

New history

ASU is developing new ways to teach history to middle school and high school students.

Shakespeare

New research shows how the Bard's timelessness is challenged.

Sustainability

The humanities help address sustainability issues.

H2

H6

H8

ASU[®] Insight

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The Humanities

Humanities research, programs illuminate university innovation

By Carol Hughes

As ASU emerges as a comprehensive knowledge enterprise committed to discovery, creativity and innovation, the humanities are playing a vital role in that mission.

"No university can achieve greatness without a strong core in the humanities," says ASU President Michael Crow. "You need the study of languages, culture, clarity of expression, philosophy, religions and history in order to create a literate citizen.

"Consistent with the vision of the research university as a catalyst for societal transformation, ASU favors a research enterprise dedicated to societal relevance and socially optimal outcomes of research," Crow adds. "We seek to understand the broadest possible spectrum of human knowledge in order to advance it, and our growing strengths in the humanities

complement our unsurpassed scientific and technological teaching and research."

ASU Executive Vice President and University Provost Elizabeth D. Capaldi says the humanities play a crucial role in ASU's curriculum.

"The humanities give all our graduates the background and sensibility to interpret and deal with change, including the scientific and technological changes that at the moment get so much attention," says Capaldi.

As ASU pursues a problem-based curriculum, it is important "to remember the human dimension," stresses Deborah Losse, dean of humanities in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

"Inquiry, culture, religion, history, language – all of these things inform how we approach medicine, science and politics," Losse says. "As we're developing new schools, we're look-

ing for ways to integrate not only threads of those different disciplines, but also methodology, so that a school, such as the School of International Letters and Cultures, looks at, say films or media, across cultures, from a cultural perspective, a films studies perspective, a historic perspective, and a historical religious perspective."

The School of International Letters and Cultures, which was established this past July, is just one of the milestones that exemplifies ASU's expanded commitment and investment in the humanities in recent years.

"With more than 20 language specialization areas, nine undergraduate degree programs, six certificate programs, four master's degree programs and a doctorate in Spanish, it is the first transformative school at ASU rooted in the humanities," says Robert Joe Cutter,

founding director of the school and a leading scholar of premodern Chinese literature and cultural history.

"There is no academic activity, none, that better prepares students for life in today's world than the study of other languages and cultures," Cutter says. "Pick up any newspaper or any magazine on any day of the year, and what immediately strikes you is how interconnected the world has become."

That global connection and ASU's serious investment in the humanities is also evident in the focus of its new research centers and institutes. Some of those established since 2002 include:

- ASU-Sichuan University Joint Confucius Institute, promoting Chinese language and culture studies in elementary and secondary (See SOCIAL CLIMATE on page H8)



PHOTO COURTESY OF PAUL HIRT

With help from a National Endowment for the Humanities grant, an ASU team of educators, graduate students and faculty members are partnering with the Grand Canyon Association to better educate visitors and classrooms nationwide on the history of the Grand Canyon. Pictured in this photo is Paul Hirt, ASU associate professor of history and director of the project.

ASU helps develop new educational tools for a new historical perspective of Grand Canyon

By Carol Hughes

For most people, including many of the nearly 5 million annual visitors to the Grand Canyon, the geological icon in northern Arizona is a striking landscape – a majestic and physical place of wonderment.

But an ASU team of educators, comprised of graduate students and faculty members from the history department and graduate students from the School of Geographical Sciences, are out to deepen that perspective with a new interpretation of the Grand Canyon's human history.

Their project, "Interpreting America's Historic Places: Nature, Culture, and History at the Grand Canyon," aims to paint a cultural landscape of the canyon through a suite of public educational materials, including a digital audio-tour, walking tour brochure, interactive Web site and DVD, and educational kits known as traveling trunks, with curriculum and classroom materials that can be used by K-12 teachers nationwide.

Supported through a significant \$365,000 grant that spans three years from the National Endowment for the Humanities and a \$200,000 investment from and partnership with the Grand Canyon Association, the project had humble beginnings with a \$9,000 seed grant from ASU's Institute for Humanities Research.

"Our aim in this project is to explore the cultural significance of the canyon to those people who have lived there, or passed through, during the past 400 years," says Paul Hirt, ASU associate professor of history and the project's director. "We will also explore the ways that this unique place has influenced American sciences, art, environmental values, popular culture, tourism and leisure.

"The project is designed to help Americans understand their own nation and how we came to be who we are – and that history happens in specific places," Hirt adds.

ASU collaborators include Linda Sargent Wood, assistant professor of history and co-director; graduate student Yolonda Youngs, School of Geographical Sciences; and graduate students Patricia Biggs-Cornelius, Sarah Bohl and Adam Tompkins from the history department.

The team began working under the NEH grant last fall and since then has interviewed park rangers, experts and tourists to produce the first interpretative product – a digital audio-tour – that will be available to the public at the Grand Canyon in May 2008.

The 90-minute digital pedestrian audio-tour interprets more than 20 historic sites at the Grand Canyon Village historic district on the South Rim, including the El Tovar Hotel, Bright Angel Lodge, the Kolb Studio, the Santa Fe railroad depot, and many other buildings and architectural features. It will be for sale at Grand Canyon bookstores and on the Internet from the Grand Canyon Association.

"The histories of the Havasupai Indians and other Americans who have called this landscape home are largely missed by most visitors to the Grand Canyon who lack the knowledge or the tools to perceive and understand the human experience embedded in this seemingly natural landscape," says Hirt.

"As a consequence, millions of park visitors each year lose a unique opportunity to appreciate how nature, culture and history have long been bound together at the Grand Canyon and how that diverse and changing relationship

(See GRAND CANYON on page H8)

Institute examines the complex through humanities apparatus

ASU's Institute for Humanities Research underscores multidisciplinary approach

By Sharon Keeler

What does a culture's view of the human embryo say about its views of women, God and social power? Why do humans and societies continue to follow a certain path long after that path has proven to be a liability? Will money damn – or save – your soul?

These topics and others are the focus of the Institute for Humanities Research (IHR). The institute is a gateway for collaboration, bringing together scholars from across disciplines who are interested in exploring today's most important issues from humanistic perspectives. Through the institute, faculty members and students conduct advanced research to address the world's social, cultural, technological and scientific challenges through a humanities lens.

"Our goal is to make the humanities central to the research mission at ASU, to have them as equal importance as the sciences," says Sally Kitch, the institute's founding director and professor of women and gender studies. "The institute promotes, generates and supports innovative transdisciplinary research that helps people frame and understand the historical and cultural contexts surrounding an issue, to ask the 'why' and 'what if' questions."

The IHR supports scholars in traditional humanities disciplines as well as faculty in non-traditional fields who approach their research from a humanities perspective. One of more than 20 research centers and institutes in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the IHR provides several funding opportunities.

IHR Research Clusters bring ASU and visiting scholars together to explore a theme for further research. These clusters examine a vast array of topics including how African migrants have created cultures, as well as the interactions between urban values, systems, and those who inhabit cities. In addition, the inaugural Jenny Norton Research Cluster on Women, supported by the Rev. Jenny Norton, is centered on sustainability.

In annual fall and spring competitions, as many as 10 individuals are awarded up to \$12,000 each through the institute's Seed Grant Program. Research Cluster members often extend their collaborations through such grants, spending an academic year conducting research, developing proposals for submission to external funding agencies and planning conferences and publications.

The IHR awarded the Embryo Project a grant that supported its first workshop. This helped the team formulate its ideas, drawing on an international interdisciplinary team of researchers, and it has been successful with National Science Foundation grant funding in part because of that investment

(See HUMANITIES on page H8)

Teaching grant enlivens history classes

By Erica Velasco

In elementary and high school classrooms in the Deer Valley Unified School District, teachers are educating their students about America's history, culture and democratic process with new knowledge and skills acquired through a Teaching American History program with ASU.

Under this professional development program, the Arizona State University Department of History is partnering with the Deer Valley district and the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History to improve public school teachers' knowledge, understanding and appreciation of American history.

Funded through a \$960,000, three-year grant from the U.S. Department of Education, the program strives to help teachers develop a stronger U.S. history core curriculum. ASU receives nearly half of the funding to implement the program. This is the fourth time ASU's history department has partnered with Maricopa County schools in the grant program.

