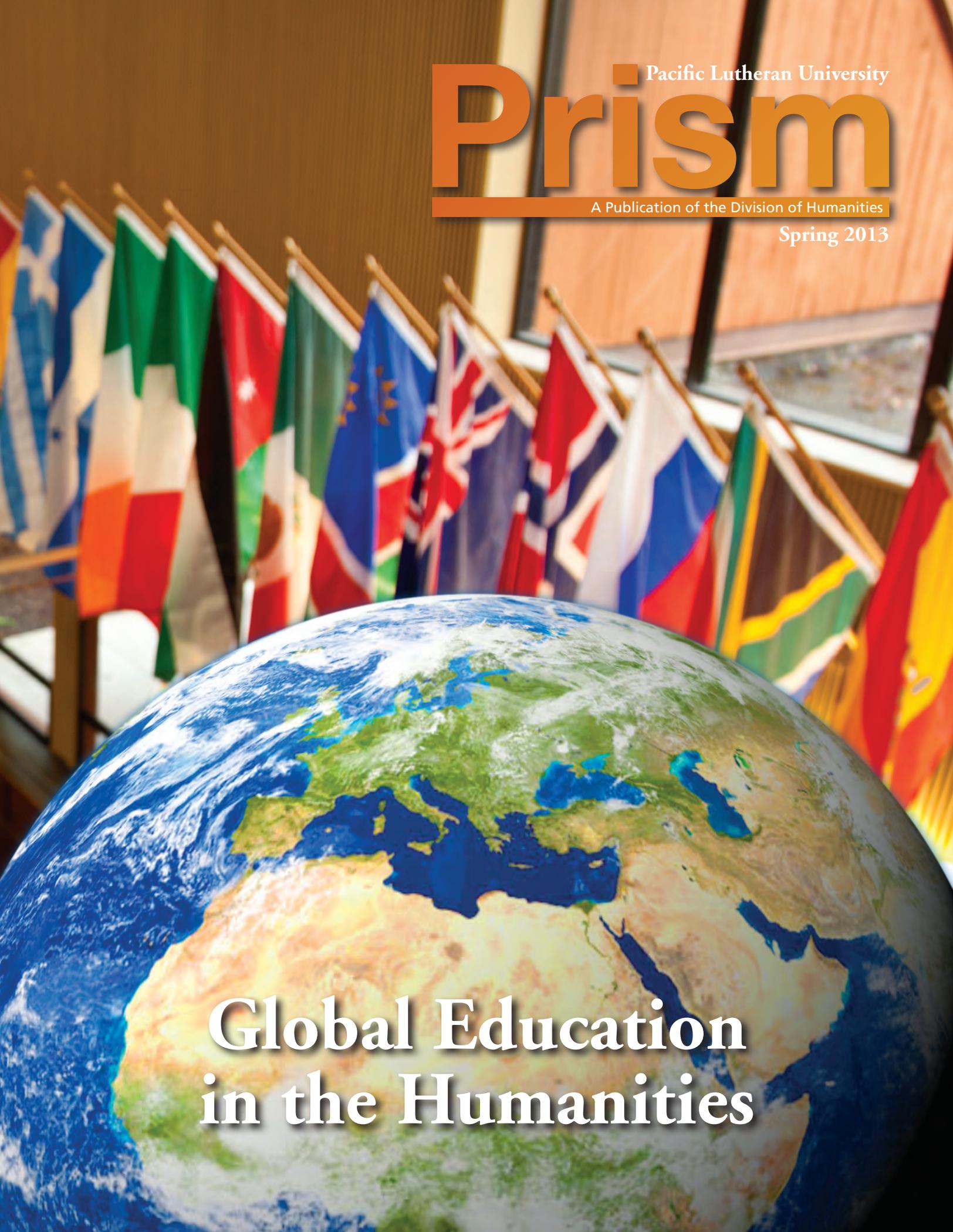


Pacific Lutheran University

Prism

A Publication of the Division of Humanities

Spring 2013



**Global Education
in the Humanities**

GREETINGS FROM THE DEAN



Welcome to this year's *Prism*, which comes to you as we near the end of another productive and exciting academic year.

Our year began with great sadness, however, as we lost our dear colleague, Professor Kathlyn A. Breazeale, who died in September after a two-year struggle with cancer. Kathi was a devoted and accomplished teacher, who touched the lives of many students in her years at PLU – not only in the Religion Department, but also in the Women's and Gender Studies community. She was also a respected scholar, whose work included her 2008 book *Mutual Empowerment: A Theology of Marriage, Intimacy and Redemption*. For those of us in the Division, she was a dear friend and an irrepressible source of cheerful optimism – which she maintained throughout her entire illness. I write these greetings on the verge of Mardi Gras, when Kathi would normally shower us with purple, gold, and green beads, and king cakes. We miss her presence, but are grateful for the gift of her life and her contributions to our community. A tribute to Kathi is on page 18 of this issue.

We have established a fund to create an endowed scholarship in Kathi's honor, which will provide financial aid to outstanding students in Religion and Women's and Gender studies. Gifts to this fund may be directed to the PLU Office of Development.

This year's *Prism* focuses on global education in the Humanities. Global education has been one of PLU's pathways to distinction since *PLU 2010* – a

commitment that has been re-affirmed in the goals of the recently adopted *PLU 2020* long-range plan. Global education is not something that only happens in the many study-away courses available to our students, but something we try to infuse across our curriculum. In recognition of this fact, PLU was awarded in 2009 a prestigious Simon Award for the internationalization of our campus. In the pieces that follow, you'll be able to read about how faculty in all four of our Departments bring a global perspective to their courses here at PLU. I know you'll be impressed by the passion and creativity with which my colleagues pursue their craft as teachers! You'll also find other news from each Department – about new colleagues, recent scholarship, and other happenings.

It has been a busy year on campus, with the arrival of President Krise, who has charged us all with developing strategic plans to work towards realizing the goals laid out in *PLU 2020*. You'll be hearing from us as we move ahead in the months and years to come.

A special thanks to all of you who have shared with us the stories of your career and vocational journeys. We are working to shape these into brief profiles to feature on our web pages – because you, our alumni, are the best advertisement for the lasting value of a PLU education! If you haven't been in touch – please email us or, better yet, drop in if you're near campus. We'd love to see you.

With warm wishes,
Jim Albrecht, *Professor of English*
& *Dean of Humanities*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Greetings from the Dean	2
Cover Story: Global Education in the Humanities.....	3
Study Away in the Humanities.....	5
Department of English.....	8
Department of Languages & Literatures.....	10
Department of Philosophy	12
Department of Religion.....	14
Tribute to Kathlyn A. Breazeale.....	18

Prism

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From PLU to the U.S.-Mexican Border: Nurturing Student Commitments to Peace and Social Justice Through Global Education

Historically, Global Education at PLU has been grounded in a commitment to an academically-based, nuanced understanding of the intersection of the local and the global and its impact on ongoing and intractable issues related to human diversity, social justice, and the fragility of our planet. The scope and delivery of global education, therefore, is necessarily complex. Rather than superimpose a superficial one-size-fits-all understanding of “global education,” PLU has fostered the integration of a global perspective through targeted grant activity and faculty development projects across the campus. In this way, growth in students’ global learning occurs both on and off-campus. More importantly, however, it is grounded in, and relevant to, disciplinary or interdisciplinary-based learning objectives and reflects faculty expertise and research interests. The result is extraordinary curricular integration, enviable breadth and depth, and, in terms of program delivery, multiple points of entry for the pursuit of a global education.

It is this approach to Global Education that has kept PLU competitive as a globally focused university. We are consistently ranked among the top twenty-one universities in the nation for undergraduate participation in study away, we are among the top producers of Fulbrights nationally, and in February 2013, we were ranked eighteenth in the nation for producing Peace Corps volunteers. These accolades are one measure of our success. However, as a faculty member in the Humanities Division and now as Acting Executive Director of the Wang Center, I have the privilege – daily – of witnessing the personal and academic transformation of extraordinary Lutes. Whether it is in a traditional discipline or an interdisciplinary program, at home or abroad, in a traditional classroom or as part of grant-funded research, an internship abroad or in our own community, or the result of one memorable lecture by an expert

in a specific field, continuous exposure to global issues and contexts impacts, broadens, and shapes individual students’ lives.



