
Other Research by McNair Scholars at the University of Oregon

Abstracts

Thomas Pynchon's *Against the Day*

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Thomas Pynchon, the reclusive author of *Gravity's Rainbow* and *The Crying of Lot 49*, has written a new novel, *Against the Day*, that may serve as a capstone to his career. A widely read and studied author of the twentieth century, Pynchon has attracted a considerable amount of criticism and analysis. His latest novel, however, remains largely unexamined outside of reviews in the mainstream media. In large part, due to its recent release in November 2006, little scholarship has focused on Pynchon's new novel. A thematic analysis and an examination of the novel's historical context allow an exploration of Pynchon's newest work within the framework of his writing as a whole as it echoes the themes and techniques with which he has concerned himself throughout his career.

Literacy Markers for Adults in Lane County Drug Court

Roseanna Boyer, Psychology /

Planning, Public Policy, and Management

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Planning, Public Policy, and Management

A lack of basic literacy may increase the likelihood that individuals will fail to complete drug and alcohol treatment programs thereby contributing to increased rates of recidivism following participation in treatment programs. Stage one of this project assessed basic literacy and math levels using the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS). Preliminary results indicated a broad relationship between literacy level and incentive to engage in voluntary educational training. Stage two continues the study and relates literacy performance to measures of success and recidivism in the Lane County Drug Court. If individuals with higher levels of literacy demonstrate higher success rates and lower recidivism rates, the study would provide justification for developing interventions designed to increase levels of literacy for individuals referred to Drug Court. This project is the result of collaboration between the Lane County Circuit Court, Emergence Treatment Services, Lane Community College, and the University of Oregon.

Nunn-Lugar in the Twenty-first Century: A Plan for Success

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Faculty Mentor: Jane Cramer, Political Science

After the fall of the Soviet Union, the United States began funding the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) program in an attempt to help the states of the former Soviet Union do several things: dismantle their weapons of mass destruction (WMD); secure the materials, technology, and expertise related to weapons of mass destruction materials; and convert their WMD facilities to civilian use. The Nunn-Lugar program is a vital program in securing loose weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and preventing such weapons from falling into the hands of rogue or terrorist regimes. The paper will explore the successes and failures of the Nunn-Lugar CTR program in former Soviet states in an effort to draw conclusions about the future of the program.

Sex Tourism: A Feminist Perspective of Travel Media and the Portrayal of Thai Women

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Faculty Mentor: Diane Baxter, Anthropology

The sex tourism industry has become a booming market in the last several decades with a corresponding increase in marketing for such types of tourism. Many images generated for travel brochures, websites, and travel books portray Thai women as submissive sex objects. Much research has been done on the creation of such images and why people of color from third world countries, especially women, are shown in such a demeaning fashion. Using a feminist perspective to analyze gender relations between Thai women and Western male consumers, this paper shows that the images used in tourism marketing give the Western consumer the belief that the women shown in travel media are submissive, inferior, and the subservient "other."

Care of a Yurok Collection according to Yurok Religion and Curatorial Practices: A Case Study at the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian

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From first contact, the Yurok people have intrigued outsiders. Their language, culture, and material wealth have been extensively collected and studied, with many religiously significant Yurok items housed throughout the world. The Yurok, as other Native peoples, have struggled to have these items cared for according to Tribal beliefs until they can be returned home. Using the Yurok collection housed at the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, DC, I look at ways in which Yurok curatorial practices and modern curatorship can work together to take care of a Yurok collection. My paper strives to be a guide both for museums and the Yurok Tribe in dealing with a large collection. Also, I discuss the complexities in dealing with objects that have been taken out of the possession of tribal people through various ways. Tribal people and museums can overcome a negative history to find ways to work together. In this way these important objects can be treated with the respect that they deserve.

Transformative Education: An Analysis of Paulo Freire and *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*

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Brazilian educator Paulo Freire is widely considered a leading scholar of critical pedagogy. His most famous work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* offers insights regarding the student-teacher relationship and the significance of education in transforming society. Many scholars have noted the eclecticism in Freire's ideas, a point his critics have used to question the innovation of his work. An examination of Freire's ideas requires an understanding of their historical context and the unique personal experiences that have given his thought a distinct quality. A stronger understanding of how Freire's ideology was shaped will help explain why his message has been popular in "third world" countries. Throughout his career Freire incorporated ideas from Marxist and religious thinkers to construct his own educational philosophy and reconcile those two seemingly incompatible elements. Both schools of thought greatly shaped Freire's understanding of people, the mentality of the oppressed and oppressors, and the means of transforming society.

