

2006-2007 Warren Center Programs

Fellows Programs

2006/2007 Fellows Program, “Between Word and Image,” co-directed by Carolyn Dever (English/women’s & gender studies) and Gregg Horowitz (philosophy). Participants in the program included Teresa Goddu (English), Robin Jensen (divinity), Kevin Leander (teaching and learning), Ellen Levy (English), Richard McGregor (religious studies), Catherine Molineux (history) and Paul Young (English). The 2006-2007 Williams S. Vaughn Visiting Fellow was Cara Finnegan (speech communication, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign).

Guest Speakers: **Slavoj Zizek** (Professor at the Institute for Sociology, University of Ljubljana and at the European Graduate School EGS) met with the group on Saturday, November 4, while on Wednesday, November 29th, **Joseph Mella** (Director, VU Fine Arts Gallery) presented a lecture to the group. **K. Dian Kriz** (Art History, Brown University) presented a public lecture, “Cultivated Jews and Black Folk: Staging Jamaican Identities in Isaac Belisario’s Sketches of Character” on March 1st. On March 12th, local artist **Erika Johnson** met with the Fellows to discuss her work and a potential collaboration. She joined the group for all subsequent meetings and has been commissioned to create an original piece of art for the fellows’ fall program. The Fellows agreed to co-sponsor an event with Film Studies, a screening of the documentary “Searching for Orson,” by filmmakers Jakov and Dominik Sedlar, at the Nashville Film Festival on April 20th.

2006/2007 Robert Penn Warren Dissertation Completion Fellows. Six graduate students participated in the Warren Center’s inaugural Dissertation Completion Fellowship Program. They were Lisa Battaglia (religious studies), Tim Boyd (history), Carola Daffner (German), Brian Rabinovitz (philosophy), LeeAnn Reynolds (history), and David Richter (Spanish). In the spring semester, they each presented a public lecture about their research.

Lecture Series: On March 16th Carola Daffner presented “In Search of Motherland: Imaginative Geographies in Gertud Kolmar’s Poetry,” followed by David Richter’s lecture “Margins of Poetry: Performing the Formless in Lorca’s Surrealism” on March 21st. LeeAnn Reynolds continued the series on April 12th with her talk “‘Red and Yellow, Black and White’: Maintaining Segregation, 1920-1955.” Brian Rabinovitz spoke on “Experience and Social-Political Criticism” on April 17th, and Tim Boyd followed the next day with “‘These People Begged to Be Let In’: Desegregating the Democratic Party.” Lisa Battaglia closed the series with her final lecture “*Mae Chi* or *Bhikkhuni*? Perspectives on Women’s Ordination in Buddhist Thailand” on April 25th.

Guest Speakers: On September 5th and 6th, the fellows participated in a workshop with **John Glavin** (Professor of English, Georgetown). **James Epstein** (history), who edited the *Journal of British Studies* from 2000 through 2005 and on October 3rd, spoke to the group on journal publications. **Susan Kuyper** (Grants Resource officer, College of Arts and Science) met with the group on October 24th. On October 30th, **Robert Weil**,

Executive Editor, Vice-President of W.W. Norton, met with the group for a lunchtime roundtable. **Kent Mullikin**, Deputy Director of the National Humanities Center, spoke with the group on December 4th about residential fellowship programs and the history of the National Humanities Center. On March 14th, the group spoke with **Tom Haddox** (English, University of Tennessee), a Vanderbilt University Ph.D., about the transition to a tenure track job.

Special Events

Harry C. Howard Jr. Lecture. Helen Vendler, the A. Kingsley Porter University Professor at Harvard University, presented this year's lecture on Thursday, January 18th at 4:10 p.m. in the Flynn Auditorium of Vanderbilt's Law School. Her lecture title was "The Yeatsian Sequence: 'Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen' and 'Blood and the Moon.'" Professor Vendler's research interests include English and American lyric poetry, and she is the author and editor of over twenty books. She currently has two works in progress: "*Our Secret Discipline*": *Yeats's Styles and Forms*, and *Last Looks, Last Books: Stevens, Plath, Lowell, Bishop, Merrill, Ammons*. In 2004, she delivered the National Endowment for the Humanities' Jefferson Lecture—the federal government's most distinguished award for intellectual achievement in the humanities—and she is the recipient of twenty-three honorary degrees from universities throughout North America and Europe.

