



# News2Note

January 2021

**Ananda Abeysekara**, Religion and Culture, published "[Finding Talal Asad in and beyond Buddhist Studies: Agency and Race in Modern Pasts](#)," *Religion and Society* 11.1 (2020): 24–29. The essay is part of a symposium titled "Portrait: Talal Asad."

The College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences is pleased to announce the [establishment of the Academy of Transdisciplinary Studies](#), which is intended as a catalyst to bring together Virginia Tech faculty members, programs, and courses to address complex problems. The academy will complement work initiated under the auspices of Beyond Boundaries and Destination Areas; it will encompass existing interdisciplinary programs in Africana Studies, American Indian Studies, Disability Studies, and Women's and Gender Studies and seek to launch new academic programs, which are expected to include areas such as Animal Studies, Asian American Studies, Diversity and Inclusion, Food Studies, Latinx Studies, LGBTQ Studies, and Technology for Humanity. Based in the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, the academy is expected to benefit the entire university. **Carlos Evia**, Communication, has been appointed the College's first Director of Transdisciplinary Initiatives.

**David Alexander**, Education, published [University Law](#), American Casebook Series (St. Paul, Minnesota: West Academic Publishing, 2020) with Kern Alexander and Klinton Alexander.

**Catalina Andrango-Walker**, Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures, published "Female Fashion, Divine Punishment, and Local Pride in the Accounts of the 1698 Ambato Earthquake," *Colonial Latin American Review* 29.4 (2020): 554–71. She also served as the guest editor of a [special issue on Colonial Latin American theatre](#), *Latin American Theatre Review* 54.1 (2020). Her individual contributions to the issue were: "Introducción: Las regiones que dejaron de ser artísticamente desiertas: Una exploración de las nuevas perspectivas de las prácticas teatrales coloniales latinoamericanas" (Introduction: Regions that are no longer artistically deserted: An exploration of new perspectives on Latin American colonial theater practices) and "Música y performance como estrategias de conversión en el Virreinato del

Perú” (Music and performance as conversion strategies in the Viceroyalty of Peru), pp. 7–16 and 125–48 respectively.

Two CLAHS students were among faculty and students recognized with 2020 Division of Student Affairs Aspire! Awards. [Sabrina Sturgeon](#), a master’s student in Higher Education, was recognized with the [Award for Curiosity](#). [Macie Snelson](#), an Agribusiness and Spanish major, was the recipient of the [Award for Ut Prosim](#).

**Amy Azano**, Education, published [Teaching in Rural Places: Thriving in Classrooms, Schools, and Communities](#) (New York, New York, and London, United Kingdom: Routledge, 2021), with Devon Brenner et al. In addition, Azano published: “Overcoming Structural Challenges Related to Identification and Curricula for Gifted Students in High Poverty Rural Schools,” *Conceptions of Giftedness and Talent: Worldwide Perspectives*, ed. Robert J. Sternberg and Don Ambrose (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan/Springer Nature, 2021), pp. 51–64, with Carolyn M. Callahan; and “Validation of Instruments for Measuring Affective Outcomes in Gifted Education,” *Journal of Advanced Academics* 31.4 (November 2020): 470–505, with Carolyn M. Callahan et al.

**Laura Belmonte**, Professor of History and Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, published [The International LGBT Rights Movement: A History](#), New Approaches to International History (London, United Kingdom: Bloomsbury Academic, 2021).

**Mauro Caraccioli**, Political Science and ASPECT Core Faculty, published [Writing the New World: The Politics of Natural History in the Early Spanish Empire](#) (Gainesville, Florida: University of Florida Press, 2021).

**Dan Cleveland**, Assistant Dean of Advancement, [was named Assistant Vice President for Advancement – Colleges and Units](#). In his new role, which began December 25, 2020, Cleveland oversees the chief advancement officers of 12 colleges and programs. The College appreciated his leadership of its advancement team and wishes him the best in his new position.

College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences staff member **Vickie Martin**, Education, was recognized for 45 years and recently retired staff member **Linda Fontaine**, History, and emeritus faculty members **Peter Graham**, English, and **Michael Hughes**, Sociology, were recognized for 40 years of dedicated service to Virginia Tech and commitment to upholding the university’s mission. A complete list of employees recognized this year for 10 or more years of service (in five-year increments) can be found [here](#).

**François Debrix**, ASPECT program director and Professor of Political Science, gave the keynote address titled “The Necro-Geopolitics of American Insecurity” as part of the “Global Life and Death in Viral Times” lecture series of the Department of Politics, Philosophy, and Religion at Lancaster University, Lancaster, United Kingdom. The lecture was presented virtually on December 9, 2020.

**Alexander Dickow**, Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures, published poems from “Duet with Commentary,” *This Broken Shore* 13.1 (2020): 90–94; and “[Five Poems by Max Jacob](#),” translation by Dickow, *Seedings* 7 (2020): 49–58.

**Joseph Eska**, English, published “[Remarks on the Left Periphery in the Medieval Brittonic Languages](#),” *Chatreššar* 1/2020 (2020): 35–51.

**Cheyenne Franklin**, a doctoral student in Rhetoric and Writing, published “[The Rhetoric of Letter Keeping](#),” *Peitho: Journal of the Coalition of Feminist Scholars in the History of Rhetoric and Composition* 22.3 (Spring 2020).

