

PROGRAMMA

A Newsletter for Graduates of the Program of Liberal Studies
The University of Notre Dame
Volume XLVI, April 2022

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Programma (the Greek word means “public notice”) is published once each year by the Program of Liberal Studies for its graduates.

Editor

John Nagy

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THE VIEW FROM 320

Thomas A. Stapleford

March 2022

As you can see from the title for the chairperson's letter, the Program has officially moved to its new home on the third floor of O'Shaughnessy Hall! Long-time veterans of the Program will remember a previous stint on the third floor of O'Shag, so this is almost a homecoming for the department. But if we're coming home, it is to a radically renovated home. Those who were able to tour the new suite during our open house in October know that I'm not exaggerating when I say that it's hard to believe we are still in O'Shaughnessy. Our end of the third floor was gutted to its bones and reconfigured into a beautiful new space that contains a large student lounge, the full set of PLS faculty offices, a small conference room, a mailroom/copy center, and a lovely reception area. We have been truly blessed, and all of our students and faculty are grateful to the alumni and friends who made this renovation possible.

Like the country as a whole, Notre Dame continued to grapple with the coronavirus pandemic during the fall and winter. We returned completely to in-person teaching during the fall, though in most cases, students were asked to wear masks in the classroom, and the Omicron surge curtailed some of the normal social events. We are, however, cautiously optimistic that plans for a semi-normal Commencement and in-person Summer Symposium will go forward, and I am hopeful that later this month the Program will be able to hold its first full Cronin Award Dinner in three years. As always, our students have devised creative ways to bolster spirits, build community, and exemplify that distinctively PLS combination of humor, irreverence, and intellectual passion. Last winter, a group of seniors created what I anticipate will become an annual PLS tradition: Crayon Week, featuring a series of crayon-related activities and culminating in a contest for the best crayon drawing inspired by a PLS text, as judged by a faculty committee. (Per student requests, the top three winners were hung with magnets on our lounge refrigerator, while other entries decorated the office.) This year, students have gone ice skating, cross-country skiing, and (with the inspiration and help of Prof. Gretchen Reydams-Schils) started a weekly knitting and tea club on Friday afternoons. Plans for a repeat of the PLS Olympics are also in the works.

Of course, alongside having fun, PLS continues to be a center of intellectual life for the College and a strong proponent for liberal education. This fall, we were delighted to welcome award-winning novelist Lauren Groff, whose 2021 *New York Times* bestseller, *Matrix*, was inspired in part by the research of Prof. Katie Bugyis, an expert on medieval female religious communities. Groff gave a public lecture at Notre Dame and led a lunchtime seminar for PLS students on the poetry of Marie de France. This spring, PLS will host the 2022 annual conference of The Association for Core Texts and Courses, the main professional society for "great books" programs across the globe. With the theme "Power and the Canon," the conference will examine how canons can both reflect and challenge power relations (one need only think of Socrates' fate). The final keynote speaker for the conference will be Roosevelt Montás, an immigrant from

the Dominican Republic who led the Core Curriculum at Columbia for many years and who is the author of a widely reviewed new book, *Rescuing Socrates: How the Great Books Changed My Life and Why They Matter for a New Generation*.

Our faculty have, of course, continued to be their typically impressive selves, and you can read their updates in our Faculty News section. To pick out just a few items, we were excited to celebrate Prof. Joseph Rosenberg's new book, *Wastepaper Modernism: Twentieth-Century Fiction and the Ruins of Print* (Cambridge, 2021), which explores the fascination and anxiety that characterized modernist authors' attitudes toward the ephemeral character of print. We were also thrilled to welcome a new member of the PLS community, Iris Robichaud, daughter of Prof. Denis Robichaud and Viveca Pattison Robichaud. (Allegedly, Prof. Robichaud already has Iris hard at work learning Latin, though she has been protesting Greek.) Along with new additions, we also had the departure of a much-loved colleague: Prof. Tarek Dika left Notre Dame last summer to take up a new position in the philosophy department at the University of Toronto. Though we were very sorry to see Prof. Dika depart, we are excited for him, his wife Constance, and their new daughter, Saba Louise, born this past July. Constance recently completed her doctorate in history from Johns Hopkins, and Toronto will offer more opportunities for academic employment than we could provide at Notre Dame. As much as we will miss them, this is a wonderful opportunity for their family.

Speaking of changes, this June will mark the end of my term as chairperson for the Program. It has been an honor to serve the PLS community over the last six years. PLS has been my home at Notre Dame since I arrived on campus almost nineteen years ago, and I would not want to be anywhere else at the University. The passion of our students and alumni make the Program a special place to work, and I am privileged to have been a part of it. Thank you for your support and prayers during my time as chairperson, and especially for your inspiring love for PLS!

Tom Stapleford
Associate Professor and Chair
Program of Liberal Studies

24th Annual PLS/GP Summer Symposium

June 5-10, 2022

“Love Is As Strong As Death”: On Human Desire and Commitment

Once again, the Program of Liberal Studies is offering a week of seminars for alumni/ae of the Program, their relatives and friends, and anyone else eager to read and discuss important texts and ideas as part of a welcoming and lively intellectual community.

We are excited to invite the PLS/GP community back to campus for our first in-person Symposium in three years and to host everyone in our new departmental space! The sessions will feature a multifaceted reflection on love as an expression of human desire and as a source of theological, philosophical, aesthetic, and interpersonal commitment, all taught by current faculty of the Program of Liberal Studies.

Courses Offered

I. Plenary Session

Jennifer Newsome Martin

General Reflections and Open Q&A on the 2021 Opening Charge, “The Liberal Arts and the Birds of Appetite”

II. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *The Marriage of Figaro* [3 days]

Christopher Chowrimootoo

Required viewing: <https://www.opusarte.com/details/OA0990D>

In this three-day course, we will explore Mozart and Da Ponte’s operatic classic, *Le Nozze di Figaro* (1786), with a particular focus on issues of love, sex, and gender. As we examine Mozart’s perspective on the symposium’s central themes, we will gain broader insight into eighteenth-century operatic conventions and how to interpret Mozart’s music against this backdrop. We will also compare different productions of the work for insights into how modern directors and audiences respond to Mozart’s representation of love and power.

III. “As Strong As Death”: Love in the *Song of Songs* and Teresa of Ávila’s *Meditations* [2 days]

Katie Buggy

Required Texts:

[1. Robert Alter, trans. *Strong As Death Is Love: The Song of Songs, Ruth Esther, Jonah, and Daniel*. New York: Norton, 2016. ISBN 978-0-393-35225-2.](#)

[2. Teresa of Ávila. *Meditations on the Song of Songs*, in *The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila*. Vol. 2. Translated by Kieran Kavanaugh. Washington, D.C.: ICS Publications, 1980. ISBN 978-0-960087-66-2.](#) (For those who prefer not to buy this book, a PDF will be provided.)

The *Song of Songs* was included in both the Jewish and Christian scriptural canons. In the former, it appears in the five *megillot* (or scrolls), together with *Ruth*, *Ecclesiastes*, *Lamentations*, and *Esther*, in the third and final part of the *Tanakh* (Hebrew Bible) called the *Ketuvim* (Writings), and in the latter, it is grouped with the Poetical and Wisdom books. The *Song* is the only love poem in the Bible (both Jewish and Christian). It is a lyric poem that mainly features the speeches of an unnamed woman and man, but occasionally interjects the replies of a group of women called “the daughters of Jerusalem,” who function as a kind of chorus. The *Song* does not unfold according to a linear plot; instead, it spirals, eschewing a clear beginning and ending and often repeating phrases, lines, images, and themes.

The *Song* itself provides no clues about its composition—its authorship or when, where, and under what circumstances it was written. Traditionally, the text has been associated with King Solomon because of the references to him in Chapters 3 and 8 and his reputation as a composer of songs (see 1 Kgs 4:32), but he was almost certainly not the author of the text, nor is he the primary male speaker in it. The *Song* probably was composed sometime between the time of Solomon (10th c. B.C.E.) and the Hellenistic period (4th–2nd c. B.C.E.), but scholarly positions have differed widely over the issue of more precise dating.

Scholarly consensus has also been divided over the question of the number of authors behind the *Song*’s composition. Some have interpreted it as the unified work of a single poet; others have detected multiple textual layers composed by different poets at different times and, thus, read the *Song* as an anthology of poems. Regardless of which position you take on this question, know that the internal divisions of the *Song* are contested, too. The chapter and verse divisions found in Robert Alter’s translation of the *Song* (the translation used in this seminar), though fairly standard among

contemporary editions and translations of the Christian Bible, are, in many respects, arbitrary and best ignored when studying the text, because these divisions sometimes create artificial breaks in the lines of a speaker.

By interpreting the *Song*, the participants of this seminar join a venerable tradition of biblical exegetes, writers, musical composers, visual artists, and filmmakers who have grappled with the text's meaning from at least the late first century C.E. up to the present. Among Jewish and Christian mystics, no book has been quoted and imitated with greater frequency, including the Psalms. Rabbi Akiba ben Joseph (d. 135 C.E.), one of the earliest recorded Jewish commentators on the *Song*, is remembered to have said: "The whole world is not worthy of the day the *Song of Songs* was given to Israel, for all of Scripture is holy, but the *Song of Songs* is the Holy of Holies." Origen of Alexandria (d. 253 C.E.), one of the earliest known Christian commentators on the *Song*, wrote: "Rightly then, is this *Song* to be preferred to all songs." And Teresa of Ávila (d. 1582 C.E.), the first known female commentator on the *Song* and the exegete who will enrich this seminar's exploration of the text, began her *Meditations* on the *Song of Songs* by marveling: "One word will contain within itself a thousand mysteries."

This seminar will spend one day discussing the *Song of Songs* itself and the second day discussing Teresa of Ávila's *Meditations* in the hopes of discovering whether the love that the *Song* exalts is indeed "as strong as death."

IV. "Tell me the truth about love": Poetry of Human Love and Divine Love [2 days]

Stephen Fallon

Chief among the perennial themes of poetry are love, time, and poetry itself. Shakespeare combines the three themes in his sonnet sequence. In Sonnet 116 his speaker famously asserts that "Love is not love / Which alters when it alteration finds," and that "Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks / Within his bending sickle's compass come," only to end with the grammatically slippery couplet, "If this be error, and upon me proved, / I never writ, nor no man ever loved." More recently, W.H. Auden addressed a longish lyric to the puzzle of love, ending, "Will it come like a change in the weather? / Will its greeting be courteous or rough? / Will it alter my life altogether? / O tell me the truth about love." Poets have written to woo, to immortalize, to praise (or castigate) their beloveds, to mourn the beloved dead, to testify to their love of God and to God's love for us. We will spend two sessions sampling poems that approach human and divine love from various angles. We will read poems by, among others, Shakespeare, Mary Sidney, John Donne, Ben Jonson, George Herbert, Anne Bradstreet, John Milton, Thomas Hardy, Gerard Manley

Hopkins, Robert Hayden, Audre Lorde, and Mark Jarman. Electronic copies of the poems will be made available prior to the start of the symposium.