Robert Weil.

On Thursday, November 30th, Robert Weil, Executive Editor, Vice-President of W.W. Norton, met with the 2006/2007 RPW Dissertation Completion Fellows for a lunchtime talk. At 4:10 p.m. that same day, he gave a public lecture entitled, "Publishing, History, and the Crisis of the Book."

Slavoj Zizek

On Friday, November 3rd, Professor Zizek (Professor at the Institute for Sociology, University of Ljubljana and at the European Graduate School EGS) gave a lecture entitled "A Theology between Fear and Trembling: On Why Only Atheists Can Believe." The event took place at the Stevenson Center Lecture Hall at 4:30 p.m. On the following day, the 2006/2007 Fellows Group hosted a luncheon in his honor at the Vaughn Home. The Warren Center co-hosted this event with the Divinity School and several other departments.

Robert Schanke, Professor Emeritus of Theatre at Central College, Iowa, gave a public lecture entitled "Playing Sherlock: Why I Write Theatre History" at 4:10 p.m. on Thursday, March 22nd in Buttrick Hall. This talk was part of the Theatre History series coordinated by Edward Freidman (Spanish) and Terryl Hallquist (theatre).

Rev. Bill Miscamble, Associate Professor of History at University of Notre Dame, presented a public lecture entitled, "From Roosevelt to Truman: Potsdam, Hiroshima, and the Cold War" on Monday, March 26th at 4:10 p.m. in the auditorium of the Black Cultural Center. Earlier that day, Prof. Miscamble had a lunch with RPW graduate student fellows and other history graduate students at 12:30 p.m. in the Duncan Library in the English Department.

Pre-Modern Others: Race and Sexuality, Newberry Library, Chicago Illinois

This symposium on March 30, 2007 grew out of last year's Warren Center Seminar on "Pre-Modern Others: Race and Sexuality," and was designed to continue the lively interchange that was started there, but with a larger group of scholars. Each of the four conference sessions were intense and wide-ranging discussion sessions focusing on some significant element of the topic. They were: "Race and Racism in the European Middle Ages," "Issues in Pre-Modern Sexuality," "Early Modern Race, Colonization, and the Americas," and "Theorizing Race and Sexuality." Participants from Vanderbilt were Leah Marcus (English), Holly Tucker (French), Houston Baker (English), Lynn Ramey (French), Katherine Crawford (history), Lynn Enterline (English), Carlos Jauregui (Spanish), Kathryn Schwarz (English), and David Wasserstein (history/Jewish Studies). Speakers from other universities included: David Nirenberg (Committee on Social Thought, University of Chicago), Geraldine Heng (English/Medieval Studies, University of Texas), Dyan Elliott (history, Northwestern University), Kim Hall (English, Barnard College), Jean Feerick (English, Brown University), Jeffrey Masten (English/Gender Studies, Northwestern University), Margo Hendricks (Literature/Pre- and Early Modern Studies, University of California Santa Cruz), and Francesca Royster (English/African Diaspora Studies, DePaul University). The symposium was co-sponsored by the Newberry Library Renaissance Consortium and the Robert Penn Warren Center for the Humanities.

Robert ter Horst, emeritus professor of Spanish and comparative literature at the University of Rochester, was on campus for two events which the Warren Center co-sponsored. First, a lunch at the Warren Center on Thursday, April 19th, at noon was an open dialogue on Golden Age drama; later that day Prof. ter Horst gave a talk at 6:30 p.m. in Furman Hall on Cervantes's last novel, *Los trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda*. Prof. Edward Friedman of the Spanish & Portuguese Department organized this visit.

