



# News2 Note

December 2012

**Elisabeth Austin**, Foreign Languages and Literatures/Spanish, published *Exemplary Ambivalence in Late Nineteenth-Century Spanish America: Narrating Creole Subjectivity* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell UP, 2012). Probably too late- but might want to add "poetry" in front of unit in the following sentence:

**Amy Price Azano**, School of Education/Teaching and Learning, as a member of the National Research Center for the Gifted and Talented at the University of Virginia, was awarded a Curriculum Award from the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC). The competition identifies different curriculum units for heterogeneous classrooms and gifted education programs that can be shared with other educators as models of exemplary curriculum. Azano and her colleagues received the award for the poetry unit "The Magic of Everyday Things" during the 2012 NAGC convention in Denver, Colorado, which took place November 15-18. In addition, Azano published "An evaluation of test speededness in an assessment for third-grade gifted students," *Journal of Advanced Academics* 23 (2012): 292-304, with Emily Hailey, Carolyn M. Callahan, and Tonya R. Moon.

History Professor and Chair **Mark V. Barrow, Jr.**, was awarded the Watson Davis and Helen Miles Davis Prize for Best Book for a General Audience by the History of Science Society (HSS). Barrow was recognized *Nature's Ghosts: Confronting Extinction from the Age of Jefferson to the Age of Ecology* (University of Chicago Press, 2009). The History of Science Society is the world's largest society dedicated to understanding science, technology, medicine, and their interactions with society in historical context. The Davis Prize was established in 1985, and this year's prizes were presented at the Prize Ceremony on November 17 during the HSS's annual meeting at the Sheraton San Diego Hotel and Marina.

The Virginia Tech Chamber Singers performed at the 2012 Virginia Music Educators Association Conference in Hot Springs, Virginia, on November 15 under the direction of **Dwight Bigler**, Music. The repertoire included music from the Renaissance to contemporary compositions, including two works by Bigler. On November 2 the Blacksburg Master Chorale premiered Bigler's "The Day Is Past" at their "American Originals" concert.

Sophomore English major **Emily Blair** was part of a three-person panel that presented “*The Course of Study Planner: Empowering Students to Take Control of Their Education and Create a World-Class Education for Themselves*” at the National Collegiate Honors Council’s (NCHC) national meeting in Boston on November 16. Blair participated with Honors staff members Christina McIntyre and Russell Shrader. In addition, Blair gave a second presentation at the conference, on “*Honors and the National Parks: Assessing the Academic Rigor of Experiential Education*,” with faculty members Johnny MacLean (Southern Utah University) and Brian White (Graceland University) and another student from Angelo State University. The panel resulted from Blair’s participation in “Partners in the Park,” an experiential learning program cosponsored by the NCHC and the National Parks Service.

Alumni Distinguished Professor of Human Development **Rosemary Blieszner**, who also serves as the Associate Director of the Center for Gerontology and Associate Dean of the graduate School, was elected to serve as President of the Gerontological Society of America. Her three-year term as President-elect, President, and Past-president of the society began on November 19, at the close of the organization’s annual meeting. Elected by fellow members of the GSA, Blieszner will be responsible for the governance, planning strategy, and representation of the Gerontological Society of America, which, with more than 5,400 members worldwide, is the largest interdisciplinary gerontological organization in the world.

