



Humanities Newsletter

March | 2017

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Dean's Message



Dear Friends,

As the spring semester speeds along, it's good to take a moment to reflect on all the wonderful work happening in the College of Humanities. This past month saw two of our faculty--Katharine Coles (Creative Writing and English), and Elijah Millgram (Philosophy)--named as University Distinguished Professors. Professors Coles and Millgram are outstanding and beloved teachers who have inspired their students, just as they've also contributed important scholarly and creative works to their fields, and I couldn't be more pleased to see them recognized for their achievements. Three of our faculty--

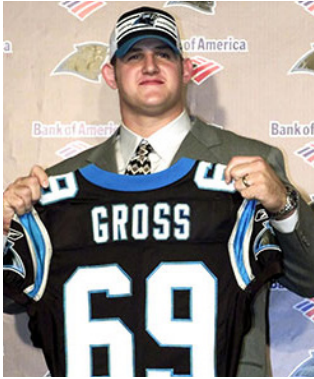
Professors Johanna Watzinger-Tharp, Jane Hacking, and Fernando Rubio--were named in the recently released report from the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, "America's Languages: Investing in Language Education for the 21st Century," for which they were interviewed about their work with the State of Utah's Dual Language Immersion program. Professor Kent Ono (Chair, Department of Communication) was elected by his peers to serve as the Second Vice President for the National Communication Association. The Department of History's Professor Matt Basso is the State Scholar for the Smithsonian Institution's "The Way We Worked" Museum on Main Street exhibit, and Professor Eric Hinderaker's new book about the Boston Massacre was just published by Harvard University Press. The faculty in World Languages and Cultures has organized an event series called "Shock-Culture-Shock" that is attracting leading scholars to our campus for the benefit of students and faculty alike. The incredible level of intellectual activity happening across the college--in our Centers, Programs, and Departments--is astounding and it is a delight to behold. Meanwhile, our undergraduate and graduate students continue to participate in world-class research projects through their work in all our classes, taking advantage of the rich, research-informed teaching that distinguishes our work at the University of Utah.

As most of you know, we also took a day off from our usual routines in the College of Humanities on March 1st to head up Big Cottonwood Canyon to "Ski For Scholarships" at Brighton Resort. It was a great day of fun and fresh air as we made some turns together and raised some money for a great cause on some of the 547" of snow Brighton had received. And I can check some items off my bucket list: I've now skied with the University of Utah Ski Team, and with a big red bird (thanks Swoop!). My sincere gratitude to all who turned out to ski with us on March 1st, and to all of you who continue to support our work in the College of Humanities. Spring is around the corner.

Wishing you peace,
Dianne Harris, Dean



Featured Alumni



Jordan Gross

B.S. in Communication

Jordan Gross retired from his NFL career at age 33. Now Jordan has a second career as a sports journalist. Realizing at a young age a passion for both football and public speaking, he chose a path that would lead him to both.

Jordan may have been drawn to the University of Utah for their football program, eventually playing 11 years in the NFL, but it was in the College of Humanities where he developed collaboration, communication and speaking skills that would serve him in both careers.

Jordan took classes in the Communication department, enjoying the group project opportunities and wide range of electives. He was able to develop skills that are necessary when you need to get information to people quickly and accurately. He learned how to edit his messages of non-essential content, he collaborated with other students on group decision making projects and practiced conflict resolution. Being a team captain for six years, he found these skills essential during stressful times in the locker rooms. He explains how these skills continue to serve him as a sports journalist today:

Getting a degree is key. It meets the criteria for you to be a potential employee. But it is who you are after you complete your education that is more important. While in school, focus on your education and building your individual toolbox. For me, those skills were formed in my Communication classes, and I still use them every day. They are super valuable to my career. So, learn how to sell yourself, get involved and stand out from the crowd.



After graduation, Jordan was ranked as the number one offensive tackle available in the NFL Draft. His career lasted 11 years and 167 games. He assisted the Panthers getting to Super Bowl XXXVIII and was featured in *Pro Football Weekly* and *Sports Illustrated*. During this time, Jordan used more of his communication skills and started his own podcast, *This Is Gross*, where he interviewed his teammates. He uploaded this on iTunes and received more than 500,000 downloads in a matter of weeks. His podcast got so much attention that it became a TV show by the same name.

After announcing his retirement from football, he continued using his Communication degree and became a sideline reporter during the regular season, a TV reporter during preseason, and radio announcer at night. Jordan has advice gleaned from years of personal experience:

For those who are looking for a career in sports journalism, you need to figure out how to present the information in a way that is relevant and accurate, but entertaining so people want to hear what you are saying. Sports journalism is a competitive field, especially if you don't start by playing a sport. My advice is to have a small ego because you are in the public eye. Naturally, you are going to start small. Start as an intern and work hard to deliver well on tasks that are assigned to you. Then, you may move up to a camera man, then help write a script, then, after proving yourself, you will continue to move up the ladder. But be patient. It takes time and perseverance.

