ON THE COVER: The Cantino World Chart, created anonymously in Lisbon in 1502, presents a stunning view of the world based on the knowledge of sailors, navigators, sea captains and merchants. Named for Alberto Cantino, who obtained it for the Duke of Ferrara, it shows Portuguese maritime discoveries and trading opportunities in Africa, America and Asia.
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I am delighted to report that the Humanities Research Center was recently selected by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to host a John E. Sawyer Seminar on the Comparative Study of Cultures. Titled, “Platforms of Knowledge in a Wide Web of Worlds: Production, Participation and Politics,” the seminar will be held during the 2015–16 academic year and will coincide with the 25th anniversary of the World Wide Web. Faculty, staff, postdoctoral fellows, graduate students and undergraduates will come together to explore, critique and experience programmable computing environments that support knowledge creation and transmission. E-learning, publishing, researching, text-mining and crowd-sourcing platforms will be studied not only because of the large-scale changes they promise but also because of the questionable obsolescence they provoke.

Digital Humanities as an area of study to which the Sawyer Seminar belongs happens to figure among HRC’s three ongoing initiatives along with Public and Medical Humanities. Diverse as they may be, all three initiatives have the potential at Rice to resemble each other structurally in the sense that each of them has an existing research constituency on campus, can be connected to strong local partners and is likely to add programming to the university’s curriculum. For example, many course offerings at Rice already fall in the categories of both Public and Medical Humanities and so do the research projects of such faculty members as Kirsten Ostherr and Caleb McDaniel. Internship programs associated with the Texas Medical Center and with Houston museums already exist as well. Should these two areas be officially associated with an introductory course, a series of electives and a practicum (spent literally across the street from campus), it might therefore become evident that two additional minors ought to be added to Rice’s curriculum. All three areas would benefit greatly were we to host postdocs working on related fields and who can assist in keeping both minors and the certificate program up to date.

All this remains to be seen in the coming year and, in the meantime, a debt of gratitude is owed to the many people who have contributed their time and support to the HRC. Carl Caldwell has stepped down as a member of the faculty advisory panel after completing his three-year term. A farewell bid also is owed to our Autrey Visiting Scholars Ian Balfour, Ana Maria Tavares and Catherine Wilson; to our Mellon Postdoctoral Fellows, Sarah Stevens, Mariola Alvarez and Elizabeth Farfán Santos; as well as to all the Rice Seminar visiting fellows, Keith Ansell-Pearson, Jess Keiser, Lenny Moss and Angie Willey ... ce n’est qu’un au revoir, I hope. I would, in turn, like to welcome Anthony Brandt, who will be joining the panel, and to our new visiting scholars Sunil Agnani (University of Illinois at Chicago), Ian Balfour (York University), Jen Hill (University of Nevada at Reno) and Jessie Reeder (University of Wisconsin at Madison), who will all be participating in this year’s Rice Seminar, “Exchanges and Temporalities in the Enlightenment, Romanticism and Victorianism.”

Looking forward as well to this year’s Autrey Visiting Scholars, Jennifer Borland (Oklahoma State University) and Erica Fudge (University of Strathclyde).

Finally, I would like to close this letter by extending the HRC’s gratitude to some of our benefactors — Sam Bickford, Jr., John ’74 and Annette Eldridge, Clint ’79 and Nancy Packer Carlson ’80, Terrence ’86 and Terri Gee, Keith Lovin ’71, Don and Nancy Mauney Mafrige ’59, Lily McKaege ’09, Jane and Charles Szalowski ’70, and Mary John Vexler ’03 — for making our programming possible. Additional thanks are owed to Dean Nicolas Shumway for his staunch support and the HRC staff for making it possible for me to direct the center: Melissa Bailar, associate director, Lauren Kleinschmidt, assistant director, Ryan Bell, outreach program manager, and Carolyn Adams, center coordinator, as well as our graduate student assistants, Sydney Boyd and Karen Rosenthall.
What, then, is time? If no one asks me, I know; if I want to explain it to someone who asks me, I do not know. I can state with confidence, however, that this much I do know: if nothing passed away there would be no past time; if there was nothing still on its way there would be no future time; and if nothing existed, there would be no present time.

— St. Augustine, "Confessions," Book XI
The 2013–14 Rice Seminar, “Materialism and New Materialism Across the Disciplines,” brought together an extraordinarily collegial group of resident scholars from American and British universities spanning the disciplines of philosophy, literary studies, feminist science studies and philosophy of biology. The seminar hosted a variety of speakers over the course of the year, including Samantha Frost, Joseph Rouse, Graham Harman, Galen Strawson, John Protevi, Mel Chen, Stacy Alaimo and Charles Wolfe. In February, the group collaborated with the Anthropos Project at the University of Lyon in a conference at Rice on early modern and contemporary perspectives on materialism. Participants included Daniel Garber, a leading scholar of early modern philosophy from Princeton, and Mogens Laerke, a specialist on Spinoza and Leibniz at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique. The seminar’s year-end conference drew together the group’s individual research projects and benefited from the participation of two distinguished keynote speakers: Stuart Kauffman, a prominent biological theorist, and Katherine Hayles, a leading scholar in digital humanities and posthumanism at Duke University.

The 2014–15 Rice Seminar will look at the various assumptions that divide the 18th and 19th centuries into periods or movements, including geographical, chronological and epistemological. With a focus on the relation between Britain and the rest of the world, the seminar proposes to understand Enlightenment, Romanticism and Victorianism as interlocked yet internally contradictory terms, with specific aesthetic, literary, historical and geographic valences. The seminar offers a chance to re-examine the claim of these terms to conceptual and historical specificity and to explore their power and their limitations.


Faculty Organizers:

Helena Michie
Agnes Cullen Arnold Professor in Humanities

Michie will study the concept of simultaneity (or coevality) as it structures historical thought, with particular emphasis on 19th-century British attempts to integrate events happening at the same time in other places around the globe into timelines, popular and professional histories and mental maps. This involves thinking about different kinds of temporalities, including progressive time, belatedness, deep time, comparative time, etc.