V. “. . . no work can be pleasing unless it is a work of love . . .”: Søren Kierkegaard, *Works of Love* [4 days]

Eric Bugyis

[Required Text: Søren Kierkegaard, *Works of Love* \(Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998\). ISBN: 978-0691059167.](#)

In his famous “Rebellion” in Fyodor Dostoevsky’s *The Brothers Karamazov* (1880), the skeptical middle brother Ivan says to his pious younger brother Alyosha, “I could never understand how one can love one’s neighbors. It’s just one’s neighbors, to my mind, that one can’t love, though one might love those at a distance.” Depending on how good our proverbial fences are, we might be inclined to share Ivan’s confusion over this central commandment of Christianity. As Dostoevsky maintains throughout his most celebrated novel, it is much easier to love in the abstract than it is to love in action, which is so often, as Alyosha’s beloved elder, Father Zosima, instructs, “a harsh and dreadful thing.” Often we may dream of doing good works, of encircling humanity in a magnanimous embrace (provided, of course, that the conditions are just right), but how many of us relish the opportunity to offer our cloak *and* our tunic to the neighbor at our door, let alone to the stranger in the street? In *Works of Love*, perhaps the most important of the many books that he wrote in his short life, Dostoevsky’s slightly older contemporary, the Danish philosopher and theologian Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855) claims that the love of one’s neighbor is a distinctive invention of Christianity and is, indeed, the basis of all other loves, though it is no less “harsh and dreadful” for that fact. For this reason, Kierkegaard insists that the “God of love” must be remembered in every human work that aspires to love, for the timber of humanity is too crooked to meet the demands of love on its own. Over four sessions, we will consider with Kierkegaard the Christian command to do what is both necessary and impossible—the work of love. The schedule of readings will be as follows:

Day 1: “First Series,” Preface - Part II

Day 2: “First Series,” Parts III-V

Day 3: “Second Series,” Preface - Part V

Day 4: “Second Series,” Part VI - Conclusion

VI. George Eliot, *Middlemarch* [4 days]

Thomas Stapleford

[Required Text: George Eliot, *Middlemarch* \(New York: Harper Perennial, 2015\). ISBN: 978-0062356147.](#)

Widely regarded as one of the greatest English novels, George Eliot's *Middlemarch* has been praised for its masterful insights into the frailties and depths of human relationships. Over four sessions, we'll explore what Eliot (the pen name of Mary Ann Evans) has to say about love, desire, and our (mis)perceptions of one another. Although any edition is fine, our standard will be the Harper Perennial edition listed above. The schedule of readings will be as follows:

Day 1: Books I & II

Day 2: Books III & IV

Day 3: Books V & VI

Day 4: Books VII & VIII, plus the "Finale"

VII. "Birth in Beauty": Love and Erotic Desire in Plato's *Symposium* [1 day]

Jennifer Newsome Martin

[Required Text: Plato, *Symposium*, trans. Nehamas and Woodruff \(Hackett Classics\). ISBN 978-0872200760.](#)

Plato's *Symposium* is not only a classic text in its own right and context, but also has been deeply formative for subsequent theologies of love, desire, beauty, and aesthetic and mystical experiences, especially in figures in the Catholic intellectual tradition like Gregory of Nyssa, Augustine, Bonaventure, and Dante. For example, in his *Life of St. Francis*, Bonaventure borrows liberally from Platonic images in the *Symposium* to make a Christian and Christological point about the saint: "In beautiful things / He saw Beauty itself / and through his vestiges imprinted on creation / he followed his Beloved everywhere, / making from all things a ladder / by which he could climb up / and embrace him who is utterly desirable" (263). This one-day course will reintroduce students to Plato's foundational collection of speeches in praise of Love/Eros from Phaedrus, Pausanias, Eryximachus, Aristophanes, Agathon, the mysterious Diotima, and the hapless Alcibiades, as we reflect together with Socrates upon the phenomenon of love and the ultimately human desire for transcendence.

ALL SOULS MASS

November 4, 2021

Fr. Frank Murphy, C.S.C.

*Jesus said, 'Everything that the Father gives me will come to me,
and I will not reject anyone who comes to me. . . .'*

I believe that we have all heard the amazing story of Amish mercy and forgiveness back in the year 2006. There was a shooting in an Amish school in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Ten girls in a one-room schoolhouse were tragically killed. The incident naturally made headlines. But the story was the response of the Amish community in the days that followed.

In their grief and anguish, they reached out to the killer's family.

The very afternoon of the shooting, one of the girls' grandfathers expressed forgiveness toward the killer. Amish neighbors of the killer's family visited that family to comfort them in their sorrow and pain.

Later in the week, the Amish community invited the killer's family to the funeral of one of the girls. At the funeral of the killer himself, Amish mourners outnumbered the non-Amish mourners.

After seeing the forgiveness and compassion of the Amish, many people asked, "How could they forgive such a terrible, unprovoked act of violence against innocent lives?"

This is an amazing story of the power of Christian love and mercy. It seems almost unreal that human beings, even Christians, could be so merciful and forgiving. But they were putting into practice their deep faith in God, their reading of scripture, and their attempt to imitate Christ. It challenges our own faith and imitation of Christ. But as Christians we know that we are called to be merciful to one another because that is how God treats us: with mercy, just like this Amish community treated the killer's family.

All Souls' Day is about God's mercy. On this day we remember and pray for our loved ones who have gone before us in the hope that God will be merciful to them. I think one of the most difficult things for Christians to believe and to trust in is God's mercy and forgiveness. The secret, interior hope that each one of us has is that God will be merciful with us in this life and in the life to come. Mercy and forgiveness are the essential characteristics of God's love.

In his Apostolic Letter for the end of the Year of Mercy, Pope Francis writes:

Forgiveness is the most visible sign of the Father's love, which Jesus sought to reveal by his entire life. . . .

Nothing of what a repentant sinner places before God's mercy can be excluded from the embrace of his forgiveness. For this reason, none of us has the right to make forgiveness conditional.

Mercy is always a gratuitous act of our heavenly father, an unconditional and unmerited act of love. Consequently, we cannot risk opposing the full freedom of the love with which God enters into the life of every person.

The idea that God's mercy is a gratuitous act, and that it embraces all that a repentant sinner places before God, challenges our understanding of who God is. As a confessor and repentant sinner myself, I have come to see this as one of the hardest images of God for Christians to accept. But it is essential to who God is.

Pope Francis, in the same letter, writes: "Every page of the Gospel is marked by this imperative of a love that loves to the point of forgiveness. Even at the last moment of his earthly life, as he was being nailed to the cross, Jesus spoke words of forgiveness: 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.'"

In his encyclical *God Is Love*, Pope Benedict XVI writes that God's love is both passionate, or Eros, as well as self-sacrificing, or Agape. "This is not only because it is bestowed in a completely gratuitous manner, without any previous merit, but also because it is a love which forgives," he explains.

God's love is a love that forgives. Benedict uses the example of the prophet Hosea, who uses the image of adultery in marriage to describe how Israel has broken its covenant with God: Israel has committed adultery. As a judge, Benedict says, God should repudiate Israel. But "it is at this point that God is revealed to be God and not Man." He quotes the passage from Hosea:

How can I give you up, O Ephraim! How can I hand you over, O Israel! . . . My heart recoils within me, my compassion grows warm and tender. I will not execute my fierce anger, I will not again destroy Ephraim; for I am God and not man, The Holy One in your midst (Hos 11:8-9).

"God's passionate love for his people—for humanity," Benedict concludes, "is at the same time a forgiving love."

These words of God from Hosea find greater power in the death and resurrection of Jesus. A scripture scholar writing on Paul's Letter to the Romans points out that, although God is the wronged party due to our sinfulness—that is, humanity's rebellion—it is God who reaches out to reconcile us, to forgive us. By this generous act, God puts us in right relationship—that is, at peace—with God.

Of course, this is how the Amish acted, following the example of God. They were the wronged party, yet they reached out first to the perpetrator's family. Benedict writes, "And if God has thus acted magnanimously, then 'much more' is the fullness of salvation assured."

In the Gospel today, we heard Jesus proclaim: "And this is the will of the one who sent me, that I should not lose anything of what he gave me, but that I should raise it on the last day."

Therefore, we need fear neither for our loved ones, nor for ourselves. An essential characteristic of God's own being, as God has revealed it to us, is his generous mercy and forgiveness. When we repent our sins, and seek God's forgiveness, it is always there, always! As the book of Wisdom reminds us, "Those who trust in him shall understand truth, and the faithful shall abide with him in love, because grace and mercy are with his holy ones, and his care is with his elect."

Wisdom calls us to trust in God's mercy, to presume that God will be forgiving. We should never judge ourselves or our neighbors. It is only God's job to judge. And thanks be to God! He judges with mercy and love.

God does not ask us just to be recipients of His Mercy, but also to be merciful ourselves. This group of Amish Christians knew that. As they trusted in God's mercy and love for themselves and their loved ones, they were moved to give the same mercy to their neighbor, even though they were the wronged party—a stunning example of God's mercy incarnated today. On this feast of All Souls, may we similarly trust in God's mercy for our loved ones and for ourselves and have mercy for all who wrong us.

*Remember that your compassion, O LORD,
and your kindness are from of old.
In your kindness remember me,
because of your goodness, O LORD (Ps 25).*

OPENING CHARGE 2021

September 9, 2021

The Liberal Arts and the Birds of Appetite

Jennifer Newsome Martin

*“Bird life aplenty is found in the sunny air,
not all of it significant.”*

~Homer, *The Odyssey* II.191-92

The Opening Charge is a venerable institution in the Program of Liberal Studies that provides an annual occasion for a current faculty member to reflect—usually in a somewhat quirky way—upon the characteristics and value of an integrated liberal arts education. Like all venerable institutions that are part of a long tradition, it has a somewhat formulaic element: usually some light self-deprecating humor near the beginning, a few jokes here and there that land with more or less success, some kind of retrospective view of Opening Charges delivered in years past, a smattering of personal anecdotes, an appeal to texts we’ve all read, subtle or not-so-subtle campaigns for texts we *don’t* read together but *really really should*; then, about halfway through, a rhetorical move like the one Erasmus makes in *The Praise of Folly*, where the jests and the jester suddenly become tremendously earnest, and the seriousness of what we really do together in PLS is laid bare. This form is sacrosanct and from time immemorial and I will not be departing from it.

Part One. The Liberal Arts as Augury and Haruspicy

As I said, the form of the Opening Charge calls for some element of recapitulation of its past iterations. In one lecture in recent memory, what we do together in PLS was likened to the antique practice of necromancy, “the art of summoning the dead to gain from them some special insight otherwise thought to be inaccessible.” Such conversations with the dead were part of the “broader art of divination,” which involved consulting seers “who could interpret dreams or read the entrails of animals or interpret the flights of birds.”¹ In keeping with this Opening Charge-sanctioned theme of the liberal arts as a kind of antique divination, my talk invites a playful comparison between the liberal arts and augury (the interpretation of the flight patterns of birds) and haruspicy (the examination of the entrails of sacrificial animals), where such seers, sometimes called “bird-watchers,” could determine whether an omen or bird-sign was good or bad.

Before we have a mass exodus for the door, or the rumor of the cult-level devotions of PLS students transforms from the metaphorical into the actual, let me reassure you in no uncertain terms that ours will only be a literary augury and a literary haruspicy. The meaning we seek is traced not in the sky or on the ground but rather in the pages, patterns, images, and metaphors of the books in and beyond our common canon. And though these pages are indeed bursting with flocks of birds—crews, murders, quarrels, flutters, knots, bands, and swarms of them—I will

prescind from all warblers, plovers, sparrows, starlings, robins, and storks in decided preference for the raptors: birds of prey and punishment and appetite, birds like sparrowhawks, eagles, merlins, kestrels, owls and peregrine falcons.

I feel I must confess in full disclosure that my interest in these raptors is not strictly limited either to cataloguing their descriptions in PLS books or mining such appearances for application to the enterprise of the liberal arts. It's personal. A pair of red-tailed hawks have taken up a nest in the wooded area by my house, and I've become singularly attached. I watch for them circling languidly in the sky when I walk the dog; I root for them against the nettlesome machinations of the crows. Even as my rational mind chastens me for it, I anthropomorphize them, ascribing intention to the movements of their animal instincts. What primeval human compulsion is this, to scan the horizon and to impute significance and meaning either to their absence or to these aviary, but almost angelic, visitations? Nor can I fully shake, even as a non-superstitious, post-Enlightenment modern, the sense that certain of these encounters are trying to communicate something to me from beyond the veil. Let me share a few personal anecdotes so you'll see what I mean.

Once, when my three children were much younger, I had ushered them to the backyard for a lunchtime picnic, which, as anyone with small children can tell you, was no small feat. They had that morning been weepy and bored and underfoot, and I thought a change of scenery might help us all feel better. But the instant I spread everything out, a warm, bloody, headless bird fell out of the sky and onto the picnic blanket, dropped, presumably, by a hawk or falcon who was out hunting. Tell me, reader: how could I *not* take this personally? With apologies to *Casablanca* and to Humphrey Bogart, on all the picnic blankets in all the backyards in all the towns in all the world, this decapitated bird gets dropped onto mine?

