



NARRATING THE HUMAN FOOTPRINT

Gulf Coast Intercollegiate Consortium
ACADEMIC SYMPOSIUM 2018

Friday, April 20 ♦ 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. ♦ LRC-131



WELCOME to College of the Mainland's sixth annual Gulf Coast Intercollegiate Consortium Academic Symposium!

Professor Dalel Serda

GCIC Academic Symposium Chair

Professor Dalel Serda works to offer students opportunities to engage in inquiry-driven undergraduate research that



contributes to ongoing, cross-disciplinary conversations. She is a proponent of helping students gain habits of mind that foster self-regulation both inside and outside the college classroom. She hopes providing students a platform like today's symposium will help them gain the authority and knowhow necessary to pursue long-term learning and civic engagement.

The theme, "**Narrating the Human Footprint**," asks us to look at the threads in our common human history that bind and distinguish us. It asks us to look at our human impact on our natural and manmade environment, on our community, region, economy, politics, art, artifacts, children, parents, neighbors and technology. It asks us to read, interpret and tell our human story from as many perspectives as possible. It asks us to look far into our history, to look critically at our present, to look boldly into the future and ask who have we been? What are we now? When did we become? Where will we be? And why are we? This year's theme is broad and lends itself to cross-disciplinary examination, which is the driving force of our academic symposium. Today's student scholar presenters promise to surprise us with their take on the theme. We invite you to peruse the presentation schedule and choose sessions that best suit your interests. When in sessions, we ask that you engage actively with student presenters during Q&A. The aim is for them to grow as scholars during this experience and for their work to enrich the day's conversation concerning the theme.

Our hope for this symposium is that it serves multiple goals including enhancing students' communication skills, facilitating networking across the disciplines and colleges and helping students build self-confidence and feel ownership of their work.

Enjoy yourself and thank you for supporting student scholarships.

Sincerely,

Dalel Serda, Professor of English
Gulf Coast Intercollegiate Consortium
Academic Symposium Chair

9:00am - 9:25am

Overview of Day's Events:

Dalel Serda, Associate Professor of English, GCIC Academic Symposium Chair

LRC 131

9:30am - 10:30am

Session 1A: Human Aesthetics

"Beauty"

Fatima Salahuddin, College of the Mainland | Advisor: Professor Dalel Serda

"The Effects of Applying Heat, Dye, and Keratin"

Daniela Gonzalez, College of the Mainland | Advisor: Professor Jennifer Bieszke

"Act Like a 'Lady': The Consequences of Gender Roles"

Trekaria D. James, College of the Mainland | Advisor: Professor Dalel Serda

LRC 255

9:30am - 10:30am

Session 1B: Time and its Impact on Ethical and Linguistic Frameworks

"Healthcare in Despair: Bridging the Gap Between Medical Administrators and Practitioners"

Morell Jenkins, College of the Mainland | Advisor: Professor Stacey Burleson

"Language: Its Progression and Impact Through Time"

Maizie Fernandes, College of the Mainland | Advisor: Professor Stacey Burleson

"Finding One's Mind in the Cave: Clifford Beers' Struggle for Personal and Social Enlightenment"

Maria Gelves, Lee College | Advisor: Professor Georgeann Ward

LRC 213

9:30am - 10:30am

Session 1C: Humans and Nature

"Prairies and Industry: The Ecological History of the Galveston Bay Area"

Emily Blumentritt, Lee College | Advisor: Professor Georgeann Ward

"Agent Orange in Vietnam: The Danger of Ignorance and the Harmful Effects of a Negligent Government"

Samantha Wylie, College of the Mainland | Advisor: Professor Patricia Ovesny

"Climate Change Through the Eyes of a Photographer"