The Center for Peace Studies and Violence Prevention hosted the symposium “[Cultivating Peace: A Student Research Symposium for Violence Prevention](#)” at The Inn November 16-18. **Marc Lucht**, Philosophy and Associate Director of the CPSVP, coordinated the event. Presenting papers were the following ASPECT doctoral candidates: **Michele Deramo**, “Effects of Forced Migration on Identity”; **Jordan Hill**, “An American History of Creating Memory Sites to Violence”; and **Lyusyena Kirakosyan**, “Exploring theater as a tool for peace and justice: the case of Serbia’s DAH Teatar.” ASPECT student **Christian Matheis** served as the facilitator for the workshop titled “Peace with Power, or No Peace at All.” Undergraduates enrolled in Lucht’s capstone seminar “Global Society, Violence, and the Prospects for Peace” hosted a roundtable discussion as part of the symposium; CLAHS students are in bold: Jeremiah Azurin, Geography, **Matt Barnette**, Sociology, **Samantha Holly**, Political Science, **Meaghan McCormick**, Philosophy and Political Science, and Tyson Phillips, Architecture. 2011 Political Science alumna **Victoria James** gave a paper titled “Unmanned and Out of Control: The Devastating Impacts of Drone Use on Peacebuilding Worldwide.” Additional information is available in the [interview on WVTF](#) with Matheis and **Jim Hawdon**, Sociology and Director of the CPSVP.

**Rob Chafin**, Music, performed the role of Alfred in Johann Strauss’s operetta *Die Fledermaus* with Opera on the James in Lynchburg, Virginia, on November 11.

The Department of Communication received the [2012 Program of Excellence Award](#) from the Basic Course Division of the National Communication Association, the discipline’s largest academic association. The award is based upon offerings of the 1014 Communication Skills course, a two-semester, same cohort class that encompasses a wide range of written and oral communication components, the “interchange model” and virtual delivery of Public Speaking, and a Comm Lab component that ensures in-depth communication training and competencies. Collectively, the courses encourage students to develop practical discourse skills necessary for success in college and in future

careers: interacting with teams, making in-class presentations, and communicating with peers, professors, and the public in person and in writing. They are pioneering in terms of content and delivery. The Department was recognized for the honor on November 16, during the Basic Course Division Business meeting at the National Communication Association convention.

**Travis J. Cross**, Music, guest conducted his most recently published work, *Let the Amen Sound*, with the Capitol Pride Symphonic Band in Washington, D.C., on November 17. He also served as a visiting composer for a performance of the same work by the Steinhardt Music Education Concert Band at New York University on November 30.

**Tom Ewing**, History and Associate Dean, presented “Advertising the Flu: Newspapers and the Great Influenza Pandemic of 1918” as the [2012 Bernard Malis Memorial Lecture](#) at the University of the Sciences in Philadelphia on October 24.

**Elizabeth Fine**, Religion and Culture, edited the *Proceedings of the Twenty-Second International Colloquium on Communication* titled [The Evolving Media’s Impact on Rhetoric and Society: Critical and Ethical Issues](#), with Gary W. Selnow. The colloquium took place July 25-30, 2010, at the University of Vienna in Austria. Fine authored “Rhetorical Strategies of Environmental Cyberactivists” and co-authored the introduction.

**Diana George**, English and Director of the Virginia Tech Writing Center, edited the Fall 2012 special Issue, “Public Rhetoric & Activist Documentary,” for the journal *Reflections: A Journal of Public Rhetoric, Civic Writing, & Service Learning* (12.1), with Diane Shoos.

History professor and Associate Dean **Tom Ewing**, and CLAHS alumnae **Katharine A. Goins** (B.A. in History and a B.S. in Biology, 2012), **Mallory J. Orrison** (B.A. in History, 2011, and M.A. Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction, 2012), and **Erin M. Lord** (B.A. in History, 2010, M.A. in History and M.A. Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction, 2011) published “Researching and Writing a Historical Biography for the Elementary Classroom,” *Perspectives on History* (Newsmagazine of the American Historical Association) 50.8 (November 2012), pp. 32-33. The article describes the process of researching and writing a biography of Edgar A. Long, Principal of the Christiansburg Institute, for use in fifth grade classrooms in Montgomery County Public Schools. For more on the book, see last fall’s [Virginia Tech news article](#), “Virginia Tech students develop history book for Montgomery County fifth-graders.”

