

# Humanities Center

## THE COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

I Daniel Belding of lawfull age do testify and say, that the inventory hereto annexed is a true account of articles on board the Schooner Hopewell at the time she was captured by the privateer Coquette two hogheads of rum & some barrel of soap were on board, not in more Dist. Court Dec. Term 1795 Daniel Belding

Sworn to in Court  
Attest N. Goodale Clerk

Question by the Court, at what distance from the shore was the schooner Hopewell, at the time of said capture, and what there do you say it was? At the time of the capture we were at the distance of two miles from Moose Peak and Captain Canard, upon my observing to him we were within jurisdiction of United States declared, that it made no difference, for if said schooner Hopewell had been within any harbour of United States, he would have sunk her if he could not have taken her.

Daniel Belding

Sworn to in Court  
Attest N. Goodale Clerk

### Eminent Scholars

- » Stanley Fish: English scholar
- » Linda Gordon: History scholar
- » Cheryl Goldsleger: Emeritus Professor of Art

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### Contact Us

ERIC SMITH

Director, Humanities Center

Associate Professor of English

[uah.edu/la/research/humanities](http://uah.edu/la/research/humanities)





Demeter

BY KATHRYN JILL JOHNSON

## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

### Welcome



I am happy to report to you at the conclusion of another year filled with stimulating campus events and faculty research sponsored by the Humanities Center, which continues to support innovative and interdisciplinary work in the humanities and to expand the borders of the latter toward the rich intersections of humanistic inquiry in the arts and social sciences.

Thanks to the initiative of faculty in the College of Liberal Arts, this year saw campus visits by some true luminaries in the humanities.

In cooperation with colleagues at the Stetson

University College of Law, Dr. Clarke Rountree hosted a symposium of legal and communications scholars from across the country featuring lectures by renowned legal and literary scholar and preeminent public intellectual Stanley Fish. Emeritus Professor of Art at Georgia State University, Cheryl Goldsleger gave a public lecture on her exhibits commissioned by the National Academy of Sciences and the Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport. Internationally acclaimed women's historian Linda Gordon gave public lectures on the history of political debates regarding birth control and abortion and on the subject of "visual democracy." In addition to these and an array of public programs, Humanities Center grants sponsored faculty research and travel to academic conferences and the acquisition of important library materials to support research by both faculty and students.

Looking ahead, we have a number of excellent events and visiting scholars scheduled for the upcoming year including a spring 2015 symposium on sound studies featuring Jonathan Sterne, Trevor Pinch, and our own Rolf Goebel among other distinguished speakers; Duke University Professor of English and Women's Studies Priscilla Wald will provide the keynote lecture for the English Graduate Student Conference in April; and in fall 2015, the Humanities Center will host a symposium dedicated to world-renowned philosopher Alain Badiou, featuring public lectures by Kenneth Reinhardt, Susan Spitzer, and Badiou himself. It is a privilege to work alongside my energetic and visionary colleagues in the College of Liberal Arts, whose efforts as scholars and teachers daily renew the great civic and intellectual promise of the humanities. I look forward to another exciting year as director and, as always, welcome your input.

**Eric Smith**

Associate Professor of English

### Humanities Center Steering Committee

**Laurel Bollinger**

Professor, English

**Rolf Goebel**

Professor, Foreign Languages  
& Literatures

**Nicholaos Jones**

Associate Professor, Philosophy

**Lillian Joyce**

Associate Professor, Art & Art History

**John Pottenger**

Professor, Political Science

**Christine Sears**

Associate Professor, History

### Library Grants

**Joseph Conway**

English, Materials on 19th-Century  
American Literature

**Andrei Gandila**

History, Materials on Roman History  
and Archaeology

**Rolf Goebel and Joseph Taylor**

Foreign Languages and English,  
Materials on Sound Studies

**Jeremy Fischer**

Philosophy, Materials on the Philosophy  
of Emotion and the Philosophy of Race

**Molly Johnson**

History, Materials on Twentieth  
Century Central / Eastern European  
and Soviet History

