

Faculty Fellowships 2005-2008

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C. Matthew Balensuela

Associate Professor of Music

An Intro to Music Notation and Theory: Performance, Analysis, and Composition

While there are currently a number of introductory music theory texts, the goal of “An Intro to Music Notation and Theory: Performance, Analysis, and Composition” is to synthesize what I perceive to be the various reasons students pursue an introductory study of music. The proposed text places equal priority on the accurate performance of music notation and the application of music theory to the study and analysis of music, while providing introductory exercises in music composition from the very beginning of study. At the core of the text is a series of exercises which ask the student to take an incomplete musical theme or motive and provide three possible conclusions to it: repetition, variation, contrast. Through these exercises, students are asked to perform short music examples, to study and to analyze possible musical structures, and to compose rudimentary music within a specific and guided framework. In addition to these exercises, the proposed text will also contain a number of other features which will help introductory students understand music notation and theory.

- Introducing the concept of cadence at every level of musical structure including rhythm and melodies. This will lead to discussions of form and composition much earlier in the student’s study of music.
- Exercises in writing melodies limited to the major and minor scale patterns. This will demand that a student considers such aspects of music as rhythm, rests, dynamics, and other expressive elements in the early composition exercises.
- Gradually introducing a limited number of intervals to include in melodic composition.
- More exercises for a student to re-write actual music in score notation into familiar forms and structures (scales, smaller intervals, chords in closed position) to provide more support for the study of music.

The proposed text will expect students to consider the artistic and aesthetic issues in musical structures from the first exercises in the book as a way to understand music’s technical vocabulary and symbols as well as a way to explore music’s emotional resonance.

Howard L. Brooks

Professor of Physics and Astronomy

Modifying the Physics and Astronomy Instructional Delivery System Utilizing the Laptop Initiative and DyKnow

Building on the foundation of the Laptop Initiative and DePauw's implementation of the interactive computer based learning system, DyKnow, this project will modify the instructional delivery system used in the introductory course in physics and astronomy. Software will be tested, organized, and where necessary developed, to allow student laptop computers to control all data gathering equipment in the laboratories. These software packages, one for each type of supported laptop computer, will be packaged onto a single CD-ROM for student use. Classroom learning will be enhanced by allowing anonymous student responses to questions presented by the instructor through DyKnow. Complete sets of interactive questions will be developed for the two semester calculus-based introductory course and the liberal arts physics course. In addition to the standard multiple choice response questions, the project will develop a set of graphic response questions utilizing small graphics tablets that students will connect to their laptop computers. Instructors will be able to display anonymously the student sketches for the rest of the class. The proposal will check for improvement in student learning through diagnostic tests that are used in physics courses across the nation.

Vanessa D. Dickerson
Professor of English

African American Women Abroad in Twentieth-Century Fiction

While there has been an explosion of scholarly and critical studies of travel, of empire, of tourism, even of the concept of the home and homelands, there has been very little written about the travel of African Americans. This dearth of writing on the subject can be explained in part by the legacy of the institution that severely restricted the mobility of black men, women, and children—slavery. Given the fact that the movement of blacks, both slave and free, was strictly monitored and curtailed within the United States, the possibility of travel abroad was, it is hardly surprising, practically non-existent during the early and well into the later part of the nineteenth century. Passage beyond the big house itself could prove perilous for the black person who attempted transit without a written pass. The penalty for venturing beyond the plantation or escaping to the North or Canada was whipping, branding, mutilation, or death. The fear thereby instilled, coupled with monetary constraints alone rendered the prospect of travel, well into the twentieth century a daunting and rare occurrence for blacks. But travel blacks did, albeit in much smaller numbers than whites. The project I am proposing, “African American Women Abroad in Twentieth-Century Fiction,” will examine blacks as travelers, more specifically it will study fictional representations of African American women abroad in the twentieth century. The three chapters I plan to write of this book-length study will address such questions as the following: Why does this writer send her protagonist abroad? What does the experience abroad reveal that a domestic or local experience cannot? What do these travel fictions by African American women signify about the politics of identity, the phenomenon of transculturation, and the definitions and re-definitions of home? These and similar questions will inform the analysis of works by such writers as Nella Larsen, Jessie Fauset, and Andrea Lee.

Thomas S. Dickinson

Professor of Education Studies

Dewey, Addams, and Montessori: An Examination of Three Progressive Educators

John Dewey, Jane Addams and Maria Montessori are three giants of the last century. They are internationally significant in their respective areas of philosophy and education, social work, and child development and learning. However, they are also significant for the time in which they did their work and the era that they shaped—the progressive era. As well, these three reformers are significant today as we move toward achieving their goals of significant learning opportunities for children and adults and a rich and fruitful life.

This project will focus on a study of these three giants of the progressive era through a structured investigation of their written work; written work about them and their time; attendance at education conferences, seminars or workshops; visits to important schools, historical sites, museums, and exhibits associated with them; and electronic dialogue with other colleagues interested in the progressive era and particularly the importance, life and work of Dewey, Addams and Montessori.