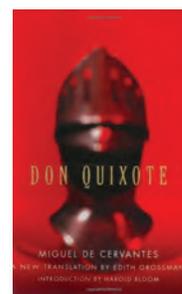
One such student is Brian Erickson (PLU '09), an International Honors student and graduate with a double major in Hispanic Studies and Global Studies. Over

the course of his four years at PLU, Brian developed a deep concern for the human rights of migrants in the context of the U.S.’s ongoing and unresolved immigration policies, especially for one of its most insidious consequences: the use of lethal force by U.S. Border Patrol agents near the Mexican border. Originally from Arizona, the ground zero of the nation’s unresolved immigration policy, it is not surprising that in his junior year Brian chose to participate in PLU’s Semester in Oaxaca, a program with a dual focus on development and social justice issues as they impact on migration. Post-graduation, he spent a year with the Lutheran Volunteer Corps working on border issues and in 2010 was hired as a Policy Advocate for the ACLU’s New Mexico Regional Center for Border Rights. It was in this capacity that he was asked to testify at the 67th United Nations General Assembly sponsored by the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR) on systematic abuses and excessive use of force by the U.S. Border Patrol. To read more about Brian’s testimony, go to the ACLU blog at <http://www.aclu.org/blog/immigrants-rights-criminal-law-reform-national-security/cause-alarm-aclu-tells-un-panel-rampant>

More than the accolades, it is students like Brian that give me confidence that PLU is living out its mission. In her own way, each student breathes life into it, having been challenged to continually revise received notions of the world even while their passions – for social justice, sustainability, and/or an authentic interest in cultures other than their own – are nurtured and expanded. The students who study a foreign language,

especially, develop exceptional intercultural knowledge and skills and are sound critical thinkers that value competing perspectives and frameworks. Ultimately, their global education at PLU has augmented and enhanced their liberal arts degrees through experience-based learning opportunities both at home and abroad, laying the foundation for hope in the challenging global context of the twenty-first century.
— Tamara R. Williams

Don Quixote in the English Literature Classroom; Or, Remembering an Old Conversation



What can Miguel de Cervantes’ masterpiece, *Don Quixote* (1605/1615), teach us about the eighteenth-century English novel? And what does considering the persistence of the term “Quixotic” teach

us about literature? These are two of the central questions we explore in the English course on Literature before 1914 entitled “Quixotic Conversations: Cervantes and the British Eighteenth-Century Novel.” Beginning with Miguel de Cervantes’ *Don Quixote* we follow with three of the most memorable and, perhaps to some, most British eighteenth-century experiments in fiction: Henry Fielding’s *Tom Jones*, Charlotte Lennox’s popular novel, *The Female Quixote*, and Laurence Sterne’s *Tristram Shandy*, all responses to Cervantes’ novel. Reading the English novel vis-à-vis *Don Quixote* foregrounds the global history of the novel and of literature. Although generally organized and studied according to national boundaries, literature has been and will always be shaped by ongoing global conversations. The term “Quixotic” is itself a testament to this: the *Oxford English Dictionary* registers its official entry to the English language in 1718, but Cervantes’ impact on English literature was immediate: the mid-seventeenth-century play, “The History of Cardenio,” based on *Don Quixote*’s Cardenio – a

madman who lives in the Sierra Morena – was allegedly written by William Shakespeare. Although the manuscript was lost, the play's mere existence attests to the international network of conversations that has shaped literature across time.

As we examine the novels, our classroom conversations take us back to Cervantes, forward to the British eighteenth century, and beyond to old and recent American and European symphonies, musicals, films, and novels that continue to interpret, revise, and trouble Don Quixote's character and the term Quixotic. I think of our own conversations as Quixotic both in their whimsicality and in their defiance of the all too rigid divisions that shape nationalist approaches to literature.

As a means to challenge these divisions, students conclude the course developing their own definition of the term "Quixotic" by comparing *Don Quixote* to an eighteenth-century British novel and a twentieth-century cultural artifact of their choice. By doing so, they create a Quixotic Conversation of their own. In her project, Melanie Hering



(PLU '14) explored the Quixotic nature of violence, moving from Cervantes' novel to Charlotte Lennox's *The Female Quixote* to contemporary American military propaganda. Melanie

argues that despite the differences between these texts, "chivalric violence in all three sources [fosters] a conflict between reality and fiction." She explains, "The most meaningful and fascinating aspects of this project came through applying my knowledge of Cervantes' work and the Quixotic to modern U.S. Army ads that are influencing my 18-year-old sister and her friends who are just now old enough to join the military. . . Just as Don Quixote and Arabella both create worldviews that make the best of romantic notions at the cost of reality." In military ads, she explains, "the representation of violence itself is often overshadowed by the honor, justice, pride, and skills one can gain from engaging in such violence."

Melanie's project, like those of her classmates, foregrounds a forgotten or perhaps eroded history of global conversations that have for centuries enriched not only our languages and our literatures, but also our understanding of such crucial questions as the nature of violence and the role of art in society. Their ability to place historical periods and cultures in conversation in order to consider these questions suggests that PLU's mission of global education does not only take place studying overseas or across borders, but also in the college classroom, from where students can both engage the world and transform it.

— *Adela Ramos*

PLU Chinese Studies: In China, and in the Classroom

PLU students learn about the wider world in many ways. In addition to Global Studies, students can also major in Chinese studies through our longstanding Chinese Studies Program. Although it has no dedicated faculty positions of its own, each year professors from across the PLU campus choose to teach courses that contribute to this major. A few of these include Dr. Akiko Nosaka (Anthropology), Dr. Greg Youtz (Music), and Drs. Paul Manfredi and Leihua Weng (Languages and Literatures). The work of these and other professors makes Chinese Studies at PLU not merely possible, but successful. Recognizing the importance of this program, the Religion Department has made a commitment to contribute regularly to the program, and I am delighted that one of my permanent duties as a member of this department is to teach a course entitled "The Religions of China" each spring.

PLU's Chinese Studies Program grew out of its groundbreaking study abroad program in Sichuan, China. Begun in the early 1980s by PLU professors (notably Drs. K. T. Tang and Charles Anderson) just as China was opening up after the turbulent years of the Cultural Revolution, this program continues to provide Lutes with the chance to live and study in China for a semester. This program has inspired many students to pursue a deeper study of the "Middle Kingdom" upon their

return. During the Sichuan program's early years, it was noticed that more and more students were returning to PLU with this in mind, but because no formal program existed for them they had to follow their interests as independent studies. Eventually a number of faculty, led by Dr. Greg Guldin (Anthropology), started the Chinese Studies Program in the early 1990s. Thus, while many schools were adjusting their curriculum to include Japan-related courses, PLU faculty, inspired by their forward-thinking students, steered a different course. Obviously, this decision was a prescient one.

The early synergy between students' on-campus studies and their off-campus experiences that led to the formation of our Chinese Studies Program continues to bring vitality to both the Chinese Studies Program and PLU as a whole. In my course "The Religions of China," students who have participated in the China program often share their experiences and knowledge with their classmates. I remember well the first time this happened while I was teaching. That day I was speaking about the different ways that China's Christians worship, making note of the phenomenon of China's quasi-legal "house churches." As I was speaking I saw a flash of recognition pass across the face of Crystal Swetz-Rommen (PLU '11), a dual Chinese Studies and Social Work major recently returned from the China program. She raised her hand to say, "I've been to one of those," and for the next few minutes she shared with us her firsthand experience of religion in China today. Her description of a fairly commonplace Christian worship service held in a nondescript apartment helped us all to better understand how ordinary the activities of such churches are, and how little the government actually regulates religion in China on a daily basis. She said that at the time she had not even really known that it was not a legal gathering. It was an enlightening moment for everyone in the room, and it is a great example of the ways in which PLU's Study Away program impacts not only the students who participate in them, but also the classes those students return to on campus.

— *Erik Hammerstrom*

STUDY AWAY IN THE HUMANITIES

Trinidad and Tobago: Where's That?

When students choose to study away, they've embraced the challenge of moving beyond their familiar surroundings of campus and culture. Their nearly five months in Trinidad and Tobago immerse them in one of the world's most ethnically and culturally diverse societies through study at its university and participation in local community life. And when they pack their bags to return home they carry with them a wealth of experience and knowledge that prepares each student to be an active citizen of our complex world.

"Caribbean." The first thoughts that came to my mind when I heard this word were sun, sand, and sea. As I have since learned, however, the word

"Caribbean" represents so much more. It represents a warm and vibrant place, various peoples, intertwining histories and cultures, and unimagined experiences.

As a student who chose to study away for nearly five months in Spring 2010, no other option proved as compelling as discovering more about the Caribbean. I was drawn there for several reasons, but particularly for the breadth and diversity of the learning experience the program offers. PLU's gateway

program to the English-speaking twin-island nation of Trinidad and Tobago offers students from all majors experiential learning opportunities beyond anything life on campus can grant. Besides augmenting my major in communications with two unique media classes offered at the 19,000 student strong University of the West Indies, I took two PLU-designed classes.

As a communication major, my main focus was to study Caribbean media and the influence of American media on the residents of the Caribbean. I left, however, after having learned about so much more – colonial legacies, struggles for freedom, nation-building, American policies and society, and, of course, myself. PLU's pivotal course "Caribbean Culture and Society" entailed readings, lectures, and hands-on experience about the nation's colonial past, its struggle for independence, and its evolution into the globalized present. The colonial past lingers in Trinidad's Westminster Parliamentary system and British-style university, while in the hills of Paramin we met folk still speaking Patois (French Creole), a legacy from before the British seized the island. History came alive when we participated in a reenactment of the Canboulay riots of the freed slaves against British authorities in 1881, a great example of people's continuing struggle for freedom. Dr. Eric Williams, the first



president of an independent Trinidad and Tobago, had introduced nation-building programs like the Best Village Competition designed to encourage pride in local culture, and our participation in one of these groups, Malick Folk Performers, gave us first-hand experience of the persistent success of this program. The lecture series of the Caribbean Culture and Society course granted us insights into topics from a Caribbean point of view, such as a lecture on American policies in the Caribbean that helped us see the sometimes questionable impact America may have on these islands. And my media studies revealed a subtle new kind of imperialism: a cultural imperialism led by American media, where Trinidadians are bombarded with American images and consumerist values.

Our PLU classes were interactive and explored all facets of the cultures and islands.