**Nicole Pacino**

History, Materials on Women and  
Gender in Latin American Studies

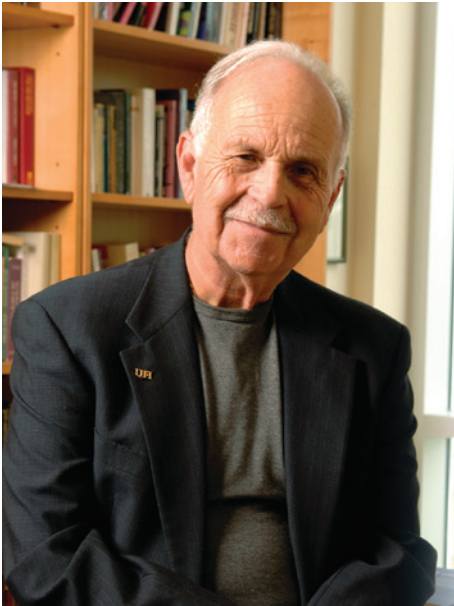
**Christine Sears**

History, Materials on Slavery in Public  
History and Memory





## EMINENT SCHOLARS



## Stanley Fish

### English Scholar

From April 10-12, 2014, the Department of Communication Arts hosted as visiting Humanities Center Short-Term Eminent Scholar the renowned literary and legal scholar and public intellectual Stanley Fish. Professor Fish lectured on the U.S. Supreme Court case *D.C. v. Heller*, which supported a Second Amendment right for citizens to keep and bear arms; participated in a colloquium on rhetoric and law organized by Dr. Clarke Rountree in co-

operation with Stetson University College of Law, the UAH Provost, and the College of Liberal Arts; and lectured in Dr. Angela Balla's graduate seminar on John Milton.

Dean Emeritus in the College of Liberal Arts at the University of Illinois at Chicago, Davidson-Kahn Distinguished Professor of Humanities and Law at Florida International University, and most recently Floersheimer Distinguished Visiting Professor at the Cardozo School of Law, Yeshiva University, Professor Fish has also held appointments at Duke University, Johns Hopkins University, and the University of California at Berkeley among others. Prolific, provocative, and, on occasion, polemical, Professor Fish has developed in his twelve scholarly books and many, many articles some of the key concepts and methods in contemporary literary criticism of the last fifty years, self-reflexively probing and productively agitating longstanding creeds of "interpretive communities" on all fronts, from his game-changing reflection on Miltonic syntax and the construction of the "fallen reader" in 1967's *Surprised by Sin* to his most recent reflections on style in *How to Write a Sentence: and How to Read One*. His work on legal interpretation has appeared in leading journals like the *Stanford Law Review*, *The Yale Law*

*Journal*, *Duke Law Journal*, and *Columbia Law Review* among others. As an online opinionator columnist for the *New York Times* and in popular outlets like *Harper's Magazine*, Professor Fish has vigorously taken up the vocation of the public intellectual like few of his generation, training his unique insights into language and the discursive horizons of meaning onto questions of public interest and urgency: education reform, freedom of speech, the Second Amendment, religion, and the value and purpose of the humanities in contemporary society.

In his public lecture, Professor Fish argued that Justice Antonin Scalia's majority opinion in *D.C. v. Heller* engaged in "crumbling," whereby the Second Amendment was broken down into individual words which were then defined using selective historical sources to yield the surprising finding that individuals, rather than militias, have a general constitutional right to own and use guns. Professor Fish told an audience of about eighty students, faculty, and community members that examining the intention of the Second Amendment, rather than the meanings of its individual words, was a more appropriate approach to understanding this constitutional provision.



## Cheryl Goldsleger // Emeritus Professor of Art

Emeritus Professor of Art at Georgia State University Cheryl Goldsleger visited UAH in September 2014 as a Humanities Center Short-Term Eminent Scholar. She exhibited artwork commissioned by the National Academy of Sciences from August to September 2014 and gave a public lecture on her work. Professor Goldsleger also gave a demonstration of encaustic painting, hosted a gallery reception for her exhibition, and met with the Philosopher's Guild student group.

## Linda Gordon

### History Scholar

From October 23 - 25, 2013, Linda Gordon, University Professor of the Humanities and Florence Kelley Professor of History at New York University, visited UAH as a Humanities Center Short-Term Eminent Scholar. Dr. Gordon is one of the foremost experts on the history of women and gender and of social policy in the United States. Dr. Gordon's visit was coordinated by the Women's and Gender Studies Program, with additional support from the Honors College.

Dr. Gordon gave two public lectures, a keynote lecture on "Birth Control and Abortion: Why Still So Controversial? An Historical View," and a lecture to students in the Honors College on "Visual Democracy: How Dorothea Lange Used Photography to Promote Equality." Dr. Gordon also discussed her research with undergraduate and graduate students in two history classes and one political science course.

