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*From Your HERA President
Therese Tomaszek,
Davenport University, Grand Rapids*

“Intersections”

Dear HERA members,

I spent some time today on the HERA website reading the titles of sessions and papers that many of you will be presenting at our El Paso conference. When we selected the theme of “Intersections,” I didn’t realize that it would elicit such deeply thoughtful and excitingly challenging presentations related to questions of boundaries, barriers, destabilization, intercultural and communication competencies, the “other,” diversity, and other interdisciplinary subjects.

In his charmingly dry and witty way, comedian Stephen Wright once said, “I have an existential map. It has ‘You are here’ written all over it.” A wonderful thing about HERA and an interest in interdisciplinary humanities generally is that we are the kind of folks who are comfortable with flux, the apparent chaos that resolves itself into new patterns that pique our curiosity and are worthy of our inspection. Our time in El Paso will be a celebration of the humanities, a feast for the mind and spirit.

Following Wright’s existential metaphor, I will ask you to consider what you want HERA to be so that, with your help, we can invent it. HERA is a space where a multiplicity of voices and perspectives may intersect to make new knowledge – but only with your help. I thank you for your decision to be a member of this association. Times are hard, and many organizations vie for your membership. I appreciate that HERA is your association of choice. I hope that you will think about friends and colleagues who may also benefit from a membership in HERA and encourage them to learn more about us.

As you probably know, HERA is a non-profit association with 501(c)(3) status so any donations are tax deductible. Please consider HERA when you select the organizations to which you will contribute, and share our story with your academic institutions too.



Curtis White, keynote speaker at the 2009 HERA Conference in Chicago. Photo by Marcia Green

The program committee for our El Paso conference has prepared an exciting set of events. My special thanks go to Dr. Ronald J. Weber, Director of the Humanities Program at University of Texas – El Paso and 2010 Conference Program Chair; Dr. Lee Ann Westman, Visiting Professor at UTEP and Conference Coordinator; and, of course, Dr. Marcia Green, Executive Director and Chief Financial Officer of HERA. My thanks also go to others too numerous to mention in this short letter who are helping us to make the conference possible. HERA in El Paso will be a success because of you.

I hope that many of you will be able to sign up for the optional Saturday trip to Southern New Mexico Winery, Old Mesilla, and dinner. It’s an opportunity to catch the flavor of the region and relax with friends.

I’ll see you in El Paso.

Best,

Terri

Language Partners Project Showcases Humanities in Action

by: **Therese Tomaszek**

Davenport University Arts and Culture and English as a Second Language (ESL) students have partnered with the Literacy Center of West Michigan to produce an oral history project called Language Partners. Supported by a Quick Grant from the Michigan Humanities Council, the project includes a short film based on interviews with people who have immigrated to West Michigan and a companion booklet of the interviews.

Language Partners was inspired by a memoir written by Bich Minh Nguyen entitled *Stealing Buddha's Dinner*. Nguyen's book, which tells her story of immigration and life growing up in Grand Rapids, Michigan, was chosen by the Michigan Humanities Council as *The Great Michigan Read* selection for 2009 to encourage people in Michigan to learn more about their state, history, and society.



From left to right, Ron Falk, Russell Scarbrough, and James Allen.
Photo by Jane DeGroot.

To learn more about the lives of other immigrants who have settled in West Michigan and to meet a community need, the project was initiated by HERA members Suzanne Gut (ESL) and Terri Tomaszek (Arts and Culture) along with Vickie Craig (ESL). The purpose of the project was to help the Literacy Center increase awareness of its programs and services among potential volunteers, students, and donors while, at the same time, giving students an opportunity to put their skills into practice outside the classroom and reflect on the value of the humanities in their lives.

Describing the long-term impact of the project, Arts and Culture student Colten Bredeweg noted, "We decided that there is no documentation of immigrants' experiences for people to look back on years from now, and we needed to change that."

Karly Christoffersen observed, "Based on the knowledge that I have obtained from Arts and Culture, I feel that, like much of history, these stories will get lost without documentation. All that is known from the past comes from art, literature, and other well-preserved artifacts that have been found. Therefore, I used this information to help produce a well-documented piece that will serve as a historical reference for the future of West Michigan."

Jane DeGroot, a teacher in the Literacy Center's Customized Workplace English Program, commented that the Literacy Center "appreciates this opportunity for our students to tell their amazing stories on film. Learning English has been a challenge for them all, but they have shown tremendous energy and strength. The Literacy Center is very proud of them!"

According to Wayne Sneath, Program Director of Experiential Learning, "Davenport is working to build sustainable community partnerships which engage our students in academic service-learning opportunities that meet expressed community needs. The Language Partners-Literacy Center Project is an excellent example of how DU students, faculty and staff are working with the community to engage issues of access and literacy."

The project concluded with students' presentation of copies of the film and booklets to the executive director of the Literacy Center and the director of the Davenport Library Information Commons at a premier showing of the film in a free and open-to-the-public event.

