

The Unbearable Humanities

VHC Program

FRIDAY, APRIL 7, 2017:

Friday, April 7, 8:00-9:15 AM:

I. Unbearable Us: Mythic Mirrors of Our Ugly Selves

Chair: Kelley Crowley, Shenandoah University

- Teagan Hicks, Christopher Newport University, "The Dangers of Myth"
- Nicholas Robinson, Christopher Newport University, "Review of 'The Innocent Nation'"
- Elle Rosenbaum, Christopher Newport University, "Hercules—Take Two"
- Kyle Knachel, Christopher Newport University, "Outlaw Pete: A Critical Analysis of the Myth of an Antihero"

II. Narrating the Unbearable

Chair: Matthew Corr, Shenandoah University

- Katie Peebles, Marymount University, "Reconsidering Sovereignty: When Is an Invasion Not an Invasion?"
- Shawn McAvoy, Patrick Henry Community College and Arizona State University, "Organizing the Unbearable Humans"
- Elizabeth Gunn, Morgan State University, "Let Us Narrate This Unbearable Life"

III. The Unbearable Gothic

Chair: Michelle Adams, Shenandoah University

- Nathan Ray, James Madison University, "The Pirate Crew: A Historiographical Look at Integration in the 'Golden Age of Piracy'"
- Sandy Burnley, Michigan State University, "Looking at Wolves, Women, and Vampires in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*"
- Geraldine Kiefer, Shenandoah University, "Un-Bearable Iceland: A Studio and Historical Journey Through the Maelstrom of Monstrous Maps"

IV. Unexpected Utterings in Antebellum America

Chair: Christin Taylor, Shenandoah University

- Wyatt Dillon, Shenandoah University, "Trapped Inside The Victorian Frame: A War on Women's Representation"
- Samantha Maddy, Shenandoah University, "Harriet Jacobs's Polite Agenda"
- Krysta De Hoyos, Shenandoah University, "Man vs. Thing: What Does It Mean to be Human?"
- Maryjean Gillis, Shenandoah University, "The Savage, The Master, the Fall: The Conception of Power in Early and Antebellum America"

Friday, April 7, 9:30-10:45 AM:

I. Feminism, Resistance, and the Unbearable

Chair: Rachael Hammond, Shenandoah University

- Tonya Howe, Marymount University, "Unbearable Refusals: Resistance to the Female Autonomy in Charlotte Lennox's *Henrietta*"
- Catelin Turman, Radford University, "The Unbearableness of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*"
- Marybeth Richards, Wilson College, "Caught Between Voices, Caught Between Pages: Reading Laurie Halse Anderson's *Speak* as a Pseudo-Feminist Text"

II. The Self and the Other: Subjectivity, Othering, and Otherness

Chair: Bryan Pearce-Gonzales, Shenandoah University

- Maureen Jameson, State University of New York (Buffalo), "Unbearable Tyranny and the Humanities: Tobacco Control"
- Casey Eriksen, Shenandoah University, "On the Uses of the Grotesque: Silvina Ocampo and the Psychological Portrait"
- Rachel Blase, George Mason University, "Medicine, Society, and 'Freaks'"
- Andy Eicher, Stony Brook University, "Positively Poz!: The Possibilities of Desiring HIV"

III. Dystopian Narratives

Chair: Meredith Minister, Shenandoah University

- Sarah Canfield, Shenandoah University, "Octavia Butler and Unbearable (Post)Humanity"
- Michael Babcock, Central Virginia Community College, "Simulated Humanities: A Literary Perspective on the 'Simulated Universe' Hypothesis"
- Zachary Stephens, Virginia Commonwealth University, "Machines as Equal Automata"
- Dipsikha Thakur, University of Virginia, "'Terrifyingly Unknowable Compulsions': The Vegetarian and the Paradox of Bearing the Unbearable"