"This grant allows us to stay invested in the community by working hand-in-hand with teachers and students in the Deer Valley Unified School District," says Linda Sargent Wood, assistant professor of history in ASU's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

"While we are embedded in this community, we are able to conduct applied research on what kinds of approaches work in teaching history and what doesn't."

The grant allows 25 middle school and high school teachers to take two graduate-level courses at ASU, attend history workshops at the Gilder Lehrman Institute, and travel to historic sites to study subjects ranging from the Revolutionary War to the civil rights movement.

ASU's history department provides graduate history courses that are offered through a mix of Web-based instruction and face-to-face discussions. The first course features lectures and site visits by history faculty members Brian Gratton, Paul Hirt, Catherine Kaplan, Kyle Longley and Matthew Whittaker. Teachers receive extensive classroom materials prepared by ASU graduate students. In the second course, ASU faculty members and graduate students work with the teachers on individual projects designed to help them learn more about history and bring their learning to their students.

The knowledge gained by the teachers is filtered back into their classrooms through innovative historical projects that help students "learn history by doing history." One such project required 100 eighth-grade students to visit a senior community in Sun City where the students learned about the Great Depression, the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor, and what life was like for women working on the home front during World War II, and others who had experienced the war firsthand.

Students videotaped their interviewees and were responsible for the planning and production of their video project. Students took on the assignments of interviewer, transcriber, audio technician and videographer.

A few teachers entered their high school students into a history competition, and the competing projects included documentaries, exhibits and Web sites on various topics in history. Another high school teacher asked her students to create memorials for fallen Arizona soldiers from several wars throughout history.

"Students were able to get a firsthand account of what the United States was like during that time period in history as well as the life of a soldier in the war. History literally came alive for the students, and that is something that is invaluable when teaching history," says Sargent Wood.

The Deer Valley Unified School District, located in northwest Maricopa County, is the fourth largest K-12 public school district in Maricopa County with more than 36,500 students.

This fall, ASU's history department will begin a new Teaching American History partnership with Mesa Public Schools, the largest unified public school district in Arizona with more than 74,000 students.

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Humanities at ASU: fuse, frame, focus

From the outset of Renaissance pedagogical reform, the humanities have highlighted the social and cultural consequences of scientific knowledge. What are the outcomes of discovery? Travels to the new world or to China and India had both negative and positive consequences for indigenous and European peoples. Nicolas Copernicus, Galileo Galilei and Johannes Kepler profoundly challenged the orthodox views of the perfection of the heavenly spheres. Within the humanistic enterprise, advances in scientific inquiry will call into question the most revered tenets of cultural beliefs.

Our faculty in the humanities focuses on the ability to probe fundamental issues dealing with cultural identity, geographic provenance and the historic setting in time and place. In a recent report by the Modern Language Association, the leadership of one of America's most prominent scholarly organizations proposes that "the kind of curricular reform we suggest will situate language study in cultural, historical, geographic, and cross-cultural frames within the context of humanistic learning."

The interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary structure at Arizona State University enables our disciplines to interconnect and to cross-pollinate. Chinese scholars and students in the School of International

Letters and Cultures interact with scholars and students in history, religious studies and philosophy as they explore Taoism, Buddhism and Islam.

Historians and philosophers of science work together in the School of Life Sciences to investigate the human dimensions of biology and medicine. Historians and geographers study the cultural and natural landscapes of national parks. Scholars ask the fundamental question of how does the availability of space and land contribute to the American psyche: the American reliance on space can be seen in less proximate face-to-face exchanges and in the preference for front yards instead of enclosed courtyards.

Humanists ask questions about what constitutes cultural identity as depicted in fine art, literature and film. How are ethical principles affected by cultural settings? How does religion shape human response to everyday practices: family life, the interpretation of texts, respect for the law? Arizona State University offers a core of humanities disciplines that explore culture, language, philosophy, history, around the topics of sustainability, religion and conflict, and aesthetics and the media. Our programs, centers and institutes explore vital questions that both engage our students and faculty, and lead us towards viable solutions to improve the human condition.

— Deborah Losse, dean of humanities
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences



Deborah Losse

History sheds light on current human rights issues: A conversation with Mark von Hagen

By Erica Velasco

Mark von Hagen, a historian specializing in the Russian empire, Ukraine and the borderlands of eastern Europe, is wrapping up his first year as chair of the ASU Department of History in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Von Hagen came to Arizona after spending more than 22 years at Columbia University where he was chair of the history department and director of the Harriman Institute, the oldest and largest teaching and research center devoted to the successor states of the Soviet empire. He also chaired the master's of international affairs program at the Columbia School of International and Public Affairs.



Mark von Hagen
Why did you decide to come to ASU and chair the department of history?

ASU is an exciting, dynamic institution in the process of transformation. The more I get to know ASU, the more I am impressed by the real possibilities of creating research programs that can connect history with departments in the social sciences and humanities, even the natural sciences and professional schools.

We have one of the strongest programs in public history in the country. The program trains people to work in non-traditional academic careers such as museums, archives, scholarly publishing, historical preservation and even documentary filmmaking. These are all fields that historians rely on for sources when conducting their research.

Also, a third of our double majors are in education to be middle school or high school teachers. Having teachers specialized in history is important for developing civic literacy in our future citizens.

What are your plans for the department of history?

Our concentrations in the United States — especially the West — Asia and Europe are strong, but I would like to develop them even further. I have been thinking about an area of study based on our geographic location here in the southwest United States. Since we live in the desert, comparative desert societies are one intriguing possible track. There are a lot of other deserts around the world that have given rise to societies that have not only tested the very notions of sustainability, but made great contributions to civilization.

Urban history is another obvious area to develop. Phoenix is the fastest growing city

in the country, a place where sustainability is becoming prominent in people's minds. The history department is already collaborating with other units at ASU on the interdisciplinary and comparative study of cities.

In order to move the department toward a more global orientation, the history of global processes, from migration to trade to cultural transfers, is another important track. There are a lot of colleagues currently in the department teaching aspects of global history, but here, too, the opportunities to collaborate with other units across campus and beyond have not been much explored.

And, it seems to me that here in Arizona there's a lot more openness between mainstream medicine and naturopathic and other kinds of alternative medicines than I've been used to from the east coast. The history of medicine, if we look at how other societies at other times dealt with diseases and health, is another area where we might be able to contribute something and give us other opportunities for collaboration with natural sciences, human evolution, the medical school and others.

How do you fit into the New American University?

I've been a leader in the field of Russia, Ukraine and comparative history and area studies for the past 20 years, and I'm bringing that experience here to ASU. A large part of that experience has been global engagement. I have been privileged to be involved in building scholarly and other contacts with colleagues in the former Soviet space, to train students who have gone on to work not just in history, but in the non-governmental sector, especially in human rights.

I support President Crow's position on student success and agree wholeheartedly that the university should be geared toward the student. It is why I got into higher education in the first place. I have learned a great deal from interdisciplinary teaching and collaborative research.

What research are you currently conducting?

My scholarship is interdisciplinary, focusing on modern history with an eye to contemporary problems, particularly war and society, multiethnic states and nationality politics in modern Russian and Soviet history.

I am a co-editor of "Russian Empire: Space, People, Power, 1700 to 1930." The book is a culmination of research completed for a Ford Foundation grant, which brought together historians from both Russia and the United States. The premise is to examine the Russian empire by looking at space and regions, and evaluate how different empires tried to fill that space with their own institu-

tions, people and ideas. The history of these empires offers some insight on how contemporary multinational countries deal with difference.

My new book, "War in a European Borderland: Occupations and Occupation Plans in Galicia and Ukraine, 1914-1918," came out last fall. The book reviews how Russian, German and Austrian armies tried to impose regimes on the borderland territories, during World War I, that are now Ukraine. It is very much contemporary history and has disturbing parallels to the current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Why did you choose to focus your research on Russian and Ukrainian history?

