

ASPECT NEWSLETTER

Alliance for Social, Political, Ethical, and Cultural Thought

An interdisciplinary Ph.D. program at Virginia Tech

Fall 2016, Issue 7

EDITOR'S WELCOME

Caroline Alphin, second-year ASPECT student

This year's issue of The ASPECT Newsletter opens with introductions from a new core faculty member, Dr. Mauro Caraccioli, and from new students in the ASPECT program. In addition, you can learn more about recent and upcoming ASPECT events and awards, including the 2017 ASPECT Graduate Conference and The ASPECT Doctoral Fellowship.

ASPECT students are also involved in ASA- the ASPECT Student Association, and they participate in a multitude of disciplinary and interdisciplinary events on and off the Virginia Tech campus. Furthermore, incoming editors of SPECTRA-The Journal of ASPECT, Mario Khreiche and Shelby Ward provide a brief word on the direction of SPECTRA.

Finally, please consider helping ASPECT by contributing to the "Friends of ASPECT" fund as detailed on p. 4.

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Meet Dr. Mauro Caraccioli

The ASPECT program welcomes a new core faculty member, Dr. Mauro Caraccioli. He has been appointed as an assistant professor in the Political Science Department. Below you will find a brief biographical sketch.



Born in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, Mauro J. Caraccioli received a Bachelor's degree in Philosophy and International Relations, as well as a Master's in International Studies, from Florida International University in Miami, Florida. Mauro received his PhD in Political Science from the University of Florida in Gainesville, specializing in Political Theory, Critical International Relations, and Interpretive Approaches to Politics. He comes to Virginia Tech after having been Instructor of International Relations at Saint Michael's College in Vermont. His current research interests include political theories of empire and nature, the history of environmental political thought in the Americas, and the politics of scholarly reflexivity.

ASA: THE ASPECT STUDENT ASSOCIATION

The ASPECT Student Association mediates the relations between the ASPECT student body, ASPECT faculty, ASPECT Alumni, and the University. We manage our funding from Virginia Tech to organize academic events on campus and to assist ASPECT students in their conference travel, national and international.

The ASA is headed by second-year ASPECT student Shelby Ward (President), and the ASA treasurer will be chosen soon.

Brief Biographies of Some of Our New ASPECT Students

Robert Flahive

Bio: Rob is a first-year ASPECT student interested in the relationship between modernist movement architecture/urban planning and decolonization processes, the spatial and political implications of UNESCO World Heritage Site inscription, and the requisite logistical infrastructure behind the use of military violence. Rob is an avid runner and appreciates a good debate. He values learning from personal experience as much as from others' perspectives. Both relate to his enduring curiosity in how individuals intersect with wider global processes, and importantly, contribute to his aspiration to teach at the university level. He holds an MA in Political Studies from American University in Beirut and a BA in English Literature from Washington University in St. Louis. He finds it hard to imagine life without fall leaves, espresso, pizza (or some bread/cheese combo) or Fairouz.

Galen Olmsted

Bio: his research centers on the overcoming of capitalism and the emergence of a new global governance and economy. In his spare time he dreams of taking over the world, and starring in movies.

Ezgi Seref

Bio: she is a first year Ph.D Student in the ASPECT Program at Virginia Tech. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Law from Marmara University, Istanbul, Turkey and two different Master's degrees from the Conflict Analysis and Resolution Program and from the Cultural Studies Program at Sabanci University. Her research interests include legal politics, globalization, professional identity, legal policy, and legal culture.

Brief Biographies of New ASPECT Students Cont'd

Emma Stamm

Bio: Emma is from New York's Hudson Valley and received her B.A. in literature from Bard College and MS in nonprofit management from the New School. Her research interests include hacking, ethics and ideologies behind "Web 3.0" technologies and Eastern religions. She maintains a blog and portfolio at www.o-culus.com.

Katy Shepard

Bio: I just graduated from the Philosophy Master's program here at Virginia Tech. A few of my interests include art theory and philosophy of art, self understanding and (positive) confidence, gender and sex as displayed in language and culture (my thesis for my Masters addressed the benefits of a hypothetical world without gender terms), and the way in which sustainability is linked to human rights. I am considering for research during ASPECT looking at the use of gender in Korean manhwas and dramas, and in "all" my spare time I am doing a fun side project of seeing what the Catholic Bible would look like without gender terms.