Tim Good

Assistant Professor of Communication and Theatre

The Living Theatre and the Importance of Space

The Living Theatre and the Importance of Space is a book-length study covering the work of The Living Theatre fifty years after its founding. The Living Theatre is one of a handful of performance groups coming out of the cauldron of experimental theater in the 1950s and '60s who are still creating new work. They have stayed the course of revolutionary pacifist idealism while changing their forms to fit both their ideals and the times.

The Living Theatre became notorious in the 1960s for cutting edge plays such as *The Brig*, *Frankenstein*, and *Paradise Now*. These plays assaulted the audience, brought fame to the company, and stamped this confrontational image of The Living Theatre into the minds of most people who have heard of the group. The truth is that they realized that this violent form worked against their radically pacifist ideals, and they have since continued to grow into new forms that work with the members of the audience to invite them into the pacifist ideals of the group.

The Living Theatre has always had a dual existence in Europe and in New York. This will take on an even more vital reality as they open a new home on 49th Street in Manhattan. Since 1995, they have had a European base in Rochetta Ligure, Italy, near Genoa, and have performed in New York in rented spaces such as the Theatre for the New City. They will maintain their presence in Italy as they open their fifth different space in Manhattan in 2005.

The goal of this study is to reveal The Living Theatre as the current, creative force that they still are, and to examine why having a physical performance space of their own is so important.

Carl A. Huffman

Professor of Classical Studies

Aristoxenus and the History of Ancient Pythagoreanism

The project will be to complete a book-length study on the fragments of the Greek philosopher Aristoxenus that deal with the history of philosophy. Aristoxenus (370-300 B.C.) is not as famous a name as Plato or Aristotle, but he was an important figure in the golden age of Greek philosophy. He began by studying with Pythagoreans in his native Tarentum, a Greek city in southern Italy, but then came to Athens and joined Aristotle's Lyceum, where he became a leading candidate to succeed Aristotle as head of the school. He had a staggering output of over 400 books, although most only survive in fragments. Aristoxenus is most famous for his writings on Greek musical theory. He was also, however, a central figure in the development of Greek biography and in writing the history of philosophy. He wrote lives of Socrates and Plato and a series of works on ancient Pythagoreanism. One of the most interesting of these latter works is the Pythagorean Precepts, which provides an outline of Pythagorean ethics. We are woefully ignorant about the history of Pythagoreanism, since Pythagoras himself (570-490 B.C.) wrote nothing, and we are particularly ignorant about Pythagorean moral philosophy. I will carry out a book length study of the fragments of Aristoxenus' The Pythagorean Precepts, in order to determine what they can tell us about the Pythagorean ethical system and its relation to Platonic and Aristotelian ethics and in order to evaluate Aristoxenus as a historian of philosophy. This latter goal will also require me to study the fragments of Aristoxenus' other works in the history of philosophy: The Life of Socrates, The Life of Plato, The Life of Archytas, Pythagoras and his Associates, and The Pythagorean Life.

Leslie R. James

Assistant Professor of Religious Studies

Wilson Harris and Caribbean Poetics: Religion at the Crossroads of Civilization

Fiction is an important tool in the dialectic between religion and the pursuit of identity, meaning and purpose within the framework of national development. It is a vehicle for exploring questions outside the framework of dogmatic, codified answers. The writings of Wilson Harris, especially his novels, are a classic example of this phenomenon. Wilson Harris is a major Caribbean writer who raises questions and takes on journeys into the interior of our consciousness to confront the questions we have ignored and to explore the possible solutions to the existential dilemmas we face. From a literary perspective his work has tremendous religious significance both for the Caribbean and the world. The questions he asks and explores in his fictional and other writings are of universal import. They offer clues as to how humankind can go about the task of individual reconstruction at the individual, local, national, and international levels. Further, they offer possibilities for exploring and negotiating the birth of a cross-cultural humanity. Within Harris's project of humanization the role of religion is central, though mostly ignored. This project seeks to excavate and structure the religious worldview implicit in Harris' works. The goal of this study is both to elucidate Harris's religious implications and to offer some degree of hope for contemporary humanity to transcend the legacy of brokenness.

Jeffrey M. McCall

Professor of Communication and Theatre

Media Literacy for the Masses

Much research indicates that American media consumers are generally unaware of the processes used by media producers and the impact of mediated messages in our society. It can be said, then, that many Americans are media illiterate. This project will lead to a series of op-ed newspaper columns that will help to explain media practices and content to consumers of mass media. Citizens who better understand how the media operate are better positioned to critically examine their own media habits and assess the impact of the media in their lives. Further, media literate citizens are empowered to demand the kind of entertainment and news coverage they deserve. Since the nation's educational systems, and the media organizations themselves, fail to provide suitable insight on media processes, the proposed op-ed columns can make a contribution to providing this insight. Media consumers need to know more about how news judgments are made, how television programs affect culture, how the media affect the political process, how corporate ownership affects content, and how the federal regulatory system can help or hinder the generation of suitable media content.