My father worked in military intelligence following World War II and during the Cold War. He would often bring home scrap-paper maps of Eastern Europe that they were throwing away, so I had that somewhere in my head. My Austrian mother lived in the Soviet zone — Austria was divided like Germany into four zones until 1955 — where my parents met. And then, when we were living in Denver, a family friend was teaching Russian and thought it would be a good idea for his daughter and me to study Russian. After that, every time I had a junior high school project in social studies, I did it on Russia. These facts brought me to my lifelong fascination with Russia and its history.

Besides Russian, what other languages do you speak?

Ukrainian, German, Polish, French, and I studied Turkish for two years. I also speak some Spanish. I've studied it more recently.

You have an interest in human rights. What inspired you to get involved with that sector?

It actually got started when I was doing my own doctoral research in Soviet history and got to know many Soviet intellectuals in the dissident and human rights communities. Later, I received a grant from the Ford Foundation to do a history of the human rights movement in the Brezhnev era, and eventually I was asked to be on the advisory board of the Europe and Asia division of the Human Rights Watch, a position I still hold. That started my passion for human rights. I taught a course last year before I left Columbia on human rights issues, in post-Soviet conditions. I've just started talking with others here about organizing a center for the study of human rights. I'm also involved in planning a conference on gender and human rights issues.

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New school takes innovative first steps in language learning

This kind of foreign language education systematically teaches differences in meaning, mentality, and worldview. ... In this course of acquiring functional language abilities, students are taught critical language awareness, interpretation and translation, historical and political consciousness, social sensibility, and aesthetic perception.

They learn to comprehend speakers of the target language as members of foreign societies and to grasp themselves as Americans – that is, as members of a society that is foreign to others.

–“Foreign Languages and Higher Education: New Structures for a Changed World,” May 2007

By Britt Engle

A little more than three years ago, leaders at Arizona State University empowered a group of faculty members from the Department of Languages and Literatures and other units to plan a new school that would preserve and enhance a traditional education in language, literature and culture while at the same time providing the opportunity for students to embark upon an innovative, transdisciplinary learning experience.

Their approach to the teaching of language and culture, as it turns out, prefigured in several ways the approach to languages and cultures advocated a few years later in an important Modern Language Association (MLA) Report on foreign languages in higher education.

After months of collaborative effort by dozens of faculty members and final approval by the Arizona Board of Regents, the School of International Letters and Cultures (SILC) replaced the Department of Languages and Literatures in the summer of 2007, approximately the same time the MLA released “Foreign Languages and Higher Education: New Structures for a Changed World.”

The report emphasized the integral relationship between language and culture as opposed to an overly narrow and utilitarian

approach to languages that have been the norm.

“What is interesting is that plans were already taking shape at ASU that clearly anticipated many of the recommendations that appeared in the MLA Report,” says Robert Joe Cutter, founding director of the school and professor of Chinese.

“We were responding to elements of President Michael Crow’s design for the New American University and operating from a belief that a new structure could better provide superior training in languages, literature and culture, while at the same time facilitating study and research that could transcend cultural and disciplinary boundaries,” Cutter says.

The school is among several recently assembled schools at ASU, but it is the only one situated in the humanities. Organized into five faculties – Classics and Middle Eastern Letters & Cultures; East and Southeast Asian Letters & Cultures; French and Italian Letters & Cultures; German, Romanian and Slavic Letters & Cultures; and Spanish and Portuguese Letters & Cultures – SILC boasts more than 20 language specializations, nine undergraduate degree programs, six certificate programs, four master degree programs and a doctoral degree program in Spanish. The school also has a Linguistics and Language Program that serves in part to promote best practices in language teaching and to provide professional development opportunities to language professionals on and off campus.

“Many observers have lamented America’s general lack of knowledge about other countries and cultures and our inability to see the world as others see it,” says Cutter. “Of course, there is no better solution to this problem than the study of other languages and cultures.”

Increasing language enrollments nationally over the past five years reflect a growing awareness on the part of students of the value of foreign language and culture study. Of the 13 percent enrollment growth, Arabic and Chinese experienced the largest

gains, says Cutter. He adds that Spanish, French and German remain the most popular languages to study.

The school fulfills another MLA recommendation in its cross-disciplinary research.

“Language and literature scholars tend to be interdisciplinary by nature,” Cutter says. To allow students to cross the boundaries between languages and disciplines, a new transdisciplinary bachelor’s degree program is in its final stage of approval, and a transdisciplinary doctorate degree is in the planning stages.

“This is not just about teaching language – it is about history, culture, globalization,” says ASU President Michael Crow. “We need to move away from the notion that we are simply creatures of social constructs.

“It’s a significant part of a rapid period of evolution here at ASU where we’ve asked the deans and the faculty to work together to evolve those communities of scholars and communities of teachers to have an opportunity to be transformative.”

The school’s ongoing Work-in-Progress Lecture Series gives faculty and other members of the school further opportunities to discuss and conceptualize prominent cultural discourses. Advanced classes to be taught in Chinese in cooperation with the history department and other units are under development, and there are plans to offer such “content” courses in other languages, as well. As recommended in the report, a number of the school’s faculty members also work with K-12 educators to bolster language learning, and faculty train students in effective translation and interpretation practices.

It is only the beginning for the School of International Letters and Cultures. The school’s insightful leadership and commitment to a global education in the 21st century have offered a promising first chapter to its future.

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Eco-focused literature is subject of Taiwan lecture tour

By Chakris Kussalanant

Native American literature and indigenous communities are the focus of ASU associate professor Joni Adamson’s work and her upcoming lectures during her one-month stay in Taiwan this summer.

What’s the connection between Asian communities and Native American tribes? According to Adamson, many things, but particularly an experience of oppression.

“Taiwan has 14 indigenous tribes who are considered to be the ancestors of the Austronesian tribes, who over the course of thousands of years, peopled the Pacific islands, including New Zealand and Hawaii,” says Adamson. “These tribes have a history that parallels the history of American Indian tribes in many ways.

“They have been very oppressed, first by the Han Chinese, who colonized the island from mainland China, and then by the Japanese who occupied the island for 40 years. Now an independent and democratic country, Taiwan has established centers at their most respected universities to study their indigenous tribes.”

Adamson has identified many connections between Native Americans and indigenous people of Taiwan over issues of sovereignty, environmental justice and cultural preservation.

Adamson was first invited to Taiwan in 2002 to deliver a lecture on ecocritical approaches to Native American literature. Ecocriticism, an emerging field of literary criticism, studies the relationship between literature and the natural environment. Since her first lecture, Adamson has been invited back to Taiwan several times to lecture extensively on Native American literature in relation to globalization and indigenous communities. She has been working with Native American literature scholars from universities throughout Taiwan since 2004.

Her workshop and lecture series this summer will address “Planetary Approaches to Film and Literature,” and seek ways to analyze literature from a worldwide perspective. Through the workshops, Adamson aims to address questions such as: Should alternative geographies be forged? What impacts would ‘planetary study’ have on our analysis of American Literature, Native American literatures and other ethnic literatures? How might this approach to American literature change our sense of scale and enrich our understanding of both the local and the global?

“The boundaries of American Studies, along environmental and social justice lines, are being



PHOTO COURTESY OF JONI ADAMSON

ASU associate professor Joni Adamson guest lectures at National Sun-yat Sen University in Kaohsiung, Taiwan. Her focus is environmental justice in relation to Native American literature.

questioned, as they have for some time, by scholars such as Wai Chee Dimock, Lawrence Buell and Paul Gilroy,” says Adamson. “Each of these scholars is calling for the study of American literature from a ‘planetary’ scale, arguing that events such as Hurricane Katrina and the Iraq War make it even more important for us to redefine what we mean by ‘American Literature’ and ‘American Studies.’”

Adamson will deliver her first lecture at National Taiwan Normal University in Taipei, followed by a graduate seminar at Tamkang University in Tamshui, titled “To Change in a Good Way: Native American Literatures, Place-Based Transience, and Diasporic Residency.” Her address at the Fourth Tamkang International Conference on ecological discourse will discuss “Coming Home to Eat: Re-imagining Place in the Age of Global Climate Change.” After that she will travel the country as a visiting distinguished scholar in residence for the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature at National Sun Yat-sen University.

Through her visits over the years, Adamson has been able to visit nearly all of the indigenous tribes of Taiwan. All of her visits have been funded and supported by Taiwan’s National Science Council.

