

Interdisciplinary Studies

Fall 2008

Greetings Alums, Students, and Friends!



As Mark Twain almost said, “The report of our death has been exaggerated!”

We don’t know how much you’ve heard about the changes in IDS and thought we ought to bring you up to date. As of July 1, 2008, IDS is no longer a department in Arts and Sciences but a degree-granting program in the new University College (UC). IDS no longer includes Watauga College, Women’s Studies, Sustainable Development, Appalachian Studies, or Global Studies. However, IDS and all these other units are independent programs in UC, and all except Watauga grant degrees!

So what is IDS now? We are a faculty of three full-timers: Richard Carp, Derek Stanovsky, and Nancy Love, the new Director of IDS. However, things are a bit more complicated than that. First, Nancy was hired last spring, but she was on sabbatical from Penn State, and had to return for one year before she could take over at App, so I agreed to be Interim Director for this year. Second, Richard was persuaded to take over as chair of Foreign Languages and Literatures for at least a year, no more than two. He teaches one course per semester for us, but we miss him. Derek is leaving for an OCSA in Mexico in the spring, so we’re struggling to cover courses that semester. We’re getting good help from Elitza Kotzeva, a startlingly energetic and bright young Bulgarian woman, who is doing Senior Seminar, from Elaine Gray (LTS) who will teach Seminar I, and Marvin Williamsen (IDS, retired) and Holly Martin (ENG), who will teach Seminar II. Fred Castelloes is still offering Capoeira, so we’ll make it until Nancy arrives, Derek returns, and Richard finishes his chairmanship.

The important things among all these changes are that while the administrative structure of IDS has changed, the concentrations are all intact and some have been strengthened by their ability to give degrees—a BA in all

programs except Watauga and an additional BS in Sustainable Development. We no longer have a department but we do have University College (UC), where interdisciplinarity is pervasive, and the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, Dave Haney, is exceptionally supportive of what we do. Being in UC, IDS is now able to develop new concentrations and minors, and we’re charged to develop interdisciplinary discussions, research, pedagogies, assessment tools and programs across the university. On behalf of IDS, Richard and I are spending a lot of time on the new General Education program, which is much more interdisciplinary than previous versions.

We are smaller, but we have room and processes that will allow us to grow and be more affective outside our program.

Plans include developing a Peace Studies minor and we are now developing a Consortium with UNCG, NCA&T and Guilford to join the Transcend Network headed by the Grandfather of Peace Studies, Johan Galtung, from Norway. We will be teaching a course cross-listed with General Honors, and we are working on adding Associated Faculty to our three full-timers. We have a new IDS Advisory Board to help us, as all in all these are exciting and challenging times for IDS, and we need help. If you’re willing to hear from us about how you can help, please send us your email address, and we’ll let you know. Tell us the years you were in IDS, your concentration, and your graduation date.

NOTE: Even if you are registered with our Alumni Office, we can’t get your email address; we can only get it directly from you, so please help us develop an email database by sending us a short email.

Jay Wentworth



Nancy Love



An Interview with the Future Director of Interdisciplinary Studies

What are your areas of interest?

I'm a political theorist, trained in political science, with ties to philosophy and women's studies. Along with directing the Interdisciplinary Studies Program, I'll be a Professor of Government and Justice Studies at Appalachian State. I'm interested in expanding concepts of public discourse beyond debates, speeches, and votes to include artistic expression, especially music.

Tell us about your current research.

My research focuses on music and social change, specifically, how music mobilizes people for democratic and anti-democratic causes. I recently published a book that examines the role of music in progressive -- feminist and civil rights -- social movements. I'm now researching how the radical right is using skinhead music to recruit youth, fund activities, and promote violence.

What made you choose Appalachian State University?

My teaching and research have always been interdisciplinary, and I am excited about directing a program with that explicit commitment. University College also provides an innovative context for doing interdisciplinary work. Since research universities are highly specialized, it's often difficult to cross disciplinary boundaries. The conversations I had with faculty and students when I interviewed convinced me that Appalachian State is a place where interconnected knowledge really matters. I found that very compelling.

What do you see as your role as director?

I'm still learning about what the program already has from which we can build and, of course, there are many changes still in progress. I work by consensus and, right now, want to gather as much information as possible from alumni, faculty, and students. I do

expect to play a major role in recruiting new faculty, whose work is interdisciplinary, to teach in the program.

What are your hopes for the future of this program?

