EVENTS

These funds support advanced graduate students of exceptional merit as they complete their dissertations. At Yale, a faculty committee appointed by the Dean selects the very best students from among those who have been nominated by their departments to be Whiting Fellows. This year’s Whiting Fellows are Irina Dumitrescu (English), Tara Golba (French), Andrew Goldstone (English), Faith Hillis (History), John Muse (English), Laura Robinson (History), and Rocco Rubini (Comparative Literature).

Fellows received prize scholarships and were honored at a dinner hosted by the Dean in November. They will meet several times during the spring semester to explore intellectual and professional topics that go beyond their fields of specialization. John Mack Faragher, the Arthur Unobskey Professor of American History, director of the Howard R. Lamar Center for the Study of Frontiers and Borders and professor of American Studies, will serve as faculty mentor for the Whiting Fellows group this year.

“I'm eagerly looking forward to meeting and getting to know these talented young people,” Faragher says. “I've invited the Whiting Fellows to join me in a series of lunchtime conversations about the role of humanists in American colleges and universities. Over the semester we’ll be hearing from several guest speakers, including a rare books curator, a university press editor, and an English professor at a regional university.”

“The mentoring aspect of the program has been an extremely valuable experience for the Fellows in the past, and we anticipate a lively exchange of ideas this semester,” says Edward Barnaby, assistant dean and coordinator of the Whiting Fellowship program at Yale.

“It is often noted that humanists are vulnerable to a feeling of isolation that comes with the solitary nature of their research,” says Barnaby. “The Whiting Foundation’s program counters this tendency by encouraging discussions among graduate students that move well beyond a polite exchange of research interests. The Whiting Fellows are provided with a rare and invigorating opportunity to reflect on the variety of paths through which their peers have come to the study of the humanities, to distinguish and articulate what has shaped their own intellectual motivations as humanists, and to consider as a group the professional responsibilities and challenges that humanists share, regardless of the specific disciplines in which they operate. There is no better time for these students to become conversant in such issues than now.

Continued page 2
The strength of the humanities in the colleges and universities of tomorrow—how will depend on scholars and teachers like these.

Literature, a study of the complex role of corporal punishment and imagined pain in teacher-student encounters. Roberta Frank is her advisor. Anglo-Saxon writers revolved education as a vehicle for Christian salvation, but they also recognized that the process of learning, whether for infant or adult students, involved painful desires and strenuous negotiations for power. A variety of Anglo-Latin and Old English texts reveal imagined pain as a constructive, but also potentially disruptive, component of the teaching moment. I explore this aspect of the teacher-student relationship in text-books, histories, esoteric literature, and saints’ lives in poetry and prose.

Irina was born in Bucharest, Romania, grew up in Canada, and has lived in Israel and Germany. She earned a B.A. from the University of Toronto and came to Yale because “it seemed like a great chance to do what I loved most—reading, writing, and talking to people about literature and ideas.” Her research topic grew out of a fascination with what she calls “a very obscure text, the Old English poem, Solomon and Saturn.” Eventually, I realized that what most fascinated me about it was the fact that the two speakers in the poem, the wise King Solomon and Saturn, a pagan prince, are actually in a teacher-student encounter, but a very dark and dangerous one. My dissertation is about the role of mistrust, danger, and illicit attraction in teaching relationships. Her article, “The Grammar of Pain in Ælfric Bata’s Colloquies,” was recently accepted for publication at the Forum for Modern Language Studies.

At Yale, in addition to academics, Irina was the graduate affiliate coordinator at Berkeley College for four years. She worked in the darkroom of the Art School for two summers and modernized through the World Language Center. She is a member of the Elizabethan Club, has published in Palimpsest, and co-organized two conferences: the New England Graduate Medieval Conference in 2005, and in 2009, a conference on “Plaissance in Anglo-Saxon England,” both partially supported by the Dean’s Symposium Fund. Tara Gold

Tara is working on “French and Franco-Phone Novels of Investigation: Dissecting the Post-colonial Epistemological Terrains,” with Christopher Miller as her advisor. In the dissertation, she analyzes European and African novels “in which scientific, historical, criminal, and administrative investigations provide the narrative framework. The investigations in question contain elements of objective inquiry – conclusions might, for example, be verified by physical evidence— but the novels that I examine are especially notable for their challenging of assumptions about objectivity and subjectivity. In my study of these novels I hope to arrive at the very heart of how French and Francophone authors interpret the post-colonial/subject’s knowledge of him/herself and the world.”