As Long As the Waters Run: Metaphors of Water in Thomas King's *Green Grass, Running Water*

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The use of stories to teach lessons is a long-standing tradition of indigenous peoples. Every story is a tapestry with multiple threads of meaning woven throughout the narrative. Although Thomas King, the product of a non-Native education, is part Cherokee, the characters in his novels are often of Blackfoot ancestry. Therefore, an analysis of King's metaphoric use of water in his novel, *Green Grass, Running Water*, offers opportunities to examine these metaphors not only from the perspective of Western culture, but also from the cultures and mythologies of the Cherokee and Blackfoot nations. While images of water are sometimes used in literature as metaphors for obstructions or impediments, King's use of water imagery in this novel is different in that, while representations of obstruction are present, water is also representative of connectivity, creativity, and spirituality.

Six Oregon Watershed Councils: Finding and Using Community-Impact Indicators

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Planning, Public Policy, and Management

Community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) refers to a merging of ecology with economic development and other community needs. Local watershed stewardship organizations are one of the most common types of CBNRM efforts, and Oregon's watershed councils are leading examples of organizing community efforts to improve and maintain the health of local watersheds. Although their mission is ecological health, their restoration activities add economic and aesthetic value to local areas. In turn, the councils depend on the goodwill and participation of their community members. Effective implementation of CBNRM requires an assessment of outcomes, the final direct and indirect products of specific actions. This study is part of a larger project that attempts to demonstrate the feasibility of measuring the local, economic, and civic engagement outcomes of watershed council activities. The larger project identified indicators for six rural Oregon watershed councils. This study involves collecting time-series data on the indicators and working with the councils to use the data for self-evaluation, strategic planning, building legitimacy, and community education based on each council's needs.

Sensory Semantics: George Berkeley's Theory of Vision, Phenomenology, and Twenty-first Century Philosophy of Cognitive Science

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The work of George Berkeley, an eighteenth-century empiricist philosopher, has been historically less successful than the work of his rationalist and empiricist contemporaries, primarily due to his unusual metaphysical claims. Berkeley's work on visual theory, however, has garnered some attention in the last ten years from philosophers of cognitive science. Recent publications, by philosophers as diverse as Alva Noë and Shaun Gallagher, reveal a distinctive methodology in Berkeley's theorizing about the nature of vision. Berkeley based his thesis on evidence culled from the conscious experience of visual perception, a method nearly opposite, and generating a conclusion nearly opposite that of his contemporary, René Descartes. Furthermore, Berkeley insisted upon the primacy of conscious experience for understanding visual perception. Therefore, his work could be described as having a (proto-) phenomenological orientation, which I argue is the very thing that gives his work its lasting relevance.

The Rose of Mysterious Union: The Influence of William Blake on Jim Morrison as a Poet

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Jim Morrison is often disregarded and thought of as a simple poet, and his poetry is regarded at times as simple rhymes. The same could be said, however, of William Blake, one of the most famous Romantic poets of all time, especially in light of his *Songs of Innocence and Experience*. Both artists were viewed as eccentric in their times and both had an interest in social and political revolution and revolutionary aims. It is commonly acknowledged that Blake influenced Morrison as far as the name of his band, The Doors, but Blake's influence and the themes of Romanticism extend much further into the body of Morrison's work than previously realized.

Characterization of Histone H4 N-Terminal Regulation of DNA Methylation in *Neurospora Crassa*

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The regulation of genomic expression in eukaryotes is accomplished by a variety of cellular mechanisms which may activate or silence specific genes. DNA methylation, an expression regulator often associated with genetic silencing, is particularly interesting because patterns of methylation related to such processes as histone modification are being actively researched. Recent investigations indicate the possibility that the n-terminal tails of core histones, around which DNA is packaged into the nucleosome, play some role in regulating methylation. This study indicates to what extent the H4 n-terminal residues are interrelated with the process of localized and global methylation. Such correlations are identified by substituting each of twenty-one modifications of the gene encoding histone H4 for that same gene in a suitable strain of *Neurospora Crassa*. Patterns of methylation and phenotypic variance in the tested H4 strains indicate to what extent the structure of H4 is involved in DNA methylation.

Reading Cultural Hybridity in Mestiza Altars: A Comparative Historical Analysis

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The construction and maintenance of religious home altars by women in the borderlands has been imagined as a feminized art form that invokes the traditional domestic roles ascribed to women. To analyze and deconstruct that cultural myth, this study examines conquest era tendencies relating to gender and the burgeoning cult of saints. Using insights drawn from contemporary scholars such as Kay Turner and Amalia Mesa-Bains, the study explores the implications of altar creation and maintenance in today's borderlands. Also, the study examines the manner in which the spatial context of altar art creates a reversal of the patriarchal hegemony characteristic of traditional gender roles within the domestic sphere, where historically women have been oppressed. This paper analyzes three different ways in which the reversal of patriarchal hegemony is manifested: the various uses of altars and their sociopolitical importance, the spatial reclamation exhibited in the placement of home altars and yard shrines, and the motives of devout women who decided to discontinue their attendance in church.