Alexander Regier
Associate Professor of English

How can the theory, history and practice of exchange — understood in its many different ways — help us facilitate and formulate a truly comparative study of 18th- and 19th-century literature, culture and art? Regier’s project aims to answer this question in a global way, but also pays particular attention to a set of neglected Anglo-German relations during the periods of the Enlightenment, Romanticism and early Victorianism.
Faculty Participants:

Sunil Agnani
Associate Professor of English
University of Illinois at Chicago

Agnani’s research project will trace a genealogy of colonial resentment, beginning with Diderot and running through Nietzsche, paying particular attention to how conquest and colonialism are imbricated with a temporal disposition to the past, present and future.

Ian Balfour
Professor of English
York University

Balfour will focus on the idea and actuality of the nation in Britain in the era of the French Revolution, when historical forces that could not quite have been predicted generated new sorts of narratives and figurations of the nation (and nations) only partly enabled by stories of progress in the 18th century. Attention to writing of the Romantic period early, middle and late (Volney, Coleridge, De Quincey) will highlight the national imaginary in its fraught re-fashioning under the pressure of the facts of the British empire as it is expounded and contested.

Leo Costello
Associate Professor of Art History
Rice University

Costello’s project, titled Pictures of Nothing: Romantic Figurations of the Void, is best characterized as a materialist history of “nothing.” That is, while Hazlitt’s phrase about Turner’s work (Pictures of nothing, and very like) is often cited, it is rarely analyzed with respect to the concrete conditions which produced it and in which it gained meaning. This study will address Romantic depictions of nothingsness, absence, void and immateriality within related theological, sociopolitical and aesthetic/literary discursive networks.

Jen Hill
Associate Professor of English and Director of Gender, Race and Identity Program
University of Nevada at Reno

Hill’s project, The Barometric Real, looks at 19th-century data visualization and how it made visible new connections between local and global conditions, discrete experience and larger systems. Hill is interested in formal and thematic traces of these relational patterns in cultural products of the Victorian period, including poetry, the realist novel, the sensation novel, opera and choral music.

Jessie Reeder
Ph.D., English
University of Wisconsin at Madison

Reeder reads canonical British authors alongside Latin American writers (in their native Spanish) in order to understand how 19th-century British-Latin American contact and the newly emergent practices of “informal empire” troubled preexisting master narratives of international and transatlantic contact. In particular, Reeder claims, Atlantic informal empire runs forcefully afool of the notion of progress that scholars have thought to underpin so much Enlightenment and 19th-century thought.

Rice Graduate Student Participants:

Lindsey Chappell
English

Chappell’s project explores how 19th-century literature experiments with alternative temporal paradigms, such as fractals. It maintains that travel writing, in particular, narratives concerning the Mediterranean region, constructs multiplicitous, dynamic temporalities that try to resolve the paradox of past and present coexistence in places designated as “ancient.”

Jennifer Hargrave
English

Hargrave’s project, The Romantic Reinvention of Imperial China, 1759–1857, establishes literature’s relevance to the development of Anglo-Sino relations during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. She analyzes canonical and archival texts of both European and Chinese origin ranging from 1697, the year of Leibniz’s earliest commentary on China in Novissima Sinica, to 1857, the publication year of Thomas De Quincey’s essay “China,” that reveal Britain’s increasingly tenuous relationship with the Chinese.
While Digital Humanities projects received much funding and attention, the digital turn has brought to academia many changes as yet unexpected. The seminar plans to incubate a multidisciplinary and broadly humanistic collaboration among technology innovators, visiting scholars, faculty and students. This cohort will critically investigate digital knowledge platforms (e.g., e-learning, publishing, collaborative research or crowd-sourced). Such platforms enable faculty and students to discover, analyze and share information, collaborate without regard to barriers of space and time, and widely publish their work. They thus uphold a fundamental academic mission to promote the discovery and dissemination of knowledge, yet they also raise questions about expertise, access to information, whether quantification and metrics are valued over humanistic knowledge and wisdom, the power shifts from educational institutions to profit-seeking companies, and the loss of academic autonomy and diversity.

Farès el-Dahdah and Melissa Bailar of the HRC and Lisa Spiro of Fondren Library will serve as principal investigators on the three-year grant, one of 10 Sawyer Seminars awarded in 2014. They will convene a collective of faculty, staff and students from Rice and area institutions and hire a postdoctoral fellow through an international search to explore the ways in which the digital turn is reshaping academic and other infrastructures. The seminar will produce both digital and print reflections on various aspects of this question as well as a website to feature the participants’ activities.
Each year, the HRC advances teaching and research opportunities in the humanities by hosting outstanding external scholars for a one-semester or one-year residency. By engaging in new research, symposia and works-in-progress discussions, the fellows play an active scholarly role in the center. Fellows also teach an undergraduate or graduate course.

The 2014–2015 scholars are:

Jennifer Borland  
Associate Professor of Art History  
Oklahoma State University

Domesticating Knowledge: Household Health and the Late Medieval Illustrated Manuscripts of the “Régime du corps”  
(2014–15 academic year)

Borland’s book project considers several illustrated copies of “Régime du corps,” a late medieval health guide written by the physician of an ambitious French countess for her to pass on to her daughters. Although these six illuminated manuscripts represent a relative anomaly in the extensive transmission and dissemination of the “Régime” text, they are much more than luxurious examples of conspicuous consumption. These indicate that the domestic sphere remained central to the maintenance of health in spite of medicine’s increasing professionalization.