A native of Toledo, Ohio, Tara received a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from Boston University, then worked as an au pair in France before joining the v.s. Patent and Trademark Office as a patent examiner. At the Graduate School, she decided to specialize in Francophone literature after taking courses at Yale on postcolonial theory, the slave trade, and the literature of sub-Saharan Africa, and after carrying out research on African women writers in preparation for qualifying exams.

Tara’s research addresses “issues such as the relationship between anthropology and colonial-era racism, the role of memory and testimony in investigation, the subdivision of official discourse, and perceptions of race in France today.”

She has served as the French department’s representative to the Graduate Student Assembly for three years and has done volunteer work with arts Project New Haven, helping to train and supervise high school students participating in a peer education program.

Andrew Golkstone

Andrew reports that he was “raised by two academics. For a long time I thought I would go into my father’s field—physics. I concentrated in physics and math at Harvard, where I got my bachelor’s in 2004. But by that time I had already chosen graduate school in English, thus ending up closer to my mother’s path; she got her master’s in French at Yale. My science background has never left me, though. The standards of rigor I learned in physics and math have continued to shape my approach to the study of literature.”

Andrew’s dissertation, titled “The Dominance of Form: Modernist Poetic and Narrative Fictions of Aesthetic Autonomy,” is advised by Langdon Hammer. In it, he “addresses very fundamental questions about how we study a literary text: is it self-contained, autonomous object? Is it a reflection of the social conditions that produced it?” He focuses on the early twentieth century and argues that even the most extravagantly claims to autonomy nonetheless reveal the relations between literature and its historical contexts. I argue for a sociologically specific concept of relative aesthetic autonomy. I study modernist literature’s vexed relationship to such contexts as the changing nature of domestic service, the myths of the aging artist, the world of the ex-pats in Paris, and the dream of a purely self-referential literature. Of course, choosing such a broad theoretical framework was also a sneaky way to work on a large selection of my favorite authors: Oscar Wilde, James Joyce, Henry James, Marcel Proust, T.S. Eliot, Wallace Stevens, and others.”

Faith Billis

Faith’s dissertation, “Between Empire and Nation: Urban Politics and Community in Late Imperial Korea, 1863–1907,” investigates the development of mass politics in a multi-lingual, multi-religious, and multi-ethnic city. It describes how Korea, which was renowned for the diversity and inclusiveness of its commercial elite in the 1860s, by the turn of the twentieth century became one of Russia’s most violent cities and the center of a mass-oriented, anti- Semitic right-wing movement. “Challenging the tendency to write the political history of late tsarist Russia as a narrative of decline, this work shows that local political culture was sophisticated and consequential and explores how Kcv residents used local politics to intervene in larger questions of pan-imperial importance,” she says.

A native of Virginia, Faith graduated from Princeton University in 2002. Following a brief stint in the policy world in Washington, D.C., she came to Yale to continue working with Laura Engelstein, who was her college thesis advisor. “My most positive memories of graduate school will always be connected to my travels,” Faith says. “I’ve had the good fortune to complete language courses in Berlin, Krakow, and Kyiv [Kiev] and to make several research trips to Europe, including a year-long odyssey that took me to archives in Ukraine, Russia, Poland, and Finland.”

John Nose

John’s dissertation is titled “Time She Stops: Modernist Theatrical Shorts Since 1886,” and is advised by Marc Robinson and Joseph Roach.

“Some of my topics come together as I did mountains of reading to prepare for my oral exams,” he reports. “In reviewing the plays and histories of modernist drama over the last 120 years, I kept coming across remarkably short plays, but found that when these “It is often noted that humanists are vulnerable to a feeling of isolation that comes with the solitary nature of their research. The Whiting-Foundation’s program counters this tendency by encouraging discussions among graduate students that move well beyond a polite exchange of research interests.”
Laura Robson
Laura is writing a dissertation on “The Making of Sectarianism: Arab Christians in British Mandate Palestine, 1917–1948,” advised by Paul Kennedy. She came to Yale in 2003 and has “benefited hugely from the many opportunities I’ve had to travel. During my time here, I have traveled to Palestine/Israel, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, and Syria for archival research and language training.”

Her dissertation investigates “why and how sectarianism emerged as a major feature of the modern Palestinian Arab political landscape. My manuscript follows the declining political fortunes of Palestinian Arab Christians during the mandate period, from a prominent and influential position within a broad secular nationalist movement in the early years of the mandate to a position of almost total exclusion from Muslim-dominated national politics by the late 1930s. … This study historicizes the movement of Palestinian Arab politics away from secular nationalism and towards sectarianism. It demonstrates that both Muslim and Christian sectarian identifications, far from representing an entrenched mode of Palestinian Arab political action, constituted a considered response to the new conditions of the mandate state.”