Marcia A. McKelligan
Professor of Philosophy

Two Courses in Applied Ethics

When is war just? Is it morally permissible to destroy human embryos for medical research? Should homosexual couples be allowed to marry? Should the death penalty be abolished? Are CEOs overpaid? How pernicious are the effects of sex and violence in the media? I don't remember another time when the public was as passionately interested as it is now in such a large number of serious and complex moral questions. Yet the quality of the public debate on these issues is dreadful: simplistic, driven by slogans, and often remarkably uninformed. Since a sophisticated understanding of these issues is vital in a democratic society, a complete undergraduate education should include attention to them, and indeed, virtually all departments offer courses that address pressing social problems. The moral philosopher can make a unique and especially valuable contribution to this enterprise. Ethics courses help sensitize students to the moral dimensions of social issues, heighten their awareness of the moral complexity of these issues, give students the analytical tools they need to make sound moral judgments, and, perhaps most important of all, promote respect for rationality and objectivity of judgment.

In this project I will develop two courses in applied ethics: Biomedical Ethics and Contemporary Moral Controversies. Biomedical Ethics is one of the philosophy department's most sought-after courses. Because of my interest in the subject matter and its connection with other things I teach, I have volunteered to prepare to teach the course. My course will cover such topics as euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide, assisted reproduction and surrogate motherhood, abortion, research on human subjects, genetic testing, and allocation of medical resources. Contemporary Moral Controversies would be new to the philosophy curriculum and would deal with a wide range of issues, which might include but would not be limited to such topics as war, media ethics, embryonic stem cell research, sexual ethics, animal rights, and affirmative action.

Sherry J. Mou

Assistant Professor of Modern Languages and Asian Studies

Through the Confucian Lens: The Literati Tradition and the Contemporary Chinese Film

My book, *Through the Confucian Lens: The Literati Tradition and Contemporary Chinese Film*, will make an historical analysis of contemporary Chinese film from three angles. The first two examine distinctive features of Chinese cinema: the cinematic interpretation of historical personages and events and the cultural tradition behind the wuxia (martial-arts/knight-errantry) films. Both features show that Confucianism is a deep-rooted cultural framework in Chinese cinema. The wuxia films are perhaps the most unique contribution Chinese culture has provided to the cinematic world. Derived from the xia culture of China's Shang dynasty, the wuxia films are both a manifestation of and reaction to Confucian tenets. The xia (Chinese knight-errant) exists outside the law, but defends in spirit the very same set of Confucian ideals, such as honor, loyalty, righteousness, and integrity. Finally, the book discusses one director's film career as a process of Confucianization. The thirteen films Zhang Yimou directed so far can be interpreted in terms of Chairman Mao's famed political slogan—"Criticizing Confucius, Praising Emperor Qin." Taking *To Live* (1993) and *Shanghai Triad* (1994) as a watershed, we can see the five films before *To Live* as critiques of the traditional clan family system, a foundation of Confucianism. The five films since *Shanghai Triad* show Zhang's gradual embrace of Confucian thoughts and his identification with traditional virtues, cumulating in *Hero* (2001) where Zhang completes the other half of the Mao slogan by taking the stance of "praising Emperor Qin." Whether criticizing the Confucian tradition or aligning with the ruling ideology, in Zhang's films throbs a lively Confucian heartbeat from the nervous years immediately after Mao's demise to the heat of the rising capitalistic market economy.

Jacqueline R. Roberts

Associate Professor of Chemistry

Understanding Archaeal Transcriptional Regulatory Networks

Genomic and proteomic studies highlight the importance of defining roles for gene products within the context of cellular regulatory networks in order to provide an understanding of biological systems. Structural biology, biochemical characterization, and genetic analysis offer a unique integrative approach to address evolution of transcriptional regulators and transcriptional regulatory networks in Archaea. While much is known about Eukarya and Bacteria, a lot still remains to be discovered about the workings of the domain Archaea. To explore more about archaeal gene regulation and the evolutionary ties between the three domains, this research project will focus on determining the structure and function of an archaeal gene regulatory protein. The genome of *Methanosarcina acetivorans* (MA) has been searched and seven putative genes have been identified to code for ArsR “winged” helix-turn-helix transcription factors. Previous results have yielded cloned plasmids for a number of these transcription factors. While additional clones still must be obtained, the focus of this research project will begin to shift towards expression, purification and characterization of the gene products. Native and his6-tagged versions of each putative regulatory protein will be expressed in *E. coli*. Native protein will be purified by heparin affinity chromatography, and his6-tagged protein will be purified by nickel affinity chromatography. Each of these proteins will be characterized for structural and functional studies, which include protein crystallography, metal characterization, DNA binding properties, and allosteric effector binding. This work will enhance our understanding of control mechanisms for various important biological processes such as nitrogen fixation, amino acid metabolism, and methanogenesis in Archaea. In turn, these studies will integrate this information at a genomic level to provide insight into gene regulatory networks and genome evolution in microbes.