Another time, on an early morning just a couple of years ago, I looked outside in the grey light of dawn to see—standing perfectly still with its haunches raised, about ten or fifteen feet from the sliding glass door where the kids were eating breakfast—an enormous and terrifically scary-looking coyote. As I watched, a massive hawk swooped down from out of nowhere with a guttural sort of scream and attacked it, chasing it away from the property. Tell me, reader: what kind of Homeric omen was this—either of my looming victory or of my eventual defeat?

I have other stories. On the anniversary of a dear friend's sudden, accidental death, I was standing in the backyard and a little songbird, presumably just learning to fly, landed on my shoulder and stayed there for at least a full minute, chirping in my ear like a voice from the far country. And I must mention as well that residents of Indiana this very evening have been alerted to a high migration event, with over 100,000 birds currently flying over our heads.

Truly, though, the power and fury and gravitas of these tremendous creatures stimulates the imagination no less in our books than in our backyards. Raptors are invoked not merely as occasions for auspicious or inauspicious bird-signs in the antique epics but also throughout the canon, up to and including what is almost a cottage industry of raptor books within the genre of modern nature writing: think of T.H. White's *The Goshawk* (1951), J.A. Baker's *The Peregrine* (1967), or, more recently, Helen Macdonald's *H Is for Hawk* (2014) and *Vesper Flights* (2020).

This evening I plan to gloss over some of the more powerful literary examples of raptors across our shared canon, and then move to a more detailed presentation of Baker's masterpiece, *The Peregrine*, an utterly harrowing, heartbreakingly gorgeous example of this sort of literature. Because you did not come out tonight *just* for a catalogue of birds across the PLS canon (although that would be a worthy endeavor), I will use *The Peregrine* as the occasion and the ground to reflect more constructively upon the unique sort of education that is on offer in PLS and in the liberal arts in general.

Before we begin in earnest, I would certainly be remiss were I not to mention here that birding and bird-watching actually have a strong precedent in the annals of PLS history. In a 1977 issue of *Programma*, Prof. Ed Cronin wrote in amusingly vivid detail of his new sabbatical hobby of watching the birds.² And as I understand it from Prof. Phil Sloan, Charles Nutting (1858-1927), the father of Prof. Willis Nutting, one of the founders of our program, was a noted ornithologist for whom Nutting's Flycatcher was named.³ Prof. Nutting was described by another beloved professor emeritus, Walt Nicgorski, as someone compelled by the Catholic Agrarian Movement who "sought to keep all close to the spectacles and rhythms of nature."⁴ Nutting would routinely lead PLS bird walks for students and faculty as an informal part of the curriculum. Often meeting well before 5:00 a.m., these intrepid PLSers would assemble at the lakes and proceed to bird-watch on campus and in the more wooded area to the north. It might be time to bring that tradition back.

Part Two. A Litany of Hawks

Those of you currently in Seminar will have already gotten your fill of raptors within the first few weeks of the semester. Though we could multiply examples, just a few samples of the bird-omens as messages from the gods in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* will suffice for our purposes.

We may all recall the famously gruesome bird-sign in Book 12 of Homer's *Iliad*, which Hektor soundly rejects both to his and the Trojans' mortal detriment:

Just then
as they desired to cross, a bird flew by them,
heading to the left across the army,
an eagle beating upward, in its claws
a huge snake, red as blood, live and jerking,
full of fight; it doubled on itself
and struck the captor's chest and throat. At this
the eagle in its agony let go
and veered away screaming downwind. The snake
fell in the mass of troops, and Trojans shuddered
to see the rippling thing lie in their midst (*The Iliad*, 12.220-29).

The Odyssey likewise employs several bird-omens to foreshadow the final defeat of the suitors by Odysseus:

Now Zeus who views the wide world sent a sign to him,

launching a pair of eagles from a mountain crest
in guiding flight down the soft blowing wind,
wing-tip to wing-tip quivering taut, companions,
till high above the assembly of many voices
they wheeled, their dense wings beating, and in havoc
dropped on the heads of the crowd—a deathly omen—
wielding their talons, tearing cheeks and throats;
then veered away on the right hand through the city (*The Odyssey*, 2.156-64).

Intense raptor imagery gets used elsewhere in the *Iliad* to describe the gods, invoked in these cases for their speed and power.⁵ We see Homer, for instance, likening Poseidon to a hawk and Apollo to a peregrine falcon.⁶ The human characters likewise get the raptor treatment, not just to evoke their animal speed and power but also the perhaps more anthropomorphic senses of intelligent sight, in the case of Meneláos, or the dark fury of grief in the case of Patróklos, when a fellow-soldier loses his life in the fierce battle over Sarpêdôn’s body.⁷

Finally, in Homer’s *Odyssey*, powerful raptor imagery is evoked in that first emotional reunion between Odysseus and Telémakhos in Book 16:

Then, throwing
his arms around this marvel of a father
Telémakhos began to weep. Salt tears
rose from the wells of longing in both men,
and cries burst from both as keen and fluttering
as those of the great taloned hawk,
whose nestlings farmers take before they fly (*The Odyssey* 16:256-59).

Had we “but world enough and time” I could elaborate upon the raptor imagery of the Bible—on passages in the book of Job, for instance, which in its own way displays the ferocity of the best nature poetry as it interrogates God: “Is it by your wisdom that the hawk soars, / and spreads its wings toward the south? Is it at your command that the eagle mounts up and makes its nest on high? / It lives on the rock and makes its home / in the fastness of the rocky crag. / From there it spies the prey; its eyes see it from far away. / Its young ones suck up blood; and where the slain are, there it is” (Job 39:26-30). Or the apocalyptic bird-sign of Revelation 8 wherein an eagle cries “out in a loud voice, ‘Woe! Woe! Woe!’ to the inhabitants of the earth” (Rev. 8:13). I could also speculate about why Lucifer is portrayed in Dante’s *Inferno* as a great, frozen bird, really more a bat than anything else, or else consider the rich eagle imagery on the sphere of Jupiter in Dante’s *Paradiso* or perhaps do a deep dive into Robert Penn Warren’s poem “Evening Hawk,” whose title character climbs “the last light / Who knows neither Time nor error, and under / Whose eye, unforgiving, the world, unforgiven, swings / Into shadow...”

But what I really want to use my time to do is to confess and share an obsession. And—I must be quite forthright with you—it is a contagious one, borne of another man’s intense obsession, and one which tends to breed other forms of obsessiveness. It is my obsession with a book, certain passages of which might well—somewhat like Blaise Pascal’s fiery *Memoria*—be sewn permanently into the lining of jackets everywhere: J.A. Baker’s 1967 environmental classic, *The*

Peregrine. It is a book in certain respects about human transparency (or lack thereof) to the animal and natural world. And though it is a book about anger, loss, and grief, it has been—at least to me, especially in these last few, difficult years—somehow also a book of unusual consolation. People have been known to carry this unlikely book with them everywhere in life and even to be buried with it in death.⁸ What accounts for that kind of response? And what might such a book as this tell us, gathered here tonight looking for scraps of wisdom about the enterprise of the liberal arts and the intellectual life?

Part Three. Perceval and The Peregrine:
Birdwatching and the Quest for the Holy Grail

On the face of it, J.A. Baker's *The Peregrine* is just another nature book about watching birds. A closer look, however, reveals an epiphanic, even apocalyptic study in the art of the slow burn: in descriptive and metaphorical language, in cinematics, in optics, in landscape, in setting, and the boundaries and possibilities of narrative voice and of human relationships with the animal world. In certain respects, it's not an easy book to read: it is sometimes tedious, often bloody, occasionally voyeuristic, and a bit despairing about the capacity of most human beings to relate to nature in anything other than an exploitative way. As Helen Macdonald suggests, "Baker writes like an angel, but always the angel of death. No community and little human warmth exist in [the book's] pages. Baker wrote it as if he were the last man on Earth and the peregrines he watched airborne revenants, lost and losing souls."⁹ But even though the price of admission is high, on my estimation it is worth every single penny. *The Paris Review* acclaims *The Peregrine* as deploying such a "technique of description, a technique of ecstasy, really, that has the ability to transform the way you see, to cleanse the window's perception as it were, and reveal the world in all its pure and infinite primal glory."¹⁰ *The Guardian* praises its "dark fury" and its "ecstatic, violent, enraptured prose;"¹¹ to *The New Yorker*, the book represents "a record of desire."¹² It is also one of the few mandatory texts—cinematic to its core—that Werner Herzog assigns in his filmmaking courses.

The book tells the story—if you can even call it that—of one man's obsessive hunt not only to observe raptors in the wild but also to ritualize his own behavior to adapt to their habits and perspectives. Baker writes:

To be recognized and accepted by a peregrine you must wear the same clothes, travel by the same way, perform actions in the same order. Like all birds, it fears the unpredictable. Enter and leave the same fields at the same time each day, soothe the hawk from its wildness by a ritual of behavior as invariable as its own. . . . Learn to fear. To share fear is the greatest bond of all. The hunter must become the thing he hunts."¹³

And later:

Wherever he goes, this winter, I will follow him. I will share the fear, and the exaltation, and the boredom, of the hunting life. I will follow him till my predatory human shape no longer darkens in terror the shaken kaleidoscope of colour that stains the deep fovea of his brilliant eye. My pagan head shall sink into the winter land, and there be purified.¹⁴

As *Landmarks* author Robert Macfarlane has it, “*The Peregrine* is not a book about *watching* a bird, it is a book about *becoming* a bird.”¹⁵

It is nearly impossible to tell whether the book is fiction or non-fiction, art or science, poetry or prose. There is also a deliberate collapsing of phenomena observed, of observer, landscape, author, and narrator, such that the reader gains a new kind of sight: we become *katascopoi*, “looker-downers,” like birds or the gods of antiquity.¹⁶ Near the beginning of the text, Baker writes, “In my diary of a single winter I have tried to preserve a unity, binding together the bird, the watcher, and the place that holds them both. Everything I describe took place while I was watching it, but I do not believe that honest observation is enough. The emotions and behavior of the watcher are also facts, and they must be truthfully recorded.”¹⁷ This is not, however, entirely true. Though in form the book purports to be a brief personal diary of the narrator’s recorded observations of the activity of raptors in Great Britain over a period spanning October 1 to April 4, Baker in fact distills into these six symbolic months, in heavily concentrated doses, the data of over ten years and 1600 pages of field notes and maps annotated with hundreds of markings that recorded the particularities of his raptor sightings. Every page is crammed with hundreds of metaphors and similes with varying degrees of plausibility. And though it has been said that nothing really *happens* in this book—Robert Macfarlane quipped that “*Waiting for Godot* was once described as a play in which nothing happens, twice. *The Peregrine* is a book in which little happens, hundreds of times”¹⁸—its drama and its so-called “hyperkinetic” energy comes from its remarkably inventive deployment of figurative language and the utter sensuousness of Baker’s descriptions. The setting is strange, crepuscular, wrenched out of time. For instance, in the book’s cinematic opening, Baker writes that “a fragrance of neglect still lingers, like a ghost of fallen grass. There is always a sense of loss, a feeling of being forgotten. There is nothing else here; no castles, no ancient monuments, no hills like green clouds. It is just a curve of the earth, a rawness of winter fields. Dim, flat, desolate lands that cauterize all sorrow.”¹⁹

Similarly, his figuration of the song of the nightjar flirts with synesthesia:

Its song is like the sound of a stream of wine spilling from a height into a deep and booming cask. It is an odorous sound, with a bouquet that rises to the quiet sky. In the glare of day it would seem thinner and drier, but dusk mellows it and gives it vintage. If a song could smell, this song would smell of crushed grapes and almonds and dark wood. The sound spills out, and none of it is lost. The whole wood brims with it.²⁰

There are, as Robert Macfarlane elaborates in *Landmarks*, adjectives “torqued” into verbs; verbs “incite[d] to misbehavior”; “audacious comparisons,” and the contrivance of plentiful “neologisms and coinages.”²¹ Moreover, the manuscript pages were quite heavily revised at least five times; many of the pages were marked with stress-marks over certain syllables to indicate something like poetic meter, even if the pages themselves might look ostensibly like prose. Some of the sentences had been rendered into verse in the marginalia, and there were running tallies of how many hundreds of metaphors, similes, adjectives, and verbs had been used on each page.²² Baker could well be compared to another of England’s poets, Gerard Manley Hopkins, in another voice and in another time.