Other new ASPECT students for 2016-2017 include: Nada Berrada, Claire Gogan, Jesse Paul, and Faith Skiles. We hope to be able to share their biographies in our next ASPECT Newsletter.

Research Interests of Various ASPECT Students

Student	Research Interests
Judson Abraham	Appalachian Studies, Globalization, Critical Theory, and Social Movements
Caroline Alphin	biopower, necropower, human geography, cyberpunk, urban theory, insecurity, neoliberalism
Amiel Bernal	Political Philosophy, Ethics, Metaethics, Political Theory
Katherine Cross	Social justice and nonviolence in social movements; critical theory and postcolonial theory; indigenous and local knowledges; alienation and violence; engaged Buddhism and non-dualistic cosmology
Claudio D'Amato	postcolonialism, development, anti-neoliberalism, global distributive justice, cultural ethics
Michele Deramo	effects of forced migration on identity, agency, and transformation; auto/ethnography of a Somali Bantu family
Taulby Edmonson	the contemporary impact of <i>Gone with the Wind</i> in the perpetuation of the Lost Cause in historical memory and public history
Tim Filbert	Modernity, techno-politics, and sustainable development; global coloniality, postcoloniality and border thinking; politics of space, place, and nature
Johannes Grow	International relations theory, modern political and social theory, European Union and European studies, critical security studies, cultural studies, and critical geopolitics
Darren Jackson	Continental philosophy (especially Heidegger), Wittgenstein, post-analytic philosophy, critical theory, phenomenology, music
Mario Khreiche	Political theory, history and philosophy of science, sociology of science, popular culture
Jordan Laney	Appalachia, American Studies, Folklore, feminist theory, music, theories of space and place
Leigh McKagen	American cultural identity, media studies, contemporary American history, 20 th century American history, popular culture, cultural studies, science fiction
Kent Morris	Western political thought, international relations, national security, political theory, US government, research methods in political science, introduction to politics, popular culture
Mohammed Pervaiz	Intellectual history, historiography, hermeneutics, anthropology of secularism, tradition as forms of life, Middle East (Ottoman) and South Asian (Mughal) diplomacy, comparative colonial connections, decolonial struggles, Hanafi law, Kalaam, modern discontents, history and philosophy of science
Mary Ryan	20 th century U.S. social movements; racism and white privilege; global prison industrial complex; civic studies moral philosophy; political psychology; anti-intellectualism in the U.S.; political theater; and ethical understandings of truth, responsibility, and sympathy
Julie Walters Steele	Women in the labor force; American Indian governance
Alexander Stubberfield	American politics; globalization; economic development; international aid; NGOs and NPOs; poverty; political ideology and subjectivity; political extremism; moral and political philosophy; philosophy of language; democracy; capitalism; corporate personhood; universities; mass persuasion; U.S. right-wing social movement
Anthony Szczurek	Comparative political thought, Indian political thought, international relations theory.
Josette Torres	Microcelebrity, digital identity, new and emerging media, politainment, political fiction and memoir, electronic literature, and 20 th -21 st century contemporary American poetry

RESEARCH INTERESTS OF CURRENT ASPECT PH.D. STUDENTS *(cont'd)*

Student	Research Interests
Dana Volk	racial and social passing
Shelby Ward	Modern and contemporary poetry, identity politics, theories of space/place, issues of displacement, travel narratives, and creative writing.

Research Interests of the newly admitted ASPECT students will appear in the next issue of the ASPECT newsletter.

“FRIENDS OF ASPECT” FUND *HELP US SUPPORT ASPECT!*

Please consider making a gift to the “Friends of ASPECT” fund! The fund supports many initiatives that are crucial to the ASPECT doctoral program at Virginia Tech and to ASPECT students’ professional and academic success, including: conference travel, small grants for students, summer dissertation research funding, student support for field research, the annual ASPECT graduate student conference, and other ASPECT lectures and symposia.

The Friends of ASPECT fund also contributes to the annual ASPECT Outstanding Dissertation Award, which recognizes the best completed ASPECT dissertation from the previous academic year. So far, ASPECT has recognized the following awardees: Michael Butera (2010), Juan Carlos Sierra (2011), Scott Tate (2012), Robert Kirsch (2012), Lyusyena Kirakosyan (2013), Aaron Stoller (2014), Christian Matheis (2015), Francine Rossone de Paula (2016).