Dr. Gordon's keynote lecture was drawn from her 1976 book, *Woman's Body, Woman's Right: The History of Birth Control in America* (revised and republished as *The Moral Property of Women* in 2002), which remains the definitive history of birth control politics in the United States. Her Honors lecture was based on her most recent book, *Dorothea Lange: A Life Beyond Limits* (2009), which won the Bancroft Prize for best book in U.S. history and the Los Angeles Times Book Prize for Biography. She has also published three other major academic monographs, *Heroes of their Own Lives: The History and Politics of Family Violence* (1988), *Pitied But not Entitled:*



*Single Mothers and the History of Welfare* (1994), and one *The Great Arizona Orphan Abduction* (1999), each of which won a major book award.

Dr. Gordon earned her Ph.D. from Yale University in Russian history in 1970, before moving into the field of U.S. women's

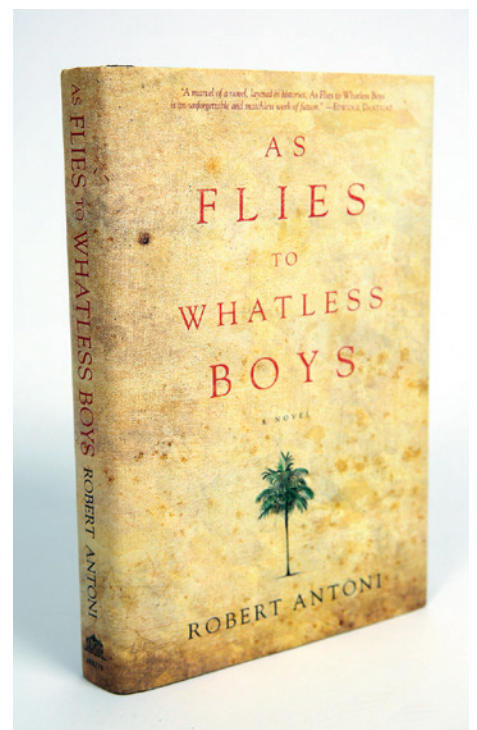
history, an outgrowth in part of her active participation in the women's movement. Before moving to New York University, she taught at the University of Massachusetts Boston and the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where she was awarded the university's most prestigious chair professorship, the Vilas Research Chair.



## Robert Antoni

### English Scholar

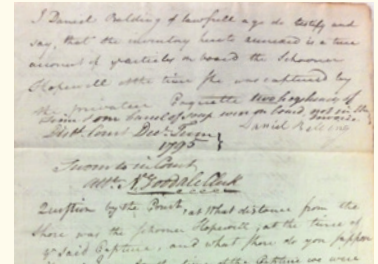
On November 13, 2014, Robert Antoni read from and discussed his novel *As Flies to Whatless Boys*, recipient of the 2014 Bocas Prize for Caribbean Literature, and met with a group of English graduate students. Author of five novels, including *Divina Trace*, winner of a Commonwealth Writers Prize in 1992, Antoni has also received the Paris Review's Aga Kahn Prize and been awarded both a Guggenheim Fellowship and a grant by the National Endowment for the Arts. In 2012, Antoni received the NALIS Lifetime Literary Award from the Trinidad and Tobago National Library. He currently teaches creative writing in the New School University in New York.







**ANDREI GANDILA** traveled to Romania for his book "Marginal Money: Cultural Encounters on Byzantium's Northern Frontier (6th-7th Centuries)," which explores cultural interactions in the frontier regions of the Early Byzantine Empire (6th-7th c.). Byzantine coins represent the most interesting, yet unexplored, media whereby the Empire and the outside world connected at multiple levels. Employing a comparative framework, Dr. Gandila argues that the same frontier can act both as a political/ military frontier of exclusion and as a cultural frontier where ideas, fashions, and people can circulate more or less freely. In the hands of "barbarians" early Byzantine coins possessed more than the basic economic value, bringing social prestige, conveying religious symbolism embedded in the iconography, and offering a general sense of sharing in the early Byzantine lifestyle. The project required access to a large body of literature published in local journals, usually issued by small regional museums. He also participated in archaeological excavations at Capidava, an important Roman and early Byzantine fortress on the Danube frontier, to study the rich collection of early Byzantine lamps and amphoras found on the site. Summer research in Romania also allowed Dr. Gandila to update his database of coin finds from the frontier region by locating relevant publications and by gaining access to unpublished material. At the National History Museum in Bucharest, he studied ca. 1,000 unpublished early Byzantine coins found in the region of Durostorum, one of the most important Byzantine centers on the Danube frontier. This group of coins alone accounts for almost one third of the number of published finds from the Northern Balkans. He also obtained important information about early Byzantine coin finds beyond the frontier, which are currently kept at local history museums in Craiova, Călărași, Băcau, and Piatra-Neamț.