**Matthew Homer**, a doctoral student in Rhetoric and Writing, published “Sovereignty and Algorithms, Indigenous Land Disputes in Digital Democracy,” *Platforms, Protests, and the Challenge of Networked Democracy*, ed. John Jones and Michael Trice, Rhetoric, Politics and Society (London, United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), pp. 329–43.

**W. Wat Hopkins**, Communication, published “*Sheppard v. Maxwell* Revisited: A ‘Roman Holiday,’ a ‘Carnival’ or ‘Decorum Comparable with the Best?’” in the [Journal of Media Law & Ethics](#) 8.1 (Spring/Summer 2020): 4–31.

**Timothy Luke**, University Distinguished Professor and Chair of the Department of Political Science, published [Screens of Power: Ideology, Domination, and Resistance in Informational Society](#), Revised Edition (Candor, New York: Telos Press Publishing, 2020).

ASPECT doctoral student **Sarah Plummer** published the poem “[Relic](#)” in *The Dillydoun Review* on November 27, 2020.

The College is pleased to announce the [Center for Refugee, Migrant, and Displacement Studies](#), an initiative focused on conducting, supporting, and promoting humanistic and interdisciplinary research on issues of migration and displacement. **Katrina Powell**, English, serves as the center’s founding director. Additional founding members are **Rebecca Hester**, Science, Technology and Society; Georgeta Pourchot, coordinator of the International Refugee Research Project, based in Alexandria, Virginia; and **Brett Shadle**, Professor and Chair of the Department of History; each fills a leadership role as well, namely Associate Director of Education, Associate Director of International Initiatives, and Associate Director of Outreach, respectively. The center also administers the Virginia Consortium on Refugee, Migrant, and Displacement Studies, a statewide organization established in 2019 to understand issues facing community members as they transition to living in Virginia.

A Russian Flagship program has been established in the Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures with [support from a competitive grant from the Language Flagship, which is administered by the National Security Education Program at the U.S. Department of Defense](#). Virginia Tech is one of only eight universities in the United States with a Russian Language Flagship school. The program’s goals are to help students attain a high degree of

cultural competency and a professional-level proficiency in Russian and prepare them to qualify for a year completely immersed in the language. The program offers coursework, co-curricular activities, study abroad, and tutoring. Details about the program can be found on its [website](#).

The paper titled “Cybervetting Employers: Exploring Early-Career Job Seekers’ Uncertainty Management” by **Stephanie Smith**, Communication, was recognized with a top paper award by the Association for Business Communication. Smith presented the paper at the National Communication Association’s annual conference, which was held virtually November 19–22, 2020.

**Yannis Stivachtis**, Political Science, co-edited [The Routledge Handbook of Critical European Studies](#) (London, United Kingdom: Routledge, 2020), with Didier Bigo et al. His individual contribution to the volume was “Critical European Studies: An Introduction,” pp. 1–12. In addition, Stivachtis published “Creating Order in the MENA Neighborhood: The Enlargement of the European International Society and Its Contestation,” *Resisting Europe: Practices of Contestation in the Mediterranean Middle East*, ed. Raffaella A. Del Sarto and Simone Tholens (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2020), pp. 47–72.

**Debra Stoudt**, Professor of German and Associate Dean for Academic Policies and Procedures, published “The Afterlife in the Visionary Experiences of the Female Mystics,” *Imagining the Medieval Afterlife*, ed. Richard Matthew Pollard, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature 114 (Cambridge, United Kingdom, and New York, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2020), pp. 264–85.

ASPECT doctoral student **Molly Todd** received a grant from the Center for Peace Studies and Violence Prevention to support her dissertation research during Spring 2021. The working title of her project is “Borders, Art, and the Decolonial Imagination.”

**Shelby Ward**, Political Science, published “[The Postcolonial State as Container: Lessons on Nation-Building and the Nation-State from Sri Lanka](#),” *New Political Science*, special issue, “Beyond Citizenship and the Nation-State” 42.4 (2020): 521–37.

**Brandi Watkins**, Communication, edited [Research Perspectives on Social Media Influencers and Brand Communication](#) (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington, Books, 2021). Her individual contribution to the volume was the “Introduction,” pp. xiii–xvi.

**Marcus Weaver-Hightower**, Education, co-edited [The Wiley Handbook of Gender Equity in Higher Education](#) (Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley-Blackwell, 2020), with Nancy S. Niemi. His individual contribution to the volume was “Critical Theories and Methods in Gender and Higher Education,” pp. 469–92. In addition, he published “An Appreciation of the Ethnographic in Connell’s *The Men and the Boys*,” *Boyhood Studies* 13.2 (2020): 129–32.

**Laura Welfare**, Education, received a [2020 Fellows Award from the American Counseling Association \(ACA\)](#). The highest honor bestowed by the ACA, the award recognizes members

who have contributed to and advanced the counseling profession throughout their career; fellows must be members of the ACA for at least 10 continuous years, possess appropriate professional credentials, and take an active role in the organization to identify future trends, research, and issues. Welfare was one of 13 individuals among the 55,000 ACA membership recognized in 2020. Her research focuses on counselor cognitive development, evidence-based practices in counselor education and supervision, supervisor development, and counseling assessment.

**LaDale Winling**, History, [was awarded funding through the Digital Humanities Advancement Grant program of the National Endowment for Humanities](#) for his project titled “Connecting the Interstates.” The project focuses on the development of a digital platform to help consider the consequences of building the United States interstate highway system, which was launched in the 1950s. The damaging effects of the highway system will be illuminated through an interactive map, which can help community leaders, public officials, journalists, and historians as well as the general public better understand the system’s impact.

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