Graduate Student Research Day

On Wednesday, April 4, the Warren Center co-sponsored a talk to kick off Graduate Student Research Day. Warren Center staff worked with representatives from the Graduate Student Council to organize a visit by Dr. Jorge Cham, a former Instructor at Caltech and the cartoonist behind "Piled Higher and Deeper," the funny and unique comic strip about life (or the lack thereof) in graduate school. Dr. Cham is the author of two compilations of his comics, *Piled Higher and Deeper: A Graduate Student Comic Strip Collection*, and *Life is Tough and Then You Graduate: The Second Collection of Piled Higher and Deeper Comic Strips*. He gave a talk entitled "The Power of Procrastination" to an audience of over 300 graduate students, faculty, and administrators, followed by a reception and book signing in Wilson Hall. Additional support was provided by the Office of the Dean of Students, the Graduate School, Dean's Office of the College of Arts and Science, Department of English, Department of Pharmacology, Biomedical Research and Training Office, and the Psychological Counseling Center.

Murray Eden

On Monday, May 7th at 4:00 p.m. scholar Murray Eden, Adjunct Professor, Boston University School of Public Health, Scientist Emeritus, National Institutes of Health, and Professor of Electrical Engineering, Emeritus, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, spoke with a small interdisciplinary group on his research, giving a talk entitled, “Side notes on language. Linguistics and linguists I have known, from Zellig Harris to Noam Chomsky.” This talk on non-aural language expression, based upon work on cursive script, offered a rare insight into this renowned scientist at MIT who has over the years brought his work in sciences to bear upon language studies. The group of about 20 listened to Dr. Eden’s talk, engaged him in conversation about linguistics and politics, and joined him at a reception in his honor after the lecture at the Warren Center. Professor Robert Barsky of the French & Italian Department organized the visit.

Warren Center Seminars

Achievement Gap.

This interdisciplinary seminar was designed so that participants gained a substantive understanding and knowledge-base relative to correlates of the Black-Latino-White achievement gap. Theory, research, and practice on this pervasive national and local issue guided each seminar. An organizational meeting was held September 11th from 12:00-1:30 p.m. Later meetings occurred on Monday, October 2nd, Monday, November 6th, and Monday, December 4th. Seminar Coordinators: Donna Y. Ford (Peabody College) Gilman W. Whiting (African American and Diaspora Studies/human and organizational development).

Ancient and Medieval Studies Seminar. The purpose of the group was to foster interdisciplinary study of the time periods embraced in its title, which means not only history but language and literature, chiefly, though not exclusively, Greek, Hebrew, and Latin. The main focus was on faculty and graduate student research. The first meeting took place Wednesday, September 6th at 3:00 p.m., followed by a second meeting on October 11th. Seminar coordinator: Bill Caferro (history).

Guest Speaker: On Monday, December 11th, the seminar hosted a lunch talk by **Elizabeth Pollard** (History, San Diego State University), entitled, “Women and Witchcraft in the Greco-Roman World.”

Black Europe/Black European Studies Reading Group. The reading group was committed to exploring intellectually Black Europe as an emerging field of study on the European continent and in Great Britain, as well as the particularities of the Black European experience. Seminar Coordinator: Tracy Sharpley-Whiting (African American and Diaspora Studies/French).

Guest Speaker: On November 29th, **Robert Bernasconi** (Moss Professor of Excellence in Philosophy, University of Memphis) gave a public lecture entitled, “An Haitian Paris: Antenor Firmin as Philosopher against Racism.” A reception followed at the Vaughn Home.