**CHRISTINE SEARS** traveled to Boston, MA, to visit the National Archives, where she researched admiralty cases in the New England District Court Records (Record Group 21), an extensive collection that covers NH, VT, ME, CT, MA from the 1780s through the 20th century. She gave special attention to MA cases 1780s to 1820s, recording instances in which sailors sued for wages and to protest ill treatment. She also reviewed records relating to privateering and photographed and took notes from the Records of the US Customs Service Records (RG 26), including the Seamen's Protective certificates with which seamen hoped to prove their US citizenship when captured by British seeking to impress them or by other enemy ships.



**NICOLE PACINO** received a grant for her research in La Paz, Bolivia, during June and July 2014 to support her book "Prescription for a Nation: Public Health in Post-Revolutionary Bolivia, 1952-1964." The book examines the National Revolutionary Movement in Bolivia, a left-of-center group that took power on April 9, 1952, in a genuine social revolution. She investigates the role of public health programs in helping the revolutionary government solicit political loyalty from its citizens, support promises to improve people's way of life, and expand political power into the country's rural regions. Her research also focuses on the government's maternal and infant health campaigns and the way revolutionaries envisioned women as essential to building a new society.



## HUMANITIES CENTER SPONSORED SCHOLARSHIP

AY 2013-2014

**ANGELA BALLA:** "The Politics of Circumspection and Religious Toleration in Donne's Sermons" Twenty-Ninth Annual John Donne Society Conference, Baton Rouge, LA, February 2014.

**ANNA FOY:** "Georgic Instruction and the Marketplace of Ideas: James Grainger's The Sugar-Cane as a Reformist Response to the Canada-Guadeloupe Controversy" Southeastern American Society for Eighteenth Century Studies, Knoxville, T, February 27, 2014; and "Colonial Translatio: North-American Identity in Cotton Mather's Pietas in Patriam," East-Central / American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA, November 9, 2013.



**ALANNA FROST:** "The Affordances and Constraints of Global Translingual Research: Sites, Methods, Tools" Thomas R. Watson Conference, Louisville, Kentucky. October 16, 2014; and "Exploring the Literacy Narrative as Data." Writing Research Across Borders, Paris, France, February 17, 2014.

**ANDREI GANDILA:** "Between Byzantium and Persia: Money and Politics in Transcaucasia (6th-7thc.);" 49th International Congress on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, MI, May 8-11, 2014.

**ELITRA GILCHRIST-PETTY:** "When the Mother-in-Law Moves In: Negotiating Marriage and Caregiver Stress" Eastern Communication Association Conference Providence, RI, April 2014.

**ROLF GOEBEL:** "Sonic Transpositions: Intermedial Reflections on Sound and the (Post-)Modern Metropolis." Sound Studies: Mapping the Field. 2nd International Conference of the European Sound Studies Association, University of Copenhagen, Denmark, 27 June 2014; and "Benjamin's Music: Metaphysics, Technological Reproduction, and Cultural Function." Thirty-Seventh Annual Conference of the German Studies Association, Denver, CO, October 5, 2013.

**DEBORAH HEIKES:** "Can Mind Be a Virtue?" International Association of Women Philosophers, Madrid, Spain, June 2014 and Southwestern Philosophical Society 76th Annual Meeting, Lawrence, Kansas, November 2014.

**MOLLY JOHNSON:** "Between Objectification and Self-Empowerment: Representations and Self-Representations of Figure Skater Katarina Witt's Performing Body" National Women's Studies Assoc. Conference, Cincinnati, OH, November 2013.

**NICHOLAOS JONES:** Workshop on Theory of Systems Engineering, National Science Foundation. Alexandria, VA, October 2014.

**LILLIAN JOYCE:** "Hadrian, Roma, and the Revealed Breast" Fourth Annual Feminist Art History Conference, American University, Washington, DC., November 2013.