Featured Faculty



Elijah Millgram and Katharine Coles Named Distinguished Professors

Two of our College of Humanities faculty are being honored with the University of Utah's prestigious designation of "Distinguished Professor" – Professor Elijah Millgram in Philosophy and Professor Katharine Coles in English. These appointments were recommended by the U's Distinguished Professors and approved by President David Pershing and Vice President Ruth Watkins. Both Professor Millgram and Professor Coles are internationally renowned for their scholarly contributions.

Elijah Millgram is the U's E. E. Ericksen Professor of Philosophy. His research specialties include practical reason and moral philosophy. He is a previous recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship and a Distinguished Scholar Award from the College of Humanities, among many other awards. His most recent book, *The Great Endarkenment: Philosophy for an Age of Hyperspecialization*, was published in 2015 by Oxford University Press.

Professor Katharine Coles is a distinguished scholar and poet. She served as Utah's Poet Laureate from 2006-2012 and was a previous recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, as well as many other distinctions. She is the co-principal investigator on the NEH-funded Poemage project, which develops software for analyzing and visualizing sonic relationships in poetry, and has written a number of scholarly articles and presentations based on this work. Her sixth poetry collection, *Flight*, was published by Red Hen in 2016.

Congratulations to Professors Coles and Millgram for receiving the highly sought-after distinction of Distinguished Professor!

Featured Student

Shelby Wayment

*Sophomore, Writing & Rhetoric Studies
Minor in Peace and Conflict Studies*



Shelby Wayment is a Writing and Rhetoric Studies major with a minor in Peace and Conflict Studies who believes her work in the humanities gives her the "edge" she needs to excel in school, think more deeply about world issues, and be a more compelling writer.

She grew up in Mapleton, Utah, and chose the U because she wanted to

attend a research university with many extra-curricular activities and programs that would still allow her to see her family. Now in her junior year, Shelby lives in the [Humanities House](#) on campus, works as a tutor at the Writing Center and as a Writing Assistant at Colonial

Stock Transfer Company, serves as a Peace Corps Campus Ambassador, and directs the Resident and Housing Association Environmental and Sustainability Board.

"I chose to major in the humanities in Writing and Rhetoric Studies and minor in Peace and Conflict Studies because I eventually want to focus on law in my graduate studies, and these fields are a perfect foundation for that," she explains. "My major, and the humanities in general, allow me to think critically about world issues and to focus my writing on topics about which I am passionate. In addition, I believe that even if I change career paths and don't go to law school, a humanities degree will push me to grow and think in new ways."

The "edge" Shelby gets from studying the humanities teaches her to question and challenge ideas she is presented with. "I've learned to think more deeply about the world around me, and I have become a better listener and writer because of my studies here. The humanities have also taught me to learn to connect with the past so I can better understand and prepare for the future."

Events

Species in the Age of Discordance

University of Utah Department of Philosophy
March 23-25, 2017

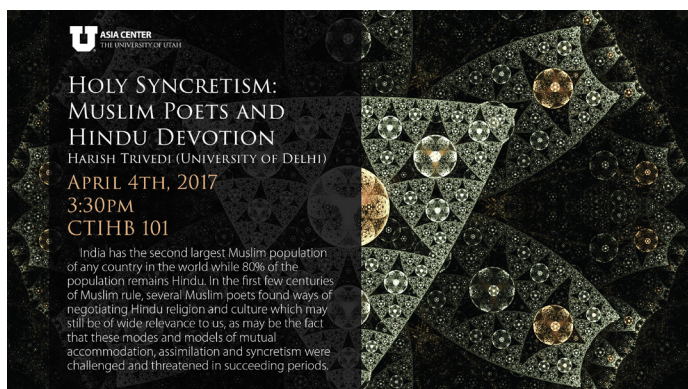
Biological lineages move through time, space, and each other. As they do, they diversify, diverge, and grade away from and into one another. One result of this is genealogical discordance, i.e., the lineages of a biological entity may have different histories. We see this on many levels, from microbial networks, to holobionts, to population-level lineages. The Utah meeting is the first of three meetings on this topic. Follow up sessions are tentatively planned for the 2017 Evolution Meeting (Portland, OR) and the 2017 ISHPSSB Meeting (Sao Paulo, Brazil). The Utah meeting will be a mix of invited and refereed papers and posters.