Three CLAHS faculty are among the [recipients of grants](#) from the Institute for Society, Culture and Environment Global Issues Initiative (GII) Research Support program. **Eunju Hwang**, Apparel, Housing and Resource Management, and AHRM professor and head **Julia Beamish** received support for “Global Age-Friendly Communities Initiative: Policy in Action for Active Aging.” They will be collaborating with colleagues at Frasier University, University of Hong Kong, and the Jeju Development Institute, Korea. **Bettina Koch**, Political Science, was awarded a grant for “Religion and Political Violence: Twentieth Century Latin American and the Middle Eastern Discourses on Religious Justifications of Political Violence.” Four grants were awarded. The GII RSP supports projects to enhance faculty scholarship in the social sciences and humanities directed toward global issues with significant implications for the United States.

**Mark Managuio**, a senior majoring in Political Science and Sociology, won the Research in Education Award at the University of Delaware's 10<sup>th</sup> Annual National McNair Research Conference. Managuio's project focused on evaluating student perceptions of diversity at Virginia Tech; he hopes to use the results to promote change on campus by implementing new programs or initiatives.

ASPECT student **Christian Matheis** gave the following invited presentations this semester: "Action and Architecture," a guest lecture in the VT seminar "Unsolicited architecture - historically and now, September 24; "Critical Thinking vs. Intelligence: Why Smart People Believe Bad Ideas," for the Society of Analytical and Critical Thinkers (SOACT) at Virginia Tech, October 14; "Disobedience and the Doctrine of Sovereign Immunity" for the Introduction to Political Theory seminar at Radford University, October 11; "What's the T? An Introduction to Gender Diversity" for the Safe Zone Program at Virginia Tech, October 17; and "Disobedience and the Doctrine of Sovereign Immunity" for the Peace Studies seminar at Virginia Tech, October 23.

Two CLAHS students were awarded Phi Beta Delta scholarships for Spring 2012: **Courtney Tamaro**, a Spanish and Mechanical Engineering major, and **Tyler Weiglein**, who is majoring in German and Civil Engineering.

Religion and Culture faculty members **Benjamin Sax** and **Matthew Gabriele** co-edited a special issue of the online, open-access, peer-reviewed journal [Relegere: Studies in Religion and Reception, 2.2 \(2012\)](#) on the theme of "Revisiting the 'Judeo-Christian' Tradition." The essays included in the issue were papers presented at a symposium held at Virginia Tech in October 2011. Sax and Gabriele co-authored the introduction, and Gabriele contributed the essay "The Chosen Peoples of the 11th and 21st Centuries," pp. 281-90, while Sax provided "Re-Remembering the Holocaust: A Look into 'Judeo-Christian' Holocaust Denial," pp. 319-31. In addition, Religion and Culture colleague **Brian Britt** authored "Secularism and the Question of the 'Judeo-Christian,'" pp. 343-52.

**Karen Roberto**, Human Development, Director of the Center for Gerontology, and Director of the Institute for Society, Culture, and Environment, received the [2012 Distinguished Mentorship in Gerontology Award](#) from the Gerontological Society of America. The GSA is the nation's largest interdisciplinary organization devoted to the field of aging, and the honor is bestowed on individuals who have not only fostered excellence in the field but have made a major impact by virtue of their mentoring, and whose inspiration is sought by students and colleagues. Roberto received the award at the GSA's 65th Annual Scientific Meeting, which was held November 14-18 in San Diego.

The Office of the Vice President for Research recognized **Emily Satterwhite**, Religion and Culture, as the Virginia Tech November 5 [Scholar of the Week](#) for her work in Appalachian Studies. Through fan mail and online customer reviews, Satterwhite analyzes why certain readers have romanticized images of the Appalachian region. The politics of culture, especially in relation to imagined geographies and identity formation, is the focus of her research agenda. Her book *Dear Appalachia: Readers, Identity, and Popular Fiction since 1878* (University Press of Kentucky, 2011) won the Weatherford Award for best non-fiction work illuminating the Appalachian South.