IV. The Unbearable in Ethnic and Cultural Studies

Chair: Diana Risk, Virginia Wesleyan College

- Sharisa Aidukaitis, University of Virginia, "Ambiguously (Yet Unequivocally) Russian: Pushkin's Diverse Ethnic Background"
- David Tortolini, Old Dominion University, "Spineless Literature: Mythology, Power, and Feminism"
- Arib Alajmi, Marymount University, "Memoir—A Pure Arabian Horse"
- Kelly Fenwick, Virginia Commonwealth University, "But Did You *Really* Write This? Early American Women's Narratives and Cultures"

Friday, April 7, 11:00 AM-12:15 PM:

I. Free Speech in Contemporary Society

Chair: Barry Penn-Hollar, Shenandoah University

-JoAnne Holman, James Madison University, "Up from Unbearable: Towards a New Model for the Online Public Sphere"

-Gina Daddario, Shenandoah University, "The Unbearable 'Other' in Sport Coverage: How the Media Marginalizes Female Athletes"

-Carrie Longworth Caplan, Old Dominion University, "'Beautiful Little Fools': A Reader Response Interrogation of Narcissistic Abuse in the American Literary Canon"

II. Unbearable Mothers: Ambiguous Parental Identities in Global Cinema and Literature

Chair: Sarah Canfield, Shenandoah University

-Michelle Brown, Shenandoah University, "Postcolonial Families and Unbearable Nationalities"

-Andrea Meador Smith, Shenandoah University, "Unbearably Barren: The Horror of the Childless Mother in *El vientre*"

-Leslie M. Kaiura, University of Alabama at Huntsville, "Unbearable Identities/Ambiguities in Pedro Almodóvar's *Todo sobre su madre*"

III. Unbearable Health

Chair: Anne Schempp, Shenandoah University

-Audra Gollenberg, Shenandoah University, "Opioids in the Shenandoah Valley: Perceptions of Heroin Use and Prescription Drug Misuse Among Young Adults in the Loud Fairfax Health District"

-Amanda Bohn, Marymount University, "Unbearable Futures: The Life of Incurable and Chronic Illness in Art"

-Jessica Peacock, Shenandoah University, "Unbearable Obesity"

IV. Science, Society, and Meditation

Chair: Petra Schweitzer, Shenandoah University

-Kasinathan Muralidharan, Quest Diagnostics Nichols Institute, "The 'Unbearable' Burden of our Genes"

-Meenu Tewari, University of North Carolina—Chapel Hill, "Heartful Networks"

-Jayaram Thimmapuram, York Hospital, Pennsylvania, "Heartfulness Meditation Perspective on the Stresses of Social, Scientific and Medical Advances"

This panel will be followed by a Heartfulness Meditation from 12:15 until 12:35 PM, open to all.

Friday, April 7, 12:30-1:30 PM:

LUNCH

Friday, April 7, 1:30-2:45 PM:

I. Genocide and Trauma

Chair: Rachael Hammond, Shenandoah University

- Chris Zimmerman, Shenandoah University, "The (Unbearable) Act of Seeing with One's Own Eyes: Memory, Trauma, Testimony, and Film"
- Petra M. Schweitzer, Shenandoah University, "Embodied Existence of Mothers"
- Dorota Glowacka, University of King's College, "Ignorance or Taboo? Teaching about Sexual Violence as the Weapon of War and Genocide"

II. The Unbearable Curricula: Working Toward Curricular Cohesion in the 21st Century Academy

Chair: Doug Enders, Shenandoah University

- Bryan Pearce-Gonzales, Shenandoah University, "Shenandoah University's Plan for the General Education Curriculum and Town Hall Culminating Experience"
- Maynard Schaus, Virginia Wesleyan College, "Virginia Wesleyan College's Approach to a Cohesive Curriculum"
- Courtney Watson, Jefferson College of Health Sciences, "May the Odds Be Ever in Your Favor: Saving the Humanities in the Age of STEM"
- Michael Saffle, Virginia Tech, "Unbearable Music Scholarship: Getting Back to Basics in Today's Musicological World"

III. Confronting the Unbearable through Pedagogy

Chair: Michelle Brown, Shenandoah University

- Eric Lorentzen, University of Mary Washington, "Interdisciplinary British Literature in the University Classroom"
- Julie Ward, Virginia Commonwealth University, "Global Education and the English Language: Linguistic Homogeneity and Its Responsibility"
- Arnaldo Robles, Shenandoah University, "The Virtue of Errors in Second Language Classrooms: Making Use of Contemporary Research"
- Kelley Crowley and Maurice Fraga, Shenandoah University, "The Unbearable Weight of Acts of Art"