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Sun Angel scholarship powers new undergraduate research

By Ashley Lange

What do Japanese comic books, ‘green’ advertising, and a gender-focused American Revolution historical event all have in common? They are the unique and interesting subjects of current ASU undergraduate research projects that received funding from a Sun Angel Foundation research award.

Stefanie Craig, Kendra Kennedy and Ginger Hanson are the 2007-2008 recipients of the Sun Angel Excellence in the Humanities Research Scholarship. The scholarship provides undergraduate students in ASU’s College of Liberal Arts and Sciences a chance to pursue a research project in their field of study. The award requires that their research appear in a scholarly article or related form of publication.

For Craig, who received a bachelor’s degree in English this past December, the chance to study a topic she loves was the best part about her project.



Stefanie Craig

“Manga is something I’ve been interested in for over a decade,” Craig says. Manga are Japanese comic books, read by people of all ages. They can be about anything – fantasy, science fiction, romance or school life. Craig, who also speaks Japanese, focused her research on how teachers of young adult literature can use the popular medium in classrooms.

“My main goal is to give educators, parents and any interested party a look into what manga actually is – its history, themes, characters, archetypes and structure,” she says.

Craig’s work is published in the April 2008 eighth edition of “Literature for Today’s Young Adults,” a textbook written by Alleen Pace Nilsen, an ASU English professor, and Kenneth L. Donelson, an ASU Professor Emeritus of English education.

Kennedy, a senior with a double major in history and women and gender studies, became interested in her topic after stumbling across a reference to the Meschianza, an elaborate party thrown by the British Army in Philadelphia in 1778. With her curiosity piqued, Kennedy made her first archival re-

search trip to Philadelphia, which revealed intriguing gendered aspects of the event and its impact on the Revolution.

The research will serve to illustrate the role that gender and culture had on political events that shaped United States history, Kennedy says.

Combining both of her majors into one project is what Hanson found so interesting about her analysis of ecological and environmental language and rhetoric in advertising. Hanson, a junior with a double major in English and conservation biology, is able to put both disciplines to work in her research.

“It was not until I noticed my heart rate was picking up every time I viewed an ‘eco-friendly’ advertisement on television that I realized I had to propose a project based on analyzing the rhetoric employed in such ads,” Hanson says.

All three scholarship recipients intend to go on to do graduate-level research.

“What began as a curiosity about the Meschianza and an experimental research trip has become the basis for my graduate school studies,” Kennedy says.

Hanson said the experience gave her newfound confidence.

“It felt good to be trusted to plan and conduct my own study, and my mentor gave me great advice along the way that I will be able to put to use in future studies,” Hanson says. Her mentor is Peter Goggin, assistant professor of English, rhetoric and composition.

The Sun Angel Foundation is an organization founded in 1946 to provide financial aid to outstanding scholar athletes. It has since extended its support to students throughout the university, including the humanities.

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Kendra Kennedy



Ginger Hanson



Cassandra Maldonado

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English Literature and History*

Cassandra Maldonado

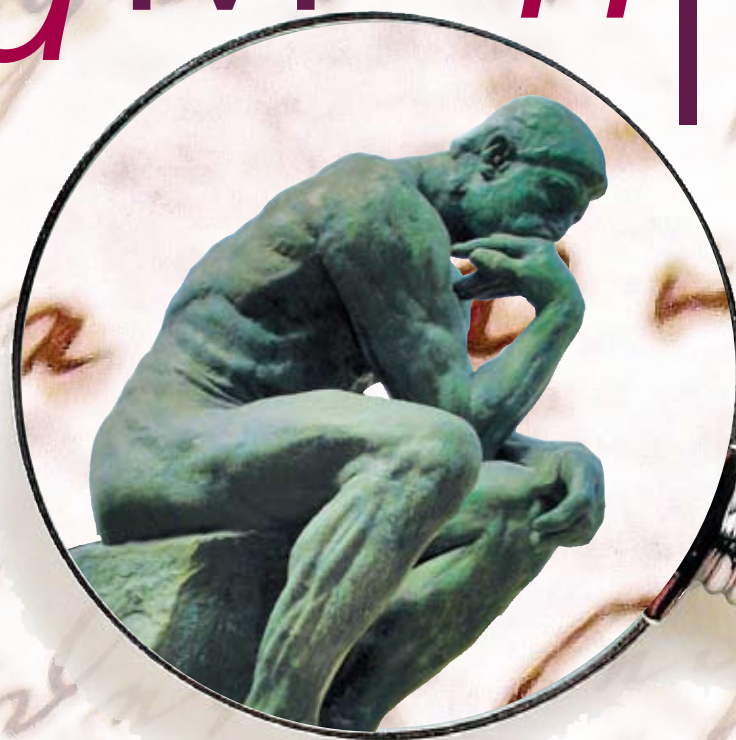
“For me, the study of humanities offers a viewpoint of whom we once were, where we are, and creates a glimpse into what we can become. In the humanities, literature, history, religion and pop culture are capable of intertwining to create a wider viewpoint of our world.

Where the sciences can offer you the knowledge of how, the humanities offer perspectives into why. What I love the most is that there are no absolute answers in the humanities. Instead, we explore, we challenge, we postulate, we create, and above all, we dream our own answers.”



April R. Summitt

The Humanities



Jack Nelson

Associate Dean, Student and Academic Programs, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Interim Chair, Philosophy

Jack Nelson

“One traditional answer to the question ‘What are the humanities good for’ is that they are good in and of themselves – pursuing the humanities is its own reward. But this is an inadequate answer. The humanities are part of the core of a liberal arts education because they speak to the human experience, in and through literature, history, philosophy and religious traditions. They raise issues relating to the nature of human existence, the nature and foundation of values, and our relationships to one another and to the world around us. On a more practical note, pursuing the humanities makes us better writers, clearer thinkers, and – we hope – better human beings.”

A closer look: ASU connections magnify impact



Mirna Lattouf

*Faculty, Religion
University College, School of Letters and Sciences*

Mirna Lattouf

“Studying the humanities connects us to our shared past, awakens our senses to the sounds, smells and sights of our world, and stimulates the creative, critical and independent thinking needed for tomorrow’s global challenges. Recognizing our traditions, capabilities and limitations allows us to accept the complexities of our being and guides us to find meaning!”



Barbara A. Lafford

*Professor, Languages and Cultures
University College, School of Letters and Sciences*

Barbara A. Lafford

“The humanities help us explore the relationship between human languages and the cultural values reflected in their use. It is through the study of language that we are able to understand the products, practices, and perspectives of world cultures and use those insights to inform our communication as we engage with peoples around the globe.”



Elizabeth Langland

Vice President and Dean, New College of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences

Elizabeth Langland

“Why do we exist, what is our purpose, what should we value, what is worth living for, what happens after life, what does it mean to be human?”

The humanities provide ways to think about these issues and suggest answers – always partial, always tentative. They help us to grapple with the contradictions that inform existence: birth and death, hope and despair, love and hatred. And they can connect the remembered past and the imagined future in an arc of significance. The humanities are frequently criticized as insufficient preparation for a career. They offer, however, indispensable preparation for coping with the complexity of living.”

April R. Summitt

Assistant Professor, History
Humanities and Arts Department

“Why study history? In so many ways, history is humanity’s collective memory. Without memory, people find themselves adrift in the world without past connections, knowledge and context for their lives. Societies are the same way, and an understanding of the past makes it possible to understand ourselves and each other. It enables us to build upon what we already know and makes positive change possible.

Here at ASU’s Polytechnic campus, engineering students take history courses in order to understand the human context for their future work. Whether it be History of Engineering, History of Agriculture or Global History, students of all majors learn research and communication skills, and gain a global perspective that will help them function in an increasingly interconnected world.”



Patricia Friedrich

Patricia Friedrich

Assistant Professor, Department of Language, Cultures and History, and Writing Certificate Director

“Scholars in the humanities contribute to scientific knowledge by engaging in an analysis of the state of human beings vis-à-vis their literary, cultural and artistic creations, as well as their history and their philosophical and religious beliefs, amongst other forms of expression. These manifestations are the very core of what makes us human. Humanities scholars are interested in interpretation, critical thinking, argumentation, and also – contrary to what some believe – empirical testing. They want to know what they know, what the past means, and they want to gain an understanding of where humankind is going in the future so as to possibly positively affect outcomes.”