For more information about giving to ASPECT, please contact us by phone, e-mail, or letter:

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Pictures from the Fall 2016 ASPECT Kick-off Event

During the annual Fall Kick-off Event in October 2016 we celebrated the eighth year anniversary of the ASPECT program. To mark this special occasion, ASPECT awarded its annual Outstanding Dissertation Award to Francine Rossone de Paula, and the first ASPECT Dissertation Fellowship to Caroline Alphin.



Call for Papers

Aesthetics, Politics, and Ethics in Fractured Times

2017 ASPECT Graduate Conference - Friday, March 31st – Saturday, April 1st

The Alliance for Social, Political, Ethical, and Cultural Thought

Location TBA

Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA

www.aspect.vt.edu

www.facebook.com/aspectvt

aspect@vt.edu

Across disciplinary boundaries, the 2017 ASPECT graduate conference seeks to address articulations of aesthetics, politics, and ethics within contested temporalities. Graduate students of any level and irrespective of disciplinary affiliation are encouraged to submit abstracts based on papers that engage topics related to artistic, aesthetic, social, political, philosophical, cultural, theoretical, ethical, and critical concerns.

Trajectories of inquiry may include theoretical, critical, empirical, policy-oriented, and performative explorations of the conference theme. Particularly, we invite papers that engage issues of interdisciplinarity.

Confirmed Plenary Speaker:

Dr. Michael J. Shapiro, University of Hawaii, Manoa

*You can view the full
call for papers,
including a list of
possible topics here:*

[ASPECT Website](http://www.aspect.vt.edu)

[2017CallforPapers](https://www.facebook.com/aspectvt)



SPECTRA: THE ASPECT JOURNAL

Social, Political, Ethical, & Cultural Theory Archives (SPECTRA) is a student-led refereed online scholarly journal established as part of the ASPECT (Alliance for Social, Political, Ethical, and Cultural Thought) program at Virginia Tech. The journal features interdisciplinary work and is designed to provide an academic forum for scholars to showcase their research, explore controversial topics, and take intellectual risks. We welcome submissions of articles, book reviews, essays, interviews, and other works within theory-driven, problem-centered frameworks.

Dear ASPECT students, faculty, and friends,

As the current SPECTRA editors, we would like to keep you updated about what we're working on these days and how that might be of interest to you.

SPECTRA had an excellent year with issue 5.1 guiding the journal towards a more artistic approach, while maintaining its critical purview. We would like to continue this development and work towards establishing SPECTRA as a relevant platform for social, political, ethical, and cultural thought.

On that note, issue 5.2 is on the horizon with a symposium on celebrity philanthropy and a variety of pieces on migration, identity, cinema, and other topics which, as we think, have much currency in contemporary conversations. We are currently working not just on SPECTRA's platform and content, but also on its online presence which we hope to make more appealing to a wider audience. Additionally, we are integrating more artistic work into the journal to enhance its aesthetic quality and to further its critical reach.

We encourage both incoming and current ASPECT students to submit abstracts for publication in SPECTRA, as we accept book reviews, articles, and other formats (more on the website). In the past, many students have turned seminar papers into submission drafts for SPECTRA. We encourage you to not only submit your own work, but to circulate and share SPECTRA with your previous institutions and associational connections. Further, if you have experience with web design, we would love to meet with you to discuss possibilities for our multi-media aesthetics.

As Jordan Laney and Anthony Szczurek co-edit their final issue, we would like to announce Shelby Ward and Mario Khreiche as future co-editors as well as Caroline Alphin and Alexander Stubberfield as incoming editors-elect. We would also like to express our sincerest gratitude to recent ASPECT alumnus and resigning editor emeritus, Sascha Engel, who has dedicated many hours to taking SPECTRA off the ground. All the best in Wyoming, Sascha!

Finally, in order to celebrate these transitions and the release of SPECTRA 5.2 we invite all ASPECT students to a release party in the near future (details about time and place in an upcoming email from the editors).

Stay tuned,

Jordan, Anthony, Shelby, and Mario