Alyssa Taylor, College of the Mainland | Advisor: Professor Kristy Peet

LRC 257

10:40am - 11:40am	<p>Session 2A: Being “Educated”</p> <p>“High-Skilled Versus Low-Skilled: The Perception of Immigrants Based on Skill Composition” Maizie Fernandes, College of the Mainland Advisor: Professor Shinya Wakao</p> <p>“Gifted Education: The Label” Morgan Turley, Clear Falls High School Advisor: Professor Elaine Childs</p>	LRC 255
10:40am - 11:40am	<p>Session 2B: Developing the Self</p> <p>“A Self-Narrative of the Human Footprint: The Evolution of the Selfie” Madeline Meylor, Brazosport College Advisor: Professor Carrie Pritchett</p> <p>“Nick Adams: A Lost Soul Through Nature” Hannie Granados, Lee College Advisor: Professor Georgeann Ward</p> <p>“Emotion Through Music” Jacob Porter, Dickinson Continuation Center Advisor: Ms. Katie Daley</p>	LRC 213
10:40am - 11:40am	<p>Session 2C: The Social Construction of Relationships</p> <p>“The Narrative of Marriage: The Story of the Idea” Hayley Salazar, College of the Mainland Advisor: Professor Brian Anderson</p> <p>“An Unfiltered Glance of Arab Women’s Experiences in Arranged Marriages” Fatimah Beydoun, College of the Mainland Advisor: Professor Dale Serda</p> <p>“Hulga’s Emasculation: Repurposing Gender in O’Connor’s ‘Good Country People’” Amy Waltz-Reasonover, Lee College Advisor: Professor Georgeann Ward</p>	LRC 257
11:50am - 12:45pm	<p>Lunch & Speaker: Dr. Elaine Childs, Associate Professor of English, College of the Mainland</p> <p>“The Language of Memes”</p>	LRC 131
1:00pm - 2:00pm	<p>Session 3A: Mapping Mortality’s Footprint</p> <p>“Cotton Mather: Narrating the Salem Witch Trials” Steve Cervantez, College of the Mainland Advisor: Professor Brian Anderson</p> <p>“Memento Mori” Michele Chapman, College of the Mainland Advisor: Professor Mark Greenwalt</p> <p>“Giving Reason to Our Past” Isis Rendon, College of the Mainland Advisor: Professor Dale Serda</p>	LRC 255
1:00pm - 2:00pm	<p>Session 3B: Creative Writers’ Response to “Narrating the Human Footprint”</p> <p>Participants: Julia Adcock-Scheafnocker, Fatimah Beydoun, Maizie Fernandes, Trekaria D. James, Nichole Kimbark, Alyssa Maldonado, Robert Marquez, Fatima Salahuddin, Cade Soslby-Monroy, College of the Mainland Advisor: Professor Dale Serda</p>	LRC 213
1:00pm - 2:00pm	<p>Session 3C: (Re)Imagining Human Boundaries</p> <p>“Crippling Conventional Notions” Dinah Lemonier, Lee College Advisor: Professor Jerald Hamby</p> <p>“Isaac Asimov and the Future of the Human Footprint on Space and Technology” Bryce Fitzgerald, Brazosport College Advisor: Professor Carrie Pritchett</p> <p>“The Truth of Triteness and the Virtue of the Self” Cody Grace, College of the Mainland Advisor: Professor Stacey Burleson</p>	LRC 257
1:00pm - 2:00pm	<p>Session 3D: Narrating Guns in America</p> <p>“School Terrorism Threats” Solomon Roady, College of the Mainland Advisor: Professor R.E. Davis</p> <p>“Gun Control Impacting America” Karen Camero, Clear Falls High School Advisor: Professor Elaine Childs</p>	LRC 212B
2:10pm - 2:50pm	<p>Session 4A: College of the Mainland’s Debate Team Roundtable Discussion</p> <p>“Narrating Our Contemporary Human Footprint: A State of the Union”</p> <p>Participants: Adrian Caraves, Maizie Fernandes, John Herrington, and Cade Soslby-Monroy, College of the Mainland Advisor: Professor Joseph Willis</p>	LRC 131
3:00pm - 3:45pm	<p>Keynote Talk and Q & A:</p> <p>Dr. Nicholas Castle, Geologist, Lunar and Planetary Institute in Houston</p> <p>“Science and the Art of Storytelling”</p>	LRC 131
3:45pm - 4:00pm	<p>Awards and Wrap-Up</p>	LRC 131

Note: Coffee, water and snacks will be available in LRC 258.

STUDENT PRESENTATION ABSTRACTS

In order of scheduled presentation; please see presentation schedule.