They also explored topics as varied as gender, economics, religion, music, and the environment through weekly guest lectures and fieldtrips. By being able to ask questions and hear about a lecturer's experiences and daily life we were able to learn so much. Participating in glittering Hindu ceremonies, attending Parliament in session, accompanying the Easter procession of the Stations of the Cross, and cleaning up beaches for Leatherback turtles (we later witnessed them

laying their eggs!) were just a few of our experiences. As a visual and experiential learner I was able to fully take in and understand every topic because I was seeing its direct impact or influence.

Both UWI and PLU classes helped me understand, grow, research, and learn far more than I ever could have in my PLU classroom. I returned home with a new appreciation of the importance of connecting with the community one finds oneself in, of exploring its sources of stress, and of embracing the diversity it represents. Ultimately, I learned that our communities and their issues are microcosms of the larger world, a world that I now feel well-prepared to engage. I look back on my studies with fondness and gratitude and encourage every student to take the plunge of studying abroad.

— Chelsea Paulsen (PLU '13)

Barbara Temple-Thurston (English) founded PLU's Semester Gateway Program to Trinidad and Tobago in 1995 and has directed the program since its inception. The program offers students from across the university the opportunity to study abroad for a J-term and Spring semester. It has also encompassed an exchange that has brought Trinidadian students to PLU.

STUDY AWAY IN THE HUMANITIES Greece through PLU Eyes

The texts. In the class “From Athens to Greece,” PLU students were challenged to read and study the theology within and history behind selections from a collection of writings known as the *Pseudepigrapha* and *Apocrypha*, Jewish texts that emerged in the centuries between the end of the construction of the Hebrew Scriptures and the emergence of Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism. The literature that remains reflected their experiences: a people distant from their homes and familiar customs, living among people who speak and eat differently, and whose values reflect a disparate way of viewing the world. In foreign circumstances, it makes sense that one of the questions that would emerge within the literature would be: to what degree do I make this (culture/language/food/clothing/behavior) my own? In foreign circumstances, it makes sense that lines would need to be drawn in the sand around these social pieces. As well, in foreign circumstances it also makes sense that relationships would need to be renegotiated and beliefs – previously unexplained because they never were challenged – would need to be elucidated and articulated. The problem of foreign occupation and Diaspora living became particularly acute for the Jews while living within the environment of Hellenized Egypt, and such conditions shifted from preventing Jews from being Jewish, to providing foundational philosophies and methods by which Jews might better define themselves *as* Jewish. In other words, what was foreign ceased to be the foe and became instead the friend (causing no small amount of difficulty among them). The intrusion of foreign culture is more traumatic than simply having another option on the menu, and – as we learned by reading these texts – the intrusion can prompt the most basic question about identity: “How can I sing the Lord’s song in a strange land?” Or, how can I be “me” here in this new place. The site for this particular J-term class provided the perfect opportunity for reflection on these questions.

The site. As was consistently reflected on the Sojourner Blog (<http://plu-greece-2011.blogspot.com/>), students wrestled with the questions posed by the texts in light of new and constantly shifting circumstances of their own personal contexts. And I say “contexts” rather than “context” because no one’s Athens was anyone else’s Athens. To provide a few examples, I did not experience the changing of the guards at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in any way similar to that of the two PLU

students who are in the military, though we stood in the same spot and witnessed the same activity. Twenty-one students entered a monastery, twenty-one experiences took place, and twenty-one conversations about that visit reflected the type of meta-reflection that professors dream of fostering. What modern Greece provided for this class was a set of very clearly conflated historical contexts within which students began to consider the implications of holding tight to various identity themes: How did reading a romance novel in the country that invented drama and in view of Sparta change how Ashley LaMagna (PLU ’11) read that novel? How did reading conflicting accounts of accommodation and rejection shift Kelsey Martin (PLU ’12) from feeling homesick to feeling at home? How did reading about the afterlife on an island that – the myths claim – was fashioned by the sun god Helios change how Kimberly Stone (PLU ’13) understands the Son

of God? And how was Ben Fox’s (PLU ’11) independent streak curbed in a culture that – along with the texts we read – considers the will of the individual as secondary to the needs of the group?

Recognition that history did not begin the day one was born is a pivotal moment in the transition from young adult to adult, and it is a transition that is hard to make when the history of a place in which

one lives is subordinated to the immediate needs of the culture. In our particular space – the Pacific Northwest – we are relatively green in the history of normative notions of civilization (i.e. industry, mega-metropolitans, cultivation of community). Old buildings are replaced with parking lots, churches become nightclubs, and elementary schools are reinvented as brew pubs and hotels. It is – I confess – much easier to adopt a spirit

of humility towards one’s actual degree importance in the world (or lack of it) when everywhere you go in Athens you are in the shadow of the Acropolis; it is easier to make that transition when staring down into the remnants of Byzantine homes. However, a discerning eye will recognize that deep history is present in the space we too occupy: in the Kiklitate tale of love and deception that ultimately culminates in the eruption of a violent mountain; in the abandoned bars of the Seattle underground; at the gravesites of northwest musicians; in the Scandinavian bakeries of Ballard, in letters from a Tlingit grandmother. “Greece through PLU eyes” provided students with the opportunity not only to read literature that challenged Jews to ask where they fit in a world that did not begin with them, but to ask that same question of themselves both within Greece and, ideally, within the multiple contexts in which they must now exist.

— Brenda Llewellyn Ihssen



STUDY AWAY IN THE HUMANITIES

Antarctica and PLU

What can literature have to do with Antarctica? It's the first question we always get as we travel to Antarctica in the J-term course entitled "Journey to the End of the World." In the course we read about the places and the creatures that we see—the Drake Passage and albatrosses, for example, as described in Samuel Taylor Coleridge's great poem, "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," or the great story of Antarctic survival and ocean travel in Ernest Shackleton's *South*. We put texts and experiences into conversation with each other. They comment on each other, deepen each other, and the results are life-changing. Simply put, we go to Antarctica because it both beggars and cracks open the imagination, drives us repeatedly to our knees in humility and awe, teaches us to see the world and its creatures with new eyes, gives us glimpses of what it means to be global citizens, and makes us new.

— Charles Bergman

An Invitation

PLU is the only undergraduate university on earth to offer a class physically on the continent of Antarctica, and a literature class, no less. I knew that this might be my only opportunity to visit the White Continent, and so I registered without hesitation.

Once there, Antarctica quickly became the most unique and beautiful place I've ever been. Every sense is wonderfully overwhelmed, whether it's the symphony of crackling icebergs, the neon blue hues of the balancing glaciers, or the crisp saline exhale of the Southern Ocean and a minke whale.

Perhaps the most unique aspect of Antarctica is the landscape's lack of human "stuff." There are no food wrappers strewn about, no televisions or road signs, and no wifi signals rushing throughout our bodies. Indeed, Antarctica is an anomaly in today's modern industrial world. The purity of the environment became the ideal classroom to discuss our relationship with nature. Topics ranged from the history of the Antarctic region, to the conservation of ice and animals, to mimicking the "ecstasy call" of an elated penguin – the class was sublime and we had many reasons to be ecstatic, this was Antarctica after all.

These experiences completely changed the way I think about humanity's connection with nature. The pure environment allowed me to see that the separation between humans and other animals isn't so vast. For example, many aspects of penguin culture mirror our own. Penguins create lifelong bonds, they get divorced, they decorate their homes, they play together, and their rookeries are harassed by adolescent troublesome gangs.

This "Journey to the End of the World" opened my eyes to the potential for connection rather than accepting our modern separation. Antarctica urged our spirits to respond to the inherent call of nature that we all may hear as born beings on this planet. It invited us to resume our symbiotic place in the beauty of nature, an invitation we all hold dear in our hearts and in our understanding of vocation as we continue to journey to the ends of the earth.

— Nevis Granum (PLU '14)

A Humble Crossing

The first time any of us had ever read Mary Oliver's *The Summer Day* was on the ship after exploring the fog-shrouded Cuverville Island. We hiked up a mountain, made an Antarctic snowwoman, and observed nesting penguins. On the descent, our rubber boots compressed the snow deep enough to see the rouge stain of years' worth of penguin droppings, as if we had left a faint trail of blood behind us with every footstep – an uncanny dose of symbolism

for our growing environmental awareness. Looking down, I saw that our footpath had intersected a Gentoo penguin highway at a perfect right angle. Ours descended to the beach with its lonely whale bones; theirs turned to the rocks, where their cliff-side nests overlooked ribbons of icebergs crawling through the Gerlache Strait.

Dr. Charles Bergman led that day's class discussion on nature and vocation. How you stagger under the weight of humanity with this kind of global exposure, knowing thousands of albatrosses die every year by fishing ships' nets. You stagger under the weight of humility, too, which can be just as powerful a tool. We were ten thousand miles away from our homes, and in that distance we saw how connected our actions,

even as mundane as making a tuna sandwich, can be to the frozen, forgotten edge of the earth when our awareness is expanded. An expanded awareness that burns with humility is what I understand to be the core of a global education. The choices we make leave tracks that intersect with those of other lives and ecosystems. Intersection is inevitable and humbling, but the dissection of the ecological balance can be avoided. And it is humility that levels the playing field. It puts you eye-to-eye with the penguins, whales, seals, and albatrosses. You can no longer ignore your place alongside them in the environment or the potential for conservation or destruction our actions have. Then you smile, wait, and give the inquisitive penguins the right of way when your two paths cross.

"You studied *environmental literature* in Antarctica?" Of course I did. Just as Mary Oliver asked, "What else should I have done?"

