Richard Thompson Ford Will Speak About “Racial Culture” as O’Fallon Lecturer

What is black culture? Does it have an essence? What do we lose and gain by assuming that it does, and by building our laws accordingly?

Richard Thompson Ford, George E. Osborne Professor of Law, Stanford Law School, and the 2005-06 O’Fallon Lecturer in Law and American Culture, will raise these and other bold and provocative questions in his lecture entitled “Racial Culture: A Critique,” scheduled for Tuesday, April 11, 2006. The lecture will take place in 175 Knight Law Center at 7:30 p.m. and will be followed by a book sale and signing.

In his lecture, Richard Ford questions the common assumption that social categories such as race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality are defined by distinctive cultural practices, and he argues against law reform proposals that would attempt to apply civil rights protections to “cultural difference.”

Ford argues that multicultural accounts of cultural difference do not accurately describe the practices of social groups. He further suggests that the “rights to difference” discourse is a misguided one that can lead to policies which threaten to exacerbate social divisions that continued on page 2

Prolific Author and Former Episcopal Bishop John Shelby Spong to Discuss Christianity in the 21st Century

Retired Episcopal Bishop John Shelby Spong will visit Oregon to give two thought-provoking public lectures on the future of Christianity as the Oregon Humanities Center’s 2005-06 Kritikos Professor in the Humanities.

His Eugene lecture “Who is the Popular God in Public Life in the 21st Century?” will take place on Wednesday, May 24, 2006 at 7:30 p.m. in 150 Columbia Hall. Spong will explore a variety of timely and important questions concerning faith and living in the modern world. He will ask: “What has happened to God in our generation, when that holy name is invoked to support a method of teaching about human origins which is universally dismissed in the world of academic science? When God is invoked to justify violence again whoever one’s enemy is? When America’s leaders lecture the people of Iraq about why they cannot install a fundamentalist Islamic government, but defend a Supreme Court nominee on the basis of being an Evangelical Christian? When Congress—in the name of God—passes a bill to interfere with the decision of a terminally ill patient’s family and doctor? When God is invoked to support a Constitutional amendment to discriminate against homo- continued on page 3
Louis Menand’s *The Story of the Soup Cans* Is Published

A printed version of Louis Menand’s May 11, 2005 Portland Kritikos lecture, *The Story of the Soup Cans*, is now available through the Oregon Humanities Center.

Louis Menand is the Bass Professor of English and American Literature and Language at Harvard University. His book *The Metaphysical Club* won the Pulitzer Prize for History in 2002.

In *The Story of the Soup Cans*, Menand sketches out the historical context for understanding the emergence of Andy Warhol’s 1962 exhibition of Campbell’s soup cans at the Ferus Gallery in Los Angeles. He places the soup cans in the context of the distinction between the high art of the abstract Expressionists and the “kitsch”art of mass culture.

The cost is $5 plus $3 for shipping and handling. Make checks payable to: The Oregon Humanities Center 5211 University of Oregon Eugene, OR 97403.

Other Kritikos lectures are also available for purchase. To view our collection of publications, or to download an order form, visit the Humanities Center homepage at http://uoregon.edu/~humanctr/ and click on the “Publications” link at the top of the page.

O’Fallon Lecture

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we should be working to lessen; which unduly impinge on individual liberties; and which distract from the most pressing contemporary social concerns, particularly those related to the distribution of wealth and income. Ford’s focus is on the law and legal institutions, and the effects—often unintended—that multiculturalist legal policies can have.

One of the most distinctive and important young voices in America’s legal academy today, Richard Ford makes a bold argument against the liberal emphasis on diversity—which, he says, often results in a “difference discourse” that forces minority groups to accept the very stereotypes they are trying to oppose. In so doing, he makes a major contribution to our understanding of today’s politics of race.

This lecture, sponsored by Betsy Mayer and the O’Fallon family, is free and open to the public. For more information, or for disability accommodations (which must be made by April 4th), please call (541) 346-3934.

Find a complete listing of “UO Today” episodes available in digital form by going to our web page at: http://uoregon.edu/~humanctr/uotonline.htm

The Oregon Humanities Center would like to thank the UO Knight Library and Media Services for making these digital versions of “UO Today” programs available.
Spong
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sexual persons? Is this who God has become? How did that happen? What is the future of this kind of religion?”

For his Portland lecture, scheduled for Thursday, May 25th at 5:45 p.m. in the Mayfair Ballroom of the Benson Hotel, 309 SW Broadway, Portland, Spong will ask “Can 21st-Century People Believe in God with Integrity?” In this talk, Spong will pose the following questions: “Who is God for us today? Does this concept of God, given its present cultural use, still have meaning? Is there a God experience that can be understood in a new way by postmodern people, and if so, how does this relate to the idea of God that is still present in traditional religious settings?”

