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Humanities Advisory Committee
Otterbein University

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Humanities Advisory Committee Grants for Autumn 2020

Co-Sponsored Grants

These grants support humanities-related events on campus. HAC will cover up to half of the total budget of the event. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis.

Faculty-Student Enrichment Grants

These grants support enrichment activities for humanities-related courses. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis.

The Humanities at Otterbein

A newsletter of the Humanities Advisory Committee Autumn 2020



For the summer of 2020, HAC awarded fourteen Summer Writing Awards to faculty to support ongoing scholarly projects. The committee is pleased to present abstracts of the resulting projects in this, and upcoming, newsletters.

Summer 2020 Writing Award Recipients:

Alex Rocklin, Assistant Professor of Religion: “Making the Chief Servant Mad: Disability, the Regulation of Afro-Caribbean Religions, and the Political Prophecy of Tubal Uriah Butler.” This essay has been accepted for publication in the *Journal of Africana Religions*.

Facing empire-wide social unrest after a global economic downturn, the British colonial regime in Trinidad and Tobago arrested labor organizer Tubal Uriah “Buzz” Butler, the self-styled “Chief Servant” of the people, in 1937. Butler was famed for his fiery preaching, audacious prophesying, and effective union work that incorporated elements of Afro-Caribbean Christian discourse, practice, and institutions. The colonial government charged him with sedition for his speeches denouncing the injustices of the government, which the regime claimed led to dissension, revolt, and the killing of two police officers. Butler was ultimately convicted and spent most of the war years in jail. While evidence in the King’s court focused on Butler’s supposedly seditious anti-government language, in the court of elite public opinion, in popular and official speech and writing in Trinidad and Tobago and England, Butler was repeatedly portrayed as a disabled madman and an unreasonable religious fanatic. Colonial regimes and their dependents in the Caribbean have used a racializing discourse of mental and

HAC-Sponsored Reading Group, Autumn 2020

This fall semester, faculty from across campus will read and discuss two books about careers and the liberal arts:

- George Anders, *You Can Do Anything: the Surprising Power of a "Useless" Liberal Arts Education* (Back Bay Books, 2017)
- Scott Hartley, *The Fuzzy and the Techie: Why the Liberal Arts Will Rule the Digital World* (Mariner Books, 2017)

If you are interested in joining the book group, please contact Amy

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physical disability purportedly caused by African superstition or fanaticism to contain social formation among the colonized outside of colonial control. In this essay, I use the history of such regulation to better understand government crackdown on Butler's activism but also his critique of colonialism and British sovereignty.

Carla Corroto, Associate Professor of Sociology: "Women in the Man-Made City." On Inequality and Freedom. Lawrence M. Eppard and Henry A. Giroux (eds). London: Oxford University Press. (forthcoming)

The built environment reflects the dominant cultures that create it and is an agent that propagates their values. Urban design is a multi-disciplinary process with numerous components including town planning, zoning, architectural engagements, parks, and places. Practitioners describe urban design as "creating the theater of public life."

As an actor in this urban theater, I am aware of how the city is designed for a specific demographic. For example, office workers can commute to their daytime jobs with mass transit and traffic priority. Able-bodied people can find a building's door or stairwell without looking for an oft unreliable wheelchair ramp or elevator. Middle class people can afford to park their cars in garages with hourly fees. White people can claim the sidewalk with little fear of "stop and frisk" or "looking suspicious." The upper social classes can find, then afford safe, quality housing in high cost-of-living cities. Most men can walk about unselfconsciously without having to circumvent catcalls or street harassment. American cities have largely been imagined, designed, and maintained to fit a single actor – a white, middle and upper class, cisgendered, able-bodied man who has no childcare or household responsibilities. This is their theater of public life and they are both the directors and stars of the show; the rest of us are supporting actors, extras, ushers, and stagehands.

We are literally living in a man-made world. With this paper, I investigate women in relation to the American city's manifest and latent functions - how our freedoms are constrained or enhanced, fought for or taken for granted, policed or liberated. Considering urban design decisions as scripts written for the theater of public life offers a framework for understanding who among us can flourish in the city, and who is oppressed when navigating the built urban environment.

Megan Chawansky, Assistant Professor of Health & Sports Science:

This award supported the writing of one chapter within the upcoming co-authored book, *Sport, Gender and Development: Intersections, Innovations and Future Trajectories*. The chapter is written by Megan Chawansky and Payoshni Mitra. The book is co-authored by Lyndsay M.C. Hayhurst (York University, Canada), Holly Thorpe (University of Waikato, NZ), and Megan Chawansky (Otterbein University, USA). It will be published by Emerald Publishing.

Chapter title: Economic empowerment in Sport, Gender and Development: Examining the GOAL Program in India.