Eduardo Obregón Pagán

Associate Professor, Division of Humanities, Arts, and Cultural Studies



Eduardo Obregón Pagán

“Thomas Jefferson observed, ‘Self-government is not possible unless the citizens are educated sufficiently to enable them to exercise oversight, [and] it is therefore imperative that the nation see to it that a suitable education be provided for all its citizens.’

Education in the humanities actively contributes to that democratic charge because it is through the humanities that we strive to understand the breadth and depth of the human experience. Through art, history, literature, philosophy, religion, language and other fields of study, the humanities explore the ties that bind us together above our discreet cultures, histories and languages, as well as our uniqueness and diversity that contribute to the richness of the human experience.”

Duane Roen

Head of Humanities and Arts and Professor of English, School of Applied Arts and Sciences



Duane Roen

“Rhetoric, a formal discipline for more than two millennia, is one of the oldest fields in the humanities. Using rhetoric to craft effective writing is one of the skills that every person needs to be successful in all arenas of life.

We all need to know how to shape our messages for specific audiences, for specific purposes, and in specific contexts. We write to share and reflect on experiences; to solve problems; to inform and persuade other people; and to explore, analyze and evaluate ideas. Because of writing, we are able to read the ideas of great thinkers who are alive today, as well as those who lived thousands of years ago.

Because of writing, we have the potential to influence people who will be born centuries from now. Writing is an enormously powerful tool that allows us to connect with other humans across time and space.”

Frederick Corey

Dean, University College, and Director of the School of Letters and Sciences



Frederick Corey

“On the Downtown Phoenix campus, the humanities are in the early stages of development. The School of Letters and Sciences is committed to building capacity in the humanities. Studies in philosophy, languages and cultures, religion and society, rhetorical theory and criticism, and literature make a significant contribution to globalization, understanding diversity, and the shape of public discourse.”

Daniel Bernardi

Associate Professor and Director, Film and Media Studies, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences



Daniel Bernardi

“If, as the saying goes, the sciences is our head and the social sciences our heart, the humanities is our soul. In the humanities, we study the art, literature, history, ideas and beliefs of human expression, social interaction and cultural change. Students learn skills that transcend professions, including creative reasoning, adaptive thinking, effective writing and tolerance. In this light, the humanities is a pragmatic course, as its disciplines prepare students to enter a complex world in which they are likely to engage great diversity while changing professions multiple times. In such a world, individual success goes to those who are able to think critically and act compassionately.”



Monica Kelly

Monica Kelly

Student
Social Work

“The humanities encompass the human experience. These subjects teach us about what it means to be human and broaden our perspective and worldview. They allow us to assimilate knowledge of times past into our current experience.”

Professor examines the Bard's work through colorblind lens

By Judith Smith

Should you notice, or shouldn't you? In a "colorblind" society, a black actor cast as Macbeth should not turn heads. The audience has come to enjoy a theater classic that is touted, like the rest of Shakespeare's works, as a "universal play with timeless themes."

Whether the actor is black, white, Asian or Native American should not make any difference.

But it's not as simple as that, says Ayanna Thompson, an assistant professor of English and women and gender studies in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

In "Colorblind Shakespeare: New Perspectives on Race and Performance," which she edited in 2006, Thompson says that "the universality and timelessness of the Bard's works are often tested when actors of color are involved."

Beginning in 1821, when the African Theatre in New York, a company comprised of and for ex-slaves and the sons of ex-slaves, put on a production of "Richard III" white critics ridiculed the black actors, Thompson said, writing that Shakespeare's language was deemed "too difficult for these uneducated ex-slaves."

A white audience member complained that it was too much for frail flesh and blood to see an absolute Negro strut in with so much dignity, bellowing forth.

Fast-forward to the 1960s. Critics of a multi-racial casting of "Antony and Cleopatra" said: "Negro actors often lack even the rudiments of standard American speech" and "they do not look right in parts that historically demand white performers."

Over that time span of 150 years, not much changed, Thompson says, and even today, "audiences don't come to productions color-blind. We may desire to be a colorblind society, but we're not there."

She cites an example of Clarence Smith, a black

actor who was cast as the King of France in the Royal Shakespeare's colorblind production of "King Lear" in 1991.

A Frenchwoman in the all-white audience heckled the actor as he spoke his first lines, and continued yelling comments throughout the production. The woman explained that she thought it was "a disgrace that a black man was playing the King of France," the actor later explained.

And when Denzel Washington played Brutus in a fairly recent Broadway production of "Julius Caesar" there was an audible gasp when he kissed the white actress who played his wife, Thompson said during an interview on NPR's "Talk of the Nation."

The Bard himself contributes to some awkward moments in supposedly colorblind productions of his works.

Shakespeare's plays are "riddled with racist comments, both Jewish and black, that put the actor of color in an awkward position," Thompson says. "Directors must decide, if they cast a black actor, for example, whether to take the offending line out."

Reviewers also have difficulty sometimes with colorblind productions, Thompson noted in an article she wrote for *Borrowers & Lenders: The Journal of Shakespeare and Appropriation*.

Thompson says, "Josette Simon, who made a name for herself playing classical theatrical roles in the 1980s and early 1990s, is quoted as saying, 'I find critics calling me black Josette Simon, as if there were a white Josette Simon knocking about somewhere. They wouldn't dream of talking about white Anthony Sher.'"

Will there be a time when colorblind casting or what Thompson describes as the "meritocratic model" in which "talent trumps all other aspects of an actor's personhood" is the norm?

Lisa M. Anderson, an associate professor of women and gender studies and theater at ASU,



ASU PHOTO

In her book assistant professor Ayanna Thompson examines the timelessness of Shakespeare and how it is challenged when actors of color are involved.

wrote a chapter in "Colorblind Shakespeare" titled "When Race Matters: Reading Race in Richard III and Macbeth."

She said that while the pursuit of an antiracist society and the eradication of the concept of white supremacy is vitally important, a world where skin color did not mean anything would not have a history in which race was a central category.

Race is not only about skin color, but it is a cultural construct, she said. As such, while racial dividing lines have been used to discriminate; they have also served to create an identity for those who are racialized.

Anderson said, "race mattered" in her high school drama club, "but not so much. The faculty advisors had no problem casting me in a role that did not specify someone of a particular race." The high school musical theater club, however,

"insulted" her by casting her as Bloody Mary in "South Pacific."

And when she sought a role in her college's summer theater, she was told there were no parts for black actresses that summer. "Enraged, I dropped my theatre major in favor of political science and vowed to become a playwright and write good roles for black women," she said.

Today, "we remain acutely aware of race, and the privileges that a 'lack' of race (i.e.) whiteness bestows. We are unable to pretend that a black person, on stage or in a film, is not a black person."

Thompson, herself an actress, said, "Although I did not know it at the time, I benefited from colorblind casting practices in high school and college. I played everything from an Angel in 'Anything Goes' to Marty Maraschino in 'Grease.' Thinking back to my teenage years, I know it would have been a bitter pill to swallow if I had been told that I could not play a 'white character.' I did not see race in acting roles; I only saw the roles themselves."

"In addition, I was and still am deeply committed to the idea that black actors and actresses should have as many opportunities as their white counterparts. Why should talented thespians like Denzel Washington, Halle Berry and Samuel L. Jackson have to wait around for specifically designated 'black roles'?"

And Thompson says she, herself, does not want to be viewed in a "colorblind" manner.

"I wonder if being 'blind' to race and ethnicity is even desirable. Being black is so much a part of my identity that I am offended when people say they do not notice race, color or ethnicity. My race informs the way I experience the world in so many complex ways that I do not want it whited out or 'e-raced' by others."

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ASU's Piper Center goes global with creative writing adventures

By Tom McDermott

Nearly five years ago, the Virginia G. Piper Center for Creative Writing was established with a mission to elevate the creative writing program at Arizona State University to national and international prominence, and to enhance the region's cultural environment.

The center has wasted no time in making a name for itself domestically, while at the same time attracting and developing talented students.