Circum-Atlantic Studies Group. Now in its sixth year, this group met monthly and read and treated works-in-progress authored by participants. Participants' scholarship was interdisciplinary in nature, focusing on at least two of the following regions – Africa, Europe, Latin and Central America, the Caribbean, and North America – and treating some aspect of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, colonialism, and/or postcolonialism. Meetings have taken place on Thursday, October 5th, Monday, October 23rd, and on January 24th history graduate student **David Wheat** presented a paper entitled, “Matrilineage and Social Mobility: West Central Africans in Late 16th Century Havana.” Seminar Coordinators: Sean Goudie (English) and Jane Landers (history). Guest Speakers: On Monday, November 13th, the group hosted **Roderick McDonald** (Professor of history, Rider University) for a lecture entitled, “The Ethnography and Pornography of Slavery: Dr. Jonathan Troup’s Journal of Dominica, 1789-1791.” The group also sponsored a talk on February 16th, 2007 on Black Atlantic History, “British Slavery and Abolition: Commemorating the 200th Anniversary of the Abolition of Slavery.” **Christopher Leslie Brown** (History, Rutgers University) was scheduled to attend, but fell ill. **Philip Morgan** (History, Johns Hopkins University) presented both papers: his own, “British Slavery in the Era of Abolition,” and Professor Brown’s, “Anniversaries and Teleologies: Slave Trade Abolition Two Hundred Years Later.” The event was held in the Black Cultural Center, with a reception and book signing afterwards. Over 70 guests from Vanderbilt and the community attended the lecture. **Diabetes Work Group.** This group consisted of scholars across the disciplines whose research involves the social aspects of diabetes. Seminar Coordinator: Arleen Tuchman (history).

Disability Studies Reading Group. This interdisciplinary reading group was designed this year to explore the emerging, interdisciplinary field of disability studies. Disability studies focuses on the ways socio-medico-legal discourses and practices construct bodies as disabled. The field is simultaneously a political project emphasizing social justice and collective action and an intellectual endeavor addressing questions about subject formation, power, bodies, subjugated knowledges, and normalization. The new group met on March 2nd, and again on April 13th, both times at 12:00 p.m. for a lunch meeting. Seminar coordinators: Heather L. Talley (sociology) and Stacy Clifford (political science).

Intellectual Life of the Commons. Frank Weislo, Dean of The Commons, planned a series of dinner conversations at the Warren Center for faculty members interested in the development of intellectual possibilities for faculty and undergraduates in The Commons. A group of interested faculty and administrators met for a catered dinner in the conference room at 6:00 p.m. on April 10th.

Global Feminisms Reading Group. This interdisciplinary reading group was designed to explore and debate issues related to the growing field of intellectual inquiry and practice known as *global feminism*. This field locates women’s lives and experiences within transnational, global frameworks, including processes of globalization, and interrogates the operations of “local”, “regional”, “national”, and “global” perspectives on sex, gender, and inequality. The field is emergent, contested, and dynamic, and is one

of the “hottest” topics in feminist studies. The first meeting was Tuesday, September 12th from 11:30-1:00 p.m. followed by a second meeting on Tuesday, October 3rd. For meetings which took place on Tuesday, November 14th, and Tuesday, December 5th, (both from 11:30-1:00 p.m.) the group discussed *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection* by Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing. Seminar Coordinators: Monica Casper (sociology/women’s and gender studies and Brooke Ackerly (political science/women’s and gender studies).

Medicine, Health, and Society Seminar. This interdisciplinary seminar met monthly in the fall to discuss common concerns and hear talks by members and visiting speakers. Seminar Coordinator: Arleen Tuchman (history).

Guest Speakers: **Ernest Drucker** (Professor of Epidemiology and Social Medicine/Psychiatry at Montefiore Medical Center/Albert Einstein College of Medicine in NYC) spoke on Tuesday, September 12th at 4:10 p.m.

Nineteenth Century Seminar. This group focused upon the history, art, literature, and culture of the long nineteenth century (ca. 1760-1914). Graduate students and faculty were encouraged to attend. The first meeting took place Friday, September 15th at 12 noon, followed by a second meeting on Friday, October 20th from 12:00-1:30 p.m.

Guest Speakers: The group hosted **Alexis Boylan** (Art History, University of Tennessee) on January 25th, and a reception for **Mary Poovey** (English, NYU) on February 22nd. On March 12th **Sharon Marcus** (English, Columbia University) spoke with the group over lunch at 12:30 p.m., and **Gordon Bigelow** (English, Rhodes College) also met for a lunch on April 18th.

Seminar Coordinators: Lauren Wood (English) and Brian Rejack (English).