I agree with plans to emphasize individually-designed majors and, among current major concentrations, possibly Internet Studies and American Studies, along with the Black Studies minor. (It's too soon to say for sure about that yet.) I definitely want the program to be more than an incubator for interdisciplinary programs, though. I'd like to feature how interdisciplinarity transforms knowledge. I think we need new courses on concepts and processes that confound disciplines, for example, creativity, integration, sustainability, and intersectionality. Those are some long term goals. Short term, I'd like a speaker series with four scholars from the arts, humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences whose interdisciplinary approaches transform our understanding of a contemporary issue or problem. We've also talked making "praxis" a research design course, maybe called "metaphors, models, and math."

Is there anything else you'd like to tell students?

I'd like current and former students to know that I want to hear their ideas about the program. What has worked well and not so well for you? What would you like to see happen with the program? What are you doing now and how does it relate to what you studied? Are there ways you want to remain involved with the program after graduation? I officially join the program in July 2009, but you can contact me before then at: lovens@appstate.edu.

Quick Facts about Nancy Love

- I enjoy hiking and the outdoors, fiber arts (knitting and spinning), and music, especially choral singing.
- My undergraduate degree is from Kenyon College (1977) and I did my graduate work at Cornell University, where I earned a Ph.D. in Government in 1984.
- I taught at Swarthmore College for a year after graduate school before I came to Penn State where I am now.
- I've published four books: *Musical Democracy* (SUNY Press, 2006), *Marx, Nietzsche, and Modernity* (Columbia University Press, 1986), and a textbook and edited reader on political ideologies with CQ Press. I've written articles on critical theory, democratic theory, and feminist theory.
- I was born in Beaufort, S.C., grew up in suburban Detroit, and ever since I had a choice have lived in rural areas.
- I'm really looking forward to exploring the mountains and rivers of Boone (so are my two dogs!).

SPRING 2009 IDS CLASSES

- IDS 2533 The Art of Capoeira
MW: 4:00-5:15pm Castelloes
- IDS 3000 Histories of Knowledge
TR: 9:30-10:45am Carp
- IDS 3250 The Virtual Life: Presence, Power, & Place
MW: 5:00-6:15pm Gray
- IDS 3300 Seminar I: The Virtual Life: P,P, & P
MW: 5:00-6:15pm Gray
- IDS 3533 Intermediate Art of Capoeira
MW: 5:30-6:45pm Castelloes
- IDS 3700 Seminar II: The Making of Modern China
TR: 11:00-12:15pm Martin and Williamsen
- IDS 4550 Senior Seminar
MW: 2:00-3:15pm Kotzeva

CLASS HIGHLIGHTS

IDS 3700:

Seminar II: The Making of Modern China

The last century in Chinese history has been characterized by violent upheavals and wide-sweeping changes. From a dynasty ruled by an emperor, to a Republic that was occupied by Japanese invaders, to civil war and the formation of The People's Republic of China, the ebbs and flows of Chinese history have kept both the world and the Chinese people puzzled. Is China now a marketplace ripe for the consumption of Western products (as business and industry hope), is it a key player in maintaining worldwide peace and stability (as politicians hope), or is it a country so strongly tied to ideology that periods of openness and modernization will inevitably be followed by periods of repression? One thing is for certain. Whichever way the mood swings in China, the rest of the world will be affected. To understand modern China, we need to know the forces that have shaped her—the wars, the ideologies and the economic factors. We need to understand what politicians, writers, intellectuals, workers and other Chinese people think about their present and their future. These are the issues we will explore through historical and literary readings. We will look at the broad picture of China's recent history, but also at individuals' thoughts as portrayed in literature, letters and public documents. Textbooks include: *Selected Stories* by Lu Hsun, *Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress* by Dai Sijie, *Under the Red Flag* by Ha Jin, *Modern China* by Edwin Moise, and other readings to be determined.

IDS 3250/3300:

The Virtual Life: Presence, Power, & Place

This course provides an introduction to cyberculture and Internet studies. As the Internet continues to permeate our daily lives, it is changing our culture, our world and our individual concepts of self. This course will be an interdisciplinary exploration of the social, political, cultural, psychological, economic, educational, and legal implications of the Internet. It will also provide an opportunity for you to hone your critical thinking and media literacy skills as well as learn some of the technical skills needed to publish your own creative expressions on the Internet. This class fulfills requirements for the IDS Internet Studies major concentration and minor. There are no prerequisites.

Required Classroom Orientation January 12th 4pm -5:30 LLA 223, all other class meetings and assignments will be online.