Erica Fudge  
Professor of English  
University of Strathclyde

(Fall 2014)

Fudge’s current research project examines an aspect of early modern English society that until now has escaped detailed attention: the world of affective human-livestock relations. Before the intensification of farming, many people lived very closely with animals such as cows, pigs and poultry. This project goes beyond the work of agricultural and economic history to think about what people thought and felt about their livestock animals and what the animals themselves would have experienced in their working lives. Fudge will examine chapters from Edward Topsell’s “Historie of Four-Footed Beastes” (1607) to see how modern scholarship finds it difficult to read zoology with philology, theology alongside butchery and myth as part of household management.
RICE FACULTY FELLOWS

Randal Hall
Associate Professor of History
U.S. Ltd.: How a People of Plenty Discovered the Limits to Growth

Resource scarcity is a key part of American political and economic conversations. The recent “peak oil” scare, battles over water, and limited supplies of phosphorus and rare earth elements regularly make today’s headlines; however, vigorous debate about resource abundance and scarcity has long been a part of American intellectual life. Hall asks when and how Americans abandoned the idea of inexhaustibility and came to see resource scarcity as an issue. In a series of case studies, he connects 19th-century debates about soil fertility, timber resources and coal supplies with 20th-century scares about overpopulation and dwindling resources. Taking this long view underscores the challenge facing today’s environmental movement as it looks toward an uncertain future.

Shirine Hamadeh
Associate Professor of Art History
Streets of Istanbul

Hamadeh’s work reflects on innovative ways of writing about Middle Eastern cities that allow us to imagine, with historical precision, a city as a lived-in space. It is an effort to visualize in the near absence of contemporary maps and images early modern Istanbul as a spatial fabric inseparable from the social fabric that shaped and inhabited it. Hamadeh focuses on Istanbul’s floating populations, in whose lives the street occupied a crucial place. Their paradoxical condition as socially peripheral yet central to most urban matters, allows her to consider issues rarely brought together, from zoning to welfare, to morality and citizenry.

Shih-shan Susan Huang
Associate Professor of Art History
First Impressions: Chinese Religious Woodcuts, 850–1450

Huang’s book-length study on the Golden Age of Chinese religious woodcuts explores the style, meaning and context of religious printed images. Huang traces how such images may be linked to earlier conventions across such media as seals, clay tiles, printed textiles, stone steles, rubbings and paintings. She further
argues that Chinese printmakers combined recyclable modular designs with other motifs to create new compositions addressing different themes and storylines. The study examines religious printing associated with regimes established by nomadic people active in China and different uses of Buddhist and Daoist printed images, including instruction, divination, healing, worship, visualization, contract and other ritual purposes.

Maya Soifer Irish
Assistant Professor of History
The Pogroms of 1391 and the Crisis of Authority in Fourteenth-Century Spain

The massacres and forced conversions of Jews carried out by Christians in the kingdoms of Castile and Aragon permanently altered the physical and spiritual landscape of Jewish life in Spain, creating a large class of conversos who faced lingering suspicions about the sincerity of their commitment to Christianity. The Spanish Inquisition was created in the late 1470s to investigate these “new Christians” suspected of judaizing. Considered one of the worst outbreaks of anti-Jewish violence in medieval Europe, the pogroms took place in the midst of economic and political changes accompanied by social unrest and violence. Irish argues that the crisis of authority in the Spanish realms during the 14th century fostered the growth of a “transformative anti-Judaism” ideology, which firmly linked the Jews with the established order and its many failures.

Suzanne Kemmer
Associate Professor of Linguistics
Towards a Dynamic Usage-Based View of Language

Kemmer’s monograph draws together the leading ideas of dynamic usage-based linguistics to consider the role of small linguistic acts. She examines how they are at the same time a product of the dynamic operation of the linguistic system and how, once they are repeated sufficiently in language use, they become a shaping force of the language of the user, and over time, of the language of the community as a whole.

Christopher Sperandio
Assistant Professor of Visual and Dramatic Arts
Cargo Space

Cargo Space is a mobile residency custom-built inside the frame of a working diesel transit bus. This Grennan and Sperandio project has been established as a new social artwork consisting of artists, writers and scholars, to foster a robust exchange of ideas, information and resources. Beginning in July, the Cargo Space embarked on a 2,700-mile journey from Houston to art centers in Minneapolis, Milwaukee, Chicago, Peoria and St. Louis and back again, playing host to more than 30 artists and engaging a diverse array of audiences in the context of exhibitions, lectures and public seminars.

Harvey Yunis
Professor of Classical Studies
Plato’s Symposium: Original and Later Contexts

This project combines two ways of studying the symposium that are usually conducted separately: understanding the dialogue in its original context of 4th-century B.C. Greece and examining the most interesting and influential interpretations of it that have been put forward, in multifarious contexts, through the ages. The published volume will contain the Greek text and an English translation of the dialogue, a commentary on the dialogue in its original context, and a select history of the interpretation and reception of the dialogue from its origins until today.
EACH YEAR, THE HRC AWARDS COMPETITIVE FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT TO SEVERAL HUMANITIES CONFERENCES TO SHARE IDEAS AND SPUR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW AREAS OF RESEARCH WITH SCHOLARS FROM ACROSS THE GLOBE. THE 2014–15 CONFERENCE SCHEDULE INCLUDES:

The American Yawp
Nov. 7–9, 2014

“American Yawp” is a collaboratively built, open-access American history textbook constructed by nearly 300 historians. This event will critically reflect on the nature of the digital medium and strategies for the practical construction of new resources. The conference will bring together several of the book’s contributors to consider the future of textbooks in an open digital age.

Africa at A.D. 1000: Scalar Transformations and Global Interactions at the Turn of the Millennium
Spring 2015

This event will explore regional transformations that occurred across Africa in the crucial centuries that straddle A.D. 1000. Papers will explore the basis for dramatic transformations that occurred at that time: the emergence of large-scale complex societies, significant increases in long-distance trade, and transformations in the scale of production and consumption.

Earth, Air, Water, Fire: Brenda Hillman and the Art of Ecology
Spring 2015

This will be the first major symposium on the works of award-winning contemporary poet and activist Brenda Hillman, whose poetry represents a high watermark for poetic engagements with both the politics and the lived experience of ecology, energy and climate change. A consideration of this particular author’s work will lead to discussions on the larger landscape of ecopoetics and activism in North America.