— Nathaniel Youmans (PLU '14)



photos by Nevis Granum

Finding Zlata Jampolski: Thinking Globally about Jewish American Literature



While I was on sabbatical in Spring 2010, my father gave me three items to ponder in relation to my scholarly project on Fictions of Jewishness in America: a photograph, circa 1914, of my grandmother, her two sisters, and her father on the beach at Coney Island; my grandmother's passport; and a family lodge book from 1935. Those documents launched my journey to uncover my grandmother's story of immigration – a story that was echoed in the tale of mass Jewish emigration from the “Pale” of Russia that I was teaching about in my course on Jewish American literature, and writing about in my literary scholarship. I soon discovered the ship records for my grandmother's arrival at Ellis Island in July 1914, on the last sailing from Hamburg of *The Pennsylvania* (the ship was seized on the eve of World War One). My grandmother was three years old and traveling with her parents Azreal and Shendele Jampolski, and six brothers and sisters. Her family was listed as “Hebrews” hailing from “Sivoki,” Bessarabia, Russia. It took some time to discover that the family had come from Siroki, a town now located in Moldova and whose name literally translates as meaning “poverty.”

Thanks to a Wang Center research grant, I was able to travel to Moldova in June 2012, journeying back across the ocean my grandmother traversed in steerage almost a century earlier. I wanted to explore how closely my family's history mirrored the one told in the immigrant literature I teach on a regular basis; I wanted to see for myself the land of pogroms my ancestors had fled. Up until now, my research explorations had been centered in New York's immigrant communities, but Nancy Miller's recent memoir, *What They Saved: Pieces of a Jewish Past*, pushed me to think about expanding my research more globally to trace my grandmother's roots back to Moldova. I wanted to try to understand and trace the pogroms that her family fled, the land her family subsisted on, and to explore the Jewish cemetery and synagogue of Siroki for records of her birth and family history.



The unforgettable June day I spent in Siroki began with almost all of the Jews of the town (a crowd of about 20) greeting us at the small synagogue, welcoming us with fresh baked knishes and soda. It concluded with a somber tramp through the sprawling Jewish

cemetery, a testament to a time when there was a large Jewish community here – a community that was almost completely wiped out in the Holocaust.

Immigrant stories are central to America's ideals about itself as a democratic haven. Exploring the experiences of ethnic groups like Jewish-Americans offers a new critical perspective on migration and trauma that complicates the “American dream” narrative that is so often rehearsed in the stories we tell ourselves about our past.

My journey to Moldova has dovetailed well with my teaching at PLU. While my expertise is in American ethnic literatures, the field has increasingly insisted that studies of American literature must be understood transnationally.

This is especially evident in recent ethnic American and immigrant texts, but I would suggest that it is equally important to use a transnational lens when reflecting on the vast wealth of immigrant literature from the turn of the last century. Thus I was particularly eager to explore the old world that so many “new world” texts conjure to help globalize my vision as a teacher and scholar.

This work lines up well with PLU's distinctive vision for global education that seeks to educate for a just, healthy, sustainable, and peaceful world. Immigrant stories are central to America's ideals about itself as a democratic haven. Exploring the experiences of ethnic groups like Jewish-Americans offers a new critical perspective on migration and trauma that complicates the “American dream” narrative that is so often rehearsed in the stories we tell ourselves about our past.

I regularly offer a course entitled “Jews and Jewishness in American Literature.” The course concludes with an assignment that asks students to reflect on the various “tribes” they each belong to. I have read tremendous stories of survival and regeneration, of Lutefisk recipes and familial addictions to Garrison Keillor. The project has allowed students, the majority of whom are not Jewish, to think about issues raised in our literature regarding immigration, Americanization, and assimilation in relation to *their own* family stories.

So, while my class on Jews and Jewishness in American Literature may not at first glance appear to have a global dimension, it is very much inflected with the old world, indebted to my grandmother and the generation of Jewish immigrants like her who fled to America at the turn of the last century.
— Lisa Marcus

English Department Welcomes New Professor



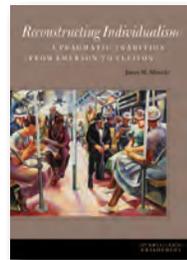
Dr. Jenny James, Assistant Professor of English Literature, was born and raised in Michigan, home of the Great Lakes and the Michigan Wolverines. Before coming to PLU,

she lived for seven years in another auspicious locale: New York City, where she enjoyed the food, the public spaces, and its collective diversity. However, Dr. James does not consider herself a “city girl.” She spent her childhood and adolescence in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and lived for a number of years in rural New England. Ironically, it was only once she left Manhattan that she began to identify as a “New Yorker”: “that place gets under your skin,” she says with nostalgia. Nevertheless, if pushed to choose a favorite abode, Western Massachusetts would be the place closest to her heart.

Dr. James’ work focuses on literature of the long 1960s in North America. She began her career as a Comparative Literature major at Smith College, but growing up she was privy to the tell-tales her parents would share about their own experiences during the era, and these instilled in her a deep curiosity for learning more about this history. This is why she’s attracted to what she describes as mid-century American literature’s dynamic formal contradictions and playful attention to new narrative structures and relational characterization. She is endlessly surprised by the way literature of the Sixties tracks the literary and social experimentations that took hold of the United States at that time. Her research traces the development of narratives of affiliation in the post-1960

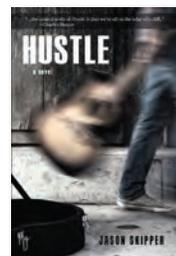
North American novel. In their depiction of loving friendship, Dr. James argues, these narratives emerged as a creative force to negotiate changing conceptions of social difference during the era. Her article “Making Love, Making Friends: Affiliation and Repair in James Baldwin’s *Another Country*,” appeared in *Studies in American Fiction* in Spring 2012. At PLU she teaches American literature from 1860 to the present, with a special emphasis on the representation of race, gender, and sexuality in fiction written after 1945.
— Adela Ramos

Recent Books by the English Faculty



Reconstructing Individualism: A Pragmatic Tradition from Emerson to Ellison, by James M. Albrecht

America has a love-hate relationship with individualism. In *Reconstructing Individualism*, James Albrecht argues that our conceptions of individualism have remained trapped within the assumptions of classic liberalism, and traces an alternative genealogy of individualist ethics in four major American thinkers – Ralph Waldo Emerson, William James, John Dewey, and Ralph Ellison. These writers articulate models of selfhood that are socially engaged and ethically responsible, and they argue that a reconceived – or, in Dewey’s term, “reconstructed” – individualism is not merely compatible with but necessary to democratic community. Conceiving selfhood and community as interrelated processes, they call for an ongoing reform of social conditions so as to educate and liberate individuality, and, conversely, they affirm the essential role individuality plays in vitalizing communal efforts at reform.



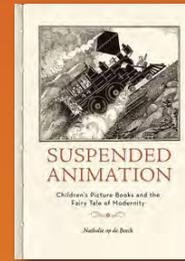
Hustle, by Jason Skipper

In *Hustle* three generations of men – an alcoholic ex-conman grandfather, a restless philandering seafood salesman

son, and a hopeful musician grandson – struggle to make up for their past and somehow set course for their future. But their problem is with the present. The grandfather has hustled for money and now he’s hustling for redemption. The son has hustled for women and now he’s hustling for love of a different sort. His son is hustling to be a musician – a famous musician with enough money to solve his family’s unsolvable problems – though he knows neither hustling nor money is enough. *Hustle* follows Chris Saxton’s difficult adolescence and the people who drift in and out of his life, exploring the ways people struggle to fulfill their desires – and what they are willing to sacrifice to feel free.

Jason Skipper’s *Hustle* was a finalist for the PEN Center USA Award for Fiction.

English Professor Wins Book Award



Nathalie op de Beeck’s *Suspended Animation: Children’s Picture Books and the Fairy Tale of Modernity* (University of Minnesota Press, 2010) received the

2012 Children’s Literature Association Book Award.

Suspended Animation examines the form and content of American picture books published from 1919 to 1942, and argues that children are told the “fairy tale of modernity,” an affirmative yet nostalgic account of U.S. progress. With engaging color and black-and-white illustrations from influential texts like *Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel* and *The Story of Ferdinand*, Nathalie op de Beeck shows how word-and-picture sequences, presented to young audiences, reveal complex modern attitudes toward historical and cultural issues. Her book investigates representations of race and ethnicity, industrial development and environmental degradation, and machine and human labor in the period between the wars.

DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGES & LITERATURES

We hear the terms “global” and “local” a lot these days. But what do they really mean? Where does “local” end and “global” begin in a world in which we can be anywhere virtually in seconds and physically in a matter of hours, and in which our economies, histories, cultures, and pollution bleed into each other like watercolors in the rain?

Ever since John Guare popularized it in *Six Degrees of Separation*, the idea that we are all connected to each other by, at most, five other individual relationships has become a commonplace. However, looked at in this way, “global” and “local” are practically meaningless for our world. The real contrasts do not lay on the physical horizon of “here” and “there,” or “ours” and “theirs,” but in connections and relationships that are recognized or unrecognized, acknowledged or unacknowledged, on the horizon of the mind’s eye. And learning to explore and nurture these relationships and connections in a way that engages the world in thoughtful inquiry, leadership, service, and care is what learning a language is all about.

Learning other languages helps us understand people from other times and other places not just *on* their own terms, but also *in* their own terms. The latter is important, because linguistic diversity, like biodiversity, passes on and preserves the fullest account of human perception, experience, and possibilities. We need those resources, and we need to nurture and protect them, now more than ever.