In Part 1, “Beginnings,” Baker’s narrator retrospectively considers what prompted the text, saying, “For ten years I followed the peregrine. I was possessed by it. *It was a grail to me.*”²³

If it is true that *The Peregrine* is a book about descriptive language and prose style just as much if not more so as it is about birds, and if we continue to take into account the scrupulosity with which Baker revised his manuscripts for final publication, it will be clear indeed that the likening of his decade-long hunt in *The Peregrine* to the quest for the holy grail is not a throwaway line. Other images and diction choices throughout the book corroborate this evocation not only of a natural landscape saturated with religious imagery, but also the medieval Arthurian legends and their immediate predecessors.²⁴ (Here it is perhaps worth noting as an aside that T.H. White, the author of the classic falconry book *The Goshawk*, is also the author of *The Once and Future King*, another 1950s classic based loosely upon *Le Morte d’Arthur* (1469).) In Baker’s world—which seems at the same time both medieval and modern—birds are “sepulchred in twilight”²⁵; glimpsing a hawk after hours of searching means that “all is transfigured, as though the broken columns of a ruined temple had suddenly resumed their ancient splendor”²⁶; a wren is a “priest”; another bird occupies a “hermitage”²⁷; a falcon startled from the marsh arises “like a departing god.”²⁸ A frigid wind blowing in from the east he calls “a blaze of lances”²⁹; the wings of the peregrine shine in the sunlight “like red and gold chain-mail.”³⁰

There is also a haunting encounter with an owl in the woods whose

helmeted face was pale white, ascetic, half-human, bitter and withdrawn. The eyes were dark, intense, baleful. This helmet effect was grotesque, as though some lost and shrunken knight had withered to an owl. . . . Neither of us could bear to look away. Its face was like a mask, macabre, ravaged, sorrowing, like the face of a drowned man.³¹

On my reading, however, it seems that there is evidence that it is not just Arthurian-style legends and medieval landscapes in general to which Baker meant to allude, but perhaps to one in particular: namely the French poet Chretien de Troyes’ (c.1130-1190) *Perceval: The Story of the Grail*³², which predates Sir Thomas Malory’s *Le Morte d’Arthur* by about 300 years.

One reason I think this is the case is the conspicuous similarity in each text in scenes that describe the strangely aesthetic experience of seeing blood on snow after raptors have wounded or killed, and then subsequently abandoned, their prey. Both protagonists are utterly enraptured by the contrast. First is the passage from *Perceval*:

He came to the king’s camp / But saw, before he reached / The tents, a flock of wild / Geese, dazzled by the heavy / Snow, fleeing as fast / As birds can fly from a diving / Falcon dropping out of the sky. It struck at a single / Goose, lagging behind / The others, and hit it so hard / That it fell to the earth. But the hawk / Didn’t follow it down, not hungry / Enough to take the trouble, / Too lazy to chase it. So the falcon / Flew off. But Perceval rode / To where the goose had fallen. / The bird’s neck had been wounded, / And three drops of blood / Had come rolling out on the snow, / Dying it vivid red. / The bird had not been badly / Hurt, just knocked to the earth, / And before the knight could reach it / It had flown away in the sky, / But its body’s oval shape / Was printed in the snow, the blood- / Dyed color suffused inside it, / And Perceval, leaning on his lance, /

Sat staring at the sight. Blood / And snow so mixed together / Created a fresh color, / Just like his beloved's face, / And as he stared he forgot / What he was doing and where / He was. The red stain / Against the white snow / Seemed just like her complexion.³³

Baker similarly describes two dead herons “shredded by many shapes of tooth and beak and claw. . . . A day of blood; of sun, snow, and blood. Blood-red! What a useless adjective that is. Nothing is as beautifully, richly red as flowing blood on snow. It is strange that the eye can love what mind and body hate.”³⁴

Here both Perceval and Baker's narrator could be said to be acting somewhat like modern haruspices, observing the entrails and blood of fallen animals and finding not only meaning therein, but also the occasion for their own enchantment and for the re-enchantment of all of nature.

Perhaps more apropos in *Perceval* for our purposes, however, is the symbolic value of the grail in tandem with the theme of *the unasked question*. The particular combination of elements in *Perceval's* story, some of which reflect earlier iterations of the tale (a 1056 text called *The Prophetic Ecstasy of the Phantom*), are quite striking: there is a magical castle, a mysterious vessel, an enigmatic procession surrounding the grail, a bleeding lance, the mortally wounded Fisher King, and the visitation of a guest-hero who is expected to—but does not—ask a fundamental question which would have healed all wounds and restored the king and his imperiled land to health. As Perceval witnessed the marvelous procession of the grail and the maimed Fisher King, he wanted more than once to ask whom the grail served and what it all meant, but again and again he chided himself and kept his silence; again and again he deferred his asking of the fundamental question of the meaning of it all.

Meanwhile, the wonderful grail / Was carried back and forth, / But again the boy was silent, / Not asking to whom it was served. And again it was thoughts of his master / Which kept him from speaking, for he never / Forgot how clearly he'd been warned / To beware of too much talking. / And so he stayed silent too long. / With every course, the grail / Was borne back and forth, / Uncovered, plainly visible, / And still he did not know why. / Although he wished to know / He told himself he'd surely / Make some safe inquiry / Before he left; someone / Would tell him. He'd wait until morning. . . . And so he postponed his questions. . . .”³⁵

When he awoke, however, he discovered that it was too late to ask what it all meant, to ask “why the lance / Dripped blood (was some sorrow involved?) / And why they'd borne the grail. . . .” For the castle had been abandoned during the night. “He called, but no one answered. . . .”³⁶

Perceval meets a mysterious lady, the sort of which abound in Arthurian legend, who chided him, saying, “Ah, how unlucky you are. / For had you asked those questions / You could have completely cured / The good king of all his wounds: / He would have become entirely / Whole, and ruled as he should. / How much good you'd have done!”³⁷

Simone Weil's much later, deeply personalist gloss on this story puts the refusal to ask the question in the register of compassionate attention to the suffering other. On her reading, the

question that the wandering hero *should* have asked the Fisher King, who was “three-quarters paralysed by the most painful wound, was simply this: “What are you going through?”³⁸

Part Four. The Quest and the Question, or, How Not to Be a Scavenger

So what exactly can this deep-dive into falconry and medieval quests say about the value of our common project in PLS or of a liberal arts education more generally? As we all already know and appreciate, a liberal arts education provides an integrated vision of a kind of pedagogical formation that is multidisciplinary, inquiry-based, contemplative, and communal, and which aims at the total development of the human person in her intellectual, affective, aesthetic, and social dimensions. The liberal arts are called “liberal” in part because this course of study allows for and encourages a spirit of free inquiry. We are a questing and a questioning people. To call the liberal arts “liberal” is to celebrate the liberty to seek the truth wherever it may be found, uninhibited by the external forces of coercion, authority, power, utility, pragmatism, social norms, premature specialization and professionalization, or private interests, which could constrain the integrity of such a search.

So first we might notice that in *The Peregrine*, Baker’s narrator comes to inhabit the perspective of the avian other with such a fierce and radical kind of sympathy that by the end of the book it is difficult to tell if he still considers himself to be of the species called human. Certainly he does not shy away from asking the question of the ultimate meaning of these natural phenomena.

He adopts a doubled perspective, to see at once as the hunter and the hunted, the bird and the man, and even to come to a sort of transformative communion with it. “I found myself,” he writes, “crouching over the kill, like a mantling hawk. My eyes turned quickly about, alert for the walking heads of men. Unconsciously I was imitating the movements of a hawk, as in some primitive ritual; the hunter becoming the thing he hunts. . . .”³⁹

Analogously, to move through our PLS seminar list is to come to see a wide range of the patterns of human behavior—if and only if we, unlike the unlucky Perceval, ask the fundamental question when our hearts and minds prompt us to do so. It is to expose and evaluate a full slate of possibilities of forms of human life: heroes, villains, statesmen, matricides, patricides, philosophers, lovers, wanderers, saints, sinners, pilgrims, mothers, fathers, poets, the bereaved, kings, travelers, contemplatives, prisoners, theologians, politicians, knights, actors, mystics, idealists, pragmatists, monsters, friends, scientists, revolutionaries, the visible, the invisible, the powerful, and the weak.

What has the power to heal our wounds and the wounds of those around us is not simply proximity to the grail; that is somehow not enough. Rather, it is the presence of the grail together with the willingness to ask the question. Not *a* question, but *the* question, the one needful thing, the question prompted by our most intimate desires toward ultimate meaning. We are, as Michael Gelven describes it, *asking mysteries*.⁴⁰

In “The Aims of Liberal Education,” a chapter in *The Aims of Education* (1997), Leon Kass draws some helpful etymological connections between the words “*question*, *query*, [and] *inquire*” with the Latin *quaero*, meaning “to hunt out.” “To question,” he says, “is to quest, to

search out and to seek after, to be engaged in a passionate pursuit. Like the hunting dogs' search for game—the original meaning of our word *quest*—questioning is an earnest activity. This insight is preserved in the Latin root: *quaeso* means to seek and search, but also to beg, pray, beseech, entreat. In true questioning, we seek for an answer and by our questions entreat being itself to reveal, to uncover, to make unhidden, the object of our search.”⁴¹ And in the liberal arts, the object of our search is not an empirically demonstrable fact but rather is the “search for *what we are* and *what we can and should become*.”⁴²

If *The Peregrine* is indeed a “record of desire”—and here we might remember that the pilgrims who embark upon the Camino de Santiago are called *peregrinos*—what is it precisely that Baker (and we, and they) are seeking? What adventure, quest, or journey of transformation awaits us in the project of the liberal arts education toward which we, like those Camino pilgrims, are always on the way? The narrator of Baker's book wants not only to observe the raptors as empirical realities, but to gain a “sharpen[ed] vision”⁴³ to see, as he puts it, “the hardest thing of all . . . what is really there.”⁴⁴

But even when the narrator seems to get exactly what it is that he is after, it turns out that the sort of desire that motivates his search is exactly the sort that can never be satiated. Even as he marvels at the falcon's tremendous power of flight, for him to see it is to want to continue to see:

Now, I thought, I have seen the best of the peregrine; there will be no need to pursue it farther; I shall never want to search for it again. I was wrong of course. One can never have enough.⁴⁵

This may rhyme with some of our own experiences of moving through our liberal arts curriculum. Whereas early on in our study we might become frustrated at the lack of definitive answers at the mysteries opened by our common texts, later we begin to see the wisdom in asking more and more incisive, provocative questions. As Kass reflects, “Unlike the solution to a problem, the gaining of an answer to our questions does not dissolve the quest, or at least, does not abolish the desire. Like other forms of genuine love, love does not vanish but even grows when the object is present. As the lover loves to gaze on the beloved, so the questing mind delights in beholding the insights it receives.”⁴⁶

To undertake a course of study in the liberal arts is also to appreciate that some enterprises are their own reward, not *for* anything, not economized into profit or the crassness of gain, which chides in a small but significant way the calculus that human persons can be measured in terms of use, commodity, economy, or exchange value. The liberal arts education is not really *for* vocational training or for the production of scholarship, or for becoming more cultured, even as it does happen to give us these things along the way. The singular aim of liberal education is “*the cultivation in each of us of the disposition actively to seek the truth and to make the true our own*.”⁴⁷

Fans of Thomas Merton may already have guessed that the title of this address, “The Liberal Arts and the Birds of Appetite,” is a riff on the title of Merton's 1968 book, *Zen and the Birds of Appetite*. While Merton and I are up to very different things, I wonder if there is a certain wisdom to be found for us with respect to this point in his prefatory author's note:

Where there is carrion lying, meat-eating birds circle and descend. Life and death are two. The living attack the dead, to their own profit. The dead lose nothing by it. They gain too, by being disposed of. Or they seem to, if you must think in terms of gain and loss. . . . Zen enriches no one. There is no body to be found. The birds may come and circle for a while in the place where it is thought to be. But they soon go elsewhere. When they are gone, the ‘nothing,’ the ‘no-body’ that was there, suddenly appears. . . . It was there all the time but the scavengers missed it, because it was not their kind of prey.⁴⁸

In our study of the liberal arts, we are best served, I think, to envision our task not like vultures who pick over the bones of carrion long dead, but more like these raptors, like predators who seek a *living* prey, who revel in the dynamic, dramatic thrill of the hunt and not just in the impoverished categories of gain and loss. Scavengers are content with nourishing themselves on dead things that have been left behind and that are relatively easy to obtain. The aim of liberal arts education, however, is—through an often agonistic grappling with our texts and with each other—to cultivate a disposition of thoughtful inquiry, to seek as if we desire whole mysterious worlds beyond bare facticity, conceptual formulations, and merely pragmatic solutions to problems, and nothing beyond the sake of knowledge itself, to go out hunting for the truth in whatever dells or valleys or forests or castles or rivers in which it may be found without foreclosing any possibility of free inquiry. May we desire and question and quest in such a way that the scavengers will miss it, as we continue the “search for *what we are* and *what we can and should become*.”