After growing up in New York and Michigan, Laura studied at Tulane, where she earned a joint b.a./b.m. degree in history and music in 2000. She won a Marshall Scholarship to study in England and continued to pursue both areas, completing a Master of Music degree in piano performance from the Royal Academy of Music in London and a second Master’s in ancient history from Queen’s College, Oxford. At Yale, she has been active on the music scene, singing in the Yale Camerata for the past four years.

Asa second language in Chiang Mai, Thailand, for two years. He recalls, “That teaching experience convinced me that I wanted to be a teacher, and I could think of no better way to do that than teaching at a university. Looking for a graduate program where I could connect my interests in literature and performance, I chose to come back to Yale in 2004 because of the strong relationship here between the humanities and the performing arts.”

Rocco Rubini
In his dissertation, “Renaissance Humanism and Postmodernism: A Rhetorical History,” Rocco “explores the intellectual history and philosophical concepts that inform the twentieth century understanding of Renaissance humanism, and shows how the current understanding of the Renaissance evolved together with and informed the emergence of our postmodern historical consciousness.”

His goal is “to advance the study of the Renaissance and its philosophy in the twenty-first century by showing in what way solid archeological and philological research on manuscripts can coexist with insights derived from past and present developments in philosophical hermeneutics, and thus make the Renaissance once again a central epoch for the West and the beginning of its ‘modernity.’”

Born and raised in Rome, Italy, Rocco moved to New York at the age of 17 with his mother. “We believed it would be only for one year, but then we ended up staying much longer, as we fell in love with the city. My home and neighborhood in New York is the Upper West side, where I went to high school for an International Baccalaureate diploma.” He earned his undergraduate degree from NYU in 2002 and came to Yale to study with two of his college mentor’s former students, David Quint and Giuseppe Mazzotta, who are now his advisors.

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About 85 alumni of the Physics and Applied Physics departments returned to campus to join current faculty and graduate students for a three-day conference titled “Today’s Physics for Tomorrow’s World” in November.

The weekend began with welcoming remarks from Dean Butler and Physics Department Chair Meg Urry. Events included a departmental open house with lab tours, panels with alumni speakers, a reception and dinner at the Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History, a gala evening in Silliman College, and a special tour of campus highlighting new construction and renovation. On Friday, graduate students presented their research at a poster session as part of the open house. Conference panels addressed “Alumni at the Frontiers of Physics Research,” “Science Policy and Its Implications for Research at Universities and Laboratories,” “From Yale Physics to the World of Business, Finance and Industry,” and “Modern Trends in Physics Education.”

Steven Girvin, deputy provost for science and technology, spoke on the future of the sciences at Yale, and Urry gave a presentation on the current directions of the Physics Department.

Participating speakers hailed from a wide range of universities, including Texas A&M, Cornell, CUNY, Notre Dame, and Vassar; from the world of business (Hewlett-Packard, HSBC, IBM, and CreditSights); and from labs such as the U.S. Department of Energy and L.G.S.-Bell Labs Innovations. Yale faculty speakers and moderators, in addition to Urry and Girvin, were Francesco Iachello, Michael Zeller, Charles Baltay, Thomas Appelquist, Peter Parker, and Daniel Prober.

The reunion and conference were organized by the Association of Yale Alumni. Iachello was faculty coordinator.
Eight graduate students participated in a pair of bilingual, bi-national conferences held at the University of Paris-Diderot in November and at Yale in December.

Titled “Ouvrir Bazin/Opening Bazin,” the conferences focused on the work of influential French film critic and theorist André Bazin (1918–1958), founding editor of the journal, Cahier du Cinéma. Bazin wrote extensively about the significance of "objective reality" in film. His essays, championing the "invisible" director and the power of documentary filmmaking, continue to be widely read by film scholars.

"Bazin is important today because several of his texts were foundational for the discipline of film studies, posing key questions that we keep debating as the nature of cinema technology changes." — Grant Wiedenfeld

"Bazin is important today because several of his texts were foundational for the discipline of film studies, posing key questions that we keep debating as the nature of cinema technology changes," says Grant Wiedenfeld (Film Studies).

Bazin’s ideas are especially open to re-examination in light of the digital revolution. He argued that "an image doesn’t just represent (as an icon), but proves and preserves (as an index) the real existence of an object," says Seung-hoon Jeong (Film Studies). "Digitization can create and compose an image even without its real source, so it de-ontologizes the traditional notion of cinema based on celluloid film.