IV. Art and Space: Mediating the Unbearable

Chair: Meredith Minister, Shenandoah University

- Stuart Romm, Georgia Institute of Technology, "How Dignity Plays"
- Kirk Richardson, Virginia Commonwealth University, "The Belle Isle Interpretive Bike Rack Series; or, How the Humanities Shapes the Unbearable"
- Bernadette St. Amand, Louisiana State University, "Ballroom Dance: Performing Gender and Gender Performativity"

Friday, April 7, 3:00-4:15 PM:

I. Confronting the Unbearable Through Writing

Chair: Avi Santo, Old Dominion University

-Pamela Anderson, "Grabbing the Beast by the Throat: Poems of Resistance—Czechoslovakia 1938-1945"

-Valerie Philbrick-DeBrava, Saint Leo University, "Changing the Subject: What a Divide in the Humanities Can Teach Us"

-Tamara Ralis, Visual Artist and Actress, "Things of the Air"

II. Shenandoah University Health Humanities Initiative: An Interdisciplinary Discussion

Chair: Rosemary Green, Shenandoah University

-Barry Penn Hollar, Shenandoah University

-Anne Schempp, Shenandoah University

-Laurel Rodgers, Shenandoah University

-Sarah Canfield, Shenandoah University

-J. J. Ruscella, Shenandoah University

III. Religion and the Unbearable

Chair: Andy Kulp, Shenandoah University

-John M. Thompson, Christopher Newport University, "Bearing the Unbearable: Buddha's Lesson to Aṅgulimāla (And Us All)"

-Kevin Minister, Shenandoah University, "The Unbearable Art of Maintenance: Religion and the End of Work"

-Dawn Hutchinson, Christopher Newport University, "Scholars: Interpreters or Defenders of New Religious Movements?"

-Meredith Minister, Shenandoah University, and Sarah Bloesch, Elon University, "Religious Studies as a Case-Study for the Unbearable Humanities"

IV. Theory, Melancholy, and the Uncanny

Chair: David Kenneth Jeffrey, James Madison University

-Varun Begley, College of William and Mary, "The Unbearable Freud: Teaching Psychoanalysis/Literature"

-Hagai Dagan, Sapir Academic College, "Remedy in Gloomy Times: Some Literary and Philosophical Perspectives of Prominent HBO and Netflix Series"

-Kate Kopy, Marymount University, "The Unbearable Fairy-tale Princess"

Friday, April 7, 4:30 PM:

Wine and Cheese Reception

Friday, April 7, 5:00 PM:

Keynote address

Lauren Berlant and Lee Edelman, “Pressures of the Unbearable: A Critical Conversation”

Lauren Berlant is George M. Pullman Distinguished Service Professor of English at the University of Chicago. Her most recent books are *Cruel Optimism* (2011) and, with Lee Edelman, *Sex, or the Unbearable* (2014). Through *Critical Inquiry* she has also recently co-edited *Comedy, An Issue*, with Sianne Ngai (2017). Her national sentimentality trilogy—*The Anatomy of National Fantasy* (1991), *The Queen of America Goes to Washington City* (1997), and *The Female Complaint* (2008) is accompanied by edited volumes such as *Intimacy* (2000); *Our Monica, Ourselves: The Clinton Affair and the National Interest* (2001); *Compassion: the Culture and Politics of an Emotion* (2004); and *On the Case* (*Critical Inquiry*, 2007). She blogs at Supervalent Thought (www.supervalentthought.com) and is also a founding member of the art/activist group Feel Tank Chicago.