Recovering Citizenship: Pedagogy and Practice. This interdisciplinary group was designed this year to explore theories of citizenship that could be translated into a useable pedagogical framework. They wanted to ask, as scholars and teachers, what it means to be an active citizen both locally and globally. As a working group, they used their discussions of these theoretical concerns to construct syllabi for use by group members and sponsoring programs. This year the group read John Dewey's *Experience and Education* and *The Ethos of Pluralization* by William E. Connolly. Meetings were from 4:00-6:00 p.m. on the following Mondays: February 5th, March 12th, April 9th, and May 7th. Seminar coordinators: Derrick Spires (English) and Sarah Passino Muller (English).

Queer Theory/Gender Theory Graduate Student Reading Group. This graduate student seminar met to discuss emergent issues in queer theory and gender theory, focusing on the ways in which these issues were developing across disciplinary boundaries. This year, the group looked specifically at emerging notions of queer temporality. Can there be such a thing as queer time? What implications does such a concept have for interpretive practice in literary studies and for understanding historicity in other disciplines? In what ways can concepts of queer time resist linear, teleological notions of history that have come to be seen as hegemonic? During the fall semester, the group explored influential post-structuralist critiques of progressive temporality (by writers such as Jacques Derrida, Walter Benjamin, and Benedict Anderson) while

examining alternative notions of temporality in relation to sexuality and gender (by writers such as Michel Foucault, Eve Sedgwick, and Jonathan Goldberg). Meetings were held from 12:00-2:00 p.m. on the following Fridays: September 1st, October 6th, and November 3rd. The last meeting of the fall semester took place Friday, December 1st. The group held their spring semester meetings on February 16th, March 16th, and April 27th. Seminar Coordinators: Rebecca Chapman (English) and Donald Jellerson (English).

Vanderbilt Group for Early Modern Cultural Studies. This is an interdisciplinary forum for faculty and graduate students with an interest in literature, history, music, art, and culture from 1400-1800. The group met monthly to discuss ongoing research by a faculty member, recent publications in the field, or the work of a visiting scholar. Graduate students were particularly encouraged to attend and contribute. Seminar Coordinator: Leah Marcus (English).

Guest Speakers: **Edward Friedman** (Spanish) gave a talk entitled "Before *Don Quixote*: The Picaresque and Its Discontents" on Friday, September 29th while on Friday, October 13th, **Jonathan Lamb** (English) spoke on "Personation, Idols and the Properties of Things: Reading *A Midsummer Night's Dream* through Hobbes's Spectacles." Other speakers included a lecture by **Michael Neill** (English, University of Auckland, New Zealand) entitled "'The Little Dogs and all': Ceremony, Nakedness, Shame, and the Deconsecration of Kingship in *King Lear*" on Thursday, November 2nd, and a talk by **Jeff Peters** (French, University of Kentucky) on Tuesday, November 7th at 4 p.m. **Jane Landers** presented her paper "The Maroon Wars in 16th Century Spanish America" on Monday, February 19th, at 4:10 p.m., and on Wednesday, February 28th, at 12:00 p.m. a Graduate Student Panel dealing broadly with "Honor, Nobility and the Family in the Early Modern Period," met. Panel participants **Bethany Packard**, **Megan Moran**, **Natalie Inman**, and **Olivia Grenvick** presented for 10 minutes each and left the remaining time open for questions. On March 15th, at 4:10 p.m. the group met for a lecture from **Richard Strier** (Frank L. Sulzberger Professor of English, University of Chicago) entitled, "Sanctifying the Bourgeoisie: The Cultural Work of *The Comedy of Errors*." Finally, on April 16th at 4:10 p.m. **Kathryn Schwarz** (English) presented her paper, "Ventriloquized Sentimentality, or, The Theory and Practice of Women in War."

Women's and Gender Studies Seminar. This seminar highlighted work being done on campus in the area of women's and gender studies.

Guest Speakers: On Wednesday, September 27th, **Nancy Reisman** (English) read from her book, *The First Desire*. **Gary Jensen** (sociology and religious studies) gave a lecture from his recently published book *Path of the Devil: Early Modern Witchhunts* on Monday, October 30th. **Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore** (Religious Studies) spoke about her recent book *In the Midst of Chaos: Care of Children as Spiritual Practice* on February 5th, and on March 12th **Kathryn Gines** (Philosophy/African American and Diaspora Studies) presented a lecture entitled, "Anna Julia Cooper: Transcending Traditional Boundaries of Gender and Race." The group also co-sponsored a lunch talk with the Global Feminisms seminar for **Joanna Kerr**, former Executive Director of the Association for Women's Rights and Development. Dr. Kerr gave a lecture entitled "Young Women in the Women's Movement Today" on February 15th.