Elitza Kotzeva's Comments on Senior Seminar and Future Classes

The IDS Senior Seminar proves once again that IDS majors are incredibly creative, imaginative, and hardworking. As it usually happens in the fall, the class is comparatively small, but its size is compensated by the vibrating energetic level of these young interdisciplinary researchers who are eager to work on their projects and get their job done as soon as possible. The electronic representation of their research makes for a good testimony to the joy these to-be-IDS-graduates experience while preparing their final portfolios. Check these out:

Leah's wiki on students' e-activism

(<http://sweatfreasu.wetpaint.com/>),

Steve's blog on Japanese artistic collaboration

(<http://shovelinaway.blogspot.com/>),

Kegan's philosophical wiki on fashion as a social skin

(<http://fashionasocialskin.wetpaint.com/>),

Chris's blog on the American sign language

(<http://helpmegrgraduate.blogspot.com/>),

and finally Ben's blog on the ethnic conflict in Georgia

(<http://bcseminar.blogspot.com/>).

Next semester, I will be teaching one of the Global core Watauga courses *Ethnicity and Transition in Eastern Europe*, which as a product of the IDS program successfully integrates components of the General education curriculum. The class aims at teaching students how to analytically process information about other cultures, make local to global connections, effectively present and defend their arguments, as well as develop basic writing skills.

In the Spring Break of 2009, I will be taking students on a service-learning trip to the Czech Republic. This will be an IDS class designed to complement the core Global Investigations course on ethnicity. Students will work at a Gypsy school in Prague, which will give them a chance to expand their understanding of the complex ethnic picture in Eastern Europe by direct exposure to the cultures of the Czech majority and the Gypsy minority. The course will focus on issues of cultural differences, tolerance and discrimination.

Student Highlights

Steve Fogleman

I came to the IDS program through Watauga College, as this experience exposed me to interdisciplinary study. My concentration revolves around Japanese literature and film. As ASU does not currently offer many classes in these areas, I have been to Japan twice to study: once during the summer after my freshman year, and again during the fall of '07. These experiences have been the highlights of the past four years. For my senior thesis, I am writing about the collaborative films of Hiroshi Teshigahara (director), Kobo Abe (novelist/screenwriter), and Toru Takemitsu (composer); the culmination of all of this research is a close-reading of their film *Woman in the Dunes*. I hope to enroll in an interdisciplinary program at the graduate level, and I still want to focus on film, literature, and cultural studies. On the side, I have been studying composition in England for the past few summers with a composer/conductor/author/organist. He is currently writing a book on British composer, Sir George Dyson, and I helped him with this research.



IDS Advisory Council

Jay Wentworth

We have added a new piece to the governance of IDS since we've become a program. We have invited interdisciplinary faculty from all over campus to serve on this Council that is helping us to develop our program across campus. The members are Richard Carp, Derek Stanovsky and Jay Wentworth from IDS, William Atkinson (ENG), Jeff Bortz (HIS), Tony Calamai (PHY), Ray Miller (T&D), Diane Mines (ANT), Howie Neufeld (BIO), Laurie Semmes (MUS), and Alan Utter (HLES). Each is now an Associated Faculty member of IDS; they can advise majors when appropriate and teach classes under our aegis.

We hope to expand the number of people beyond the Council who will be Associated Faculty in IDS so that we can expand interdisciplinary offerings, develop new programs and advise students more effectively. Our cross-disciplinary conversation has been enlightening and has allowed us to rethink the meanings of interdisciplinarity and what it means to do ID work. We full-timers are grateful to this hardy band of open thinkers for their willingness to help us in this work.

A Book About Watauga College by Jay Wentworth

Given the fact that WC (now Watauga Global Community or WGC) passed its 35th year, with many changes—break-up of the Department of IDS, the new status of Watauga as an independent program, the new name- and the fact that I'm rapidly becoming ancient, I've decided to write a book about Watauga College. The goal of the book is to analyze Watauga as an educational and social experiment, place it in the context of American education over the past fifty years, and reflect on its successes and failures so that people influenced by the (re)new(ed) emphasis on such things as Learning Communities and interdisciplinarity don't have to make our mistakes but can find ones of their own. We'd also like to give them some achievements to shoot for, so the analysis will be as balanced as possible, and will come as close to an accurate picture of the program as possible. I've found complaints from administration, faculty, and students from the beginning; these are as interesting and instructive as the many raves and successes I've found. Naturally, I'd also like to recognize and honor people who have made a difference over the years—students, staff, faculty and administrators. I've been working with grad student, Seaton Tarrant, to build a database of Watauga College students. The Alumni Affairs office has helped, but two thirds of you are

not registered with them and even if you are, we can't get your email address, so we're asking you to email Seaton (tarrentsp@appstate.edu) if you're willing to add your name, email, phone number, and address to our database. We will use your information to contact you for interviews and focus groups that we hope to put together around the state or any place a large number of alums of WC can gather. We'd like to do some interviewing next semester and during the summer. If you're willing to contact people in your area and find a place to hold a meeting, we'd deeply appreciate it and acknowledge your service in the book. If not, that's understandable, but please try to come if you're contacted since the more Wataugans we see, that more complete our picture of the program will be.