Moreover, learning another language is one of those rare ways that we move beyond caring *about* others to caring *with* them. When we respectfully enter another language and all that it entails, we learn to see, understand, and care for our common world in all its richness. This is true as much for the student who enters the world of St. Paul or Plato, because she cares about truth or God, as it is for the student who enters the world of Oaxaca because he cares about sustainable development. Learning a language is one way that we learn to stop imposing a perspective on others and learn to share one with them instead. Caring with others

is what, in the Lutheran tradition, makes caring for others (and for our common world) truly, and humanely, possible.

For most of us, this process begins locally, in a classroom. Here at PLU, language learning is one of the ways that we seek to transform our world from an opposition of “local” and “global” concerns into a network and history of shared connections and relationships. It is also how we seek to nurture and preserve the natural and human resources passed on to us by past generations. We hope that you enjoy hearing about how some of our local learning reaches out to embrace our global heritage and world.

FRENCH PROGRAM Enabling Armchair Travelers

Armchair travelers are lazy and risk-averse. They comfortably cultivate preconceived notions. They avoid authentic human interaction. In contrast, PLU French majors and minors study away in Normandy, Paris, the West Indies, Cameroon, and Senegal. They interact daily with (host) family members, with fellow students, with new friends, with strangers on the bus, at markets, in the street. They return from their experiences with a keen sense of the world’s connectedness and with abundant questions about their place in it. Far be it from a PLU French major or minor to travel by armchair!

Yet in one French class this year, students are catering to the complacent curiosity of the armchair traveler and finding their own curiosity piqued as a result. Dr. Rebecca Wilkin’s French 310 students are creating video tours of Paris aimed at an audience of peers – American students of French, who like themselves, may already have been to Paris. Each French 310 student has become an expert in a different aspect of Paris’s urbanization – the legacy of the Church or of the Crown, the city’s walls, green spaces, or its liquid *raison d’être*, the Seine River. The common thread binding together the city – and students’ video tours – is the métro. Distinctly less comfortable than an armchair, the Paris métro transports 4.5 million passengers a day. Each student initiates the armchair traveler into this



French 310 students visit Seattle.

convenient mode of transportation, while excavating a sliver of Paris’s past through sites still standing and places long gone.

French 310 students knew that armchair travel on its own was an incomplete experience. But travel in the absence of preparation is an impoverished experience. Thanks to the many hours these French majors and minors spent travelling in time and space in the proverbial armchair, they are prepared to see the City of Lights in a whole new light!
— *Rebecca Wilkin*

Professor Wilkin and her French 310 students did get off their duffs early in the semester to visit Seattle, thanks to an Innovative Teaching Grant from the Provost’s Office. French major Bonnie Griffin (PLU ’15) reports:

“I enjoyed going up the Space Needle to see the city of Seattle from a different perspective. I was able to compare that view and the layout of the city with the view from the Eiffel Tower and see how different the cities are, but also to understand how the two different structures made such an impact on the cities. It was also interesting to think about the impact and importance both the monorail and the metro had on the two cities. The monorail is quite short and is more common for tourists going to popular places in Seattle. The metro, however, completely changed the city of Paris

because it goes all over the city and is accessible and practical for everyone, not just tourists.”

CHINESE STUDIES

My course entitled “Urban China” is an experimental course focusing on cultural texts – fiction, poetry, film, and visual art – which feature Chinese urban centers Beijing, Shanghai, Taipei, and Hong Kong. The principal exercise of the course, repeated in numerous forms throughout the term, is to identify keywords (e.g., “loneliness,” “hope,” “apathy”) that seem most operative in the texts, and then to compare their narrative or other function as manifest in different media.

The global theme is recurrent in the notion that many urban centers over the world share important features, particularly in our emotional lives. The merely practical dimensions (for instance, transportation in high-density spaces) have emotional implications – feelings of alienation or isolation in crowded situations. The specific “Chinese” attributes are compared with the students’ own experience of urban life, making for a rich exploration of the texts under examination, as well as our own shared experience of cities.

— *Paul Manfredi*

Like many students I did not know what I wanted to study when I first started at PLU, so I ended up in a Chinese class as a result of my interest in languages. It turned out to be an intriguing challenge, and caused me to want to learn more about the Middle Kingdom. In “Urban China,” I learned about aspects of Chinese culture juxtaposed with the common beliefs in society and the media. I learned about Taipei and Taiwan in a group project. Even more, I learned how much I did not know.

As an international student from Norway studying China in America, my views and perceptions have been challenged in a way that I could not have imagined. Even after this course ended, my interest in Taiwan continued, and in Summer 2012, I was able to travel to Taiwan for three weeks to study the Taiwanese language and observe how its use affects Taiwanese society.

Combining my Norwegian and American perspectives, I was excited to see things from a Taiwanese perspective. I felt prepared to travel across the world by myself to learn,

not only due to my current study-away experience at PLU, but also because of the guidance of the Chinese Studies professors. Taking their classes has allowed me to see different aspects of Chinese culture, and it has been an exciting challenge to navigate the increasingly globalized world in which we live.
— *Torhild Skillingstad (PLU ’13)*

GERMAN PROGRAM

Students in German 301 this year engaged with the question „Was ist deutsch?“ (What is German?) and discovered that these three simple words evoke diverse and complex responses. Students first explored issues of German identity through literature and film that portrayed major historical events and cultural phenomena of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, including the artistic richness of 1920s Berlin, the devastation of the Third Reich and the Holocaust, the difficulty of life behind the Berlin Wall, the jubilation and complexities of unification, and the future of a multiethnic Germany. The course culminated with a very personal project in which students interviewed a native German who either lives currently in the U.S. or had lived or visited in the past. The class formulated questions together based on course topics that served as a template for each interview. Questions included: “How do people react when they learn that you are German?” “Are you frequently confronted with German cultural stereotypes or asked to respond to questions about Germany’s history?” and “What do you consider to be major differences between German and American cultures?” The goal of the interviews was to find out from each subject what “deutsch” means to them and how their sense of German identity has been shaped by their experiences in the U.S. and conceptions here about the meanings of Germanness.

Amanda Brasgalla (PLU ’15) interviewed a German-Jewish professional translator from the Seattle area, now in her seventies, who has lived in the U.S. since 1985. Brasgalla said: “My interview made me realize that identifying as German or American doesn’t have to conflict – it can be one and the same. Realizing identities and nationalities can co-mingle reaffirms to me that the people of the world are one big community.”

Samuel Pingree (PLU ’16) interviewed Janneke Menzel, a student from Germany

who was also a fellow resident in the German wing of Hong International Hall. Pingree reported: “My interview with Janneke gave me a chance to see myself and the American college system from her perspective. It made me want to explore the flip side and spend a semester in Germany.”



Barbara Roidl visits German 301.

In preparation for their one-on-one interviews, Tacoma resident Barbara Roidl, who has lived in the States for 28 years and is raising two bilingual children with her American husband, was invited to campus to offer students an opportunity to hone their interview skills with her in the classroom. The students’ conversations both with Roidl and their individual interviewees highlighted many personal dimensions of the historical events we had studied. Perhaps most surprisingly, we all learned that asking what it means to be German in America also illuminated aspects of what it means to be an American *studying* German. We learned anew that moving beyond the classroom can only enhance our understanding of German (and our own) identity.

— *Kirsten Christensen*

HISPANIC STUDIES

Hispanic Voices for Social Change

The main objective of my course “Hispanic Voices for Social Change” is to gain insight into relevant social movements in Hispanic countries during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. By studying both the historical context and a variety of literary texts and films, students reflect on the causes and consequences of these events. For example, students consider armed revolutionary movements determined to overcome oppression and social injustice (e.g., the Mexican Revolution and the Cuban Revolution). Through various assignments, students not only develop their abilities in critical thinking, but

continued on page 16

Philosophy Across the Disciplines

Philosophy, in its original Greek context, was understood most generally as the inquiry into the nature of things. Plato famously qualified this by suggesting that it should be understood more specifically as the inquiry into the nature of the “highest” things: the true, the good, and the beautiful. However, in his dialogues, he often ventured beyond these things, narrowly defined, and explored such topics as the cosmos, the soul, language, rhetoric, poetry, and piety. Similarly, in his writings, Aristotle explored such topics as physics, cosmology, biology, ecology, psychology, economics, literary criticism, and theology. Indeed, all of these subjects originally constituted the many facets of philosophy. Today, philosophers continue to inquire into the nature of the true, the good, and the beautiful (though their labors have come to be divided into the more-or-less discrete sub-disciplines of metaphysics, epistemology, logic, ethics, social and political philosophy, and aesthetics). However, many of the other topics they previously endeavored to explore have come to be viewed as the exclusive domains of other disciplines, each with its own peculiar objects, questions, and methods.

Arguably, the separation between philosophy and the disciplines comprising the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the other humanities is responsible for greater progress all around than would otherwise have been possible. But it is also in some ways artificial. Indeed, philosophy and these other disciplines were once considered to be inextricably intertwined, and this for at least two reasons. First, it is always possible to ask of any discipline what are today considered the “properly philosophical questions.” That is, it is always possible to ask of any discipline such questions as: What is the nature of its objects – what are they and how are they? How are its objects known through its methods? What place do its inquiries and their practical consequences have in the good life and in the good society? Second, it is often possible to enrich the

“properly philosophical questions,” as well as to discover new challenges to and new supports for their many possible answers by looking to other modes of inquiry. For both of these reasons, philosophy is, perhaps more than any other discipline, especially well suited for interdisciplinary engagements.

