer and sex columnist Dan Savage; poet Robert Pinsky; writers Gish Jen, Anthony Doerr, and Bill Cheng; and journalists John Nichols and Tom Segev. Most of those interviews are also available on our website.

We continue to be amazed by the breadth and intellectual talent of our research fellows, both faculty and graduate students. It is an honor and a privilege to be able to provide them with the time and space they need to work on their research, and to support the publication of their work through our author subvention program—and again, it is you, our supporters, who make all of this possible. We were able to support 16 OHC



Bruce Schneier speaking to an engaged audience in Portland.

fellows during 2013–14, and thanks to our generous donors and to the continuing support of the VP for Research and Innovation, we will have 17 fellows this coming year. You can read about three of our recent fellows in these pages. Support of humanities research and curriculum development continues to be a crucial part of our mission as a UO research center. We encourage you to attend our fellows’

work-in-progress talks on Fridays at noon for an inside look at humanities research as it unfolds and develops.

We were delighted to learn in March that Paul Peppis, our Interim Director during 2013–14, would become the permanent director of the OHC as of July 1, 2014. We have very much enjoyed working with Paul this past year, and we look forward to working with him in the years ahead. Paul’s dedication to the OHC is inspiring; he has a clear vision for the future, and the energy to see his ideas through. We know the Center will continue to flourish under his capable leadership.

Finally, we want to thank you, our supporters and friends, once again for your participation in our programs during this past year. Without you, none of what we do would be possible. We look forward to seeing you in 2014–15 as we explore the theme “connection.” Until then, I hope you enjoy what remains of the summer!

—Julia J. Heydon

Scholar expresses gratitude for her Moll Fellowship

I am very grateful to the Oregon Humanities Center for the Ernest G. Moll Research Fellowship in Literary Studies that offered me a term in residence at the center to work on my article on “Growing Old and Realizing Life in Marie-Claire Blais’s *Soifs* Cycle.” The luxury and benefits of having an entire term without teaching or significant administrative obligations cannot be overstated. This fellowship gave me both the time and the responsibility to grapple with a well-defined project in a sustained way. I loved having my office at the Center, away from the usual traffic and distractions, two steps from Knight Library. While in that office, I was able to feel both solitary and accompanied; it was stimulating to sense that there were others nearby also working with singular focus and purpose.

I also deeply appreciated the chance to get to know better (and to work in proximity to) colleagues from other humanities departments. It was especially stimulating for me to hear the work-in-progress talks of the other fall-term fellows. By bringing together humanities scholars from different departments, the OHC facilitates conversations where ideas circulate and cross-pollinate in wonderful and unexpected ways.

In the course of the term, I brought myself up to date on the recent scholarship on aging and literature. There had been more new research published than I had expected and it was exciting to have the chance to read my way through it. I also expanded and nuanced my analysis of Blais’s *Soifs* cycle by including a consideration of the treatment of aging in her most recent novel, *Le jeune homme sans avenir*.

My work-in-progress talk, the final one of the term, was one of the highlights of the fellowship for me. It allowed me to take stock of the ground that I had covered during the term and it forced me to articulate the project in ways that then further advanced my work on the article. I also derived great benefit from the probing questions and insightful feedback from the



audience. I will be following up on a few of these suggestions (especially regarding how recent queer theories might apply to my analyses) as I finalize this essay for publication. The discussion following my talk also gave me ideas for the larger co-edited project on *Defining Stages in Women’s Lives* of which this essay is a part.

I also want to acknowledge the generosity of the \$1000 stipend from the Ernest G. Moll Fellowship. I was able to use this funding to help cover the costs of attending the international conference of the Association for Canadian Studies in the United States in November. At the conference, I was able to

meet and work with my co-editor for the volume on *Defining Stages in Women’s Lives*. We also had the opportunity to hear several promising papers on our topic and to talk a number of colleagues who will be contributing to the project.

I am looking forward to completing the final version of my article by mid-March (the deadline for submission for the edited volume) and it will be my great pleasure to acknowledge the support of the Oregon Humanities Center in that publication. I am also planning to arrange to give a public talk in the community before the end of spring term, perhaps at the Willamalane Senior Center or the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. I think these would be good venues for my work on aging in literature. I imagine that those audiences would be receptive to a presentation of Marie-Claire Blais and the humanistic questions about the meaning of “a realized life” that her writing project engages.