**LESLIE KAIURA:** "Getting Away with Wife Murder: Article 438 in the Press and Popular Fiction" Kentucky Foreign Language Conference University of Kentucky, April 2014.

**NICOLE PACINO:** "The Houses of Free Citizens: Hygiene, Consumption, and Revolutionizing the Countryside in 1950s Bolivia" Berkshire Conference of Women Historians, Toronto, Canada, May 2014; and "The Paradox of Creating 'National' Health Workers, or the Tensions of Building a National Public Health Service with International Funds in Revolutionary Bolivia" Latin American and Caribbean Section of the Southern Historical Association, Atlanta, GA, November 2014.

**EVAN RAGLAND:** "Trying Drugs, Trying Work," invited paper, Max Planck Institute for the History of Science workshop, "Testing Drugs and Trying Cures in the Early Modern World," Berlin, Germany, June 27-28, 2014; and "Medical Trials in the Historiography of Early Modern Experiment," History of Science Society Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL, November 10, 2014.





**PAVICA SHELDON:** "Applying the Theory of Reasoned Action to Student-Teacher Relationships on Facebook" Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Montreal, Canada, August, 2014; and "'I Do Not Count My Carbs Like Girls Do': Media, Peers, and Family Communication Influences on Body Satisfaction Among Caucasian and African-American Men" Southern States Communication Association Conference, New Orleans, LA, April 2014.

**CLARKE ROUNTREE:** "*Shades of A Grammar of Motives in Edward Levi's Classic, An Introduction to Legal Reasoning*" National Convention of the National Communication Association, Chicago, IL, November 2014; and "The Late Reception of Kenneth Burke in Europe." Paper presented to the National Convention of the National Communication Association, Washington, D.C., November 2013.

**KRISTIN SCROGGIN:** "Disney Studies Transfer Across the Disciplines" Western States Communication Association Annual Conference, Anaheim, CA, February 15, 2014.

**CHRISTINE SEARS:** "'Arab Speculators': Arab African Masters and Slave Ransoming in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries" Perspectives on Historical and Contemporary Ransoming Practices sponsored by the Harriet Tubman Institute for Research on the Global Migrations of African Peoples and York University, Toronto, Canada, October 25; and "'Git you at Liberty': How 'the People' Understood State and Citizens' Obligations" Annual Meeting of the Society for Historians of the Early American Republic, July 2013.

**ERIC SMITH:** "Universal Love and Planetary Ontology: Beyond the Postcolonial in Vandana Singh's *Of Love and Other Monsters*" The Society for Utopian Studies 39th Annual Conference, Montreal, Canada, Oct. 25, 2014; and "Feeling the 60s in the Age of Reagan: Failure, Repetition, and History in *Eddie and the Cruisers*" 16th Annual

Conference of the University of Florida's Marxist Reading Group, Gainesville, FL, March 28, 2014.

**DAVID STEWART:** "Fracturing the Renaissance: G. F. Watts' Powerful Women" Southeastern College Art Association Conference, Sarasota, Florida, October 10th, 2014.

**JOSEPH TAYLOR:** "Arthur's Biopolitical Milieu: Waterways and Conquest in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britannie*" Annual Convention of the Modern Language Association, Chicago, IL, January 2014. This paper is part of a chapter for a new book project Dr. Taylor is developing called *Fluid Spaces: Biopolitics and Premodern Landscapes*, an examination of sovereignty's relationship to the physical environment through both legal and other means in medieval Europe.