PLU’s philosophy faculty embrace the interdisciplinary possibilities inherent in their discipline. In what follows, they describe some of their interdisciplinary interests and some of the ways they have pursued them both inside and outside the classroom.



Keith Cooper: Philosophical reflection has always served to connect various human activities, including different ways to approach and think about the world. So

it is not surprising that philosophy courses that serve PLU’s General Education Program would make such connections.

My “God, Faith, & Reason” course in the philosophy of religion invites students to think carefully about their religious commitments, or lack thereof, and about how critical reflection about faith can inform one’s life choices. My “Science, Reason, & Reality” course in the philosophy of science provides students, especially science and nursing majors, with the opportunity to explore the foundations of scientific method and face up to challenges that have been made against its objectivity and rationality. Students come away from the course better able to articulate what it is about science and scientific method that makes those activities rational and give us confidence in the results. And my J-Term course, “Creation and Evolution,” does both of these things. It provides the unusual opportunity for students to consider how science, religion, and philosophy fit together. As a course in the applied philosophy of science, it focuses on religiously situated understandings

of, and challenges to, standard scientific accounts of evolution and what many take to be the clear appearance of design.



Erin McKenna: My “Women and Philosophy” course always includes material from psychology, literature, and theology.

My “Philosophy, Animals, and the Environment” course usually includes work by animal scientists, nature writers, lawyers, theologians, and environmental/animal activists. And my course “Ethics and the Good Life” often uses novels, such as Jodi Picoult’s *My Sister’s Keeper* and *Perfect Match*, Margret Atwood’s *The Handmaid’s Tale*, Harper Lee’s *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*, to raise various ethical issues within a literary context.

Over the last two years, I have worked with professors in the Department of Chemistry and the Hispanic Studies program to address issues of sustainability in factories in Tijuana. We have visited each other’s classes and conducted joint classes in which we watched a documentary film on Mexican women working in factories and battery recycling plants in order to explore issues of gender inequality, the legacy of colonialism, and current environmental hazards in the developing world.



Greg Johnson: Many of my courses employ what I call “disciplined interdisciplinarity.” It means, on the one hand, that I remain dedicated to the discipline

of philosophy and adhere to its aims, methods, and skills. On the other hand, it requires an awareness that many of the questions I take up intersect with other disciplinary perspectives and commitments. This is the strength of a Liberal Arts curriculum. For instance,

in my course “Existentialism and the Meaning of Life,” we read standard philosophical texts regarding key themes, questions, and issues in existential thought. However, we also read literature and psychology, since existentialism transcends one specific discipline to ask the perennial philosophical question, “how should we live our lives?” In my class “Social and Political Philosophy,” I use film to help students engage with the roles of freedom, individuality, and community as they inevitably emerge in political life. My goal in approaching classes through this lens of disciplined interdisciplinarity is to help students leave the course with a good understanding of the complexity of the philosophical questions we broach and provide them with a variety of ways to respond both conceptually and practically.



Pauline Kaurin: In my course “The Experience of War,” we focus explicitly on the disciplines within the humanities (philosophy,

languages and literature, English, and religion), reading philosophical texts, plays, poetry, religious discussions about war, memoirs, and other narrative accounts of the experience of war. But we also read historical treatments of war, delve into the psychological issues around the motivations for violence, war crimes and atrocities, and PTSD and other effects of war, as well as look at film, music, and other representations of violence and war. Finally, we examine war from a technological perspective, especially the use of robots and unmanned fighting systems (like drones).

Most of my other courses, even though they are philosophy courses, use material from a variety of disciplines. I use film, music, and other forms of popular culture heavily in all of my courses and my courses in Military Ethics, Law, Race, and Social and Political Philosophy also draw heavily from the disciplines in the social sciences (history, anthropology, psychology, and political science) in thinking through current issues (like race, gender, and diversity) and political movements (like the Tea Party). When

I teach Business Ethics, I draw heavily from economics and economic theory to ask questions about capitalism and the place of business and corporations in our society. In all of my courses, I try to emphasize the connections as well as the tensions across disciplines and the ways of approaching knowledge to provide a framework for students to start thinking about the interconnections between philosophy and their other courses, especially in their major fields of study.



Hannah Love: For me, philosophy across the disciplines has appeared most consistently as part of Environmental Studies, one of PLU’s interdisciplinary programs. As both

a Capstone co-instructor as well as a faculty mentor, I’ve had the opportunity to assist students in developing Capstone projects that use philosophy, in conjunction with such non-humanities disciplines as geology, biology, economics, psychology, and sociology, to address environmentally focused questions.

For students, philosophy offers a way to explore a hierarchy of values. What value(s) should be preeminent? What can be done when values conflict? How might values emerge as part of cultural practices, and how can arguments about the meaningfulness of certain sets of values be used to shift practices themselves? Although philosophy is often stereotyped as having nothing to do with action and everything to do with abstract thought, students who utilize the insights of the discipline in this integrated manner quickly discover that thought and action are not always so far from each other, and that thinking philosophically is an essential skill for confronting (and attempting to solve) increasingly complex environmental conflicts and dilemmas.



Michael Schleeter: Many of my courses are courses in applied philosophy, which, in general, attempt to bring abstract philosophical theories to bear on



Michael Schleeter, Assistant Professor of Philosophy (top right), Kaitlyn Sill, Assistant Professor of Political Science (bottom left), and students on their J-Term study-away course in Washington D.C.

concrete social practices. Such courses provide excellent opportunities for engagements with disciplines as diverse as biology, history, economics, sociology, and theology, as well as with literature, music, and film. For example, in my “Business Ethics” course, my students use the political-economic theory of Adam Smith to analyze and evaluate the practice of modern business. In the process, we explore the histories of capitalism, the corporation, globalization, certain specific industries, the labor movement, and lobbying, as well as some of the legal documents that have given rise to increasing economic inequality both within our own nation and between our nation and others. And, in my “Philosophy and Race” course, my students engage not only with some of the major theories of race in the Western philosophical tradition, but also with various texts on the biology, history, economics, and sociology of race and race relations both at home and abroad, as well as with various works of literature, music, and film that are expressive of the experiences of different racial groups in the United States.

In addition, I have worked with the faculties of history and political science for the past two years to celebrate Constitution Day by holding interdisciplinary panel discussions

continued on page 17

DEPARTMENT OF RELIGION

Studying South Asian Religions From a Global Perspective

In my course “Religions Of South Asia,” students are introduced to forms of Hinduism, Jainism, South Asian Islam, and Sikhism. Most of these traditions arose and all are practiced in the South Asian region that encompasses India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. A main focus of this course is simply the “introduction” aspect and developing students’ awareness of a variety of value systems significant to more than 1.5 billion people or, about one-seventh of the current world’s population.

In teaching this course I emphasize comparative features between each tradition’s foundational concepts and general practices, such that students gain an appreciation of the values of these traditions. In studying these belief systems, we also pay close attention to the origins, historical trajectories, and recent issues. We ask, what is the perspective on the human condition? What are the ideal goals for a religious practitioner? What are the paths to those goals? What is ultimate reality for practitioners of these traditions? We read and analyze primary sources in translation so students experience voices (other than mine!) that speak for the religious values of these traditions. As I



photo by Aimee Hamilton

Divine beings churning the Ocean of Milk in the Suvarnabhumi International Airport (Bangkok, Thailand).

cannot transport my students to South Asia for the duration of our class to directly observe, interact, and listen, I banter with them that through films and video clips we are taking visual field trips to India and abroad to see these religions in action.

Students are sometimes surprised by the plethora of new words they must learn in a South Asian traditions course. Learning a range of new vocabulary relevant to these religious traditions is necessary for students to grapple with thinking *with* and thinking *through* beliefs and concepts that may or may not reflect values that they themselves espouse. We discuss the origins of an abundance of terms, for example, the Hindu terms *dharma* and *karma* that have entered into popular culture. We then listen to Eminem, Justin Timberlake, and Alicia Keys singing about *karma* and compare how the term is used in its original context and in modern pop culture. Music can be a useful tool and I embrace playing a range of music performances in class in order to show religious expression and devotional practices of South Asian religions. In particular, the Sufi outpouring of devotion to Allah and Muhammad is magnificently seen in the *qawwali* music of Pakistani performers Abida Parveen

and the Sabri Brothers (thank goodness for Youtube in aiding our global studies).

There is a tendency to imagine that what we study occurs solely somewhere, off in the distance, “over there,” in other countries. While we do focus on how South Asian religions are practiced in a particular region, I constantly remind students of the visibility of these religions as global religions that have a strong, though minority, presence here in the Pacific Northwest and across the United States. Recent events such as the massacre at a Sikh *gurdwara* in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, and of a Hindu man pushed to his death in a New York subway compel us to address and dispel religious stereotypes. This course emphasizes the global reach of these traditions, as well as underscoring that the traditions we study are practiced right here in our own Pacific Northwest backyard. — *Aimee Hamilton*

The Importance of the Hebrew Bible for a Post-Modern World

Study of the Hebrew Bible (the Old Testament in the Christian Bible) in academic religion courses at PLU is extremely important from the standpoint of the university’s mission. The Hebrew Bible is a seminal text for the West. It is a core text

photo by Aimee Hamilton



Purchasing flowers and fabric to offer at the shrine of Sufi saint Haji Waris Ali Shah in Lucknow, India.

for Judaism and Christianity, and indirectly for Islam. All three Western faiths are monotheistic as a result and trace descent from the patriarch Abraham. All three faiths share deep traditions of wisdom, morality, and justice that derive from the Israelites' rich historical experiences with God.