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The more the cinema is threatened by new technology and realism with which he is often most readily associated," Ryan Cook (Film Studies) adds.

Panels in Paris were conducted in French. Language was a big problem for some of the Yale students. Ryan, for example, had studied abroad in Paris as an undergraduate and can read and converse in French "fairly well," he says, "but I was out of practice and often found myself confusing everyone by unintentionally substituting French with Japanese, the foreign language I've been immersed in most recently. Speaking publicly in French at the conference was intimidating, but I felt that my piece went surprisingly well."

Grant, on the other hand, had lived in Paris and speaks fluent French. Furthermore, he adds, "I love visiting Paris because it's the capital of world cinema: a Disneyland for the cinephile."

"This conference demonstrated that there is far more to Bazin than the ideas about photography and realism with which he is often most readily associated."

"Film students, people have been re-reading Bazin recently to see how his ideas about photographic realism in cinema held up in the era of digital (arguably "post-photographic") imaging. This conference demonstrated that there is far more to Bazin than the ideas about photography and realism with which he is often most readily associated," Ryan says.

French university and seeing the way that academic meetings are conducted in France," Ryan says. "We also had a set of screenings and talks at the Cinematheque Française, a very symbolic location for film studies and for Bazin. And there were plenty of occasions to talk to people over food and drinks, including a very nice dinner on Thanksgiving at a cozy Parisian restaurant."

Participants in addition to Grant, Seung-hoon, and Ryan included Diana Lemberg (History) and Film Studies students Michael Cramer, Alice Lovejoy, and Jeremi Staniawski. Jennifer Stob attended the Yale conference. Students presented papers and held a roundtable discussion (in French in Paris, in English at Yale) and interacted with invited scholars from universities that included Harvard, Columbia, Brown, University of Iowa, University of Chicago, and NYU.

In addition, each student prepared and presented a dossier based on research in the Bazin archive at Yale.

The archive at Yale includes "a copy of almost everything Bazin published in his career, from very short movie reviews written for popular newspapers and magazines to substantial, carefully crafted essays, many long overlooked, that originally appeared in more specialized publications," Ryan explains. "There are over 2,000 items in the collection. It will be significant not only to scholars interested specifically in Bazin, but also to those researching film in Europe in the 1940s and 1950s, as Bazin was writing prolifically and insightfully throughout the period on what he was seeing around him."

"I personally learned most by delving into the fantastic archive put together by professors Dudley Andrew and Hervé Joubert-Laurencin (from Paris)," Jeremy says. "When you know that less than 10% of Bazin's works had been anthologized hitherto, you can gauge the importance of this undertaking and its value for future generations of scholars. The conferences were the jewels in the crown of this research process."

"To me, the wonderful thing about the Paris conference was to be immersed in a totally different academic tradition than the Ivy League one. The room in which we held our talks was less lavish than the Whitney Humanities Center's auditorium, no doubt, but in spite of the cold of the bare walls and concrete columns (evocative of nothing more than a parking lot), there was a wonderful intellectual warmth and energy about the event," Jeremy says.

Actress Jeanne Moreau attended the Paris conference and read from Bazin as well as from Francois Truffaut's writings on Bazin. "It was a highpoint of the conference," Andrew says. The Sedel Rose Professor of Film and Comparative Literature and vice chair of the Film Studies Program, Andrew helped organize the conferences.

Speaking of the New Haven conference, Jennifer says, "I deeply appreciated the scholarly diversity of the speakers invited and their significant contributions to the field of film studies. It was a pleasure and an honor to be able to discuss with them and present my work to them on the graduate student panel."

Sponsoring Yale offices included the Film Studies Program, the departments of French and Comparative Literature, the European Studies Council, the Whitney Humanities Center, the Peter Woodward Fund, and the Edward D. and Dorothy Clarke Kemp Memorial Fund, and beyond Yale, the French Cultural Services. "To me, the wonderful thing about the Paris conference was to be immersed in a totally different academic tradition than the Ivy League one."

