

# HUMANITIES NOW

THE UIC INSTITUTE FOR THE HUMANITIES NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the first annual UIC Institute for the Humanities Newsletter, in which we recall some highlights from the past year, feature exciting work in the humanities by alumni and community partners, and anticipate a year of programming ahead.

Check out our website and follow us on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram for updates, news, and pictures!

## FACULTY FELLOWS

The Institute honors the six Faculty Fellows from 2017-2018: **Anne Eaton**, **Roderick A. Ferguson**, **Peter Hylton**, **Marina Mogilner**, **Heidi Schlipphacke**, and **Will Small**.



**Anne Eaton** giving her lecture on “Pictures and Morality” April 5, 2018.

We welcome six new Faculty Fellows for 2018-2019: **Mahrad Almotahari**, **Adam Goodman**, **Laura Hostetler**, **Michael Jin**, **Atef Said**, and **Julia Vaingurt**.



They will present public lectures on an intriguing array of subjects from the politics of space in the Egyptian Revolution to the poetics of weakness in Russian Literature.

## Your Humanities Story: Tim Oravec (UIC English)

The Institute celebrates alumni who are connecting their work in the humanities at UIC to exciting career paths and community work. Tim Oravec tells his story:

“ Before starting my career as a policy aide to Commissioner Debra Shore at the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District, I graduated from UIC in 2012 with a B.A. in English and a minor in Earth and Environmental Sciences. I’ve since worked on a wide range of environmental policy projects. Most notably, I drafted a comprehensive white paper analyzing how improperly disposed pharmaceuticals contaminate waterways and fuel the opioid abuse epidemic. My work directly led to the introduction of an ordinance governing safe medication disposal that the Cook County Board of Commissioners unanimously passed into law. I can’t imagine succeeding as an environmentalist without the skills I gained as an English major at UIC: researching complex issues, synthesizing findings, reading critically, analyzing rhetoric, writing clearly for diverse audiences, and crafting persuasive narratives to advance specific policy goals. Addressing the 21<sup>st</sup> century’s most pressing challenges requires an ability to question long-held assumptions, work across disciplines, think creatively, and tell compelling stories. What better way to prepare than with an education in the humanities?



What have you done with your degree in a humanities-related field?

Let us know at [huminst@uic.edu](mailto:huminst@uic.edu) and we hope to be able to feature your story in a future issue!

## VISITING FELLOWS

Each year, the Institute invites a leading figure in humanities scholarship to share their work. In the spring of 2018, art historian **T.J. Clark** (Berkeley) shared fascinating work on Cézanne and Velázquez at his seminar and lecture.

In the spring of 2019, the Institute invites political theorist **Bonnie Honig** (Brown), author of numerous books on feminism, law, politics, and democratic theory. Stay tuned for more details on her visit to UIC on March 4 and 5, 2019.

If you missed these events or any other major Institute events, you can view many of them on the Institute’s channel at: [youtube.com/UICInstitutefortheHumanities](https://www.youtube.com/UICInstitutefortheHumanities)



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## FLASH CONFERENCES

Flash Conferences are one-panel discussions that focus on texts or current events from the perspective of work in the humanities—a perspective that provides cultural context, theoretical depth, and historical background.

Last year we held conferences on The Monument Debate and the #MeToo movement; stay tuned for future Flash Conferences, and contact **Mark Canuel** ([mcanuel@uic.edu](mailto:mcanuel@uic.edu)) to suggest topics.

The Institute also honored anniversaries of two important writers: poet **Gwendolyn Brooks** and novelist **Mary Shelley** (whose *Frankenstein* was published two hundred years ago). Poets and scholars from around the US joined us in these landmark events.

## UPCOMING CONFERENCES

### Political Futures: October 12-13, 2018

The Institute is teaming up with Anna Kornbluh and Nasser Mufti (English) to present an event that features scholars from UIC and other universities in the U.S. and Canada. This conference explores the relation between conceptual or aesthetic work and future political organizations, institutions, and affiliations. Its aim is to practice the power of the engaged humanities to envision futures, while also reflexively exploring the benefits, challenges, and limits of future-projection.



### “Interdisciplinary Conversations: The War that Made Today”: Commemorating the End of World War I

Eleven days of programming will take place on November 1–11, 2018. The events are organized by **Michele McCrillis** (Honors College); they will explore the global and local impact of World War I and the role of the war in shaping the contemporary world.

*WWI programming partners: The Honors College, Jane Addams Hull-House Museum, Student Veteran Affairs, Department of History, The School of Theatre and Music, and ROTC.*

## HUMANITIES FRONTIERS

Humanities Frontiers workshops are day-long intense explorations of specific problems or debates in humanities scholarship. This fall, the Institute will be supporting a workshop on “**Explanation Without Essence**” organized by **Mahrad Almotahari**, on **September 21-22, 2018**.

Stay tuned for the call for new Frontiers Workshops for spring and fall 2019.



In the spring of 2018 **Sandy Sufian** and **Michael Blackie** hosted a Frontiers Workshop on “**Stories of Illness**.”

## ENGAGED HUMANITIES

Proposed by UIC’s Provost **Susan Poser** and generously supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, a new Engaged Humanities Initiative presents an exciting opportunity for undergraduate students to apply their scholarly work in the humanities to real-life issues and problems. The initiative is housed at the Institute and directed by Professor **Ellen McClure** (French, History). Students will be able to draw on the full range of lectures and discussions at the Institute in order to broaden the scope of classroom work, connect in a casual atmosphere with faculty and students, and find mentors for inspiring research projects.

Contact **Ellen McClure** ([ellenmc@uic.edu](mailto:ellenmc@uic.edu)) if you would like to participate in this initiative, as a faculty mentor, student, or community partner.

## DISSERTATION WORKSHOP

Last year, **Kei Hotoda** (Philosophy) and **Aviral Pathak** (Political Science) presented dissertation chapters to the Interdisciplinary Dissertation Writing Workshop. In 2018-2019, **Nicoletta Rouseva** (Art History) circulates a work-in-progress for a discussion on November 7 from 12 - 1:30 PM.

Contact us at [huminst@uic.edu](mailto:huminst@uic.edu) if you are interested in presenting a section of your dissertation in spring 2019!