New Directions in Anthropology
March 2015

The 2015 session of this biannual conference jointly sponsored by Rice and the University of Texas at Austin Department of Anthropology will focus on areas of interdisciplinarity, diverse forms of media and the increase in undergraduate students in the field. Previous sessions have made connections between the two institutions in areas of Latin America, media, and architecture and infrastructure.
Each year, participants from across the humanities learn about grant and award processes and refine their research project proposals for specific opportunities. The sessions are guided by Phyllis McBride, director of proposal development in Rice’s Office of Research. McBride, who holds a Ph.D. in English, brings extensive experience in grant preparation and familiarity with funding resources.

During the fall semester, up to six graduate students draft a research or fellowship project proposal, share it with other participants and learn how to apply to various funding resources. Introductory sessions help students cull strategic information from requests for proposals, as well as search for appropriate funding sources for their work. In subsequent sessions, individual proposals are critiqued in group discussions. During the spring semester, a group of faculty meets in a similar format to prepare and submit fellowship proposals or requests for research funding.

Participants have praised the feedback obtained from their colleagues and McBride, and several have received prestigious awards. One recent successful participant is Jesus Vasallo, assistant professor of architecture, who received a research and development grant from the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Visual Arts. His project, Building With Images, explores the evolving relationships between young, central European photographers and architects as they produce architectural documentaries. Past participants have also received awards from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the American Association of University Women.
Workshops: Faculty Research

After Globalization and Theory

To study problems of post-globalization, this workshop will examine ways that recent fiction by international creative writers negotiate what Caribbean novelist and theoretician Edouard Glissant identifies as the chaos and instable memory inherent in the fluidity of contemporary geocultural production. Invited speakers will explore the conflicts and confluences between cultural memories and utterances in multiple disciplines, as well as proprietary imagination approached from a longitudinal perspective.

Organized by: Bernard Aresu, professor of French studies

Cognition, Culture and the Humanities

Situated cognition is considered dependent on the situation or context in which it occurs, whether local or more global. This workshop will foster interdisciplinary exchange and innovative research across the humanities to challenge dominant views of the mind, such as the idea that the mind is identical to or realized in the brain, or that cognition is explained by reference to computational and representational theories of mind.

Organized by: April DeConick, the Isla Carroll and Percy E. Turner Professor of Biblical Studies

Competitively funded each year, these workshops convene discussions among faculty across the humanities and social sciences and visiting scholars. Considering new paradigms in current research as well as innovative research paths, these workshops often spur the creation of new curricula and research agendas in the humanities.
History of Philosophy

This workshop focuses on the history of European thought from Greek antiquity to the present to contextualize contemporary intellectual debates and bridge conventional boundaries between philosophy, political thought, literary studies, and the history and philosophy of science. To provide a focused forum for the presentation, discussion, and dissemination of research in the history of philosophy and European intellectual history, it connects existing research at Rice to new developments in both North America and Europe through the invitation of distinguished guest speakers.

Organized by: Martin Blumenthal-Barby, assistant professor of German studies

Women in Philosophy: Why So Few?

Underrepresentation of women in philosophy leadership has been a growing subject of concern in institutions. The impact of implicit bias and stereotyping on academic decisions in philosophy has largely not been understood. Through conferences to highlight gender and other inequalities and focused discussions with prominent scholars to identify underlying factors for the marginalization of underrepresented groups, this workshop strives to find ways to effect positive change.

Organized by: Richard Grandy, the Carolyn and Fred McManis Professor of Philosophy

Global Hispanism

Brazilian cultural theory provides an interdisciplinary forum to consider the historical realities of Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian cultures. In particular, the workshop will interrogate how cultural production and social organization in Brazil have been informed by the country’s position on the periphery of capitalism.

Organized by: Leonora Paula, assistant professor of Spanish and Portuguese

Cultural Studies of Science, Technology, Engineering, Medicine and Mathematics

This workshop has presented wide-ranging topics such as courtroom evidence as considered in law and science, the “perfect model” of science itself and distinctive features of nanoscience research. It will continue to bring speakers to campus whose work engages the intersection of the humanities, sciences (both social and natural), engineering and medicine.

Organized by: Richard Grandy, the Carolyn and Fred McManis Professor of Philosophy

Nontenure Track Faculty First-Book Workshop

This workshop addresses the gap in institutional support for nontenure track faculty in the humanities and social sciences as they work toward publishing their first books. This is accomplished by providing internal peer feedback within the group, general publishing advice from junior and senior scholars, and discipline-focused feedback from colleagues beyond Rice.

Organized by: Brian Riedel, professor in the practice of humanities and assistant director of the Center for the Study of Women, Gender and Sexuality

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Organized by: Leonora Paula, assistant professor of Spanish and Portuguese
THE HRC AND OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF HUMANITIES ARE PLEASED TO AWARD HUMANITIES RESEARCH INNOVATION FUND GRANTS TO RICE FACULTY ENGAGED IN AMBITIOUS INTERDISCIPLINARY AND COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH PROJECTS. THE FUND PROVIDES SEED GRANTS FOR PROJECTS TO DEVELOP INNOVATIVE RESEARCH PARADIGMS FOR CONDUCTING HUMANITIES RESEARCH OR ASK PIONEERING QUESTIONS WITHIN EXISTING PARADIGMS. THIS FUND SUPPORTS RESEARCH PROJECTS THAT MIGHT LEAD TO LARGER ENDEAVORS, EXTERNAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES OR UNUSUALLY INNOVATIVE COLLABORATIONS. 2014–2015 PROJECTS INCLUDE:

**Expanding the Linguistic Holdings of the Houston Asian American Archive**

The Houston Asian American Archive (HAAA) collects oral histories and documents related to Houston’s Asian-American immigrant experience. It now seeks to expand its holdings to include Asian-language items to better document the unique cultural legacy of Asian-Americans as local residents and as (trans)national and global citizens. Two workshops will explore ideas for the development and implementation of the expansion of the archive, including ethics, proposed procedures, sustainability and funding.