Not only can conventional wisdom be found in the Hebrew Bible, such as "A slack hand causes poverty, but the hand of the diligent makes rich" (Prov 10:4), but also the deeply unconventional "Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and will be repaid in full" (Prov 19:17). The firm word of the prophets stands to excoriate the self-satisfied "I hate, I despise your festivals, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies . . . But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream" (Amos 5:21, 24). Biblical law still stands to challenge a modern acquisitive spirit "Every seventh year you shall grant a remission of debts . . . every creditor shall remit the claim that is held against a neighbor, not exacting it of a neighbor who is a member of the community, because the Lord's remission has been proclaimed" (Deut 15:1-2). The critical study of this literature opens doors to the cultural wealth and wisdom of the ancient Near East, one of the chief roots of modern civilization. Study of the Hebrew Bible can lead to potent discussions about gender, as well as the difference between legal relations and moral relations. These ancient texts collide in heated discussion about the nature of humanity, the nature of reality, and the reality of God.

Perhaps for those of us in the United States today, the critical study of the Hebrew Bible is most salutary in leading us to question some of our deepest economic convictions. Is the poor person really entirely responsible for his or her situation, since according to the commonplace "God only helps those who help themselves"? Is the Invisible Hand of Adam Smith really so benevolent as was believed in classic liberalism? There are many grounds to question these verities, among them traditions of the Hebrew Bible. For instance, the biblical writers knew that Israel's God Yahweh expected basic social welfare for all, as a guarantee. Biblical laws were formulated to accord with this expectation, "If you take your neighbor's cloak in pawn, you shall restore it before the sun goes down; for it may be your neighbor's only clothing to use as cover;

in what else shall that person sleep? And if your neighbor cries out to me, I will listen, for I am compassionate" (Exod 22:26-27).

The Hebrew Bible's critique of idolatry is an unremitting ally in the search for social justice. Harvey Cox has recently written about "The Market as God." For a nation that takes the Ten Commandments so seriously, there seems to be an exception clause to the First Commandment, "You shall have no other gods before me." Robert Bellah spoke on campus in October 2012 and observed that "Market Capitalism" undermines democracy and is one of the most effective institutions for producing social inequality ever devised. Such heresy can be heard and discussed on a campus that takes the Hebrew Bible seriously.

— Douglas E. Oakman

Global Application in *Introduction to the Christian Tradition*

In my course "Introduction to the Christian Tradition," students consider the question: Within a narrow circle centered on our PLU campus, can we find a global application for a general introduction to the Christian Tradition? Our goals included awakening our capacity to discern, in a real life situation, the distinctive qualities of a social event (a Christian religious service), and then deconstructing the experience to identify patterns of religious and social interaction linked with what we were learning about the interplay of religion and culture.

By selecting a religious service of a denomination different from one they were personally involved with, my students covered a good cross-section of Christian congregations. For these 60 students, this amounted to a plunge into the unfamiliar, protected by having an assignment that objectified and generalized the experience as a class project.

Even before they launched the study of their chosen community, they were deciding how to introduce themselves: "I am observing *your* service for a class project." After doing some background research to identify which historic traditions were connected with the denomination or approach, they prepared a checklist of things to keep in mind. Music, architecture, order of service, standard prayer patterns

or *ad hoc* bulletins, what appeared in pamphlet racks or on bulletin boards; seating, space allotment, major furnishings, lighting and sound systems: each student had marked what they could expect to find. Taking it *all* in was guided by the question, "What was the *central emphasis*?"

Many students went looking for culturally distinct congregations. Whether in Spanglish or a hybrid Asian and American jargon, members of these churches embraced one another and their guests with otherworldly generosity. Other students dipped into experiences they had heard about but never encountered. Two students, one from a world religion other than Christian and the other from a fairly evangelical Christian background, decided to investigate a high church formal liturgy at a midweek service for healing. They found themselves in a rather small group where everyone knew one another and knew most of the service by heart. The students were moved by how intimate and personal the juxtaposition of solemn patterns and established texts with pleas for relief from persistent ailments and expressions of personal sorrow became. They were welcomed, not as strangers or as members of the church, but as fellow human beings who could be trusted with the most profound secrets.

Constantly sorting the waves of sound and movement, the students asked impressive questions, aware they had a mission, rather than passively submitting to these experiences. Their oral reports to their classmates raised queries worthy of cultural anthropologists. Many began with our earlier study of the Gospel of Luke, where "radical inclusion" is a Christian ideal, and commented on the ways they were welcomed, on the homogeneity or diversity of the congregations, and on socio-economic and ethnic patterns. Several realized that one unique characteristic of many congregations was the phenomenon of intergenerational community, something they had seldom seen in any other context. They were certain to notice who spoke, and about what. They noted who never spoke. Issues of gender, of education, of ways of dressing for church arose as spoken or unspoken values. Sexuality and politics were felt to be in a strange dance in some communities.

Back in the classroom, students voiced concerns. Some felt alienated by Christian

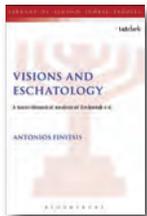
Department of Religion continued...

pop and rock, while others were bewildered at first by the slow pace of liturgies and the unfamiliar cloud of silence. Some saw discrepancies between what occurred in church and the published values of the denomination. Music drew wide attention: how “contemporary” is folk music from an era before they were born? Did a wall of sound, however in vogue, drown out the thoughtful consideration of ethical commitment and deeper faith? Does an ethereal experience have enough bite to wake worshipers to the problems of the world around them? Is there enough of a core of belief and practice to call all these experiences *Christianity*, or are there several versions of that tradition among us?

We circled the world as it plants its foot in PLU’s own neighborhood, and we became more globally aware.

— Joseph J. Hickey-Tiernan

Recent Books by the Religion Faculty



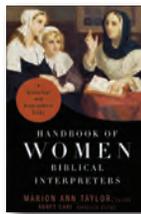
Visions and Eschatology: A Socio-Historical Analysis of Zechariah 1-6, by Antonios Finitis

Oftentimes people ask what prompts a major research project. In my case it was an intuition that the latest scholarly research on the prophet Zechariah was wrong. Although my intuition was kindly dismissed by my professors, who were justifiably hesitant to reject the work of well-established scholars over the intuition of a doctoral student, I was not the type of student who would give up without a fight. The first half of this book consists of a critical evaluation of past research. Having proven wrong other scholars, I then had to offer a counter-proposal: if earlier researchers were wrong, then what did I think was the more correct and compelling answer? Constructing this alternative understanding of prophet Zechariah was by far the most challenging part of my project. Thus, in the second part of this book I offer an understanding of Zechariah’s mode of expression, message, and role based on the historical and sociological information of his cultural context. From beginning to end this book represents eight years of research, writing, and obsessing over the fourth century B.C.E.



The Political Aims of Jesus, by Douglas E. Oakman

This book revives the eighteenth-century thesis of Hermann Samuel Reimarus, namely, that Jesus’ material political aims were redirected by his posthumous followers toward otherworldly salvation. Jesus had no messianic self-consciousness nor eschatological proclamation. His covert praxis of peasant debt relief came to the attention of the Herodian elites and supplied the grounds for a Roman political execution.



Handbook of Women Biblical Interpreters: A Historical and Biographical Guide, by Marion Taylor and Agnes Choi

The history of women interpreters of the Bible is a neglected area of study. The *Handbook of Women Biblical Interpreters* is a one-volume introduction to the wide variety of interpretation of the Bible carried out by women. Issues addressed by the interpretations of these women often overlap with issues still relevant to faith communities today, such as women’s roles in the church and synagogue and the idea of religious feminism. Women’s interpretations also raise awareness about differences in the ways women and men may read the Bible in light of differences in their life experiences.



They Who Give from Evil, by Brenda Llewellyn Ihssen

They Who Give from Evil: The Response of the Eastern Church to Moneylending in the Early Christian Era

considers St. Basil the Great and St. Gregory of Nyssa’s fourth-century sermons against usury. Both brothers were concerned with the economic and theological implications of destructive and corrosive practices of lending at high rates of interest and implications for both on the community and the individual soul of lender and debtor. Analysis of their sermons is placed within the context of early Greek Christian responses to lending and borrowing, which were informed by Jewish, Greek, and Roman attitudes toward debt.

Languages & Literatures continued...

also relate those historical movements to current issues in Spain and Latin America.
— Enrique Salas-Durazo

What is behind the label on that Chilean apple, or the shirt that says “Assembled in Mexico”? Why would you want to escape from a tropical island? In “Hispanic Voices for Social Change,” I not only found my own voice, and learned about the relationship between film, poetry, literature, and Latin American revolutions, but also the importance of examining the deeper historical, political, economic, and social contexts that ultimately join us together as interdependent nations, neighbors, and citizens of the planet.

Now I understand that every belief and ideology, every well-intentioned and self-serving social and government policy, carried out by both dictators and democratically elected leaders, often has some terrible hidden consequences, as well as benefits that affect millions of people.