NOTES

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- ¹ Prof. Andrew Radde-Gallwitz, “Moses Comes to Seminar: The Bible and the Great Conversation,” Opening Charge 2018, reprinted in the February 2019 edition of *Programma*, 13-25.
 - ² *Programma*, 1977. Accessible at https://pls.nd.edu/assets/119892/12.1977_programma.pdf.
 - ³ Phillip Sloan, “Remarks on Willis Nutting,” Program of Liberal Studies Senior Dinner, May 15, 2018.
 - ⁴ Personal Correspondence, September 6, 2021.
 - ⁵ Homer, *The Iliad*, Book 21.567-77.
 - ⁶ Homer, *The Iliad*, Book 13.73-78; Book 15.276-77.
 - ⁷ Homer, *The Iliad*, Book 17.761-69; Book 16.669-75.
 - ⁸ Robert Macfarlane, “Violent Spring: The Nature Book that Predicted the Future,” *The Guardian* (April 2017). Accessible at <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2017/apr/15/the-peregrine-by-ja-baker-nature-writing>.
 - ⁹ Quoted in Hilary A. White, “The Secret Life Behind the Writer of England’s Greatest Cult Book,” *The Irish Times* (January 6, 2018). Accessible at <https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/books/the-secret-life-behind-the-writer-of-england-s-greatest-cult-book-1.3333957>.
 - ¹⁰ Barret Baumgart, “Reading J.A. Baker’s *The Peregrine* in Fall,” *The Paris Review* (September 22, 2017). Accessible at <https://www.theparisreview.org/blog/2017/09/22/reading-j-a-bakers-the-peregrine-in-fall>.
 - ¹¹ Macfarlane, “Violent Spring.”
 - ¹² Cynthia Zarin, “Time Out: The Beauty of J.A. Baker’s *The Peregrine*,” *The New Yorker* (April 17, 2017). Accessible at <https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/the-beauty-of-j-a-bakers-the-peregrine>.
 - ¹³ J.A. Baker, *The Peregrine* (New York: New York Review of Books Classics, 2004), 13.
 - ¹⁴ Baker, 41.
 - ¹⁵ Robert Macfarlane, “Introduction” to *The Peregrine*, xiv.
 - ¹⁶ *Ibid.*
 - ¹⁷ Baker, 14.
 - ¹⁸ Robert Macfarlane, *Landmarks* (New York: Penguin Books, 2016), 151.
 - ¹⁹ Baker, 10.

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- ²⁰ Baker, 11.
- ²¹ Macfarlane, *Landmarks*, 152.
- ²² As Macfarlane notes in *Landmarks*, “‘Beginnings’ . . . though only six pages long, contained 136 metaphors and 23 similes, while the one-and-a-half-page entry for the month of March used 97 verbs and 56 adjectives” (153).
- ²³ Baker, 14; italics added.
- ²⁴ I owe a debt to Jonathan Geltner for pointing some of these allusions out to me in some unpublished work.
- ²⁵ Baker, 11.
- ²⁶ Baker, 14.
- ²⁷ Baker, 81.
- ²⁸ Baker, 149.
- ²⁹ Baker, 138.
- ³⁰ Baker, 123.
- ³¹ Baker, 78-9.
- ³² Chretien de Troyes: *Perceval: The Story of the Grail*, trans. Burton Raffel (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999).
- ³³ de Troyes, 132-33.
- ³⁴ Baker, 132.
- ³⁵ de Troyes, 105. Cf. also the lines that read, “The boy saw that wondrous / Sight, the night he arrived there, / But kept himself from asking / What it might mean. . . .” (de Troyes, 102); “And the boy watched them, not daring / To ask why or to whom / This grail was meant to be served, / For his heart was always aware / Of his wise old master’s warnings. / But I fear his silence may hurt him, / For I’ve often heard it said / That talking too little can do / As much damage as talking too much. / Yet, for better or worse, / He never said a word” (De Troyes, 103).
- ³⁶ De Troyes, 108.
- ³⁷ De Troyes, 114.
- ³⁸ Simone Weil, “Reflections on the Right Use of School Studies with a View to the Love of God,” *Waiting on God* (Routledge Revivals, 2009), 32-37.
- ³⁹ Baker, 95. The passage continues: “We live, in these days in the open, the same ecstatic fearful life. We shun men. We hate their suddenly uplifted arms, the insanity of their flailing gestures, their erratic scissoring gait, their aimless stumbling ways, the tombstone whiteness of their faces” (95).
- ⁴⁰ Michael Gelven, *The Asking Mystery: A Philosophical Inquiry* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000).
- ⁴¹ Leon Kass, “The Aims of Liberal Education,” in *The Aims of Education* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1997), 92.
- ⁴² Kass, 96.
- ⁴³ Baker, 13.
- ⁴⁴ Baker, 19.
- ⁴⁵ Baker, 149.
- ⁴⁶ Kass, 92-93.
- ⁴⁷ Kass, 86.
- ⁴⁸ Thomas Merton, “Author’s Note,” in *Zen and the Birds of Appetite* (New Directions, 1968).

FACULTY NEWS

Katie Bugyis writes, “This past year, my essay “Women Priests at Barking Abbey in the Late Middle Ages,” which was published in *Women Intellectuals and Leaders in the Middle Ages*, a collection of essays I co-edited with Kathryn Kerby-Fulton and John Van Engen, was awarded the American Society of Church History’s 2021 Jane Dempsey Douglass Prize, which honors the best essay on women’s role in the history of Christianity published in the two years prior to its adjudication. I received a three-year seed grant from the University of Notre Dame’s Faculty Research Program to develop the website *Women’s Rites: A Website for the Study of Christian Women’s Religious Communities in Medieval Europe, 900-1500*, together with Margot Fassler in the departments of Theology and Music. I also had the great honor of giving the opening Ushaw Lecture at Durham University’s Centre for Catholic Studies in October.”

Michael Crowe continues to do some writing. He has an essay on the religious significance of ideas about extraterrestrial life. This essay will appear in a collection of essays published by Routledge Press and edited by Todd Thompson of Biola University. A version of his essay will be presented in early June 2022 at Notre Dame’s Sixteenth Biennial Conference on the History of Astronomy. Professor Crowe and his wife will probably be moving in the near future into Notre Dame’s Holy Cross Village for senior citizens. He continues to be available at crowe.1@nd.edu.

Jenny Martin launched a new monograph series on theology and aesthetics with Bloomsbury Press this past year and had scholarly articles appear in *Communio*, *International Journal of Systematic Theology*, *Newman Studies Journal*, and *Modern Theology*. She delivered the [annual St. John Henry Newman Lecture](#) for the Hank Center for the Catholic Intellectual Heritage at Loyola University Chicago, a lecture series that provides Catholic intellectuals occasion to reflect on their own conversion experience in light of their scholarship, and she gave a number of talks (both virtual and in-person) to audiences in places as far-flung as Ireland and North Dakota. She is currently preparing for a trip to Krakow, Poland, as part of the instructional team for the McGrath Science and Religion Initiative, and she stays busy teaching courses in both the Department of Theology and the Program of Liberal Studies.

Emma Planinc writes, “I have been focusing in on my work on Rousseau in the last year, with some new things out or forthcoming on his theory of language in particular—which involves Ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs! I am on research leave in 2022, turning all of my attention to my monograph, *Regenerative Politics* (as well as Tex, of course, and soon, the garden).”

Clark Power’s recent work involves combating child poverty in low-income urban areas through a collective-impact approach involving a collaboration of public and non-profit sports and recreational organizations. He is focusing on intervention projects in South Bend and the west side of Chicago. He is also working with faculty, students, and alumni to explore ways in which Notre Dame and other elite universities might play a larger role in addressing systemic racism and inequality. He welcomes your advice and support,

Phillip Sloan remains active in professional and local activities. He delivered papers at several electronic conferences during the past year and gave a series of 12 electronic lectures on the

Darwinian Revolution at Zhejiang University in China. In November he delivered the fourth annual Gold Mass lecture at Notre Dame on the Feast of St. Albert the Great, the patron saint of scientists, on the interface of developments in biotechnology with the Catholic faith. He continues to serve as one of two senators representing the emeriti faculty on the Faculty Senate. With his spouse, Katherine Tillman, he enjoys activities with their extended family. He and Katherine face the uncertainties of the future, described in Katherine's write-up, with love and deep faith and appreciation for all the support they have received over the past year.

Tom Stapleford writes, "This fall, Oxford University Press published a volume that I co-edited with the philosopher Emanuele Ratti titled *Science, Technology, and Virtues: Contemporary Perspectives*. I also had an article on big data and economics published in *History of Political Economy*, and I co-organized a workshop examining the use of narratives in economics from the eighteenth through the twentieth centuries. Outside of work, I'm an assistant coach for a new women's high school lacrosse team and manage four different youth teams. (No, that's not a great time-management plan, in case you were wondering.) The biggest excitement at home has been getting solar panels installed, but more shockingly (at least for me), my daughter, who was born at the end of my first semester teaching in PLS, will be entering Notre Dame next fall as a first-year student. Somehow, that's still hard to believe!"

Katherine Tillman shares, "In the past year I have limited my scholarly activity to a book chapter on Cardinal Newman and some pedagogical issues of Plato's *Meno*, two review essays on a new edition of Newman's "Benedictine Essays," and, electronically, a short biographical presentation on Newman. On a more personal note, a year ago in January I was diagnosed with esophageal cancer and by grace have weathered the treatments and lasting side effects. My mind-bogglingly attentive husband, Phil, and I continue along life's journey, ever grateful for our 12 years of marriage, for our supportive families and friends, for our faith community, and for the thoughts and prayers of my beloved PLS colleagues and students of over a half century. May all of God's blessings be yours!"

Henry Weinfield and his wife, Joyce, have a new grandson (their first grandchild) who is named Sol and is the sun around which everything now revolves in their lives. Henry published two books in 2021: *As the Crow Flies*, a collection of poems, and *The Labyrinth of Love*, a translation of the selected sonnets and other poems by the sixteenth-century French poet Pierre de Ronsard. His new collection of poems, *An Alphabet*, will be published in 2022.