Lee Edelman is the Fletcher Professor of English Literature at Tufts University. He has published widely in the areas of film, literature, sexuality studies, and critical theory and is the author of *Transmemberment of Song: Hart Crane’s Anatomies of Rhetoric and Desire* (1987), *Homographesis: Essays in Gay Literary and Cultural Theory* (1994), *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (2004), *L’impossible homosexuel: Huit essais de théorie queer*, and, with Lauren Berlant, *Sex, or the Unbearable* (2014). His writings, which have been translated into French, Spanish, German, Italian, Swedish, Turkish, Japanese, Hebrew, Dutch, Portuguese, and Russian, have been influential both inside and outside the academy, serving as the basis, among other things, for work by lesbian punk bands, avant-garde film-makers, painters, and performance artists. He is a member of the editorial board of *Signs* and, along with Lauren Berlant, he is co-editor of the series, *Theory Q*, for Duke University Press. He is currently completing a book with the working title, *Bad Education: Why Queerness Teaches Us Nothing*.

Friday, April 7th 8:00 PM:

Shenandoah University Conservatory Performs *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*

VHC Conference Attendees Receive 20% off the \$12 Ticket Price (\$9.60)

Glaize Theater, Shenandoah Conservatory

Written by Stephen Adly Guirgis

Directed by Kirsten Trump

Set in a time-bending, serio-comically imagined world between Heaven and Hell, *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* is a philosophical meditation on the conflict between divine mercy and human free will that takes a close look at the eternal damnation of the Bible’s most notorious sinner. *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* contains profanity, adult themes and satirization of religious characters that some audiences may find disturbing or offensive. Please contact the Box Office at 540-665-4569 for more details.

SATURDAY, APRIL 8 2017:

Saturday, April 8, 8:00-9:15 AM:

I. South American Narratives

Chair: Diana Risk, Virginia Wesleyan College

-Rodrigo Casteriana, Shenandoah University, "Villas in Distress"

-Pamela Flores, Instituto Superior de Formación Docente y Técnica, "Catiline: Hero? Villain? From the Roman Republic to the Argentinian Republic"

-Amanda McMenamin, Wilson College, "Unbearable Ambiguity in the Elliptical Short Story: 'Re/Membering' Woman's Subjectivity Amidst the Dirty War in Luisa Valenzuela's 'Other Weapons'"

II. Rape and Sexual Violence

Chair: Meredith Minister, Shenandoah University

-Leigh McKagen, Virginia Tech, "'You Can't Rape a Machine': Examining Representation of Rape in *Battlestar Galactica*"

-Mary K. Ryan, Virginia Tech, "Child Rape and The Death Penalty"

-Lindsay Whittaker, Virginia Tech, "Violence against Trans* Women: Expressions of Toxic Masculinity"

III. Differences and Unbearability: Thinking the Unbearability of Femininity

Chair: Haylee Harrell, Emory University

-Ryan Kendall, Emory University, "Killing the Womb: Toward an Antifutural Theory of Reproduction"

-Samia Vasa, Emory University, "Toward an S/M Theory of MacKinnon"

-Tara Holmes, Stony Brook University, "'If It's in a Word or It's in a Look': Confronting the Unbearability of Motherhood in *The Babadook*"

Saturday, April 8, 9:30-10:45 AM:

I. Differences and Unbearability: Thinking Unbearability and Blackness

Chair: Ryan Kendall, Emory University

- Haylee Harrell, Emory University, "The Unbearability of Mulatto-ness in William Faulkner's *Light in August*"
- Brendan Moore, Emory University, "Abyss(atr)ix: The Black Atlantic's Unbearable Womb"
- Angela Jacobs, Old Dominion University, "'I Am Not Your Mammy': Storm, Uhura, and the Unraveling of the Archetypes of the Mammy Figure and the Angry Black Woman"

II. Environmental and Governmental Protest

Chair: Kevin Minister, Shenandoah University

- Marek Payerhin, Lynchburg College, "'No Compromise in Defense of Mother Ziemia': Framing the Unbearable in a Social Protest"
- Austin Louis Shifflett, James Madison University, "'Staying with the Trouble' and 'Making Kin' in Ian McEwan's *Solar* and Juliana Spahr's *That Winter the Wolf Came*"
- Meredith Privott, Old Dominion University, "The Unbearable 'Social Justice Warrior': A Feminist Rhetorical Analysis of the Pejorative Misnomer Social Justice Warrior in the #NoDAPL Movement, and How Allies Can Respond"
- Cortney Hughes Rinker, George Mason University, "The Dying Muslim Body: Creating Religious Identities Through Death in the U.S. Health Care System"