Its annual "Desert Nights, Rising Stars" writers conference has quickly emerged into one of the premier creative writing conferences in the West. The center consistently attracts high-profile authors, poets and playwrights to its successful "Distinguished Visiting Writers Series" each year. The "Piper Writer's Studio" workshops, which are led by experienced writers from the local community, are popular and attract aspiring writers from throughout the Valley. The "Piper Online Book Club" continues to see its membership grow, both regionally and nationally.

While the local community benefits from these offerings, so do ASU students, especially those enrolled in the master of fine arts (MFA) in creative writing program – one of the youngest in the country, starting in 1985 – and now ranked among the top 20.

Students regularly get to pick the brains of the prominent writers the center brings to the area during intimate workshops at the Piper Writers House.

This past year, the center expanded its global focus, providing more than half of the MFA creative writing students with fully funded international opportunities, something no other university in the country is offering at this time.

Jewell Parker Rhodes, who was the center's founding artistic director, assumed new responsibilities last fall and was named the center's director of global engagement.

"My new role is to promote our students as global citizens and artists," says Rhodes, who teaches a "Global Gateway" course

that combines readings, language and cultural explorations, and training.

This summer a group of MFA students will travel to China, touring the country in addition to teaching a creative writing course to faculty and students in Sichuan. Last summer a similar delegation of creative writing faculty and MFA students took part in an exchange program with Sichuan University, and two MFA students were granted international teaching fellowships with the National University of Singapore. Last January, four MFA students spent 10 days at an international writers retreat in India.

In all, 49 or the 55 MFA students have had global and international opportunities with support from the Piper Center for Creative Writing. The center sponsored nine trips to seven countries, including Mexico, Singapore, Canada and China.

Since 2005, ASU MFA students have planned self-directed trips to 13 countries on five continents, visiting and studying in the Czech Republic, Japan, South Africa, Italy, Ecuador and Russia.

"The level of engagement by the students was outstanding," says

Meghan Brinson, an MFA student who took part in the teaching fellowship in Singapore. "You really feel like you are helping people tap into a genre that they may not be as familiar with in Singapore."

It is also a learning experience for the MFA students.

"Not only was it a great travel opportunity, but you also gain a different perspective on our society, which is beneficial as a person, a teacher and as a writer," says Brinson.

Six students were in Calgary this fall for Wordfest, an international writers festival, and this past winter students participated in a writer's retreat in Oaxaca, Mexico.

"Our global programs will deepen students appreciation and ability to use art to foster cross-cultural understanding and communication," says Rhodes. "The goal is for every MFA student to have experienced several global adventures prior to graduating."

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New Piper leader brings accolades to post

By Tom McDermott

Accomplished poet and literary critic T.R. Hummer is leading two major creative writing efforts at ASU. He is director of ASU's top-ranked creative writing program and recently appointed director of domestic initiatives for the Virginia G. Piper Center for Creative Writing.

"Creative writing and Piper are at an exciting and challenging critical mass, as the result of decades of dedicated work on the part of creative writing faculty, and five years of groundbreaking and program building on the Piper Center side," says Hummer.

"Now with more faculty and more staff on board, the energy and potential are unparalleled. There is an enormous amount of work to do, but the rewards for us all will be great," he says.

Hummer is the author of nine books of poetry – most recently, "The Infinity Sessions" and "Useless Virtues." His poems have appeared in publications such as the *New Yorker*, *The Hudson Review*, *New England Review*, *The Paris Review* and the *Georgia Review*.



T. R. Hummer

He also has a strong background in publishing. Hummer spent five years as editor of the University of Georgia's award-winning literary journal the *Georgia Review*, before traveling

to Arizona in the summer of 2006 to direct ASU's creative writing program.

"Having served as editor of the *Georgia Review*, Terry Hummer brought his strong reputation as a poet and his ability to network with eminent writers to the creative writing program at ASU," says Deborah Losse, dean of humanities in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. "He has been focusing on the regional and national activities of the Piper Center for Creative Writing, as Jewell Parker Rhodes increased her focus on global engagement."

A native of Macon, Miss., Hummer earned his bachelor's and master's de-

grees from the University of Southern Mississippi and completed his doctorate at the University of Utah.

His first academic post was at Oklahoma State University, where he was poetry editor for the *Cimarron Review*. He published his first two full-length books of poetry, "The Angelic Orders" and "The Passion of the Right-Angled Man," before heading to Kenyon College to become editor of *The Kenyon Review*.

Hummer also edited the *New England Review* before he received a Guggenheim Fellowship in poetry in 1993 and relocated to Eugene, Ore., where he directed the graduate program in creative writing at the University of Oregon. In 1997 he returned to the South to become senior poet in the master of fine arts program at Virginia Commonwealth University.

He moved further south when he was named editor of *Georgia Review*.

Hummer has been the recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts fellowship in poetry, the Richard Wright Award for Literary Excellence, and two Pushcart Prizes.



BETH STAPLES PHOTO

ASU MFA student Jake Young talks with Sichuan University students in Chengdu, China.

Center gives religion current global context

By Judith Smith

In some families, the motto is “never discuss religion or politics.”

But at ASU’s Center for the Study of Religion and Conflict, which opened its doors in January 2003, the rule is “discuss religion and politics.”

Unique among public universities in the United States, the center was founded to explore the complex roles of religion in contemporary global conflicts from the civil to the violent.

When ASU President Michael Crow suggested the creation of the center he said, “Religious-based conflict exists in areas as diverse as foreign policy, international law, teaching and learning in our schools, science and technology research and application, news coverage and political ideology.”

“There is no shortage of issues to study,” commented Linell Cady, Franca Orefice Dean’s Distinguished Professor of Religious Studies and founding director of the center. “The relationship of religion and the state, the links between religion and violence, and the host of issues surrounding religion, science and technology...all of these have been of enormous interest to faculty and students.”

To begin the dialogue in 2003, the center hosted a conference on Islam in the modern world and a lecture by Bruce Feiler titled “Abraham: A Journey to the Heart of Three Faiths.”

Since then, the center has sponsored numerous lectures, conferences, colloquia and roundtables on issues that have included religion, gender and global politics, the Middle East, controversies of the teaching of evolution and intelligent design, and religion in U.S. presidential politics and foreign policy. The center hosts annually the Maxine and Jonathan Marshall Speaker Series on religion and conflict and the Annual Lecture in Religion, Conflict and Peace Studies.

Such public thinkers and writers as Azar Nafisi and Noah Feldman, leading journalists

Tirosh-Samuels on to lead ASU Jewish studies

By Carol Hughes

When asked why a public university should teach Jewish studies, the incoming director of ASU’s program doesn’t hesitate with her response.

“Judaism developed side by side with the Christian interpretation of the Judaic heritage, and there is no way to understand Western, Christian culture without its Judaic foundation,” says Hava Tirosh-Samuels on, who will assume the position of director of Jewish studies at ASU on Aug. 16.

Tirosh-Samuels on, who has been at ASU since 1999, is a professor and associate chair in the history department. In the director’s position, she will hold the Irving and Miriam Lowe Professorship in Modern Jewish Studies and will remain an active member of the history department.

“One of the attractive aspects of the director of Jewish studies position is the convergence between ASU’s growth trajectory and the interests and needs of the Jewish community in metropolitan Phoenix,” Tirosh-Samuels on says.

In sharing her vision with members of the faculty and the community, Tirosh-Samuels on says that Jewish studies at ASU will focus on research, teaching and community outreach.

“At ASU, Jewish studies will offer a new and creative model to integrate a Jewish perspective into all relevant disciplines and academic units, including history, religious studies, political science, justice studies, international letters and cultures, media and film studies, and law.”

Tirosh-Samuels on would like to see new subjects, discourses and emphases within the program develop, specifically in the areas of Judaism and science, Judaism and environmentalism, Jewish history as global history, Judaism and liberalism, and Judaism and the arts.

As part of the community outreach, Jewish studies will organize monthly seminars on campus, as well as art exhibits, either on campus or in synagogues.

Tirosh-Samuels on was born in Kibbutz Afikim, Israel. She has a doctorate in Jewish philosophy and mysticism from the Hebrew



Hava Tirosh-Samuels on

University of Jerusalem, and a bachelor’s degree in religious studies from the Stony Brook University. This past November, the university recognized her with a Distinguished Alumni Award.