Other Projects

Graduate Student Conference “Authority, the Law and the Word.”

The Warren Center co-sponsored the conference with the Center for the Americas and the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. The keynote lecture was given on Friday, October 6, by **Sylvia Molloy** (Albert Schweitzer Professor of the Humanities and Professor of Spanish and Portuguese Languages and Literatures and Comparative Literature, New York University). Her title was “Property Rights: Autobiography, Fiction, and the Ownership of Life.”

Thomas Koebner

Thomas Koebner (Professor of Media Studies, University of Mainz) gave a public lecture on Monday, September 18th at 4:00 p.m. Sponsored by the Max Kade Center for European and German Studies and co-sponsored by the Warren Center as well as by several other departments, his talk was entitled “The Contemporary German Film Scene: What’s Happening?” The next day on Tuesday, September 19th, the Warren Center hosted a luncheon in Prof. Koebner’s honor.

Joint meeting of the Southeastern College of Art Conference and the Mid-America College Art Association. As part of the conference, the Warren Center sponsored a panel on Saturday, October 28th, entitled “Movement as Language: Gestures and Their Meanings in the Visual Arts.” Participants presenting talks included **Ellen Konowitz** (SUNY-New Paltz) “Gestures as Language in the Art of Hugo van der Goes”; **Barbara J. Watts** (Florida International University) “Gestural Deception in Sandro Botticelli’s Drawings for Dante’s Inferno”; **Denise Budd** (Rutgers University) “Peter’s Hands: Andrea del Castagno and his Last Supper”; **Carlton Hughes** (University of South Carolina) “Ambivalence and Act in Italian Renaissance Art”; and **Eric Segal** (University of Florida) “Passing Fears and Reassuring Gestures: Race and American Illustration in the *Saturday Evening Post*.”

Online Conference in Aesthetics. From January 22nd – February 11th, **Jonathan Neufeld** (philosophy) hosted the first-ever online conference in aesthetics, focusing on the topic “Arthur Danto’s Transfiguration of the Commonplace – 25 Years Later.” Presenters included: Lydia Goehr, Richard Shusterman, Michael Kelly, Kalle Puolakka, Elisabeth Schellekens, York Gunther, Sherri Irvin, Robert Stecker, John Dilworth, Scott Walden, Sondra Bacharach, Regina Wenninger, Stephen Snyder, Mario Wenning, John Carvalho, Francis Halsall, Jerome Langguth, Theodore Gracyk, Brandon Cooke, Robert Kraut, Stephen Davies, David Carrier, and Arthur Danto. Over 3,000 web visitors from all over the world participated in the discussions, and the site received over 300 page views per day. The Warren Center co-sponsored this ground-breaking event with the Vanderbilt Department of Philosophy, The Franke Institute for the Humanities, and the Tel Aviv University School of Philosophy.

Dancing Between Two (or More) Cultures: Writers of the Caribbean, Central America and the United States. This two day symposium from March 14th to 15th was sponsored by the Creative Writing Program in the English Department as part of the Gertrude and Harold S. Vanderbilt Visiting Writers Series. Visiting writers included

Kwame Dawes, Lorna Goodison, J. Edward Chamberlin, Teresa de la Caridad Doval, and Francisco Goldman. The Warren Center hosted an opening reception for the conference on March 14th at 4:30 p.m.

Bernard Wasserstein, Professor of Modern European Jewish History at the University of Chicago, gave a lecture entitled, “Three of a Kind: Isaiah Berlin, Isaac Deutscher, and Arthur Koestler, and the Polemics of Jewish Identity” on March 15th at 4:10 p.m. The talk was sponsored by the Department of History and the Warren Center.