Notice of the Death of Father Gerard Carroll

Father Carroll, who taught in the Program of Liberal Studies from 1978 to 1983, died on Monday, July 5, 2021, in Ireland. His nephew Turloch, who is also a priest, wrote that Father Carroll had lived a number of years in ill health. "The youngest of my mother's family, and the youngest of four brothers ordained to the priesthood, Gerard was a priest to his fingertips, with an amazing, broad sense of spirituality. He was most at home in St. Sulpice in Paris, where he would spend hours hearing confessions and giving spiritual direction in French, Italian, English, German, and Spanish. As teenagers, my sister and I would enjoy our trips to Paris and the long walks around the city that was his home. His walking tours of Rome were also well known, from his student days in the Irish College. We have been so fortunate to have been enriched by his life. May he rest in peace and rise in glory." Father Carroll held doctoral degrees in sacred theology

from the Lateran University in Rome and from Trinity College, Dublin, where he wrote his dissertation on the priesthood in seventeenth-century France. His publications include his translation of *You Looked at Me: The Spiritual Testimony of Claudine Moine* (James Clark, 1989).

STUDENT AWARDS

2021 Willis Nutting Award

To the graduating student who contributed most to the education of classmates and teachers:

Eleanor (Ella) Wood

2021 Otto Bird Award

To the author of the senior thesis judged to exemplify the best ideals of liberal learning:

Madeline D. Foley

“Life After Death: The Relational Emancipation from Queer Refusal,”

Directed by Emma Planinc

2021 Susan M. Clements Award

To a female senior who exemplifies outstanding qualities of scholarly achievement, industry, compassion and service:

Rachel Hughes

2021 Edward Cronin Award

For the best paper submitted in a PLS course:

Jihan (Jerry) Chen

“Gulliver’s Encounter with Caliban on Prospero’s Island: A Dialogue”

This essay appears in the current issue of Programma.

2021 Stephen Rogers Endowment for Graduate Studies

To PLS seniors or alumni who are or will be attending graduate school:

Isobel Grogan, 2021

Sarah Tomas Morgan, 2018

Isabel Nguyen, 2020

Emily Normand, 2020

Kathleen Quinn, 2020

2021 The Monteverdi Prize

To a junior in the Program, to conduct research in Tuscany, Italy:

Luke Stringfellow

THE 2020 EDWARD J. CRONIN AWARD WINNER

Gulliver's Encounter with Caliban on Prospero's Island: A Dialogue

Jihan Chen
Class of 2022

PLS Great Books Seminar IV
September 25, 2020

After he departed from the land of the Houyhnhnms, Gulliver was reluctant to return to England, his native country. Instead, he wished to discover some remote islands on which he could spend the rest of his life, away from human society.¹ Fortune granted his wish and landed him on the Island of Prospero. Roaming alone, Gulliver came across the cave of Caliban.² An unexpected conversation happened between the two characters, as recorded below.

GULLIVER: I hear sounds coming from behind that rock. It is a man's voice, cursing in my native language. *[Loudly]* Who is behind the rock? Speak!

CALIBAN: There's wood enough within.³

GULLIVER: I do not know who you are, nor do I understand what you just said. Show yourself from behind that rock. I am asking with no ill intentions.

CALIBAN: *[Appears at the entrance of the cave]* I have never seen your face before. Are you some spirit conjured by that old wizard and his wicked daughter, coming to torture me?

GULLIVER: *[Aside]* I did not expect to encounter a Yahoo on this island who also knows how to speak the English language. *[To Caliban]* I do not know any wizard, nor am I a spirit. I am Gulliver. I traveled from the land of the Houyhnhnms. A tempest blew my canoe to your shores.

CALIBAN: I was born on this island to Sycorax, my mother, and was enslaved by Prospero and his daughter Miranda. I never left these shores when I was free, and now I am confined to this rock, not allowed to visit the rest of the island.⁴

¹ Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, ed. Christopher B. Fox, 1st ed. (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1994), 255.

² William Shakespeare, *The Tempest* (Penguin, 2016), 1.2.343.

³ Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, 1.2.314.

⁴ Shakespeare, 1.2.332-344.

GULLIVER: I have traveled to many remote regions of the world, and thus I can say that there is not much advantage to excessive traveling. How did you learn to speak, being a Yahoo?

CALIBAN: A Yahoo?

GULLIVER: You and I, we belong to the race of the Yahoos. In my own country, our race is called “humans”, the only kind of rational animal.⁵ But I have learned from the Houyhnhnms, who named us “Yahoos,” that we are truly a race of Brutes, unteachable and incapable of true reason.⁶

CALIBAN: What are the Houyhnhnms?

GULLIVER: They are a race of rational horses. The word “Houyhnhnm” in their language means “the perfection of nature.”⁷

CALIBAN: I think you are saying things that are not.⁸ How is it possible that a race of horses can speak, let alone be rational?

GULLIVER: They are indeed rational creatures who communicate through language. I myself am proof of that, since I learned to speak their language in their country. When I first met the Houyhnhnms, I explained my miserable situation to two of them. Even though they could not comprehend my language, they “engaged in serious Conversation” about what I said.⁹ I could distinctly make out the word “Yahoo” that was used to describe me, and I learned to properly pronounce the word on spot. The trick was to articulate loudly and, at the same time, imitate the neighing sound of the horses!

CALIBAN: I think your argument is feeble. How do you know they are speaking a language rather than simply neighing? Don’t you think that “Houyhnhnm” and “Yahoo” sound like horses neighing? If you observe two horses neighing at one another and thus conclude that a race of horses is capable of language, can’t you use the same argument to conclude that dogs, asses, and cows are also capable of language? Horses neigh, dogs bark, asses bray, and cows moo—when they make sounds, will you say *all* of them are speaking languages?

GULLIVER: I would not say that.

CALIBAN: Now let us return to the race of Yahoos. Did you encounter any of them in the country of the Houyhnhnms? What were they like?

GULLIVER: I did. They were the most detestable animals ever created. The Houyhnhnms enslaved them and used them for “draught and carriage.”¹⁰ I have learned to hate their

⁵ Swift, *Gulliver’s Travels*, 219.

⁶ Swift, 216.

⁷ Swift, 216.

⁸ Swift, 219.

⁹ Swift, 210.

¹⁰ Swift, 246.

race naturally, like my horse master and every other animal in their land naturally did.¹¹ Because my horse master perceived me as a Yahoo, despite being a “wonderful Yahoo” that possessed “some Glimmerings of Reason,” I tried hard to distinguish myself from their race.¹² However, I could no longer deny the truth, that “I was a real Yahoo, in every Limb and Feature,” when a female Yahoo attempted to mate with me.¹³ My horse master even convinced me that I was a *worse* kind of Yahoo. Although my “Teachableness, Civility and Cleanliness”¹⁴ differentiated me from the rest of my race and made me superior, nevertheless, many of my physical features made me way inferior. For example, I have “neither the Strength nor Agility of a common Yahoo,” and “I could neither run with Speed, nor climb Trees like my Brethren.”¹⁵ Realizing “a thousand Faults in myself, whereof I had the least Perception before,”¹⁶ I grew to hate myself more than I hate a common Yahoo; for “when I happened to behold the Reflection of my own Form in a Lake or Fountain, I turned away my Face in Horror and detestation.”¹⁷

CALIBAN: From listening to your experiences with the Houyhnhnms, I fear that the customs and perceptions of that peculiar race have poisoned your mind and destroyed your sense of self. Have you not realized that most of your knowledge about the Yahoos has come from your horse master?¹⁸ The perception of one particular race on another can be extremely biased and destructive. Since you mentioned the enslavement of the Yahoos, do you happen to know how and why they were enslaved in the first place?

GULLIVER: My horse master did narrate that part of their history to me. He said that the Yahoos were not native to their land. Many ages ago, two Yahoos abruptly appeared and from them a race of Yahoos was produced. He said, “their Brood in a short time grew so numerous as to over-run and infest the whole Nation.”¹⁹ This provoked the Houyhnhnms to purge the Yahoos from their land. They “made a general Hunting, and at last enclosed the whole Herd.”²⁰ Killing the older, they enslaved the younger generation of Yahoos.

CALIBAN: *Alas!* Did it not occur to you that those two Yahoos who “abruptly appeared” on the land of the Houyhnhnms could be travelers like yourself? They might have been lost at sea, and, discovering a new land, decided to set up a colony of their own. Your horse masters, fearing the competition of scarce resources, thus enslaved them.

GULLIVER: [*Silently*] That thought never occurred to me until now.

¹¹ Swift, 222.

¹² Swift, 217.

¹³ Swift, 242.

¹⁴ Swift, 215.

¹⁵ Swift, 235.

¹⁶ Swift, 234.

¹⁷ Swift, 251.

¹⁸ This idea originated from my classmate Nia Sylva and was brought up during a class discussion on September 22, 2020.

¹⁹ Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, 245.

²⁰ Swift, 245–246.

CALIBAN: You also said that you developed a natural hatred for the Yahoos. Why is that?

GULLIVER: Their physical features and life habits were beastly and uncultured. They had thick bodily hair and did not know to cover their private parts.²¹ Their living quarters and feeding habits were far from bearable: “they were all tied by the Neck with strong Wyths, fastened to a Beam,” and they fed upon “Roots, and the Flesh of Asses and Dogs, and now and then a Cow dead by Accident or Disease.”²²

CALIBAN: You would rather attribute the cruelty of their living conditions to their nature, but not to the cruelty of their horse masters? Just look at me: do you think it is due to my own will and agency that I am confined to this stone cave, without the freedom to roam and wander? You should not blame the Yahoos or me for our miseries. It is the institution of slavery and those who inhumanely enslaved us that should be held accountable for what you called the “beastly and uncultured” nature.

GULLIVER: You have made me doubt about things I haven’t doubted before. Also, I apologize if my stories have inflicted pain upon you. Now I am eager to learn about your current living conditions. Is your master treating you well?

CALIBAN: Like your previous horse masters, my master and his daughter treated me like a beast. They called me “A freckled whelp, hag-born, not honored with / A human shape.”²³ They ceaselessly praised themselves for teaching me their language, which is the same language you speak. The wicked daughter often says to me: “when thou didst not, savage, / Know thine own meaning, but wouldst gabble like / A thing most brutish, I endowed thy purposes / With words that made them known.”²⁴ But I will *never* praise them for that! The ability to learn language has always been a part of my nature. Like every person, all I need is a teacher who can guide me in the actualization of my linguistic potentials. Thus, they cannot claim to have endowed me with purpose or have saved me from savageness. I often refute my master’s daughter by saying, “You taught me language, and my profit on’t / Is, I know how to curse.”²⁵ Therefore, to manifest my dignity as a human being, not a beast, I will never speak kindly or rationally to my masters as I did with you. Rather, I will curse them till the end of my life! *[Exit]*

Caliban returned to his cave, continuing to curse Prospero and Miranda. Gulliver walked back to the shore where he left his canoe. He looked out to the sea and decided to go home. FINIS.

Bibliography

Shakespeare, William. *The Tempest*. Penguin, 2016.

Swift, Jonathan. *Gulliver’s Travels*. Edited by Christopher B. Fox. 1st Edition. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 1994.

²¹ Swift, 207.

²² Swift, 212.

²³ Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, 1.2.283–284.

²⁴ Shakespeare, 1.2.355–358.

²⁵ Shakespeare, 1.2.363–364.