Tirosh-Samuels on’s research focuses on medieval and early-modern Jewish intellectual history with an emphasis on the interplay between philosophy and mysticism.

Among her published works, Tirosh-Samuels on is the author of “Between Worlds – The Life and Thought of Rabbi David ben Judah Messer Leon,” which was awarded the best work in Jewish history published in 1991 by the Institute of Jewish Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and “Happiness in Premodern Judaism: Virtue, Knowledge, and Well Being.” She also is the editor of “Judaism and Ecology: Created World and Revealed Word,” “Women and Gender in Jewish Philosophy,” and “The Legacy of Hans Jonas: Judaism and the Phenomenon of Life.”

She is the recipient of a \$500,000 grant for the Templeton Research Lectures on the Constructive Engagement of Science and Religion – a three-year project titled “Facing the Challenges of Transhumanism: Religion, Science, and Technology.”

“Transhumanism is inherently interdisciplinary, as is the nature of Jewish studies,” Tirosh-Samuels on says. “To understand Judaism, the Jews, Jewish civilization, one is called to do interdisciplinary work.”

“My interest in transhumanism is part of a larger and deeper commitment to the dialogue of science and religion, which is rooted in the conviction that, historically and conceptually, science and religion are not antagonistic but intertwining cultural forces,” she says.

“In her new role as director of Jewish studies, Dr. Hava Tirosh-Samuels on brings with her both a national vision for the program and firsthand experience from some of the leading programs in Jewish studies in the country: Emory University, Columbia University and Indiana University,” says Deborah Losse, dean of humanities in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. “Her stature in the field is such that her work to advance the program will attract the attention of major scholars in Jewish studies both in the United States and abroad.”

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E.J. Dionne, Peter Bergen and John F. Burns, and policy experts Dennis Ross and Aaron David Miller, have all been featured in the center’s public events and meetings with faculty and students.

According to its mission statement, the center is “committed to a model of scholarship that is transdisciplinary, collaborative and problem-focused.”

Through a series of cross-disciplinary faculty seminars and seed grants sponsored by the center, faculty have found opportunities for

new collaborations and support for projects on a broad range of issues concerning religion in the contemporary world.

The center’s approach has proven enormously productive, with grants from the Ford Foundation, the National Science Foundation, the Metanexus Institute and the John Templeton Foundation.

The center also will be launching a new undergraduate certificate program in religion and conflict in the fall of 2008. The program involves professors from religious studies, his-

tory, political science, global studies, and international letters and cultures, and is open to students from any major in the university.

“There is every indication that religion will continue to play a major role in global conflict in the 21st century,” Cady says. “We are committed to developing research and educational opportunities that better prepare students, policy-makers, and the public for the challenges ahead.”

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NEH award recipient to research history of crime and punishment

By Stephen DesGeorges

For ASU associate professor Stephen Toth, his recent recognition as a National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Award recipient amounts to being paid to play. After all, the New College of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences modern European historian will receive a summer stipend to do what he enjoys most – researching and writing about the history of crime, punishment and violence in France.

“This is a real honor,” says Toth, whose work has appeared in such peer-reviewed journals as *History of the Human Sciences*, *Journal of European Studies*, *Nineteenth-Century Contexts*, and *Crime, Histoire & Sociétés*. “The funds provided through this endowment afford me the opportunity to get a two-month head start on my year-long sabbatical this summer, so it is very much appreciated.”

Toth is one of 149 applicants selected nationally in 2008 to receive \$11.9 million in awards and offers extended by the NEH. He will use his endowment to fund archival research and writing in Paris and Tours, France, for his forthcoming book, “Rural Redemption: The Mettray Agricultural Colony for Boys, 1840-1939.” The study will examine life inside the controversial, privately operated Catholic institution for juvenile delinquents and the process by which it acquired a national and international reputation as a supposed exemplar of moral education, despite its harshly punitive tactics.

“This is a real testimony to the high quality of Stephen’s research,” says Elizabeth Langland, ASU vice president and dean of the New College. “This is the type of work that typifies the best interdisciplinary research of the New College.”

“His study of Mettray connects 150-year-old practices and beliefs that juvenile criminals can be rehabilitated through the power of the land to our own beliefs today and our practice of using rural, military-type facilities as a mode of juvenile rehabilitation.”

Toth says his upcoming exploration of Mettray has modern applications.

“Many states, including Arizona, and an untold number of for-profit and nonprofit groups opened – and continue to operate – rural, military-style camps to house and rehabilitate juvenile criminals. While proponents believe that such facilities are an innovative way to deal with a social malady seemingly unprecedented in scope, the idea and practice are actually rooted in a 150-year history



France’s history of crime, punishment and violence is the focus of associate professor Stephen Toth’s forthcoming book that examines the Mettray Agricultural Colony for Boys (pictured above).

that can be traced to Mettray.”

The Mettray study, says Toth, contributes to the humanities by helping to understand and contextualize contemporary debates surrounding juvenile crime and punishment in the United States. In recent years, social scientists, politicians and the mass media have focused on what they believe to be the growing problem of juvenile crime in America. Spurred in part by extreme forecasts that projected significant increases in juvenile crime rates, warnings of an impending “teenage crime storm,” particularly among young black and Hispanic males, predominated during the 1990s.

“The issues surrounding juvenile crime that were critical in 19th-century France bear a remarkable resemblance to many of those in the United States in the 21st century,” says Toth.

“In both eras – one beset by the material hardships associated with industrialization, the other by segments of the population mired in a seemingly insurmountable cycle of unemployment and poverty – there is a somewhat misplaced fear of a rising tide of juvenile crime. In this regard the agricultural colony has re-emerged as a means of addressing this perceived problem. Given that many of these institutions have, not unlike Mettray, also been accused of prisoner abuse and mismanagement, we need to understand the historical legacy of this correctional practice.”

“In this regard, my work appeals to scholars of history, cultural studies, crime and criminology, as well as to policymakers who might seek a cultural and historical perspective on the topic.”

Toth notes his fascination with the French penal colonies, and particularly Mettray, was cultivated by French moral philosopher Michel Foucault, who authored “Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Modern Prison.”

“I was always struck by the fact Foucault traced the birth of the modern prison to Mettray and that he believed Mettray represented the disciplinary form in which the art of punishment had been perfected,” says Toth, whose most recent work, “Beyond Papillon: The French Overseas Penal Colonies, 1854-1952,” was published in 2006 by the University of Nebraska Press as part of its “France Overseas” series. “Foucault never really discussed the institution in any real depth, and there was very little published on the subject.”

Located in the bucolic Loire valley, Mettray inspired the establishment of some 50 new institutions during the 1840s which made the agricultural colony the most common form of incarceration for juvenile delinquents in France. In fact, colonies based on the Mettray model were opened in Great Britain, the Netherlands and the U.S.

Mettray’s founders aimed to rehabilitate criminal youths through agricultural work, basic elementary schooling, and strict military discipline. Delinquent children were removed not only from the common adult prisons where they were typically housed, but also from the perceived evil influences of the city. Toth’s research indicates that while Mettray promised benevolent reform it was not all it was reported to be. In fact, by the early 20th century, it had devolved from the reformist vision of its founders to a brutal custodial care facility.

“There was a shared belief that industrialization and urbanization had corrupted morality and was to blame for crime among adults and children,” Toth says. “Both the overseas penal colonies and the agricultural colonies shared a Rousseauian belief in the power of the land to rehabilitate the man. Whether tilling the soil of the Loire or clearing the jungle in French Guiana, this was a reaction to the birth of economic and social modernity in 19th-century France.”

“Once it became clear that this romantic belief was untenable, however, both the overseas penal colonies and Mettray became criminal dumping grounds.”

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Humanities field helps scholars address sustainability issues

By Chris Lambrakis

Most people don't think about the humanities and arts as playing a role when talking about sustainability. However, a group at the Polytechnic campus is showing the interconnectedness of both in discussions surrounding this topic.

The Polytechnic Sustainability Research Group, organized in April 2007 and co-led by Joni Adamson and Christopher Wharton, explores how scholars in the humanities are working with scholars in other fields to address the interdisciplinary challenges, opportunities and realities of creating a socially and ecologically sustainable world.