Organized by: Christina Willis Oko, assistant professor of linguistics, and Linda Ho Peche, project manager of the Houston Asian American Archive at the Chao Center for Asian Studies

**Archiving the Future: The Recovery of a Heritage in the Making**

Building from a 2013–14 Innovation Fund Grant, the second phase of Archiving the Future will continue to highlight a new generation of Latin American writers in the United States who possess a distinctive poetic voice anchored in the experience of displacement. The archive will expand this coming year, inviting new writers to submit longer manuscripts that contribute to new understandings of the global phenomenon of displacement that is reshaping local communities as well as the notion of a national literary tradition.

Organized by: Gisela Heffes, associate professor of Spanish and Portuguese
Renaissance Life Webs is a long-term, collaborative and multidisciplinary digital humanities project devoted to creating an open-source repository of Renaissance natural history texts. The project will yield an editorial collective where scholars will "sign on" to edit and annotate various works. The project will be an open, yet controlled crowd-sourced site that will provide access to select Renaissance texts in modern editions, some for the first time. The larger digital project hopes to tap into the ethos of the hive through a collective of scholars where many produce modern editions for the benefit of the larger community.

Organized by: Joseph Campana, the Alan Dugald McKillop Professor of English Literature

The Summer Institute for Women Surfers will gather various female surfers, business owners and activists to examine questions relating to feminist storytelling practices and issues of work and livelihood and to create spaces for peer teaching, learning and mutual aid.

Organized by: Krista Comer, associate professor of English and associate director of the Center for the Study of Women, Gender and Sexuality

Rio de Janeiro Iconography, part of the larger imagineRio interdisciplinary digital humanities project, will combine historical imagery, digital mapping and urban plans in order to understand the social and architectural history of Rio de Janeiro. This project will expand the imagineRio database to include images created by artists in the 1840s, 1870s and 1900, decades that mark major transformations in the city’s urban landscape.

Organized by: Alida Metcalf, the Harris Masterson, Jr. Professor of History

While the value of the humanities has been contended over the years, much of the discourse has concerned the value of the disciplines themselves rather than the ways they are taught. This project seeks to uncover and discuss innovative approaches to teaching the humanities as practiced by current instructors across the country, looking specifically at the cognitive and behavioral sciences in various pedagogical approaches.

Organized by: Joshua Eyler, director of the Center for Teaching Excellence and adjunct associate professor of the humanities
Graduate Conference Travel

When Rice Humanities graduate students receive a Ph.D., it prepares them not only for careers as faculty but also for leadership positions in commercial industries, literary firms, consulting services and nonprofit public service organizations, among others.

To assist humanities students interested in these alternative paths, the HRC works with recruiters from Rice’s human resources department to present a series of workshops offering practical advice and guidance for seeking jobs in nonacademic sectors. Additionally, the Center for Career Development administers the Strong Interest Inventory, which helps guide students to potential career paths based on their interests, followed by one-on-one counseling sessions to discuss their results. In the workshops, participants learn to identify effective resources for targeted job searches outside academia, to prepare for interviews and to highlight skills they have developed in graduate school. Rice staff and faculty coach them in composing and formatting cover letters and resumes for nonacademic jobs. Typically 12 students attend this series, which the HRC offers every other year.

During the 2013–14 academic year, the HRC, with additional funding from the School of Humanities, launched a competitive travel grant for graduate students in the School of Humanities.

Over the past several years, students have expressed the need for additional conference travel funding. Participation in conferences is an essential component of their professional development, but available resources vary widely across departments. The HRC responded to this concern with three yearly calls for graduate student proposals.

The response to the HRC’s call was prodigious: between 20 and 40 students, representing all humanities graduate departments, applied to each round. The HRC awarded $500 toward conferences in North America and $1,000 toward those elsewhere, including Puerto Rico, the United Kingdom, France, Portugal, Austria and Germany. The HRC gave 21 awards and increased the amount of available funding for this program in 2014–15 to support more students at the same levels.
MASTERCLASSES ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT UNDERGRADUATE DISCUSSION, RESEARCH AND COMMUNITY. NOW IN ITS FOURTH YEAR, MASTERCLASSES HAVE HELPED FORGE NEW RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN HUMANITIES STUDENTS AND AMONG UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE STUDENTS.

The HRC and Department of English have sponsored Literary Studies Masterclasses since the inception of the program. Group discussions conducted by guest speakers and Rice faculty explore critical questions and debates focused intensively on specific texts, objects and/or questions. Undergraduate participants also work with graduate student mentors who provide opportunities for additional discussion and a resource for questions about texts and critical writing. Masterclasses not only enrich Rice’s literary studies programs by offering students unique opportunities for intellectual engagement and interaction, they also expose students to a range of teaching styles, fields of expertise and modes of study they may not encounter in the normal course of study at Rice. Enrollment hovers at around 25 students, with many enrolling for multiple terms.

The HRC has also offered a one-year Masterclass in Digital History and considers proposals for other topics that offer undergraduate and graduate students opportunities requiring a format different from typical courses.

For the last three years the Literary Studies Masterclass has been an incredibly rewarding experience for me both as a mentor to engaged undergraduates and as a young scholar myself. The professors who visit are on the cutting edge of their fields—a session with Professor Hester Blum about tortoises in Melville’s “The Encantadas” on a snow day this spring was especially memorable. And it’s been great to get to know undergrads in such a stimulating environment. Some of the best conversations I’ve had on campus about studying English literature have been over coffee with my mentees.

— Sydney Boyd, Ph.D. student, English
Digital Humanities

Introduction to Digital Humanities

This graduate course, launched in fall 2013 as an annual offering, introduces students to current digital humanities projects as well as tools for approaching humanities research in new ways. Taught by Melissa Bailar, associate director of the HRC, and Lisa Spiro, executive director of digital scholarship services in Fondren Library, the course features faculty from across the humanistic disciplines who address trends in this expanding field and guide hands-on workshops.