Pictured on right in film strip: photo #5 from top, Seung-hoon Jeong and Grant Wiedenfeld; photo #7 Michael Cramer and Alice Lovejoy; photo #9 Jeanne Moreau and Jeremi Staniawski.
Emily Goble (Anthropology) has won the University of Notre Dame.

remote sensing to pursue her inter-

studied them as well as other collections

years, Emily has collected fossils in the

also make their first appearance in the

of humans, Paranthropus, evolved

mammal communities, including the

around 2.5 million years ago affected

fluctuations in the Kenya Rift Valley

Emily studies how significant climate

unusual rather than run-of-the-mill. "

presented at the Annual Meeting of

the Bryan Patterson Memorial Award,

Kenya, " combines the use of remotely-

the Chemeron Formation, Tugen Hills,

and Precessional Climatic Forcing in

tion of the Qur'an, in the Guantánamo

of religious abuse, especially desecra-

on Terror, " surveys, analyzes, and

reports, he argues that many Muslims

consider these abuses to be the worst

form of torture. Michael is working on a
dissertation on a very different topic,
titled "The Christian Son of God in the

Roman World," which shows how the

social and political concepts of "sonship"

in the Roman Empire can be used to ul-
minate early Christian concepts. Harold

Arryage, dean of Yale Divinity School, is

his advisor. Michael earned an M.A.R.
at Yale Divinity School and a B.A. at

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DIAPERS AND DISSERTATIONS

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Yale Graduate School’s students come from every state in the U.S. and about 100 different countries around the world. Their diversity is one of the great strengths of the school. The faces on this page, selected at random from photos taken at recent Graduate School social events, reflect some of the energy, warmth, humor, and intelligence of the student population. If you are pictured here, please contact the Graduate School News editor, gila.reinstein@yale.edu, so we will know who you are!
Michael Johnston (Ph.D. 1977, Political Scienc - e) has won the 2009 Gravemeyer Award for Ideas Improving World Order. Johnston, a political science professor at Colgate University in Hamilton, N.Y., earned the prize for proposals he set forth in his 2007 book, Syndromes of Corruption: Wealth, Power and Democra - cy. The book analyses the causes of corruption and proposes some remedies. The Gravemeyer Foundation, based at the University of Louisville, awards $1 mil - lion each year: $200,000 each for works in music composition, ideas improving world order, psychology, education, and religion. Johnston’s book argues that the best way to end corruption is to first examine its under - lying causes and the political and economic systems in which it flourishes. Corruption takes different forms in different cultures: The practice of using wealth to seek influ - ence is common in the United States, Japan, and Germany, while forming cartels to pro - tect the elite is more typically seen in Italy, Korea, and Botswana. In Russia, Mexico, and the Philippines—countries with liberal economies and weak civil societies—market - based corruption is especially risky. But the worst type of corruption—the plundering of so - cieties by those who retain absolute power—is nearly always seen in countries with - growing economies and weak institutions. Understanding how corruption develops in a particular country can help stop it more effectively, says Johnston, whose work was chosen from among 30 nominations. Johnston directs Colgate University’s Division of Social Sciences and has been a Fullbright Senior Specialist since 2006. The Fulbright Specialist Program provides short - term academic opportunities for U.S. faculty and professionals. He has done extensive - consulting in the field of public policy, assist - ing the United Nations, U.S. State Department, World Bank, and several governments. In the course of his career, he has seen stunning technical advances. “I was writing from building vacuum-tube radios in high school to using mechanical teleprinter to write my first computer program at Caltech to mak - ing 356 Mbit flash memories to be used in color cell phones with camera,” he told Yale graduate students when he visited campus five years ago.

In an effort to highlight the impor - tance of good mentoring in successful graduate education and to celebrate great mentors here at Yale, the Graduate Student Assembly and the Graduate School will host Mentor- ing Week 2009, a week of seminars and events focused on graduate mentoring. After the success of last year’s Mentoring Week, participat - ing students and faculty members compiled a handbook to help students and faculty maintain good mentoring relationships. Here are a few helpful suggestions from that document:

- Students should be aware that every mentor will have a different mentoring style. Some want to involve themselves more directly in their students’ work, and others will take a more hands-off approach. Some prefer a more formal rela - tionship, and others a more casual one. This will depend a great deal on the individual personality of the mentor.

- Students should be aware that if their mentors are monitoring multiple students, the mentor may tailor his/her mentoring style to the perceived needs of each individual. Giving extra attention to certain students at a particular time or for a particular reason does not necessarily signal favoritism or neglect.

- The mentor should be honest about his or her needs. The student should explain whether or not he or she prefers a hands-on or hands-off approach, how often he or she hopes to meet; whether or not he or she needs regular positive reinforcement. On both sides, the expectations should be clear and explicit.

This year, mentoring week will be held from February 1–7. For a complete schedule, or to read more of the Mentoring Statement, please visit http://gsa.yale.edu.

GSA UPDATE

For news and notification of upcoming events: Email: gsa.certificates@yale.edu; by fax: 432-1323, or stop by the Office of Public Affairs, 265 Church Street, suite 901.