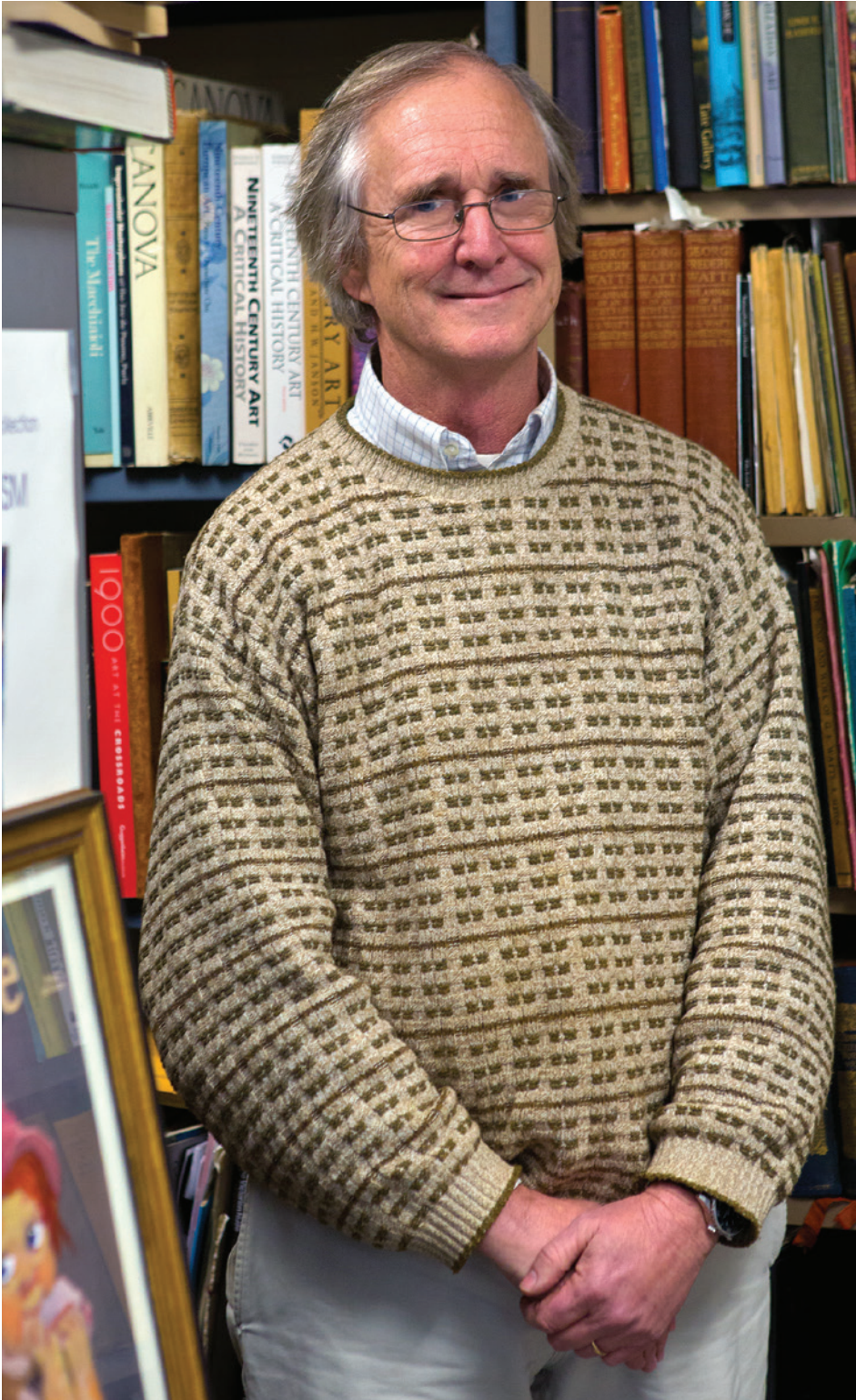
**WOLFRAM VERLAAN:** "I'm a boy and I don't like pink!": The Influence of Book Covers on Elementary-age Males' Text Selection. 2013 Literacy Summit: Building Momentum – Texas Association of Literacy Educators Annual Conference, Texas State University-Round Rock, Round Rock, TX, October 2013.

**WILLIAM WILKERSON:** Chaired session on Queer Families. Participants: Raja Halwani, Talia Mae Bettcher, Jack Halberstram (canceled). Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy, Eugene, Oregon, October 2013.



## BEYOND KNOWLEDGE

David Stewart, Art History



**M**Y LOVE OF THE HUMANITIES COMES FROM A STRANGE PLACE OUTSIDE OF THE HUMANITIES. I was a lover of Biology with an obsession for insect identification. I was a firebrand with no patience for superstition, no patience for false beliefs, and no patience for people who insisted on living in the dark ages. Choose knowledge, choose truth, or be a fool! That was my creed. One day, in just this state of mind, I listened to a Chopin piano polonaise and experienced a profound bout of nausea. Chopin's slippery, self-indulgent, and willful subjectivity sickened me to my core. I was not about to abandon truth and knowledge for ecstasy and tears. Then I hit the wall. What had seemed so firm in my Philosophy classes became slippery, and slipperier and slipperier. Could David Hume be right that we can't know the connection between cause and effect? If we cannot know that, then we cannot know anything, I thought. I was in a tailspin.