Language Partners has provided an opportunity for international and domestic students to work collaboratively and in partnership with adult learners who have immigrated to make a life in West Michigan. It was an intercultural experience that deepened understanding of many cultures while producing a historical resource and increasing awareness of the programs and services of the Literacy Center of West Michigan.



Lizbeth Flores Ramirez, Ron Falk, and Kevin Grasmeyer. Photo by Jane DeGroot.

Interdisciplinary Humanities

The Humanities Education and Research Association's Scholarly Journal: *Interdisciplinary Humanities* is a refereed scholarly journal, published twice a year.

There is the possibility that some authors will be asked to revise and re-submit for consideration in future issues. When submitting to *Interdisciplinary Humanities*, remember all essays and poems should be interdisciplinary in nature. Essays should not exceed 6,000 words and should be formatted according to the Chicago Manual of Style.

Subscriptions are included as a benefit of membership in the Humanities Education and Research Association. Libraries and institutions may subscribe for \$100.00 per year.

Submit articles and Creative Works to co-editors, Stephen Husarik shusarik@uafortsmith.edu and Lee Ann Westman, lewestman@utep.edu. Don't forget to include your e-mail address. Check HERA's website under JOURNAL to obtain information on upcoming editions.

Fall 2010 – Utopia/Dystopia – Guest Editor David Hatch. For a special issue of *Interdisciplinary Humanities*, we seek academic papers from a broad range of disciplines that address **utopian/dystopian literature, historical attempts** to create utopia, or the **philosophical writings** that underpin each of these efforts. We will also consider **creative fictional engagements** of utopian themes and **creative non-fiction** essays about utopia. In particular, this issue will explore the definitions of and boundaries between Utopia and Dystopia. Submissions are due by May 1, 2010. Length: 6,000 words. Inquiries, double-spaced manuscripts, and creative works in any genre should be sent to davidahatch@live.com

Spring 2011 El Paso 2010 conference and San Francisco 2011 Conference papers, Co-edited by Stephen Husarik and Lee Ann Westman . Please contact co-editors Stephen Husarik (479.788.7555, shusarik@uafortsmith.edu) or Lee Ann Westman (915.747.5028, lewestman@utep.edu) for further information. Deadline Nov, 1 2010.

Fall 2011 - (mis)Representing Difference in Media and Everyday Items. Guest editor Susan Booker Morris, Director of Jim Crow Museum, Ferris State University. This special issue on the representation of the 'other' invites analysis of race, ethnicity, nationality, queerness, or gender as found in representations in television, ads, films, photographs, video games, computer images, etc. Any theoretical bases are welcome. Use of the Jim Crow Museum at www.ferris.edu/jimcrow is particularly encouraged but not required. Send inquiries and papers to Susan Booker Morris at: morrisus@ferris.edu. Submission Deadline is May 1, 2011.

Calling all Book Reviewers!

IH editors are looking for well written book reviews of new publications that educators might use in interdisciplinary classrooms or scholarship. These can be scholarly works as well as textbooks that examine themes and ideas across disciplines. This is an excellent opportunity for young scholars and graduate students to publish! Please submit reviews to Wynn Yarbrough. wynnyarbrough@hotmail.com

2010 Conference

Intersections: Mind, Body, Time, Space
March 11-13, 2010,
Camino Real Hotel, El Paso, Texas



Conference updated plans include:

- A plenary session on *Boy of the Border*, a newly-published work by Langston Hughes, featuring keynote speakers **Dr. Maceo Dailey, Jr.**, Director of African-American Studies at University of Texas at El Paso and Editor, Sweet Earth Flying Press, and **Sondra Banfield Dailey**, Publisher of Sweet Earth Flying Press, University of Texas at El Paso .
- A tour of UTEP, the Centennial Museum Garden and the campus art gallery, featuring a newly-opened student show in the art gallery. A reception with speaker Marcia Daudistel, a local author, will be held in Centennial Museum Garden featuring local desert fauna .
- A Saturday afternoon excursion to Old Mesilla New Mexico for sightseeing and dinner at La Posta restaurant. Please reserve a place by contacting Ron Weber at rweber@utep.edu. Cost will be \$15 plus dinner

For the full conference program visit http://www.h-e-r-a.org/Conferences/2010_El_Paso/hera_2010_conference_program.htm

Member Updates

Allan Johnston as president of the Society for the Philosophical Study of Education, helped organize the SPSE conference in Chicago last fall and the SPSE sessions at the American Philosophical Association Central Division meeting in Chicago in February. At the fall conference, he presented the paper "Marxist Rhetoric," while at the Central Division conference he presented "The Marxist Contribution to Philosophy of Education." He will also present a paper on Robinson Jeffers at the New Directions in the Humanities conference in Los Angeles this summer. In other news, he published a chapbook of poems, *Northport*, at Finishing Line Press, and gave two readings in Chicago and Evanston, Illinois, in support of this event. He also had two conference papers published in SPSE proceedings for 2006 and 2007 addressing Kenneth Rexroth's life in Chicago and Pedagogy and Metaphor.