We have also worked on questionnaires for students, faculty, and administrators. We will be contacting all the people on the Alumni Affairs list, so if you hear from us, please help us by following the instructions. There will be a paper form and an on-line form. Mail should go out and we should have the questionnaire or a URL up on the Watauga web site by December 15, 2008. Thanks for your help!

Maggie McFadden to Retire



A note from Maggie McFadden

In the past few years I've been working on my early twentieth-century project on transatlantic women activists in the interwar period (1918-39)—women like Emma Goldman (of Lithuania, the U.S., the Soviet Union, and Europe), Hella Wuolijoki (playwright, entrepreneur, and diplomat of Estonia and Finland), Rosika Schwimmer (peace and suffrage activist of Hungary and the U.S.), Emily Greene Balch (peace activist and U.S. Nobel Peace Prize winner, 1946), and Ray (Rachel) Strachey and Lady Rhondda (British feminist activists and journalists). The Library of Congress is a mine of information on the international work of the American women during this period, so I've been working almost daily in the Main Reading Room and the manuscript room on the wonderful resources available.

My research project has taken a more autobiographical turn in the past year, as I insert materials from my own background as a kind of "shadow narrative." I want to be transparent as to my own position in this research and writing project, why I choose the subjects I do, what there is in my own background and that of my parents to turn me toward peace, justice, and feminist issues. Thus, I've also worked in the archives at Purdue University, where my parents were directors of the Wesley Foundation there in the 1930s. My father was a life-long pacifist and conscientious objector and also worked on early civil rights issues. My mother founded the first women's co-operative house at Purdue, and, by inviting an African American female to be a part of that community, succeeded in racially integrating on-campus housing in West Lafayette, Indiana (at the time, a "white" or "sundown" community).

My own beginnings as a feminist started early in life with my high school work in the 1950s at the Carnegie Public Library in Monte Vista, Colorado, where a proto-feminist community of librarian and female assistants discussed books and women's issues endlessly. By the time I was doing Ph.D. work at Emory University in Atlanta and teaching young black women at Spelman College (and teaching the first Black Lit course there), the Second Wave of the women's movement had begun.

My first activist issue was a protest over the female quota system for graduate fellowships at Emory University—women students were considered less serious about their work and therefore less deserving of financial help. In 1973 I taught my first Women's Studies course at the University of Maryland's overseas campus on Ramstein Air Base in Germany. It was a heady time, as we bought the first issue of *MS Magazine* at the Stars and Stripes Bookstore on base, read Kate Millett's *Sexual Politics*, Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook*, and Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*.

When I was hired at Appalachian in 1975, it was definitely time to begin a Women's Studies program here; we had a core of committed faculty in several departments, several (in English, History, Sociology, and Anthropology) already teaching gender-based courses; both students and faculty were enthusiastic. After Bennett College in Greensboro, our program is the second oldest in the state of North Carolina, pre-dating Duke and Chapel Hill by nearly a decade. We started as a loose collection of courses, but within two years we had a minor, and then a major concentration in Women's Studies, as a part of Interdisciplinary Studies. Now we have also a graduate certificate (minor) in Women's Studies that is proving very popular for Master's Candidates in English, history, political science, Appalachian Studies, counseling, and music.

While at Appalachian I've taught and researched in transatlantic women's history, publishing my first book, *Golden Cables of Sympathy: The Transatlantic Sources of Nineteenth-Century Feminism* (Univ. Press of Kentucky, 1999); feminist theories; feminist film studies; gendered food studies—and have shepherded several generations of students through our programs.

After more than forty years of teaching (my first job was at Northern Michigan University), it's now time to retire—I've made the decision to go on to other work as of June 09. I want to finish this book on transatlantic women activists; I want to go back to Finland, where I am an official Docent (guest lecturer); I want to travel more (perhaps India). I may teach an occasional course at Appalachian and will certainly be in Boone for at least a few years. I'm now the president of the regional Women's Studies Association, and SEWSA's conference, on "Women and Environments: The Feminism of Ecology and the Ecology of Feminism" will be held at Appalachian April 2-4, 2009. I'm also the treasurer of Boone's new chapter of Slow Food, which hosts many local food events. Over the years, I've taught in Watauga College in several different core curricula, and in the departments of History, Interdisciplinary Studies, and Appalachian Studies. Please keep in touch, especially via e-mail. I would love to hear what everyone out there is doing. And if you're in Boone, maybe we can have coffee or lunch together.