On the Lip(s) of Miriam's Well: Jews|Women|Cultures. Three days of multimedia performance, conversation and lectures undertook a global examination of Jewish women's cultural practices from March 18-20. The conference was organized by Jay Geller in the Religious Studies Department, and the Warren Center hosted a reception on March 19th.

Kocku von Stukrad, Assistant Professor of Religious Studies at the center for the History of Hermetic Philosophy and Related Currents, University of Amsterdam, gave a lecture entitled, “Ernst Haeckel and Interferences between Science and Religion” on March 26th at 4:10 p.m. The event was co-sponsored by the Max Kade Center for European and German Studies, the Warren Center, and the History Department.

Ottmar Ette, Professor of Romance Languages and Literatures, University of Potsdam, Germany presented, "Alexander von Humboldt: Transdisciplinary Perspectives and TransArea Studies" on March 27th at 4:00 p.m. The event was co-sponsored by the Center for the Americas, the Warren Center, the Max Kade Center for European and German Studies, the Dean of Arts & Science, and the Provost.

Unanschaulichkeit: towards an ethics of modern literature. This interdisciplinary conference, organized by Christian Sinn, visiting Max Kade professor, took place in the Black Cultural Center from March 30-April 1. Participants from around the United States, including professors of German Literature as well as Comparative Literature and Philosophy, presented a series of papers that took up a challenge to theorize and to demonstrate the unique contribution that literature—specifically, modern literature—makes to ethical inquiry. The conference was co-sponsored by the Department for Germanic and Slavic Languages, the Max Kade Center for European Studies, the Graduate School, the University Lecture Series, the Center for Ethics, and the Warren Center, which hosted a reception on March 30th.

National Humanities Alliance Advocacy Event. Mona Frederick met in Washington, DC with members of the Tennessee congressional delegation and their respective staffs as part of an advocacy event organized by the National Humanities Alliance to convey the importance of research and other projects supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Ian Balfour, Professor of English and Social and Political Thought at York University in Toronto, gave a paper to the Philology Group on the evening of Sunday, April 1st. The

Philology Group is an association of scholars of the Humanities who meet occasionally to discuss a precirculated paper. Dr Balfour's was entitled, "The Sublime of the Nation" and dealt with the unimaginable or sublime elements in concepts of nationhood.

Rap Sessions Town Hall Forum. "Understanding the New Gender Politics: Does Hip Hop Hate Women?" took place on April 12, featuring Bakari Kitwana, Joan Morgan, Mark Anthony Neal, Rosa Clemente, and Tracy Sharpley-Whiting. This forum was co-sponsored by American Studies, the Bishop Johnson Black Cultural Center, Center for Ethics, Masculinities Seminar Group and the Center for the Study of Religion and Culture, the Warren Center, and Women's and Gender Studies.

Sister Spit. On Thursday, April 19th, Vanderbilt University hosted Sister Spit the Next Generation, a national tour that pairs five new performance artists and writers with members of the original Sister Spit performance troupe from 1990. The event was hosted by the Queer Theory Reading Group, an interdisciplinary graduate student reading group facilitated through the Robert Penn Warren Center for the Humanities. Co-sponsoring offices included the Writing Studio, the Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center, the Women's and Gender Studies Department, and the Office for GLBT Life. The performance took place from 7:00-9:30pm at the Bishop Joseph Johnson Black Cultural Center. The performance line up included Michelle Tea, Eileen Myles, Ali Liebegott, Tamara Llosa-Sandor, Rhiannon Argo, Christy C. Road, Nicole J. Georges, and Robin Kimbo. Each performed for approximately twenty minutes, and used various media. The event attracted an audience of approximately 80 people, filling the space completely. Community members not directly affiliated with the campus comprised approximately half of the audience.

Prof. 101: Launching Successful Faculty Careers. This day-long workshop was held on **March 24th** for advanced graduate students who were going on to academic positions. The day featured sessions such as "Grants Management," "Publishing," "Balancing Teaching, Research and Service," "Course Design," and "On the Tenure Track." The Warren Center co-sponsored the workshop with the Center for Teaching, GSPPD Collaborative, the Graduate School, the College of Arts and Science, the BRET office, and ISSS.