Sociology faculty member **James Hawdon**, also Director of the Center for Peace Studies and Violence Prevention, and Chair **John Ryan** published "Well-Being After the Virginia Tech Mass Murder: The Relative Effectiveness of Face-to-Face and Virtual Interactions in Providing Support to Survivors," *Traumatology* 18.4 (2012): 3-11. In addition, Hawdon and Ryan published [School Shootings and Local Communities: An International Comparison between the United States and Finland](#), Working Papers in Economic Sociology IV (Turku, Finland: Turun yliopisto, 2012), with Atte Oksanen and Pekka Räsänen.

Sociology faculty members **David Brunsma**, **Michael Hughes**, and **John Ryan** co-edited *Readings in Sociology*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition (Boston: McGraw Hill, 2012). The reader includes contributions from the following department members: **Rachelle Brunn**, **David Brunsma**, **Toni Calasanti**, **Ted Fuller**, **Anthony Kwame Harrison**, **James Hawdon**, **Michael Hughes**, **Jill Kiecolt**, **Minjeong Kim**, **Sarah Ovink**, **Anthony Peguero**, **John Ryan**, and **Dale Wimberley**. All proceeds are used to support graduate student travel.

**Charles Lewis Taylor**, Political Science, published [The World Handbook of Political Indicators IV](#) (Columbus, OH: Mershon Center for International Security Studies, The Ohio State University, 2012), with J. Craig Jenkins, Marianne Abbott, Thomas V. Maher, and Lindsey Peterson. The dataset, housed on the website of the Department of Sociology at The Ohio State University, includes 263,912 contentious political events categorized in 40 events forms. For the period between January 1, 1990 and December 31, 2004, events in 231 countries and dependent territories are included. The project was supported by the National Science Foundation, the OSU Department of Sociology, and the OSU Mershon Center for International Security Studies.

**Vinodh Venkatesh**, Foreign Languages and Literatures/Spanish, published "Towards a Poetics of the Automobile in Contemporary Central American Fiction," *Letras Hispanas* 8.2 (2012): 66-80.

Last year's "Voices Beyond Borders" program, held in conjunction with the Blue Ridge PBS series "Women, War and Peace," received a national award for community engagement. The event, held on the Virginia Tech campus October 12, 2011, consisted of a performance of a scene from Tony Kushner's *Homebody/Kabul* by **Dean Sue Ott Rowlands**, a screening of excerpts from the "Women, War and Peace" film series, and a panel response that included senior Sociology major **Faduma Guhad**. The judges had special praise for the [interviews with former women refugees](#) who are rebuilding their lives in southwest Virginia that were part of the film series. They also recognized the collaboration of Blue Ridge PBS with regional partners, including Virginia Tech, the YWCA Bristol, Taubman Museum of Art, and Ferrum College. The award was made by the National Educational and Telecommunications Association (NETA) and was presented November 1 at the association's annual conference in St. Louis.

**Matthew Vollmer**, Director of the Undergraduate Creative Writing Program in the Department of English, published [inscriptions for headstones](#) (New York and San Francisco: Outpost19, 2012). The collection consists of 30 autobiographical essays, each in the form of an epitaph, and each unfolding in a single sentence. He also edited [Fakes: An Anthology of Pseudo-Interviews, Faux-Lectures, Quasi-Letters, "Found" Texts, and Other Fraudulent Artifacts](#) (New York: W. W. Norton, 2012) with David Shields.

## *Alumni Highlights*

**Frances Lawrence**, who earned her B.S. in Management, Housing and Family Development in 1970, was named Associate Dean of the E. J. Ourso College of Business at Louisiana State University. Lawrence earned both her master's and doctorate from Florida State University and has been employed at LSU since 1977. In the Ourso College of Business she holds both the Gerald Cire and Lena Grand Williams Alumni Professorship and the Ourso Professorship of Communication Studies. Her appointment took effect in June 2012.

Please submit items for inclusion in upcoming **News2Note** newsletters to Associate Dean Debra Stoudt at [dstoudt@vt.edu](mailto:dstoudt@vt.edu).