In my senior year I took my first Art History class. I was studying religious expressions that my "Enlightened" sensibilities were trained to attack. The artists I studied participated in the same struggle for truth and



knowledge that filled me with passion as an amateur enlightenment philosopher. I discovered that the flower of their minds was no less sweet than the flower of the Enlightenment. I discovered the humanity of the Humanities. I discovered what Jacques Rancière calls the equality of all human intelligences. I discovered that studying what is "shallow" can unfold beyond our all too narrow expectations. I discovered that sometimes knowledge can be a wall, not a door. The Humanities taught me that the greatest minds look beyond what is known in the present. They see that the unknown is the well-spring of the future. They see the cracks, and they explore them.

In the Humanities, I discovered that human beings are puzzles more fascinating than the caricatures we so conveniently live by. In Fyodor Dostoevsky we see human beings fleshed out in all their wonders, horrors, and foibles. We learn that we don't get one without the other three, and if we are going to be able to live as human beings it will probably be beneficial to come to know one another. In the bargain, we learn that knowing another person is no easy matter, and in fact it is quite impossible. We also learn the same about ourselves. We come to learn that what is human is a vast field of research that opens itself constantly to startling epiphanies and shattering intellectual collapses. In the writings of the

past, we discover truths that never came to life until they were read in the present. In fact, Contemporary theory reminds us that we remake our lives in radical new ways out of lost words waiting for us in the past. We can also learn from glib statements of students, who sometimes know us better than we know ourselves. Life is a ride. It is everything Chopin said it would be, and then again so much more.

The humanities opens us up to changing truths. The best minds once knew that women did not belong in universities, the best minds once knew that homosexuality was mental disease, the best minds once knew that racism was right. Sometimes the best thing that we can do is to be an enemy of knowledge, and stand up for what the consensus of our time calls evil. The humanities expose us to brilliant efforts to describe what it is to be human, and they remind us that a box checked is not work completed. Do we need the Humanities? If human beings have completed what needs to be done, and if we all understand one another, then the answer is "No." Otherwise, we have some work to do. The job of figuring out what it means to be human is a story written in tears and ecstasy, boredom and knowledge, and far more. And, the most transformative ideas are the ones that you haven't read yet.

"The job of figuring out what it means to be human is a story written in tears and ecstasy, boredom and knowledge, and far more. And, the most transformative ideas are the ones that you haven't read yet."

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## COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS/HUMANITIES CENTER CHAPBOOK PROJECT



### » Chapbook and Supporter of the College of Liberal Arts

\$500 (\$250 quid pro quo value of the chapbook;  
 \$250 tax deductible contribution)

### » Chapbook and Patron of the College of Liberal Arts

\$750 (\$250 quid pro quo value of the chapbook;  
 \$500 tax deductible contribution)

### » Chapbook and President's Council Membership

\$1,250 (\$250 quid pro quo value of the chapbook;  
 \$1,000 tax deductible contribution)

### Please send your contribution to:

College of Liberal Arts Dean's Excellence Fund Chapbook Project  
 Morton Hall, room 256, Huntsville, AL 35899

For more information, please call 256.824.6200

When poet Kelly Cherry visited UAH as a Humanities Center Eminent Scholar, she undertook collaboration with printmaker Michael Crouse, whose work seemed to capture in an entirely different medium what Cherry attempted to express in her poetry. Cherry and Crouse began work on a small volume that would include Cherry's poetry and Crouse's artwork. With the support of private donor Mrs. Julian Johnson and the Humanities Center, the Cherry and Crouse collaboration *Welsh Table Talk* was produced in special edition. Designed and hand bound by John Paul Greenwald and Stephen L. Vanilio of the Book Arts Conservatory in Washington, DC, the chapbook is made entirely of archival materials designed to last at least 300 years. The leather binding of both the chapbook and the box that contains it is Italian calfskin. The interior of the chapbook is letterpress printed on fabiano rusticus art paper by the printer for the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, Italy. Interspersed among Cherry's poems are six etchings by Michael Crouse. Also included is a folder containing three loose (frameable) etchings by Crouse. The box, chapbook, and folder together comprise a beautifully integrated art object.

The College of Liberal Arts and the Humanities Center at The University of Alabama in Huntsville invite you to acquire *Welsh Table Talk*, a handsomely designed, limited-edition chapbook. Your contribution to the College of Liberal Arts Dean's Excellence Fund will support scholarships, innovative projects within the College, and the creative and scholarly work of students and faculty.