III. Unbearable Immigration

Chair: Andrea Smith, Shenandoah University

- Patricia Reagan, Randolph-Macon College, "*La Jaula de Oro (The Golden Cage)*: Representations of the United States as a Golden Cage in Immigrant Film and Song"
- Jessica Davis, University of Virginia, "The Power of Words: Linguistic and National Rejection and Acceptance in Angie Cruz's *Soledad*"
- Nhu Phuong Duong, Marymount University, "Culturally Seducing the Queer"

IV. Unexpected Utterings in Contemporary America

Chair: Christin Taylor, Shenandoah University

- Denisa Banasova, Shenandoah University, "Gender and Sexual Representation in Literature"
- Michelle Adams, Shenandoah University, "Madness in American Literature: The Case of Sylvia Plath"
- Christy Graham, Shenandoah University, "On Nella Larsen's *Quicksand*"

Saturday, April 8, 11:00 AM-12:00 PM:

Panel Discussion: Can the 21st Century America Bear the Humanities?

Moderator: Jeff W. Coker, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences, Shenandoah University

- David Bearinger, Virginia Foundation for the Humanities
- Robert Ehrenreich, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
- David Smith, Department of History, Baylor University
- Robert Townsend, American Academy of Arts and Sciences

Saturday, April 8, 12:00-1:00 PM:

LUNCH

Saturday, April 8, 1:00-2:15 PM:

I. Uncertainty, Difference, and the Digital

Chair: Gina Daddario, Shenandoah University

- Norberto Gomez, Jr., Montgomery College—Takoma Park/Silver Spring, "Dying-Digital in the Age of Immortals"
- Vanessa Miller, Pennsylvania State University, "Controversial Discourse: Free Speech and Inclusivity on Campus"
- Emily Watlington, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, "Unbearable Fear & Unbearable Banality for Suburban Teens in Ryan Trecartin's *Junior War*"

II. Queer Discourses

Chair: Sarah Bloesch, Elon University

- Aleksandr Chandra, Connecticut College, "Critical Transnational Queer Praxis and the Disidentification of Scholar Activists in Academia"
- Christine Robinson and Sue Spivey, James Madison University, "Unbearable Genders: Deconstructing Ex-Gay Movement Discourses of Transgenderism in a Global Context"
- Michael Cornelius, Wilson College, "The Unbearable Queerness of Being King: Edward II's Lists of Kingship in Michael Drayton's *Mortimeriados* and Sir Francis Hubert's *The Historie of Edward the Second*"

III. New Approximations to the Unbearable: Maternity

Chair: Avi Santo, Old Dominion University

- Nicolette Bragg, Cornell University, "The Discipline of the Unbearable"
- Rachel Weitzenkorn, Emory University, "Seeing the Failures of Motherhood: The Unbearable in Cognitive Science"
- Amber Brooks, Virginia Commonwealth University, "Rights and Wrongs: An Introduction to the Feminist Victorian Poetry of Marion Bernstein"

IV. The Unbearable in Television and Pop Culture

Chair: Arnaldo Robles, Shenandoah University

- Brian E. Crim, Lynchburg College, "From Muselmann to 'Walker': Holocaust Themes in AMC's *The Walking Dead*"
- Grace Glass, American Military University, "Reddit and Policing the (Feminine?) Unbearable: Gender and the Politics of Crowd Control on Reddit"
- Amanda Dale Wroten, Old Dominion University and Christopher Newport University, "*The Walking Dead* as a Precautionary Tale of Southern Gothic"
- Adela Borrillo-Solís, Shenandoah University, The Unbearable in Spanish Politics and Television: The Case of "*La que se acerca*"

Saturday, April 8, 2:30-3:45 PM:

I. Musical Resistance to the Unbearableness of Oppression: Case Studies in Ukraine, Chile, and South Africa

Chair: Rosemary Green, Shenandoah University

-Lindsay W. Michie, Lynchburg College, "'You Can't Kill Our Spirit': The Tradition of Protest in Music and Poetry in the Eastern Cape of South Africa from Colonial Times to the Present"

-Eunice Rojas, Lynchburg College, "Water Wars: Representations of Police Repression in Chilean Protest Music"

-Kara Eaton Dean, Lynchburg College, "'Anthem of Revolution,' 'Plyve Kacha Po Tysyni,' and '1944': An Analysis of Protest through Song in the Ukraine 2013-present"

II. Contemporary Events and Social Movements, Part I

Chair: Tonya Howe, Marymount University

-Lily Kunda, Old Dominion University, "Lack of Black: A Look at How Black Business Professionals are Represented in *Hampton Roads Business Journal*"

-Chelsea Charbonneau, Old Dominion University, "Bodies That Bleed: The Unbearable Female Body as a Site of Resistance"

-Rachel Sadler, Old Dominion University, "Villains or Victims?: Historical Comparisons of Media Representation of Slain Black Youth"

-Avi Santo, Old Dominion University, "Racializing Consumers in Retail Spaces"

III. Populist Rhetoric, Native American Identities, and Social Protest

Chair: Marwood Larson-Harris, Roanoke College

-Ariel Lawrence, Virginia Commonwealth University, "Unbearable Rhetoric"

-Diana Palardy, Youngstown State University, "The Unbearable Sensescapes of Precarity in the Literature of the Indignados (The Indignant Ones)"

-Christine Rosenfeld, George Mason University, "Hawai'i Island's Saddle: Shaping the Landscape, Deepening the Conflict, & Protecting Resources"

IV. Contemporary Events and Social Movements, Part II

Chair: Adela Borrallo-Solis, Shenandoah University

-Rachel Sadler, Old Dominion University, "#BlackLivesMatter: Using Social Media for Social Change"

-Bnar Mustafa, Old Dominion University, "Economic Struggles and Challenges of Iraqi and Syrian Refugees in Hampton Roads Especially after the Executive Order"

-Shaun Respass, Old Dominion University, "Heroism & Conventional Morality: A Pedagogical Approach"

Saturday, April 8, 4:00-5:15 PM:

I. Pedagogy

Chair: Marwood Larson-Harris, Roanoke College

-Sarah Mayhak, James Madison University, "Communicating Incompetence: Unpacking the Election of Donald J. Trump"

-Allison Tharp, University of Delaware, "#Unfollow: How the College Classroom Can Combat the Unbearable Insularity of Digital Communication"

-Daisy Breneman and Sue Spivey, James Madison University, "Drinking from a Firehose: Teaching the Unbearable in Justice Studies"

II. Contemporary Events and Social Movements, Part III

Chair: Tonya Howe, Marymount University

-Danielle Salyers, Old Dominion University, "The Illusion of Diversity in the Arena of the Museum Space"

-Jeannine Owens, Old Dominion University, "Are Internet Memes the Scourge of Society? The Role that Internet Memes Play in Social and Political Change"

-Tonya Schmehl, Old Dominion University, "Elderly and Lives Valued"

-Debra Sewe, Old Dominion University, "Forced Migrations: The Criminalisation of Social Problems"

III. Ambiguous Identities as Key Category in the Global Humanities

Chair: Rita S. Kranidis, Montgomery College

-Rita S. Kranidis, Montgomery College

-Deborah Taylor, Montgomery College

-Isabel Hechinger, Montgomery College

-Joseph Marube, Montgomery College

Conference Committee:

Petra Schweitzer
Kevin Minister
Bryan Pearce-Gonzales
Meredith Minister
Andrea Smith
Gina Daddario
Andy Kulp
Adela Borrallo-Solis
Casey Eriksen
Emily Burner
Rachael Hammond
Rosemary Green
Doug Enders
Sarah Canfield

Lost and Found: If you find or lose an item, please come to the conference registration area in the Health and Life Sciences Building. We will do our best to reunite things with their owners.

In case of emergency, please contact Shenandoah University's Department of Public Safety at 540-678-4444.