Virtual Reconstruction of Historic Cities

John Hopkins, assistant professor of art history and classical studies, and Jeffrey Fleisher, associate professor of anthropology, co-taught a course in spring 2014 devoted to the virtual reconstruction of real urban landscapes. Two urban societies were studied, those of ancient Rome and the medieval Swahili on the Eastern African coast. Teams of students from humanities, social sciences, architecture and computer science completed a series of projects that created a fully interactive 3-D reconstruction of now-ruined or lost structures.

Diachronic Mapping: The Rice University Campus

Farès el-Dahdah, director of the HRC, will teach this course in spring 2015 with Centennial Historian Melissa Kean. The class will be conducted as a workshop where students will produce a diachronic map—a map whose topography or structures change over a period of time and that includes embedded visual archives—of the early years of the Rice University campus. Instruction will include training in modeling, geographical mapping and digital archiving software such as Rhino, ArcGIS and Shared Shelf.
Digital Humanities Working Group
Lisa Spiro, executive director of digital scholarship services at Rice’s Fondren Library, established a campuswide reading/discussion/working group focused on digital humanities, with funding from the HRC. The group includes Rice faculty, graduate students and staff in a range of disciplines who have experience or interest in working on DH projects. Through workshops and strategy meetings, the group raises awareness of DH activities across the Rice campus; fosters conversation, collaboration and experimentation; and helps Rice grow in incorporating digital approaches into research and teaching, particularly in the humanities.

Project-Based Learning in the Humanities
This workshop session of the Digital Humanities Working Group focused on Rice humanities and social sciences courses that include innovative digital projects, such as building 3-D models, analyzing digital texts, developing scholarly digital resources or creating digital media. Faculty from Rice’s art history, anthropology, history, English and architecture departments discussed the ways they have incorporated projects into their courses and what their impact has been on learning.

Texas Digital Humanities Consortium
The HRC co-sponsored the inaugural Texas Digital Humanities Conference on April 2014 at the University of Houston, the first event of the new Texas Digital Humanities Consortium, of which Rice is a member. Melissa Bailar, associate director of the HRC, also is on the consortium’s program committee, along with other members of Rice faculty and staff. Keynote speakers at the event included Erez Lieberman Adien (Rice University, Baylor College of Medicine and Google Labs), Geoffrey Rockwell (University of Alberta), Tanya Clement (UT-Austin) and Elija Meeks (Stanford University). The conference explored the topic of networks in humanities-based projects as well as network theory, analysis and visualization.

Rice Between Decisions
Two critical milestones in the institutional history of Rice University occurred between 1957 and 1970: for the first time, on-campus residency was extended to female students, and just a few years later, students of color were granted admission. Graduate students Itohan Idumwonyi (religious studies) and Samhita Sunya (English) designed a digital archive project to commemorate and critique these moments in Rice’s history and oversaw undergraduates Matt Holloway and Danielle Vasquez who worked on their project during summer 2014. By designing an online, public Omeka interface for these collections, this project will allow for explorations of the relationships — tensions, synergies, overlaps and divergences — between two monumental decision-making processes that led Rice to become a co-educational and integrated residential university.
UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH PRIZE

In 2014, the HRC received 25 proposals for the prize. The HRC reviewed the abstracts and invited six finalists to present their work to an award committee comprised of Emily Todd, a humanities advisory board member and former deputy director of the Menil Collection; Randal Hall, associate professor of history and editor of the Journal of Southern History; and Melissa Bailar, HRC associate director and professor in the practice of humanities. The final projects, ranging from studies of Merlin to Biedermeier furniture, were outstanding.

Brooke Bullock, a senior in English, was the unanimous choice for the prize for her digital edition and translation of an Old English text, "Leechbook III." Bullock also took the first place School of Humanities prize.

THE HUMANITIES PROFESSIONAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM, NEW IN SUMMER 2014, PROVIDES HUMANITIES MAJORS WITH OPPORTUNITIES TO GAIN PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE, APPLY CLASSROOM LEARNING TO THE WORKPLACE, NETWORK WITH POTENTIAL EMPLOYERS AND MENTORS, AND EXPAND THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS AFTER GRADUATION. STUDENTS RECEIVE A $3,000 STIPEND IN EXCHANGE FOR EIGHT 40-HOUR WORK WEEKS OVER THE SUMMER BREAK.

In its first year, the Professional Internship Program placed four students in three companies. White Rhino selected Alex Haer in a position that gave him broad experience in a financial advising office, with tasks in marketing, human resources, operations and recruiting. Mattie Pena served as the Treadsack entrepreneurial intern, which allowed her to shadow a founding partner and spend time in the various departments of the company. Sarah Long, the Treadsack editorial intern for their food industry magazine, Sugar & Rice, had responsibilities spanning every step of the publication process, including writing and editing copy; proofreading and fact checking; researching and liaising with authors, marketing staff, designers and printers. Gloria Quintanilla spent the summer as a communications intern for Houston Independent School District, going on field assignments, taking photos and writing stories posted to HISD digital publications, as well as monitoring HISD social media accounts.

A founding purpose of the program is to help students understand the value of their humanities education in the career path and industry of their choice. The greater the variety of institutions participating in the program, the broader the horizons students will envision. We welcome opportunities well suited to the Humanities Professional Internship Program mission at both nonprofit and commercial organizations; please contact Ryan Bell at ryanb@rice.edu or 713-348-3021 with suggestions.
SINCE 2007, THE HRC HAS AWARDED MORE THAN 100 FELLOWSHIPS TO OUTSTANDING UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS INTERESTED IN WORKING ON INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH PROJECTS GROUNDED IN THE HUMANITIES.

These competitively awarded fellowships are designed to help students gain broad research skills and develop relationships with participating faculty, as well as to supplement the disciplinary development inherent in traditional programs and majors. The accompanying $3,000 stipend allows the students to work intensively during the summer with faculty engaging in humanities research. In 2014, the following students received fellowships:

Jessica Crisp (English) worked with Randal Hall (associate professor of history) on U.S. Ltd.: How a People of Plenty Discovered the Limits of Growth.