2021 SENIOR THESIS TITLES

Sam Cannova	Global Counterculture in Local Protests, First Then and Again Now: Reviving Cape Town Hip Hop to Renegotiate the New Apartheid	Ernest Morrell
Natalie Casal	Alypius' Role in Augustine's <i>Confessions</i>	Hildegund Müller
Therese Douglass	Recovering Nuance: De-Homogenizing Modern "Conservative" Catholic Thought on the Feminine	Thomas Stapleford
Marie Doyle	"That long swim through the water of unknown depth": Rahnerian Grace and Symbol in the Life and Poetry of Denise Levertov	Jennifer Newsome Martin
Michael Everett	Death with Dignity: How Psychotherapies Operate As Dignity-Affirming Stories in End-of-Life Care	Francesca Bordogna
Caitlyn Fennelly	The History of the Risorgimento: Revision and Resurgence	John Deak
Emma Ferdinandi	Divine, Natural, and Human Law: The Portrayal of Criminals in the Ancient Roman World	Tadeusz Mazurek
Madeline Foley	Life After Death: The Relational Emancipation from Queer Refusal	Emma Planinc
Isabel Gese	Camping After the Death of Camp: Queer and Lesbian Camp Post-Liberation	Pamela Wojcik
Julia Goldschmidt	To Be Well: A Modern Play Inspired by Julian of Norwich	Anne Garcia-Romero
Isobel Grogan	"All Possibility Possible": Marina Carr and the Pursuit of a Tragic Anti-theater	Susan Harris
Franciso Hernandez-Guzman	Read Like a Man: Comparing Narratives of Masculinity in Secondary Education	Michael Macaluso
Rachel Hughes	Breakwater: Floods, Footprints, Backyard Ramblings, Glacial Graves, Explorations, Whispers, Living Bodies Seeking to Be at Home Here	Jennifer Newsome Martin
Carter Hult	Homelessness in America: Defining,	

	Historicizing, and Diagnosing the Causes of Homelessness	Thomas Stapleford
John Jakubowski	The Effect of the Literature of World War I on the Diagnosis and Treatment of Traumatic Neuroses	Francesca Bordogna
Stephen Kawulicz	Encomium Fateuil: The Pedagogy of Variety in Erasmus	Andrew Radde-Gallwitz
Eveline Kenney	Discerning and Discovering a Personal Call to Christian Hospitality	Katie Bugyis
Elisabeth Laseki	Spiritual Accessibility in Victor Hugo's <i>The Hunchback of Notre Dame</i> : Analyzing the Reciprocal Relationship Between Person and Place	Katie Bugyis
Mitchell MacDonald	Wycliffite Spirituality Through Chaucer's Wife of Bath	Katie Bugyis
Riley Marsh	"Out of Love for TMTH": Constructing Calvino's Author Machine	Francesca Bordogna
Alex Moran	Predicting U.S. Monthly Inflation with a Random Forest	Drew Creal
Thomas Murphy	The Republicanism of Cicero and Early American Political Thought	Emma Planinc
Alexandria Murray	Mind the Gap: Analyzing the Gap in Educational Achievement Across Socioeconomic Lines	Clark Power
Jacob Neisewander	The Lonely Players: An Exploration of Inspiration and Finding Home	Eric Bugyis
Katherine Perry	The Disruptive Nature of Grace in the Short Stories of Flannery O'Connor	Katie Bugyis
Molly Queal	Love Was Her Meaning: A Symbolic of Natality in Julian of Norwich's <i>Showings</i>	Eric Bugyis
Maddy Schierl	Prophetic Illustrations: An Exploration of Early Wellsian Imagery	Emma Planinc

Isabella Schmitz	Unpacking <i>Gulliver's Travels</i> : An Exploration of Jonathan Swift's Life, Works, and Satirical Style	Eric Bugyis
Felipe Segura	The Solutions of Thomas Carlyle and Karl Marx to a Decadent Society and the Need for Christian Redemptive Grace	Eric Bugyis
Augustine Siegel	Civic Humanism: James Hankins' <i>Virtue Politics</i> or the Pragmatic Republicanism of Niccolò Machiavelli	Andrew Radde-Gallwitz
Elizabeth Soller	Activating Solidarity: An Exploration of the Connection between Aristotle's Friendship and #BlackLivesMatter	Clark Power
Ella Wood	There Is Another Sky: A Modern Folk Retelling of Dante's <i>Purgatorio</i>	Jennifer Newsome Martin

ALUMNI NEWS

The editorial staff of *Programma* welcomes contributions and reserves the right to edit them for publication. For information about becoming a class correspondent, please contact the Program of Liberal Studies Office.

Please help us update our alumni database!

Send us your current email address, mailing address, and phone number. If you would like to let your classmates know what you are doing these days, please include an update as well. You can forward your information to pls@nd.edu or call the office at 574-631-7172.

Class of 1955

(Class Correspondent: George Vosmik, 3410 Wooster Rd., Apt. 605, Rocky River, OH 44116-4150, vosflyty@sbcglobal.net)

Class of 1957

(Class Correspondent: Ray McClintock, 3846 Orlando Cir. W., Jacksonville, FL 32207-6145)

Thomas C. “Tom” Newhouse, ND '57 (General Program – the original PLS program) passed away August 29, 2021. Not only was he a graduate of ND's PLS Program, but his three sons are also PLS alumni (Bob Newhouse '86, Brian Newhouse '89, Michael Newhouse '92). Link to Tom's obituary: [Thomas Newhouse Obituary - Bellaire, TX](#)

Class of 1958

(Class Correspondent: Michael Crowe, PLS, 320 O'Shaughnessy Hall, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN 46556, 574-631-6212, crowe.1@nd.edu)

Class of 1960

(Class Correspondent: Anthony Intintoli, Jr., 912 Georgia St., Vallejo, CA 94590-6239, aintintoli@yahoo.com)

James Byrne has passed away. Please follow the following link to his obituary: <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/washingtonpost/obituary.aspx?n=james-byrne&pid=187166399>

Class of 1962

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Class of 1966

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paulahr@earthlink.net, 305-965-9303)

Just a note to encourage fellow 1966 “GPer” to keep us up to date.

Class of 1967

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Class of 1976

(Class Correspondent: Pat Murphy, 2554 Rainbow Dr., Casper, WY 82601,

307-265-0070 (work), 307-265-8616 (home), 307-262-2872 (cell), pmurphy@wpdn.net)

Class of 1977

(Class Correspondent: Richard Magjuka, Department of Management, Room 630C, School of Business, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47501, rmagjuka@aol.com)

Anne Dilenschneider writes, “I have received the South Dakota Counseling Association’s 2021 Special Contributions Award for my work accompanying transgender and gender diverse (T/GD) persons. . . . I have been accompanying T/GD persons since 1992, first as a pastor and then as a licensed mental health professional. I am the only healthcare provider in the Dakotas who has earned the international specialty credential in Transgender Healthcare. In addition to working with nearly 100 current T/GD patients, I regularly lecture at our medical school. I lead workshops for schools, businesses, medical teams, and mental health professionals. I’ve provided testimony repeatedly for our state legislature, and I’ve been interviewed by local and national media. I collaborate with primary care, endocrinology, and surgical teams — both locally and across the U.S. — on a daily basis. I am also one of the 20 or so U.S. mentors for mental health professionals who are earning the international specialty credential. I was quite surprised to receive this award. I had no idea it was coming.

“It’s not been dull . . . I continue to write. For the last few years I have had poems published in *Pasque Petals* (the oldest state poetry journal in the US). A novel is under consideration for publication. I’ve been nominated to serve as a South Dakota Humanities Scholar again for 2018, giving presentations on women’s suffrage and on the Canton Indian Insane Asylum (a grass-roots history and reconciliation project that has been going on for 6 years). For my part, I am gathering thousands of documents digitally so the data can be shared easily with Native Nations across the US — it’s important because it was the linchpin of federal “Indian” policy from 1902-1933, and most of the inmates died there for lack of medical care; tragically most were children and young adults sent because they were “difficult” in boarding schools. I am in the process of gathering thousands of documents related to the asylum from archives across the country so they can be made available (on flash drives) to Native communities and historical groups. I will be the first healthcare provider in South Dakota to complete an international specialty credential in gender health. I’ve been accompanying TGNC (Transgender/Gender Non-Conforming) persons for 26+ years, first as a pastor and now as a mental health clinician. I collaborate with primary care, endocrinology, and surgical teams across the U.S., including the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN. I am also engaged in education and transformation with healthcare systems – e.g., providing education for healthcare administrators, providing gender-neutral intake and EMR options, exploring the ethics and practice of hospitality. And, I have been asked to serve as an expert witness for the ACLU on a case regarding insurance coverage for transgender persons. I continue to volunteer with my dogs as Therapy Dog International teams in hospitals, schools, and care facilities. My oldest dog has been doing this with me for 13 of her 15 years.”

Class of 1978

Added by the PLS Office:

Bruce Rand writes: “My Address is 15330 Ballast Point Dr., Apt. 2104, Ft. Myers, FL 33908. My email is: rand_bruce56@yahoo.com and I’m on Facebook under Bruce Rand. I retired from the Collier County Clerk of Circuit Court (Naples, Florida) in 2012 and moved to nearby Ft.

Myers (close to Ft. Myers Beach). I'm reaching out to former classmates for correspondence, etc.”

Class of 1979

(Class Correspondent: Thomas Livingston, 300 Colonial Dr., Pittsburgh, PA 15216, skiponfordham@hotmail.com)

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(Class Correspondent: Mary Schmidlein Rhodes, 9 Southcote Rd., St. Louis, MO 63144-1050, mvsvr3144@sbcglobal.net)

Class of 1981

(Class Correspondent: Tom Gotuaco, 21 Galaxy St., Belair 3, Makati City, PHILIPPINES, tom@gotuaco.com)

Class of 1983

(Class Correspondent: Patty Fox, 902 Giles St., Ithaca, NY 14850-6128, paf3@cornell.edu)

On October 12, 2021, **Elizabeth Booker Lyon** completed the Boston Marathon in 4 hours and 12 minutes and placed 117th of 350-plus entrants in her age group!

Class of 1984

(Class Correspondent: Margaret Smith Wrobel, P.O. Box 81606, Fairbanks, AK 99708-1606)

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Class of 1989

(Class Correspondent: Coni Rich, 244 Toscana Blvd., Granger, IN 46530, 574-271-0462, conijorich@aol.com)

James T. Harrington, Sr. shared the passing of James T. Harrington, Jr., Ph.D., on October 29, 2021. “Jim graduated from the program in 1989. He always used the methods in his teaching that

he learned in the program. Please forward this to any professors and professors emeritus he had while there and also to any classmates you have contact information for.”

<https://www.donnellanfuneral.com/obituaries/James-T-Harrington-Jr-PhD?obId=22934077#/obituaryInfo>

Class of 1990

(Class Correspondent: Barbara Martin Ryan, 45 Westmoreland Lane, Naperville, IL 60540-55817, jbryan45@att.net)

Class of 1991

(Class correspondent: Ann Mariani Morris, 153 Lincoln Rd., Sudbury, MA 01776, annie@rickmorris.com)

Class of 1992

(Class correspondent: Jennifer Adams Roe, 642 E. 3rd St., Newport, KY 41071-1708, jenadams1030@gmail.com)

Class of 1993

(Class correspondent: Anthony Valle, 147-55 6th Ave., Whitestone, NY 11357-1656)

Class of 1994

(Class correspondent: Sean Reay, 601 Colby Ave., Everett, WA 98201, seandreay@gmail.com)

John Fiore lives in the Chicago area with his wife and daughter (a seventh grader) and dog. He also has a son in college at Villanova. After graduating from Notre Dame, he got a master’s degree in Ancient History from the University of St. Andrews in Scotland and eventually earned an MBA from the University of Chicago. He has been working at JPMorgan for the past 26 years; on a recent East Coast business trip to multiple cities he enjoyed getting together with fellow PLS ’94 alums **Mark Cawley** and **David Lyon**.

Rachel Jarosik (Belanger) lives in the Chicago suburbs and works as a high school math teaching assistant. She has spent many years volunteering for a variety of local organizations, including Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, PTO, her local library and high school marching band (and, most recently, teaching religious education for middle schoolers). She continues to read as much as she can (and especially enjoys audiobooks), including in book clubs (which presumably are similar to Great Books seminars). For exercise she likes to run, and she participates in local 5Ks a few times a year. Two of her three kids have attended Notre Dame and a third is still in high school.

Jocelyn Malik lives in Pittsburgh with her husband, Tom, and children, Sage (14) and Hugo (11). She enjoys taking weekly tennis and art classes—one of her watercolor pieces was even featured in a juried show at the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts! She works in employer relations at Carnegie Mellon University and gets a kick out of going to lectures and seminars on all sorts of topics. She is so pleased that she stays in touch with **Sean Reay** and **Anne Heaton**. She even got to see Anne (and a group of other ND classmates) on the Jersey Shore last fall.

Ben Cain works as a chiropractic doctor and is trying to survive another dark winter in Anchorage, Alaska—by February or March, it will be light outside during his lunch hour! (Unfortunately, COVID has made trips to Hawaii more difficult to take.) Before the pandemic, he spent some time in Snohomish County, Washington, where he joined **Sean Reay** in cheering on the Single A Everett Aquasox (Seattle Mariners affiliate). He also reports he has been trying to work a little dialectic (Platonic, not Hegelian) into his everyday existence. (If you had classes with Ben, this makes sense somehow.)