At present, thousands of global initiatives use sport as a tool to help under-served youth develop life skills. Those that focus on girls and women are often called "Sport, Gender and Development" or SGD programs. This chapter critically examines notions of economic empowerment and commercialized feminism

HAC Committee Members 2020-21:

Amy Johnson, Chair, Art
History

Janice Glowski, Art
History

Margaret Koehler, English

Stephanie Patridge,
Religion & Philosophy

Allen Reichert, Library

Levilson Reis, Modern
Languages

Amy Sheeran, Modern
Languages

Deborah Solomon,
History

within SGD initiatives through a case study of the GOAL-Delhi project. The purpose is to highlight the complexities of economic empowerment messages by exploring how girls in the GOAL-Delhi program understood and made sense of economic progress and possibilities in their own lives. The Goal-Delhi program is an endeavor supported by Standard Chartered Bank and Women Win, and it is delivered through the Naz Foundation Trust in India. It combines the sport of netball with life skills modules on health and hygiene, communication skills, and financial literacy. In 2013-2014, the authors interviewed and followed a purposeful sample of 14 girls (aged 12-16) who were active in the project. Data collection occurred at the beginning, middle and end of the project in an attempt to capture the changes that occurred for girls as they participated in the program. This chapter highlights the changes related to girls' knowledge of financial matters, their career aspirations, and the challenges they experienced and anticipated as empowered young women in Delhi.

Rares Piloiu, Professor and Information Literacy Librarian: "The unraveling self: Basque Identity in the modern fiction"

The modern Basque national identity is indissolubly connected with a complex set of unresolved traumas of the more or less distant past. Three recent novels, Bernardo Atxaga's *The Accordionist's Son*, Garbriel Urza's *All that followed* and Fernando Aramburu's highly acclaimed *Patria*, explore, from perspectives that claim a simultaneously external and internal viewpoint, the multifaceted nature of a national identity built as an incomplete and inherently dysfunctional project. All these novels engage with the question of national identity as a nodal point of intertwined narratives, built at the margin of other identities and in a constant tension spun around the feelings of alienation and familiarity. The dynamics of the identity struggle taking shape at the Castilian-Basque national fault line is augmented by the dynamics of the transnational, global identity, with *All that followed* being written from an American perspective by an author with Basque roots, *Patria* from the perspective of a Basque who writes in Castilian while living as an expat in Germany, and *The Accordionist's Son*, although written in Basque by an author based in the Basque country, assuming the fictional perspective of a political exile in the USA. Each novel, in turn, gives voice to multiple characters that embody the different perspectives on the Basque identity and emphasizes the various historical realities that shaped them, from the unhealed wounds of the Franco regime, to the ambiguous cohabitation with ETA terrorism, and from the social disparities of a post-industrial society to the promises of a pan-European, post-national future. My essay analyzes these intertwined narrative lines and highlights the importance of memory and storytelling in reconciling the modern Basque identity with its ambiguous past and its uncertain future.

Stephane Patridge, Professor of Philosophy: "Digital Fictions, Interactivity, and Somaesthetics." I have been invited to give this paper as a featured speaker at the 2020 Workshop on the Philosophy of Games at the University of Central Oklahoma in October. I plan to submit the paper for publication in spring semester.

In this essay I attempt to make a novel contribution to the discussion of interactive digital narratives. I examine two digital narratives, *That Dragon, Cancer* and *Florence*, to show that in some cases narrative content is strongly

dependent on the audience-participant's cognitive-somatic experience in a way heretofore unrecognized by philosophers of interactivity. In such cases, were the audience-participant to fail to experience the relevant cognitive-somatic response to the narrative, the narrative content would either shift meaning or be incomplete. If I am right, then the interactive nature of digital fictions is distinctive not only because it allows users to discover narrative content in a new way, or because it allows participants to alter what happens in the narrative, but also because it allows a new way of expressing such content, an expression that requires the participant's cognitive-somatic experiences. As a result, the somatic experiences of a participant can be aesthetically relevant features interactive digital fictions themselves. This is a new step in taking stock of this aesthetic feature of digital fictions which, I think, is important for understanding the aesthetics of interactive artworks more generally, videogames and other strongly interactive digital fictions more specifically, and the proper role of somaesthetics in both.

Sue Constable, Professor of Education: "Maternal Theory and the Shaping of Literacy Education: Anger Exasperated by Quarantine." The Humanities Writing Award afforded me the opportunity to take the lead on a manuscript authored by the Twelve Angry Moms (TAM) Collaborative. Twelve Angry Moms is a network of teacher educator-scholars who collaborate to critically examine schooling (and specifically, literacy education) through their unique intersectional lenses as mothers, scholars, and teachers.

The physical and emotional drain of maternal advocacy is palpable. Adrienne Rich (1960) wrote, "My children cause me the most exquisite suffering of which I have any experience. It is the suffering of ambivalence: The murderous alternation between bitter resentment and raw-edged nerves, and blissful gratification and tenderness" (Rich, 2007, 405). The Twelve Angry Moms relate unequivocally to Rich's description, yet also recognize that there are few respected spaces for maternally framed discussions in the academy. We are, at times, our own worst enemies. We confront and challenge the very school cultures and pedagogies that are central to our identities as teachers and scholars. In our experiences as angry, dismayed, and disappointed teachers, researchers, and moms, we have come to view our conflicted reflections and discussions as opportunities to examine and reframe literacy from our unique and complicated vantage points.

In this autoethnography, the Twelve Angry Moms examine our struggle to advocate for our own children's literacy learning as we navigate school contexts, university demands, and sudden, undeliberate home-based learning for our children. In a critical and collaborative investigation, we re/view and expand our ongoing autoethnographies, combining analytical and evocative approaches with verbal and visual presentation. We cross-examine photographs, work-samples, communications, reflections and field notes through paradigms of critical feminism, maternal theory, and visual analysis; we expand the boundaries of our work, and its significance in and feminist implications for literacy education.