Fatima Salahuddin, College of the Mainland: "Beauty"

This prose poem is about African Americans who seek a way back home, a way back to what their ancestors were and where they originated. I want to expose the yearning that some African Americans have when they look upon someone like me, for example, that triggers a familiarity within them. The Africans that the Europeans brought here were predominately Fallatah (Fola) and Muslim. When they were brought here the slave masters stripped them from their religion and forced another onto them which was Christianity. Then they took away their language which was predominately Arabic and with that went away their culture and so forth. Thus, my intention in this piece is to show that after many generations, African Americans are still trying to rediscover their origins and to accept their ancestors from which they originated and the beauty that lies within their ancestral history before being enslaved.

Daniela Gonzalez, College of the Mainland: "The Effects of Applying Heat, Dye, and Keratin"

We as humans tell stories. Sometimes we use words, or body language, and other times we let our appearances do the talking. Our hair illustrates and conveys our genetic makeup and ethnic story. Our hair is the way it is because our ancestors passed on their genes to us. These genes included hair properties for color, strength, texture, and shape. In addition, the combination of these hair properties can be linked to ethics characteristics. In other words, we are able to narrate our personal human genome or genetics, which includes our culture and heritage. Everyone has an identity, including myself, hair being a valuable feature to our story. My hair is dark brown, it's wavy, and thick, it characterizes me. It tells others I'm from Hispanic descent, and by doing so it helps shape my identity. Now we live in the modern age, how does our modern day cosmetic routines affect our hair now? We no longer spend all of our days outside, we are instead inside. Meaning that our hair is not exposed to the same conditions, but perhaps instead heat, dye, and keratin treatments. The objective of my project is to determine how everyday hair routines affect my hair. I want to know if the hair that I have inherited is suitable for the modern day hair preparation routines that I have not tried. I have formalized that applying heat and dye weakens tensile strength of my own hair and applying keratin treatments improve tensile strength of my hair. In the future, I hope to compare my results to donated hair from my fellow classmates of different ethnicities to see which ethnicity has the best hair before and after the different treatment methods.

Trekaria D. James, College of the Mainland: "Act Like a 'Lady': The Consequences of Gender Roles"

At birth there is a respective sex identification given to babies and written on their birth certificate. Nowhere on a birth certificate does it list rules for the sexes by which a baby should live. It is only as a child grows in age, they recognize and mimic the norms of the adults around them. With the help of parents and society, we are obedient to these unwritten rules and impose them on the incoming generation. Due to the flawed norms, there is an outcry of confusion, jadedness, displeasure which festers to the point of exasperation and radicalness. There is an issue regarding what certain genders (particularly women) should look, think and act like. Ranging from the colors we should wear all the way to how to sit "like a lady," there are regulations restricting us from embracing our conflicting ideas. There are mentally crippling effects that infringe on the actions of genders. My poetry will highlight the overworked stigmas that go along with being a female—and a black female at that. I strive to deconstruct the set label of gender roles.

Morell Jenkins, College of the Mainland: "Healthcare in Despair: Bridging the Gap Between Medical Administrators and Practitioners"

This presentation is an extension of the in-class assignment called "What's Good on TV?" which analyzes ethical dilemmas in certain television scenes. Instead of focusing on a single scene, I focused on entire season of Night Shift, a medical drama set in San Antonio, Texas. I examine the series as a whole and the ethical and practicing issues therein. To recognize the disconnection between the way healthcare providers practice and the policies implemented by the administration, there needs to be an understanding of the way providers think about patient care and how administrators prioritize. I also will discuss why healthcare administrators sometimes have to compromise their own moral and ethical beliefs in order to provide the best outcome for their medical institution. In my presentation, I will suggest that providers must understand that because of this it is hard to see the value of one patient over the rest that will be denied the same care. By using this television drama it is easier to take real world practices and dissect them in order to find the root cause for the gap and lack of mutual understanding of both sides in order to find the safest and most morally sound solution. I consider the question of since health care providers are bound by oath to provide medical care no matter what happens, are they in turn not entitled to be paid for their services no matter what happens?

Maizie Fernandes, College of the Mainland: "Language: Its Progression and Impact Through Time"

From daily conversations to the spread of Christianity, language plays a critical role in the formation of societies and cultures. Not only does language help us convey our thoughts and ideas, it also helps us forge connections with others. Ostensibly, language is very closely related to thought—it determines our perception of reality. The influence of language in our day-to-day lives and society led me to question the progression of language throughout time.