Judy Liu (Asian studies, history) worked with Harvey Yunis (professor of classical studies) on Plato's Symposium in Original and Later Contexts.

Matthew McGee (English) worked with Carl Caldwell (Samuel G. McCann Professor of History) on Conceptions of the Welfare State in German Newspapers and Journals.

Allen Simon (religion) worked with Jeff Kripal (J. Newton Rayzor Professor of Religion) on Psi-Fi: Science Fiction and the Paranormal.

Kara van Schilfgaarde (history) worked with Michael Maas (professor of history) on Include Me Out: Imperial Rome and the Peoples of the World at the End of Antiquity.

The HRC Undergraduate Research Fellowship program is made possible through the generous support of John ’74 and Annette Eldridge, Clint ’79 and Nancy Packer Carlson ’80, Keith Lovin ’71, Don and Nancy Mauney Mafrije ’59, Jane and Charles Szalowski ’70, and Lily McKeage ’09.
HEALTH, HUMANISM AND SOCIETY SCHOLARS

THE HEALTH, HUMANISM AND SOCIETY SCHOLARS PROGRAM (HHASS) PROVIDES HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO ASSIST IN RESEARCH AT VARIOUS INSTITUTIONS IN THE TEXAS MEDICAL CENTER, GIVING THEM VALUABLE EXPERIENCE IN A VARIETY OF MEDICAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH SETTINGS, INCLUDING RESEARCH INSTITUTES AND CENTERS.

HHASS identifies faculty and researchers in the Texas Medical Center who are interested in mentoring undergraduates and are currently researching topics of social science, education and/or humanities in the medical sciences. Competitively selected Rice undergraduate students are matched with projects on which they spend a full academic year assisting with research.

In 2013–14, 13 humanities students participated and worked on projects such as Ethical Issues in Fetal Surgery, Developing Campaigns to Improve HIV Testing in Community Health Centers and Impact of Scientific Research: Do Abstracts Really Matter. One HHASS student, Thomas Carroll ’16 (classics and biochemistry), was invited to participate in the National Conference on Undergraduate Research at the University of Kentucky in Lexington to present his work with participating Baylor College of Medicine faculty member Amy McGuire on her project, Ethics and the Clinical Integration of New Genomic Technologies. A firsthand account of Thomas’s experience appears below.

Student Experience Spotlight: Thomas Carroll

I was excited to see that Rice’s Health, Humanism and Society Scholars Program (HHASS) provides dozens of interdisciplinary projects where my double major of biochemistry and classical studies would be well employed. I applied to work with Amy McGuire of Baylor’s Center for Medical Ethics and Health Policy, and I have been fortunate enough to work under her direction for the past year on the MedSeq Project.

The MedSeq Project is a randomized trial of Whole Genome Sequencing, a technology that tells a person his or her risk for many health problems based on studying their entire DNA sequence. My project was to help Dr. McGuire study the potential ethical concerns surrounding whether or not to give a patient that much information and considerations that must occur before this technology is implemented into clinical practice. I am elated to be working on this project, because not only am I at the cutting edge of genetic technology, I am studying whether it would be better to know your fate or to avoid it, a question that could have been pulled straight from Greek mythology.

At the end of spring semester, Dr. McGuire suggested I apply to present my work at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research at the University of Kentucky. My project was accepted, and with the generous support from the Humanities Research Center, I was able to attend.

The three-day conference brought together students of all disciplines to present their research. The presentation skills and experience I gained in preparation for and at the conference are invaluable, but the most important thing I gained from this conference was a renewed love for research. Listening to people talk passionately about linguistics, politics, gender, science and more, I realized that the key is to search until you find your passion and then dive in. My participation in HHASS has been an invaluable step in my journey.
TO HELP STUDENTS RECOGNIZE THE ARRAY OF CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE TO HUMANITIES MAJORS, THE HRC ORGANIZES PANEL DISCUSSIONS, FEATURING PROFESSIONALS WITH DEGREES IN THE HUMANITIES WHO HAVE SUCCESSFUL CAREERS IN A BROAD RANGE OF FIELDS, INCLUDING FILM, JOURNALISM, LAW, TEACHING, PUBLISHING, LIBRARY SCIENCE, EDUCATION, ART ADMINISTRATION AND SMALL BUSINESS MANAGEMENT.

Panelists present a short history of their career paths with emphasis on the ways their humanities education contributes to their professions and the day-to-day aspects of their work. Students have the opportunity to personally connect with the speakers during an informal reception following the presentations, which has resulted in one student securing a summer internship at Kino Lorber Films and other ongoing professional conversations. The HRC offers one to two of these panels each year.
For the past several years, Gisela Heffes’ diverse talents and interests have invigorated the HRC. Both a renowned creative writer and rigorous academic, Heffes seeks and forges communities for other writers and scholars who cross different boundaries.
Heffes's first scholarly book, “Las ciudades imaginarias en la literatura latinoamericana” (2008), examined literary portrayals of nonutopian and utopian cities, and this part of her research led her to urban spaces that address environmental issues. Her second book, “Políticas de la destrucción/ Poéticas de la preservación” (2013), pursued this question further, examining how the environment intersects with Latin American representations of the city in novels, short stories, and cinematic, performative and aesthetic productions. She asks whether “ecocriticism” is an appropriate tool to analyze these narratives, given the fact that the ecological situation in Latin America is often quite distinct from that of the U.S.: rather than recycle materials out of concern for the environment, many Latin American populations must reuse discarded objects for the sake of survival. This leads Heffes to call for a “bio/ecocritical” approach.

In her creative work, Heffes also focuses on urban spaces and bio/ecocritical issues, but she additionally explores questions that she is unable to consider in her academic work. For example, she addresses more introspective, personal concerns, such as the conditions of working mothers and their struggles to balance competing responsibilities. Her latest creative work, for example, incorporates her own children’s drawings.