[Find out more here](#)

Holy Syncretism: Muslim Poets and Hindu Devotion

Harish Trivedi (University of Delhi)
April 4, 2017 | 3:30PM | CTIHB 101

This event, organized by the Asia Center in the College of Humanities, centers upon the relationship between ancient Muslim poets and the Hindu religion. India has the second largest Muslim population of any country in the world while 80% of the population remains Hindu. In the first few centuries of Muslim rule, several Muslim poets found ways of negotiating Hindu religion and culture which may still be of wide relevance to us, as may be the fact that these modes and models of mutual accommodation, assimilation and syncretism were challenged and threatened in succeeding periods.



Brave New World: The Humanities and Climate Change

Jeffrey McCarthy
Director of Environmental Humanities Program
April 4, 2017 | ASB | 4 PM

Jeffrey McCarthy will talk about the ocean's centrality to climate change, and about art's role in communicating climate risk and climate recovery. The talk will focus on Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Joseph Conrad's *Typhoon* and Winslow Homer's paintings *The Gulf Stream* and *Fog Warning*. Painting and writing about the human place in a marine environment position us to recognize the ethical stakes in the climate future as well as the potential for an inclusive reinvention of the social contract.

[Find out more here](#)

Sanctuary, Fugitivity, and the Public University

Dr. Karma R. Chavez
Department of Communication Colloquium
March 23 | Reading Room 2120 | 3:30 pm



Calls for public universities as sanctuary deserve sustained consideration as they open up space for conversations about how to support vulnerable students, faculty, and staff. As a queer migration scholar, Dr. Chavez takes cue from Nicholas De Genova's important essay arguing

that protestors in the 2006 immigration marches enacted a queer politics of immigration by insisting "Aquí estamos, y no nos vamos!" In this talk, Chavez advocates for thinking of sanctuary as a similar queer politics, but one that works from the undercommons of the university and engages practices of fugitivity.

News

Kent Ono Selected as 2nd Vice President of NCA



Kent Ono has been selected as the 2nd Vice President of the National Communication Association. Dr. Ono will assume office on January 1, 2018, plan the 2019 NCA annual convention, and serve as NCA president in 2020.

A member-wide election in January 2017 resulted in Dr. Ono's selection. The NCA includes approximately 7,000 members nationwide.

[Read more](#)



Professor Danielle Endres awarded grant from the NSF

Congratulations to Professor Danielle Endres, who has been awarded a \$25,000 grant from the National Science Foundation. With the help of this award, she'll be

directing an Energy Democracy Symposium in July 2017.

Hosted by the Communication Institute at the University of Utah, the summer symposium is themed "Energy Democracy: Creating a Research Agenda." This symposium will develop a new interdisciplinary research program on energy democracy, which refers to an emerging movement among members of the public, local government entities, and non-governmental organizations that re-imagines energy consumers as prosumers, or innovators, designers and analysts who are involved in decisions at every stage of energy production and consumption.

[Read more](#)

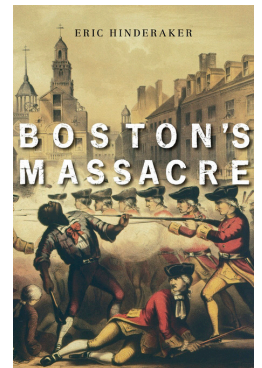


Eric Hinderaker Publishes *Boston's Massacre*

Eric Hinderaker, Professor of History at the University of Utah, has just published *Boston's Massacre* (Harvard University Press, 2017).

On the night of March 5, 1770, British soldiers fired into a crowd gathered in front of Boston's Custom House, killing five people. Denounced as an unprovoked act of violence and villainy, the event that came to be known as the Boston Massacre is one of the most familiar incidents in American history, and yet one of the least understood. Hinderaker revisits this dramatic episode, examining in forensic detail the facts of that fateful night, the competing narratives that molded public perceptions at the time, and the long campaign afterward to transform the tragedy into a touchstone of American identity.

[Read more](#)



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Our theme for the year reflects a powerful truth: **Humanities Gives You the Edge.** Alumni of Humanities not only lead lives of extraordinary fulfillment, but they also excel at whatever they do. Our thousands of alumni unanimously tell us that **Humanities gave them the edge** that helped them succeed as excellent communicators; multi-lingual and culturally sophisticated global citizens; critical, ethical,

and logical thinkers; and outstanding creative partners. And research backs this up! Studies show that Humanities students find careers that provide financial security and job satisfaction that matches those of students in nearly every other major. Employers increasingly seek employees who have strong skills learned in Humanities (writing, problem solving, listening, speaking, critical thinking, etc.). Humanities gives people the edge they need to thrive today. How does Humanities give YOU the edge?