This study examines the evolution of language from Ancient Greece and Rome to the status quo. Language gradually evolves over time—sometimes due to changes in culture, trade, globalization, interactions with other languages, etc. Throughout time, language has signified status, education level and many other aspects of people's human identity. With countless languages in existence today, does language still play a critical role in defining people's social and personal identity? Does perception of language differ from culture to culture? What impact does culture have on language progression? Does the way people speak affect their social standing? Ultimately, I aspire to highlight the effects of linguistic changes.

Maria Gelves, Lee College: "Finding One's Mind in the Cave: Clifford Beers' Struggle for Personal and Social Enlightenment"

The mental health system has had a history of abuse that has gone unrecognized by society. These poor "treatments" of the insane have been a result of a negative social stigma placed on the mentally ill. One of the survivors of this vicious system, Clifford W. Beers, explores the many inhumane methods of mental institutions in the early 1900s through his autobiography, *A Mind that Found Itself*. After being diagnosed with paranoia and depression, Beers recounts the abuse he experienced in mental care facilities and how he journeyed to regain sanity in order to bring attention to the sufferings of his fellow inmates. Beers states that it is essential to "change the attitude of the public towards those who are unfortunate enough to have the stigma of mental incompetency put upon them". This theme parallels Plato's "The Allegory of the Cave," which addresses the process of determining what is real through transitioning from what we think is real to what is real. Through Plato and Beers' story, this presentation explores the process of Beers' enlightenment from an unstable mind to reality and gain a better understanding of how one must take off the chains of stigma and ascend into a reality where one can help those who are incapable of having a say in humanity.

Emily Blumentritt, Lee College: "Prairies and Industry: The Ecological History of the Galveston Bay Area"

The upper Galveston Bay area—including Clear Lake, Pasadena and Baytown—has a rich ecological history featuring unique coastal prairie and riparian woodland ecosystems. However, the history of Galveston Bay also includes a rich history of industry and human exploration. Although only 1% of the coastal prairie remains, a Baytown poet in the late 1800s described prairie shining "golden-green for miles," (Sjolander, "Cedar Bayou"), and early Spanish explorers such as Bernardo Miranda wrote of "a plain so large that the end cannot be seen" (Baytown Historical Museum). Yet the history of the environment often fades into the shadow of industry and economy, an environmental history superseded by a conventional historical focus on oil refineries, industrial innovations and wealthy Houston-area tycoons like James Marion West, Ross Sterling and M.D. Anderson. Yet the wealth and power of these businessmen came from the natural environmental via ranching, timber, oil and cotton industries. Economic booms and busts and political power plays throughout history have greatly impacted and altered the local environment. Through my research and rhetorical analysis, I explore how environmental narratives have been marginalized and how a unique ecological history and cultural heritage are being lost. My research examines both the human and environmental stories that shaped the area through sources that include historical journals, newspapers, legal documents and cultural items. By studying the environmental history of the Galveston Bay area before and after a historical period of rapid economic growth, one gains insight into how urban development today affects the environment and may impact the future.

Samantha Wylie, College of the Mainland "Agent Orange in Vietnam: The Danger of Ignorance and the Harmful Effects of a Negligent Government"

Agent Orange was the most frequently used tactical herbicide during the Vietnam War; it contains the highly toxic chemical dioxin that causes negative health effects in humans and animals. The use of this herbicide has brought much controversy because U.S. soldiers were heavily exposed to this dangerous chemical. Dow Chemical, the manufacturer of Agent Orange, knew how dangerous the chemical was but they continued to manufacture and sell it. It has been proven that the U.S. government was also aware of the dangers of Agent Orange but they still used it without warning the military about the dangers that it posed or telling them what it was. Because of the manufacturer's and the government's negligence and lack of consideration for the soldiers when using Agent Orange, the veterans became ill, so when they returned from the war, the Veterans Administration refused to help them at first, but in the end the veterans did receive some aid. Although they did not receive all the compensation that they deserved for being exposed to the toxic chemical. When the veterans began to seek out help from the government, the Veterans Administration continued to neglect them. Vietnamese soldiers, civilians, United States veterans and children of the people exposed still have not fully recovered from the negative health effects caused by Agent Orange and the negative effects can live on for generations to come. If it were not for the manufacturer's and the government's negligence and lack of consideration for the soldiers when using Agent Orange, the veterans would have still been healthy.