Through “Hispanic Voices” I now know that we have reached an historical crossroads where we are both intolerant of human-rights abuses and environmental exploitation, but unsure of how to

implement the innovative emerging strategies on a scale big enough to create lasting positive change for all life forms on earth. How soon can I live in an ethical, organic, local but interdependent, cradle to cradle community? Only our individual will and collective decision-making over time can determine that.
— Elizabeth Valdez (PLU ’14)

NORWEGIAN AND SCANDINAVIAN AREA STUDIES

“Nation, Exile, Homecoming,” a Writing 101 course in the First-Year Experience program, focuses on Scandinavian drama and film, pairing global thinking with prudent resistance to the idea that all cultures and peoples are the same. In one essay, students explored the transcultural significance of Henrik Ibsen’s canonical verse play, *Peer Gynt*, asking “What is gained – and lost – when the work of art is removed from its specific cultural context?”
— Olivia Gunn



Peer Gynt is rich in references that require both historical and cultural context, since Ibsen relies upon Norwegian folklore throughout the drama. However, some elements

of the play transcend Scandinavian culture and are eminently understandable outside of this context. Paradoxically, Ibsen uses one of the most Norwegian elements of the play, the trolls, to deliver a message that goes beyond the culture and time period specific to the play: a critique of Peer's hollow and ineffectual Christianity.

— Thomas Kolibaba (PLU '16)



Peer's description of the Moroccan desert illustrates a critique of European thought. Morocco is an inhabited area, yet Peer wishes to colonize and build an empire on it. Following

Elisabeth Oxfeldt (Nordic Orientalism), I argue that Peer's desire to take over this land reveals Ibsen's critique of the inability among nineteenth-century Europeans to comprehend a society unlike their own.

— Hannah Ferguson (PLU '16)

Department of Philosophy continued...

on the Constitution as it pertains to various issues of national importance. Furthermore, I collaborated this year with Dr. Kaitlyn Sill, Assistant Professor of Political Science, to conduct a J-term Study Away course in Washington D.C. entitled "Democracy in Theory and in Practice," in which our students not only engaged with texts in political philosophy and political science, but also observed key political processes and interviewed key political players in order to determine whether and how well different theories of democracy are realized in our practices. Finally, I am in the process of working with the faculties of political science and economics to develop a new interdisciplinary major called "Philosophy, Politics, and Economics," a field of study that is common in the United Kingdom but much less so in the United States.

Sergia Hay: Of the courses I teach, philosophy's wide and diverse scope is most apparent in "The Examined Life." Students in this introductory course explore some of the central questions of five major branches of philosophy (ethics,



philosophy of religion, logic, metaphysics, and epistemology) and naturally come to see the numerous and rich connections between these

branches and other disciplines. For example, we discuss how logical proofs resemble mathematical proofs and explore how logic can be applied to the development of computer languages and the students' own ability to recognize fallacious reasoning in advertising and political speeches. Another example: when we consider questions of personal identity, we necessarily draw from theology, biology, and neuroscience. Furthermore, the relationship between philosophy and literature is highlighted in all of my courses; Kafka's parable "The Top," Camus's *The Misunderstanding*, and Ivan's presentation of the problem of evil in Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* are just a few treasure troves of philosophical thought.

Support Humanities Students

With 40 percent of our student body participating in at least one study-away program (compared to the national average of 3 percent), the numbers speak for themselves. Add in the students who study away near campus, and more than half the PLU community studies somewhere beyond campus boundaries.

For this reason, PLU has made a conscious decision to talk about "study away" rather than "study abroad"; when South Puget Sound is so richly diverse, students need not travel more than a few blocks to have a cross-cultural experience. That fact was reinforced when PLU received the 2009 Senator Paul Simon Award for Campus Internationalization, a prestigious award that honors outstanding efforts on and off campus to engage the world and the international

community. So prestigious, in fact, PLU was the first and only private college in the West to receive the honor.

As you have read in these pages, the lives of Humanities students (and faculty) are enriched by ongoing opportunities to engage not only the world but their own beliefs and experiences through texts. All gifts to PLU are welcome. To learn more, go to www.plu.edu/development for a list of opportunities and projects. Or, call the Office of Development at (800) 826-0035.

The Kathlyn A. Breazeale scholarship fund at Pacific Lutheran University has been established for students committed to justice, diversity, and sustainability. Gifts and memorials in her honor would be best directed toward this scholarship.



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"Pacific Lutheran University seeks to educate students for lives of thoughtful inquiry, service, leadership and care – for other people, for their communities and for the earth." – PLU's mission

Tribute to Kathlyn A. Breazeale



“It is a huge danger to pretend that awful things do not happen. But you need enough hope to keep going. I am trying to make hope. Flowers grow out of darkness.”

—Corita Kent

Fall 2012 brought the untimely passing of our friend and colleague in process studies, Kathlyn A. Breazeale. Kathi was a remarkable scholar, teacher, and friend who will be missed and remembered for her intellect, for her compassion, and for her dedication to uplifting the integrity of all people.

As member of the faculty in the Department of Religion since 2001, Kathi was a popular teacher who was highly regarded by her students. Courses she taught at PLU included: faith and spirituality; introduction to Christian theology; feminist and womanist theologies; women and evil; women, nature, and the sacred; and peace studies. Kathi received her Master of Divinity from Iliff School of Theology and her Doctor of Philosophy from Claremont Graduate School in the area of Philosophy of Religion and Theology. Prior to PLU, she worked in youth and family ministry and later taught on the faculty of Prescott College in Arizona and Immaculate Heart College Center in Los Angeles.

As a friend and colleague, Kathi's generosity and thoughtfulness was conveyed through gracious conversation and collaboration, greeting cards, welcome, and dark chocolate. She also had a seriously goofy and fun-loving side to her. One of her very favorite buttons, which she had for years on her office door read: "What if the hokey-pokey really is what it's all about?"

Kathi's light reveling was grounded, however, in a profoundly consistent theology of life. When sharing the story behind her own personal commitments, she always began with her upbringing in Natchitouches, Louisiana in the days of lingering Jim Crow laws of racial segregation. Her own school system was not officially desegregated until 1970 when she was 19 years old. There were so many things she loved about her own home and Southern traditions, but this experience in the segregated south had a permanent effect. Inclusion rather than exclusion became her primary

commitment. She was conscientiously dedicated to upholding diversity and the integrity of all people and worked with many clubs and offices on our campus toward this purpose. Marginalized voices were reclaimed as central to her courses, theology, ethics, and art.

As a process theologian, Kathi dismissed dualistic ideas that see the world in terms of binary opposites. Instead, she sought to find the interconnection between sides, between ideas, between people. Even Kathi's language was carefully chosen to reflect her commitments. She stopped using the word "but" which, as a conjunction implies opposition or dualistic thinking, and actively trained herself to use an inclusionary "and" instead. If you try this yourself, you will quickly see how it changes the way you think and talk.

As a process, ecofeminist theologian, she wrote about how relationships of mutual love and respect have the possibility to transform the world. In her book, *Mutual Empowerment: A Theology of Marriage, Intimacy and Redemption* (Fortress, 2008), she argued that this transformation begins at home, in our most intimate bodily and spiritual relations with our intimate partners. In mutual relations, – between individuals, between communities, between different religions and cultures – one experiences God or the sacred and one contributes to the loving, persuasive presence of the divine in the world. At the time of her death, Kathi was in the process of writing a book on pedagogy that highlighted the work of Sister Corita Kent, an artist, teacher and activist. Her example can inspire us to love ourselves, each other and the earth well – to reach out to ideas and people beyond our comfortable ideological or social lines, and seek to go beyond what segregates and simplifies.

In Kathi's theological studies course on "Women and Evil," a course she was teaching in Fall 2012, she had a project planned for the students after reading about Pandora early in the semester. Pandora is said to have released evil and

suffering into the world due to her overwhelming curiosity; important for feminist theologians like Kathi is the reminder that while Pandora released pain, disease, and hardship, Hope remained steadfast in the box. Kathi had planned to distribute wooden boxes to her students later in the fall, which they would decorate and pair with essays expressing their sources of hope as they confronted the reality of suffering in their lives and in the world.

Dr. Lisa Marcus, Associate Professor of English, framed her comments at Kathi's memorial service as an imaginary response to Kathi's assignment. She imagined the items that she might include in a hope box for Kathi: "First, it would be painted a vibrant red and decorated with Mardi Gras beads and tiny witches, and perhaps a Frida Kahlo self-portrait in miniature. It might have an inscription from an Amy Lowell poem about witches 'as moon-birds,' or from Emily Dickinson about hope as 'the thing with feathers that perches in the soul.' It would open to reveal several evocative pieces of writing that collectively speak to holding hope in a world that also includes deep sorrow – writings about faith and inspiration, resilience and prayer."

Kathi is survived by her partner, Jon Berkedal, her parents, Archie and Fay Breazeale, two sisters, and one brother. Using her native Methodist language and theology, Kathi laughed about how her syllabi and our department meetings were "going on to perfection" – an aspiration no Lutheran could uphold. But now that our dear friend and colleague has indeed gone on to perfection, we give thanks for her presence and are proud of her work with us. She will be greatly missed.
— Marit Trelstad

The Kathlyn A. Breazeale scholarship fund at Pacific Lutheran University has been established for students committed to justice, diversity, and sustainability. Gifts and memorials in her honor would be best directed toward this scholarship.



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12180 Park Ave. S.
Tacoma, WA 98447

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