In 2011, Heffes hosted a conference co-sponsored by the HRC that featured other displaced creative writers. "Poetics of Displacement" highlighted displaced identity in writing and inspired the topic for an ongoing workshop, "Global Hispanicisms." The speakers in these events addressed their own experiences as creative writers living abroad, displaced for economic, political, social or professional reasons into a country with a different language. Looking toward home from a new vantage point, they wondered to whom they were writing and in what language they would express themselves. These are practical as well as aesthetic problems, as publishers often have their own demands.

Concerned not only with asking such questions but also with creating solutions, Heffes is now in her second year of a digital archiving project for contemporary Latin American creative writers living in the U.S., launched through an HRC Innovation Fund award and run in conjunction with Literal Magazine and Fondren Library. "Archiving the Future: The Recovery of a Heritage in the Making" publishes new creative work both online and in print after a rigorous vetting process.

During the 2013–14 academic year, the project published five new works and already has two lined up for fall 2014. The archive encourages experimental works that traditional publishers might find too risky, such as poetic chronicles. The different formats in which the works are available (print, PDF and e-book) render them accessible to different generations spread around the globe. The archive has garnered enthusiastic support from the Latin American community of writers in the U.S., providing them new venues to reach readers and an open access digital space for building a community. Given its success in these early stages, Heffes plans to apply for external funding to support its continued growth and incorporate video interviews with the writers and other audiovisual supports to create a more interactive contact between writers and their audiences.

Heffes has been committed to her creative writing class in Spanish at Rice, which has resulted in the founding of a student-run literary magazine in Spanish, Entre Líneas, of which she is the faculty adviser. As one of a handful of such creative writing venues in Spanish in the United States, this publication has attracted submissions from students throughout North America and Latin America. This magazine’s public impact was significant enough that Heffes was interviewed about it on Houston’s Fox News in 2013 as well as in the Rice media, which was an opportunity to reach out to the Houston community and different writers.

Heffes also has participated in the HRC’s Civic Humanist program, giving two talks on Latin American human interactions with the environment to local public high schools (Davis and Sharpstown) in spring 2014. This was her first visit to U.S. high schools, and she was surprised by students’ unawareness of the plethora of opportunities available to humanists with higher education and the stigmatism they associated with their accents. Many of the students were bilingual, but saw their Hispanic heritage as a drawback. Heffes spoke openly about the challenges of having an accent, but also explained potential benefits of speaking more than one language and knowing more than one culture. This sparked enthusiastic participation from students who had not heard this perspective and previously did not think college was a viable option for them.

Writing about cities in both her creative and scholarly work, Heffes is attuned to the particularities of the spaces we inhabit. She finds Rice a perfect fit for her multiple identities, as she has time to write creatively and can stay connected to the world of fiction authorship through her sponsored projects and her classes on creative writing in Spanish. With such diverse talents and interests, Heffes provides fresh perspectives in her scholarship, her classrooms, the Houston community, and the larger communities of creative writers and displaced Latin Americans.
The fear some have of Arabs, both historically and of late, is increasingly cloaked in the more generalizing category of islamophobia. This has the effect of rendering invisible the fear not only of Muslims because they are Arab, but also of Arab Christians or Arab Jews who are gradually and conveniently effaced from political discourse.
In its sixth year, the Civic Humanist program worked with eight local high schools in collaborative programming that brought students to the Rice campus and Rice faculty to their schools. During visits to Rice, students experienced undergraduate-led tours of the Rice Gallery’s fall 2013 installation, “Marshland” by Gaia, and lectures from Rice graduate students, outlining their personal journeys to college and providing some intellectual context for discussion of the installation. By pairing the gallery tour with a lecture, the program gave high school students a chance to participate in the dynamic style of learning that happens in a university-level humanities course. In the spring, faculty visited the high schools and spoke on their individual research with similar intentions: to show students that the traditional boundaries of subjects are more flexible in higher education, which opens up new possible areas of study.

In 2014–15, the Civic Humanist field trip program will expand to include a workshop for select high schools. Students will receive a guided tour of the gallery, listen to a lecture by Civic Humanists graduate fellow Mark Schmanko (religion) and work with exceptional undergraduates to reflect on their experiences on campus. The exercise reinforces the use of close-reading, critical thinking and idea transitioning in order to process understanding and intellectualize the experience of art. It provides time for reflection and stimulation for creative responses and is another example of how university-level humanities differs from the style of learning that pervades high school education.
Research that happens at the intersection of disciplines is at the center of the HRC’s mission to actively reflect on the future of disciplinary formations and the academic formats that contain or constrain them. In 2009 and 2011, the HRC hosted daylong symposia featuring speakers whose work highlighted connections between architecture and geography, business history and corporate strategy, moral psychology and neuroscience, and literature and digital technologies.

Each month during the 2013–14 year, the HRC hosted a different inventive visiting speaker, nominated by Rice faculty in the humanities, whose scholarly work challenges the traditional boundaries of academic disciplines. Speakers included Nicole Brossard, poet and novelist, Luis Filipe Viera Castro, nautical archaeologist (Texas A&M University), Joseph Viscomi, digital archivist (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill) and Andrew Nelson, digital music researcher and entrepreneur (University of Oregon).

In 2014–15, the HRC will bring two prominent scholars to campus to discuss the intellectual opportunities and challenges faced by emerging fields and strategies for sustaining new research models.
HUMANITIES RESEARCH CENTER
2014–2015

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The mission of the Humanities Research Center (HRC) is to identify, encourage and fund innovative research projects for faculty, graduate students and undergraduate students in the School of Humanities and beyond. This involves fostering scholarly work in the humanities broadly understood and facilitating research between the School of Humanities and other areas of Rice University, as well as leading institutional change by partnering with other foundations, centers, research institutions and universities.

Regular programming produced by the HRC includes exhibitions, lectures, conferences, workshops and seminars covering a wide range of topics. Independent initiatives are also taken by the HRC in order to incubate ideas and detect disciplinary changes that will shape the future of the university.