Once again, I want to express my gratitude to the Oregon Humanities Center for this fellowship. It was like winning the scholar’s lottery! These ten weeks were intense, productive and pleasurable. Thank you!

—Karen McPherson
Professor, Romance Languages



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UOTODAY



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Recent publications supported by the OHC

By recent OHC Fellows



Alison M. Groppe, Assistant Professor, East Asian Languages and Literatures (2010–11 Faculty Research Fellow), *Sinophone Malaysian Literature: Not Made in China*. Cambria Press, 2013.

Lindsay Naylor, PhD candidate, Geography (2013–14 Graduate Research Support Fellow), “‘Some Are More Fair than Others’: Fair Trade Certification, Development, and North–South Subjects.” *Agriculture and Human Values* 31, no. 2 (June 1, 2014): 273–84.

Lucy Schultz, PhD graduate, Philosophy (2012–13 Graduate Research Support Fellow), “Creative Climate: Expressive Media in the Aesthetics of Nishida, Watsuji, and Merleau-Ponty.” *Environmental Philosophy* 10 (2013): 63–80.

Yugen Wang, Associate Professor, East Asian Languages and Literatures (2011–12 Faculty Research Fellow), “*Wenxin diaolong* Wuse pian yu Zhongguo gudian shige jingwu miaoxie cong xiangyu dao xieshi zhi fanshi zhuanxing.” 文心雕龍物色篇與中國古典詩歌景物描寫從象喻到寫實之范式轉型 (The “Colors of Things” chapter of the *Wenxin diaolong* and the realistic transformation of classical Chinese poetry). *Zhongguo bijiao wenxue* 中國比較文學 (*Comparative literature in China*), 2014 (2): 16–39.

Books published with OHC/CAS subvention funds



Pedro García-Caro, Associate Professor, Romance Languages, *After the Nation: Postnational Satire in the Works of Carlos Fuentes and Thomas Pynchon*. Northwestern University Press, 2014.



Jeffrey S. Librett, Professor, German and Scandinavian, *Orientalism and the Figure of the Jew*. Fordham University Press, 2014.



Glenn Anthony May, Professor, History, *A Past Updated: Further Essays on Philippine History and Historiography*. New Day Publishers, 2013.



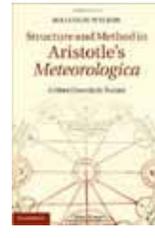
Theresa May, Associate Professor, Theatre, with Suzanne Burcell, Kathleen McCovey, and Jean O'Hara. Foreword by Gordon Bettles. *Salmon Is Everything: Community-Based Theatre in the Klamath Watershed*. Oregon State University Press, 2014.



Dorothee Ostmeier, Professor, German and Scandinavian, *Poetische Dialoge zu Liebe, Gender und Sex im frühen zwanzigsten Jahrhundert*. Aisthesis Verlag, 2013.



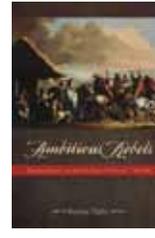
George Sheridan, Associate Professor, History, with Ludovic Frobert, *Le Solitaire du ravin. Pierre Charnier (1795–1857), canut lyonnais et prud'homme tisseur*. ENS Éditions, 2014.



Malcolm Wilson, Associate Professor, Classics, *Structure and Method in Aristotle's Meteorologica: A More Disorderly Nature*. Cambridge University Press, 2014.



Mary E. Wood, Professor, English, *Life Writing and Schizophrenia: Encounters at the Edge of Meaning*. Rodopi, 2013.



Reuben Zahler, Assistant Professor, History, *Ambitious Rebels: Remaking Honor, Law, and Liberalism in Venezuela, 1780–1850*. University of Arizona Press, 2013.



2014–15
connection

We are currently lining up an exciting slate of speakers who will address our theme of connection. The fall newsletter will detail our lectures as well as other cultural events on campus.



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