John Shelby Spong was the Bishop of Newark, N.J. for more than twenty years and is one of the leading spokespersons in the world for an open, scholarly, and progressive Christianity. He has taught at Harvard and at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley. He is the author of more than twenty books, including the best-selling Rescuing the Bible from Fundamentalism and Why Christianity Must Change or Die. His most recent book is entitled The Sins of Scripture: Exposing the Bible’s Texts of Hate to Reveal the God of Love (2005).

Both lectures are free and open to the public. The Portland lecture will be preceded by a reception at 5 p.m. For more information or for disability accommodations (which must be made by May 17th), please call (541) 346-3934.

2006-2007 OHC Fellowships Announced

Research Fellowships
Monique R. Balbuena, Clark Honors College: Diasporic Sephardic Identities: A Transnational Poetics of Jewish Languages (Fall)
Leonard Feldman, Political Science: A Genealogy of Necessity (Fall)
Sangita Gopal, English: No Place to Hide: Conjugality and Nationalism in Contemporary Hindi Film (Fall)
Jennifer Presto, Comparative Literature: The Other Motherland: Italy and the 20th-Century Russian Imagination (Spring)
Ellen Rees, Germanic Languages and Literatures: Genre and Space in Cora Sandel’s Short Prose (Winter). Professor Rees is also the recipient of the Ernest G. Moll Research Fellowship in Literary Studies.
Stephen Rodgers, Music: Berlioz and the 19th-Century French Romance: Convention, Ingenuity, and Autobiography in His Late Songs (Spring)
Daniel Wojcik, English: Outsider Art and Vernacular Traditions (Winter)

Alternates (in ranked order):
Steve Larson, Music: Musical Forces and Music Analysis (Winter)
Garrett Hongo, Creative Writing: The North Shore (Fall)

Teaching Fellowships
Heather Briston, Knight Library, and Suzanne Clark, English: Writing and the New Research (Fall: WR 399)

Coleman-Guitteau Teaching-and-Research Fellowships
Martha Bayless, English: Oral Traditions in Ancient and Modern Culture (Winter: ENG 407)
Elizabeth Reis, Women’s and Gender Studies: Sex and Medical Ethics (Winter: WGS 415)

Graduate Research Fellowships
Celia Bardwell-Jones, Philosophy: Travel, Identity and Community: Transnationalizing the Social Self (Fall)
Zhihong Chen, History: Going to the Frontier: Chinese Intellectuals’ Reconceptualization of Chinese Geography and Peoples during the 1930s (Fall)
Ann Laudati, Geography: The Greening of the Fortress: Rethinking the Conservation and Development Discourse in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, Uganda (Fall)

Alternates (in ranked order):
Tim Dalton, Creative Writing: Enumeration: A Novel (Winter)
Torrie Hester, History: Deportation: Origins of a National and International Power (Winter)
Le Jeu d’Amour: Songs and Dances from 1200-1400

World-renowned musicians Anne Azéma and Shira Kammen will return to Eugene on Tuesday, April 18th for a free concert at 8 p.m. in Beall Hall. Through accompanied song and instrumental music, Azéma and Kammen will transport their audience to the medieval world of music and poetry centered on the theme of courtly love. Songs of encounter, narrative lays, legends of lovers true and false, and dances and instrumental fantasies form the core of this program of works by Thibault de Champagne, Colin Muset, Moniot D’Arras, Jehannot de l’Escurel and others.

Anne Azéma (voice) and Shira Kammen (strings) are leaders in the field of medieval singing and accompaniment. Each has recorded prolifically and toured worldwide; together, they devote their enormous skill, insight, and fantasy to the magnificent repertoires of medieval France, Provence, and Spain. French-born Azéma brings unusual language skills, a crystalline voice, and a gift for theater; Kammen brings virtuoso technique on vielle, rebec, and harp, as well as flair, drive, and humor.

This concert, co-sponsored by the School of Music and the Oregon Humanities Center’s Public Outreach Endowment for Arts, Sciences and the Humanities, is free and open to the public. For more information, or for disability accommodations, call the Humanities Center at 346-3934.

Work-in-Progress Series

We continue our series of work-in-progress talks by University of Oregon faculty and graduate students on their current or recent research on Fridays at noon in the Humanities Center Conference Room, 159 PLC. All faculty and graduate students are encouraged to attend. The conference room seats eighteen; early arrival is recommended. Brown-bag lunches are welcome!

4/21/06 Thomas Dolack, graduate research fellow, comparative literature, will speak on “Imitation and Literary Evolution.”

5/5/06 Deborah Green, religious studies, will speak on “Soothing Odors: Cultural and Material Evidence for the Use of Perfume and Incense in Ancient Israel.”

6/2/06 Maram Epstein, EALL, will speak on “Embodied Emotions and Constructed Virtue: Filial Piety in 18th-Century China.”

6/9/06 George Evans, economics, will speak on “Bounded Rationality and Macroeconomics.”

The University of Oregon is an equal opportunity, affirmative action institution committed to cultural diversity and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. To arrange disability accommodations for Humanities Center events or to obtain this newsletter in an alternative format, call 541-346-3934.