Greg Millar lives in the Bay Area, where he works (and has a good time) as a stay-at-home-dad. Over the holidays, he and his sister had the . . . opportunity . . . to go through years of items stored in their parents' attic; they found a treasure trove of antiques and classic literature, some of which Greg has added to his personal library. Amidst the challenges of staying one step ahead of his kids, he reflects fondly from time to time on his experiences at Notre Dame: e.g., playing in a band, studying in London and traveling in Europe, and of course the Great Books and PLS!

Anne Heaton is a professional musician and singer and teacher. She currently is pursuing a master's degree in curriculum and instruction at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. She is particularly interested in songwriting as a social-emotional learning tool for high school students. Last semester, she taught public speaking to UW freshmen. Anne and her husband and two daughters and dog (and a very sturdy evergreen tree the family planted a couple years ago) live in the Milwaukee area. She was thrilled to get back to campus for a football game last fall.

Sean Reay works as a government attorney in Everett, Washington. He and his wife have two dogs, one named after a football player (Elway) and one after a Grateful Dead song (Althea)—perhaps a more PLS/Great Books-influenced canine name will be in the cards someday. During the pandemic, he enrolled in a songwriting class taught via Zoom by **Anne Heaton**. The two plan eventually to collaborate on a song touching on their shared experience in PLS. He made it back to campus in October for the USC game, and looks forward to seeing PLS folks on campus or elsewhere (he recently saw **Ben Cain** and **Jocelyn Malik**) in the future. He enjoys serving as PLS '94 class correspondent, and encourages folks to provide current information to the Program and/or e-mail him so they can be included in future alumni updates.

Class of 1995

(Class Correspondent: Andrew Saldino, 100 Mount Clare Ave., Asheville, NC 28801-1212)

Class of 1996

(Class Correspondent: Stacy Mosesso McConnell, 842 Cherry St., Winnetka, IL 60093-2433, smosesso@aol.com)

Class of 1997

(Class Correspondent: Brien Flanagan, 2835 NE Brazee Ct., Portland, OR 97212-4946, bflanagan@schwabe.com)

Class of 1998

(Class Correspondents: Katie Bagley, 2205 California St. NW, Apt. 503, Washington, DC 20008-3910, katie.bagley@gmail.com; and Clare Murphy Shaw,

3019 Campbell St., Kansas City, MO 64109-1419, clare.noel@gmail.com)

Class of 1999

(Class Correspondent: Kate Hibey Fritz, 11424 Rokeby Ave., Kingston, MD 20895,
kefritz@gmail.com)

Class of 2002

(Class Correspondent: Ricky Klee, 2010 Hollywood Pl., South Bend, IN 46616-2113,
rkleee3@gmail.com)

Class of 2011

I wrote this poem as a Christmas gift for my friends in P.L.S., and one Fr. Nicholas Ayo was kind enough to encourage me to send it to you for consideration for the *Programma* newsletter.

A merry Christmas and Happy new year to all

Patrick Johnson

December 2011

PLS Gift

Beat down from crowns my friends ache in their souls,
And me, too; I have ridden the giant Mammon
That betrays all noble order. And yet we must
Enter the market place – though longing for Sky – to dust!
Then, in a moment in time but time was made through that moment,*
Beauty passes, and before Satan can even get a chance to foment,
We are awake again. No matter how tired,
No matter red eyes, our souls are not expired!
This lot, in love, I was given in a happier time,
Such that it is right to remember them in rhyme
And to remember in prayer, incessantly towards His heart
The plethora of questions and desires on all our hearts
 Remember—more, represent—are not we one?
 One in Our Lady's mantle, one common tale begun.

*Taken from T.S. Eliot's *Choruses from 'The Rock'* section VII

Class of 2020

(Class Correspondents: John Henry Hobgood, jhobgool@alumni.nd.edu; McKenna Cassidy,
mcassid4@alumni.nd.edu; and Antonia Ambrose, antoniaambrose@me.com)

Class of 2021

(Class Correspondents: Madeline Schierl, mschierl@alumni.nd.edu; Therese Douglass,
tdougla4@alumni.nd.edu; and Emma Ferdinandi, eferdina@alumni.nd.edu)

Many Thanks to ALL Contributors

Contributions Received at the PLS Office for Support of *Programma* and the Program of Liberal Studies Since the Last Issue

The Program of Liberal Studies is home to a distinguished group of scholar-teachers committed to a vision of the power of a liberal arts education centered on the Great Books. Program faculty members strive to establish an intellectual, social, and spiritual community for students. These efforts often rely on the generosity of the University's alumni to meet with success.

We are fortunate to be at Notre Dame, a university that receives enthusiastic support from its alumni. Many of our graduates, however, may not know that it is possible to earmark a gift by specifying the unit to receive it in a letter accompanying the donation. Gifts for PLS can either be a general donation to the department or targeted to a specific fund. General donations are used initially for various operating expenses (faculty and student events, office equipment, printing and mailing *Programma*, and much more). When our annual gifts exceed expenses, part of the money is added to the department's endowment (to generate future interest) and part is used for scholarships for current students with financial need. Gifts that are earmarked for specific funds are used for the purposes of those funds, as described on the following pages.

There are three main ways to contribute:

1. Navigate to the "Supporting PLS" page on the PLS website (<http://pls.nd.edu/alumni/supporting-pls/>). A number of the funds listed on that page have direct links that will allow you to make an online donation to them.
2. If you prefer to donate by mail or if a fund is not available for direct online donation, you may send your contribution directly to the PLS office:

Program of Liberal Studies
320 O'Shaughnessy Hall
Notre Dame, IN 46556

3. Finally, you may send gifts to the university through regular channels (e.g., the Notre Dame Annual Fund), requesting that your contribution be earmarked for general use by the Program or for one of its specific funds.

No matter which method you choose, your gift will be recorded by the university and credited to your name (for purposes such as the football ticket lottery). If you wish to have your gift recorded in the current tax year, you should time the contributions to arrive before December 10. After that point, Becky is likely to be on vacation, and checks might not be processed until the New Year.

On behalf of the Program's faculty and students, I am deeply grateful not only for the financial support so many alumni, friends, and parents have given to us over the years but for the passion and enthusiasm that the Program continues to generate. It is a blessing to be a part of such a community.

Scholarships and Financial Aid for Students in The Program of Liberal Studies

The university has five named scholarships that either give preference to or are restricted to PLS students. One, the **Crosson Scholarship**, is open for public donations. The Program also has two other funds that provide support to PLS students with financial need, the **Rev. Nicholas Ayo, C.S.C., Fund** and the **Stephen Rogers Memorial Fund**. Finally, as noted above, a portion of any general donations to the department that surpass operating expenses are also used to support PLS students with financial need.

Kevin and Mary Becker Endowed Scholarship
Donald and Deborah Potter Scholarship
Jay Kelly Memorial Scholarship
Stephen Rogers Memorial Scholarship

Frederick Crosson Scholarship Endowment

In honor of this *éminence grise* and beloved teacher in the Program, a group of alumni created an endowment in his name in 2015 that provides scholarships for one or more PLS juniors with financial need. (Note: Because this scholarship is administered by Financial Aid, the Program does not always receive timely notice of contributions)

Contributions

Jan & Raymond Foery

Stephen Rogers Memorial Fund

Stephen Rogers graduated from our department in 1956 and later became a remarkable asset to our faculty. Though physically challenged by blindness, Steve was among the most remarkable and beloved faculty members in the Program. In 1985, Steve died during the final portion of senior essay time. The Stephen Rogers Fund helps us to assist worthy students facing financial difficulties. On more than one occasion, the Fund has allowed students to remain in school when otherwise they would have had to withdraw.

Contributions

Kyle Andrews & Megan Monserez
Libby Drumm & John Muench
Rev. Dr. Anne Dilenschneider
Thomas & Theresa Duffy, III
Thomas Fleming

Jan & Raymond Foery
Patrick Mannion
Kerry Smith
Gregory St. Ville

Funds to Support Student Awards or Program Activities

Along with its scholarship funds, the Program also has a number of funds to underwrite awards for PLS students or specific activities of the Program, such as its outreach programs and the Summer Symposium.

Otto A. Bird Fund

This fund is a tribute to the faculty member who worked with Mortimer Adler in founding the General Program. Otto A. Bird started the department in 1950. This award recognizes the graduating senior who wrote the year's most outstanding senior essay. The announcement of this award is keenly anticipated each year at the Senior Dinner, when students and faculty gather to celebrate the completion of the final requirement for graduation.

Contributions

Dr. & Mrs. Gary F. Raisl

Program of Liberal Studies Community Outreach Programs

In 1998 the Program of Liberal Studies began a community outreach seminar, with students from the South Bend Center for the Homeless, which runs for the entire academic year. Contributions help defray the cost of the books and outings to plays, concerts, and operas. Since then, Program faculty have also started a Junior Great Books Program (which brings PLS students to local schools to discuss age-appropriate great texts) and have been involved in a cooperative effort between Notre Dame and Holy Cross College to offer college courses in a local state prison. Contributions to this fund support these efforts.

Susan Clements Fund

Susan was an extraordinary student and a remarkable young woman who graduated in 1990. She was preparing for a career as a scholar and teacher when she met an early and tragic death in 1992. This award is presented each year at the Senior Dinner to a woman among the Program of Liberal Studies graduating seniors who exemplifies outstanding qualities of scholarly achievement, industry, compassion, and service.

Contributions

Matthew J. Beuter
Wendy C. Beuter
Catherine Clements & Jay Barbus

Eli Lilly and Company Foundation
Dana Rogers

Edward J. Cronin Fund

The Cronin Fund both honors a legendary teacher and helps to reward (and thus to encourage) undergraduate efforts to write lucidly and gracefully. The Award is for the finest piece of writing each year by a student in the Program of Liberal Studies. This is a distinct honor; it constitutes the Program's highest prize for writing in ordinary course work. Your gift will help us to recognize Program students who meet the high standards for writing set by our invaluable senior colleague.

Contributions

Mr. & Mrs. Charles A. Kromkowski

Willis D. Nutting Fund

The Willis Nutting award was established to memorialize one of the great teachers in the Program. Those who taught with or studied under Willis remember his gentle style, his clever wit, and his deep faith. The Willis Nutting tree outside the Art Department bears this motto from Chaucer: "And gladly wolde he lerne, and gladly teche." This was his style, and we hope that it will always be yours as well. The Award is for "that senior who has contributed most to the education of his or her fellow students and teachers."

Richard T. Spangler Fund

This newly established fund in honor of PLS alumnus Richard Spangler (class of 1977) is designated for stipends to cover part of the cost of attendance of our yearly Summer Symposium for alumni, in which Richard has been an enthusiastic and dedicated participant. For more information regarding the stipends, please contact the departmental office at pls@nd.edu.

Contributions

Mr. & Mrs. Ned Buchbinder
Thomas Coffey
Joseph P. Connelly
Thomas & Maryann Devine

Rev. Dr. Anne Dilenschneider
Joseph & Patricia Erpelding
Eugene & Donna Gorman
Jerry & Kathy Zuzolo

Program of Liberal Studies Endowments for Excellence

Over the years, a number of PLS graduates and their families have created substantial endowments that fund many aspects of the Program. We are very grateful for their generosity and support.

William & Christine Barr Family
Calcutt Family
Cioffi Family
John & Patrice Kelly

Franco Family
Neus Family Senior Thesis
Stephen Rogers Endowment for Graduate
Studies

General Contributions Designated for PLS Since the Last Issue

These contributions provide the department funds for the many faculty and student functions (Opening Charge, Christmas Party, Senior Dinner, Senior Reception), office equipment, and much more. They also provide us the means to send *Programma* to over 2,500 alumni all over the world. Contributions above annual operating expenses are used to build the Program's endowment and to provide financial aid to current students. This list includes contributions made during the 2021 Notre Dame Day.

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