James Bell as Managing Director of the Grand Valley Shakespeare Festival, Bell traveled to London, England in the first of January to attend the Shakespeare Theatre Association of America conference hosted in 2010 by Shakespeare's Globe theatre in London. He was able to hobnob with and learn from theatre managers, directors, and other theatre artists and practitioners from Shakespeare theatres and festivals from all over North America, the UK, Australia, and South Africa. Highlights included tours of Shakespeare's Globe and The Rose Theatre; a plenary session with Adrian Noble, the former Artistic Director for the Royal Shakespeare Company; and a plenary session at Middle Temple Hall with Tim Carroll, the director who staged *Twelfth Night* for Shakespeare's Globe that was performed at Middle Temple Hall in 2002 to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the first documented performance of *Twelfth Night* at Middle Temple. Bell will also be co-hosting the Midwest Regional Conference of the American Association for Irish Studies at Grand Valley State University in fall 2010.

David Hatch has accepted the position of Assistant Professor of English at University of South Carolina at the Salkehatchie campus beginning fall 2010.

Stephen Husarik visited Vienna, Austria over the Christmas vacation to gather photos and perform on Beethoven's 1817 Graf piano located in Baden bei Wien. He wanted to get a feel of the master's original piano sound because he is performing Beethoven's Piano Sonata in C minor, Opus 111, Sunday, February 21, 2010 as a fund-raiser for student foreign travel at UA Fort Smith, Arkansas. "The folks at Beethovenhaus in Baden bei Wien kindly allowed me to record short excerpts on Beethoven's piano for use in my lecture-recital," Husarik said. "Vienna is full of excitement at that time of year, there are concerts

of chamber music, orchestral music, opera and one can even hear the Vienna Boys Choir sing." Husarik stayed at the Hotel Austria, right across the street from Beethoven's favorite tavern, down the street from Franz Josef Haydn's favorite hotel, and just two blocks from Mozart's apartment. He had dinner at the Konig von Hungarin restaurant (Mozart's favorite restaurant) and visited numerous museums and cultural sites throughout the city.



Beethoven's Piano. Photo by Stephen Husarik.

Additionally, Stephen Husarik's monograph entitled "How Beethoven's Works Influenced the Growth of Musical Terminology" was voted among the top ten finalists in the competition for the International Excellence Award in the International Journal of the Humanities from over 200 papers at the 2009 conference where he presented the paper.

HERA Newsletter Items

The HERA newsletter is published three times a year and features conference and journal updates, information about HERA members, web sites about interdisciplinary teaching and scholarship, reports on effective teaching strategies, travelogues, and other brief information that would be relevant to humanities educators. **Send your newsletter items to:** Jim Bell, HERA Newsletter Editor, School of Communications, Grand Valley State University, 1 Campus Drive, Allendale, MI 49401 or via email at: bellja@gvsu.edu (email is the preferred method).

The production of this newsletter is made possible by the support of the School of Communications and College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Grand Valley State University, Anthony Thompson, Director and Fred Antczak, Dean.

HERA Mission Statement

The Humanities Education and Research Association is organized as a non-profit 501(c) 3 organization, exclusively for charitable, research and education purposes.

The mission of the organization is to:

- Promote the worldwide study, teaching and understanding of the humanities across a range of disciplines.
- Support the interchange of research and the scholarships of knowledge, teaching and service in the humanities through conferences, publications, and related activities in a worldwide context
- Provide additional forums for the exchange of ideas regarding humanities education in schools, colleges and universities, libraries and museums, and other contexts

For more information go to www.h-e-r-a.org

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Your donation is tax deductible and will help promote the worldwide study, teaching and understanding of the humanities across a range of disciplines. We need your help to keep the Humanities strong and thriving.

Send your donation to: HERA, P.O. Box 777, Pacifica, CA 94044-4206

Interested in Joining HERA? HERA Membership Application

Membership/Subscription Application

Membership includes: *Interdisciplinary Humanities* (HERA's journal is published two times a year.) HERA's newsletter is published in the fall, winter, and spring.

Send your completed application with a check to the address listed below. All memberships begin January 1 and end December 31. Please check appropriate category.

Check appropriate category

___ Individual 1-year membership: \$80

___ Employee of Institutional Member, 1-year membership: \$65

___ Joint 1-year membership: \$120

___ Full time student membership: \$40

___ Retired: \$40

___ Library memberships to *Interdisciplinary Humanities*: \$100

___ Institutional 1-year membership: \$500

Institutional members are recognized in conference materials and on the HERA website. Individuals employed by institutional members enjoy reduced membership and conference fees. A 1-year membership fee for an employee of an institutional member is \$65.)

Name:

Affiliation:

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Work phone/Home phone numbers:

Enclose check for category indicated above, made out to:

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