"We are breaking down boundaries between the arts, humanities and the sciences, at least as those boundaries are perceived in conversations about sustainability," says Adamson, associate professor in Humanities and Arts in the School of Applied Arts and Sciences.

The group of 20 faculty, staff and students from several academic areas is brainstorming projects, seeking funding opportunities and pursuing grants for projects that will take place over the next several years.

Some of the projects the humanities and arts members have started include Joe Herkert's work on the interplay between engineering ethics and sustainable development.

"Through this effort I am examining how engineers and

professional engineering societies attempt to address sustainability in their work, including social and macroethical issues, such as social equity, cultural diversity and public participation," says Herkert, Lincoln Associate Professor of Ethics and Technology. "The study of ethics, history, literature, and art can shed light on the human condition and the value choices/changes necessary for sustainable development."

In June, Herkert will present on "Engineering Ethics and Climate Change" at the annual conference of the American Society for Engineering Education.

In addition, April Summitt, assistant professor of history, is writing a book about the Colorado River and why environmental histories are key to discussions surrounding sustainability.

"Understanding metropolitan culture and how cities have used water over time helps scientists find solutions for the future," argues Summitt. "Tracing the ongoing struggle over allocations between states, tribal governments and agribusiness is essential to solving sustainability challenges for the Southwest."

This month, Adamson presents "Coming Home to Eat: Re-imagining Place in the Age of Global Climate Change" at the Fourth International Conference on Ecodiscourse in Tamshui, Taiwan. (See "Eco-focused literature is the

subject of Taiwan lecture tour" on page H3.)

The group also established a Community Sponsored Agriculture group, and is working with the Global Institute of Sustainability (GIOS) to create and fill a new position called the "sustainability desk" that will examine opportunities for creating a more sustainable culture at the Polytechnic campus.

And a recent public showing of "The Real Dirt on Farmer John," an "artistic docudrama" about community sponsored farming, was used to help students understand food culture, politics and policies.

Wharton, an assistant professor in nutrition who focuses on issues surrounding policy and obesity, led a discussion after the movie, noting that documentaries such as "Farmer John" play an important role in the kind of message framing that can potentially change human behaviors and perceptions.

"For this reason, understanding the role the humanities and arts play when we address environmental issues is key to building a sustainable culture and society in the future," he says.

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Social climate informs humanities research

(Continued from page H1)

schools, and to the general public in Arizona.

- Virginia G. Piper Center for Creative Writing, providing global and international opportunities for students in ASU's master of fine arts in creative writing program.

- Institute for Humanities Research, providing a gateway for collaboration among scholars whose research addresses the world's social, cultural, technological and scientific challenges through a humanities lens.

- Center for the Study of Religion and Conflict, promoting interdisciplinary research and education on the dynamics of religion and conflict with the aim of advancing knowledge, seeking solutions and informing policy.

In addition to new schools, centers and institutes, the university is investing in the hiring of more faculty in the department of English – to expand areas of strength, including medieval and renaissance studies, and also to improve student success and retention by limiting the number of students in first-year writing classes to 19.

"We have a plan to double the number of English faculty over three years, and we're halfway there," says Neal Lester, chair of the department of English. By keeping first-year writing classes to 19 students, "we're looking to significantly increase student retention, student satisfaction and the quality of instruction, giving faculty more time to spend with individual students on their writing."

Whether it's lowering class size for first-year writing classes on campus or teaching Chinese to Arizona elementary students, Losse concludes that "the humanities at ASU will have a tremendous impact felt locally and internationally."

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Grand Canyon project offers new perspective

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reveals important features of our nation's history."

As a companion to the audio-tour, the project team is revising and enhancing the existing walking-tour brochure of the South Rim Historic District. Later, they will provide interpretative training for park rangers, concessionaires and bus drivers.

The traveling trunks are being produced by a team of Arizona public school teachers who are serving as consultants. Currently, the Grand Canyon Association loans out three copies of a "human history" trunk with curriculum and classroom materials developed in 2002. Under the NEH project, this human history trunk will be significantly updated with new curriculum and divided into two trunks – one for elementary students and the other for high school students. Five copies of each trunk will be produced for a total of 10 traveling trunks for loan use.

Each trunk will contain books, maps, videos, audios and illustrative items. The new curriculum is being evaluated this summer with plans to make the traveling trunks available later this fall. According to Wood, the trunks will be shipped free of charge to any teacher anywhere in the country.

Simultaneously, the project team is writing text and gathering historic photos and images for an interactive Web site and DVD.

"There will be many more sites and stories on our Grand Canyon Web site than on other existing Web sites," Hirt says. "We will interpret some 70 to 80 historic sites."

Another unique feature of the ASU-sponsored Web site is that many of the narratives will focus on the relationship between nature and culture, and the significance of the Grand Canyon in American history.

The National Endowment for the Humanities funding for the project comes from the prestigious "We The People" initiative designed to promote "knowledge and understanding of American history and culture."

"The Grand Canyon Association is very pleased to be working in partnership with ASU on this significant human history project," says Brad L. Wallis, executive director.

"As one of the most visited natural history sites on the planet and a true international icon of natural places, the Grand Canyon has also had a fascinating human history story, and this grant will help visitors become more aware of this aspect of the canyon."

More information about the project is online at www.asu.edu/clas/history/FundedProjects/GrandCanyon.htm

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PHOTO COURTESY OF PAUL HIRT

The Grand Canyon human history project aims to paint a cultural landscape of the canyon through a suite of public educational materials, including a digital audio-tour, walking tour brochure, interactive Web site and DVD, and educational kits known as traveling trunks, with curriculum and classroom materials that can be used by K-12 teachers nationwide.

Humanities research institute explores issues with multidisciplinary tools

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by the institute, says Jane Maienschein, Regents' Professor in the School of Life Sciences, who co-directs the project with Manfred Laubichler, a professor in the school.

"The project is historical and philosophical at heart and deeply humanistic in its approaches to understanding the science of embryo research," she says. "What we are doing is richly multi-disciplined in a way that happens at ASU and not many other places. We have undergraduate researchers, graduate students and faculty members from ASU and beyond all engaged in the project."

The Embryo Project brings together scientists, historians, philosophers, social scientists, lawyers, science policy advocates and others, Laubichler says.

"While it is clear that many of the disciplines that study science, such as history of science or sociology of science can benefit from close interactions with scientists, this project also has demonstrated that science itself can take advantage from this collaboration," he says. "The project is a showcase of how history can matter to actual cutting edge scientific research."

Additional Seed Grant Programs are focused on examin-

ing transnational adoption in Arizona, building an online encyclopedia of Arizona, and examining the interaction of nature, culture, history and community on the U.S.-Mexico borderlands.

The third major program supported by the IHR is the Fellows Program. Organized around an annual theme, the Fellows Program brings together ASU faculty, visiting fellows who spend a semester in residence at ASU, and graduate student fellows doing related research.

This year's Fellows Program is focused on "The Humanities and Sustainability." In addition to several ongoing projects in this area, the IHR is working closely with the Global Institute of Sustainability to develop a Web page on humanities and sustainability, and promote collaborations between humanists and scientists.

Paul Hirt, associate professor of history, says that while sustainability is often seen as a technical enterprise in which scientists and engineers engage in 'green' practices and innovate solutions to environmental problems, just as powerful a force in shaping behavior and how humans collectively live on this planet are non-technical factors.

"The understanding of sustainability emphasizes the relationship between human and natural systems," says Hirt, a historian who also teaches in the School of Sustainability. "Thus, ecological sciences and the humanities are deeply and necessarily coupled in the sustainability enterprise. While scientists look at physical processes and social scientists examine sociological processes, humanists focus on ideas, values, culture and history. We must integrate knowledge and policy across the disciplines to understand, inform and direct human development toward a responsible, sustainable future."

Kitch says the Humanities and Sustainability project perfectly illustrates the mission of the institute – it both challenges humanists to do research in new ways and makes the humanities central to other fields.

"We want to make the humanities active, vital parts of the way people live their lives," Kitch says.

For more information on the Institute for Humanities Research, visit the Web site: www.asu.edu/clas/ihr.

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