Alyssa Taylor, College of the Mainland: "Climate Change Through the Eyes of a Photographer"

There is an overwhelmingly large amount of trash on this planet. All of the plastic that has ever been created is still here in the form of plastic. There are several photographers that specialize in capturing images of the areas of Earth that have been affected most by climate change and the effects of trash in nature from thousand-year-old glaciers melting, to trash piles in landfills. Following a glacier in Iceland and how exponentially faster it is receding and the trash gyre in the Pacific are just some pieces of evidence showing the impact humans have had on the environment. These pictures lend an eye to the future of our planet and what we will have in store for us if we do not fix how we handle waste and pollution.

Maizie Fernandes, College of the Mainland: "High-Skilled Versus Low-Skilled: The Perception of Immigrants Based on Skill Composition"

The goal of this research project is to understand the attitudes of U.S. citizens toward immigrants. In practice, I examine the perception of immigrants with varying degrees of skill sets in the U.S. In the United States, immigration is a deep-rooted political, economic and social issue that has been a frequent cause of dissension among Americans. For example, Burns and Gimpel (2000) find that the main rationale for anti-immigrant sentiments is economic rather than blatantly racist or nativist. People develop prejudicial stereotypes as a result of self-interested calculations based on one's economic stance. Previous studies, however, have yet to examine attitudes toward immigration policy about high-skilled workers with advanced degrees (often) in science, technology, engineering or medicine.

Does skill level of immigrants affect public opinion? Does skill composition affect the number of immigrants that natives are willing to allow into the country? Since immigration is often a common topic of discussion in the status quo, it is necessary to delve deeper into these questions. With more immigrants entering the U.S. than ever in hopes of a better future, it is especially critical to find answers to these questions and further explore this issue.

Morgan Turley, Clear Falls High School: "Gifted Education: The Label"

This paper considers the necessity of the gifted and talented (GT) program for elementary students. It examines the GT label for elementary students and comes to the conclusion that students should not be labeled as gifted and talented. This is due to the fact that the label is coupled with a stigma of superiority and equality cannot truly be found when students are labeled as more intelligent than other students. Instead, differentiation should be implemented in the classroom. Differentiation allows all students to be given similar opportunities to further their learning on their specific level. This helps make sure that all students are being challenged where they are, thus bringing a more positive attitude towards learning and education. The paper uses evidence from scholars such as Neihart (2006), that explain the downfalls and struggles that GT students may face as a result of being labeled. This project links to the theme of "Narrating the Human Footprint" because it highlights a part of the educational process that must be debated to explore the best method of teaching our children. It touches on the ethical dilemma in creating specialized classes and defends the reasoning that other methods can be substituted in place of the GT program.

Madeline Meylor, Brazosport College: "A Self-Narrative of the Human Footprint: The Evolution of the Selfie"

In the twenty-first century, technology has evolved such that everyone has the ability to create art at the touch of a fingertip. Through the innovation that technology provides many people now have easy access to the creation of art in a matter of seconds. This concept of "quick" art includes drawing, graphic design, music and other forms of expression. This kind of art also includes one of the most popular forms of self-expression and art in existence: selfies. Selfies are viewed as silly, narcissistic, fun and expressive, but they are rarely labeled as true "art." However, the selfie is merely an extension of the self-portrait that great artists have created since ancient times. Artists such as Van Gogh, Rembrandt, Michelangelo and others painted self-portraits, or drew themselves into their art. This left a human footprint that allows the viewer to see them as they saw themselves. The selfie, likewise, is a form of art and self-expression. From snapshots by the Eiffel Tower to silly photos with filters, it also has the same purpose of the great artists. People want to be remembered and that is human nature. This presentation will explore the history of the self-portrait and its evolution into the selfie. Through the study of art and psychology, it explains how the self-portrait and the selfie both art forms are worthy of appreciation and preservation.

Hannie Granados, Lee College: "Nick Adams: A Lost Soul Through Nature"

Ernest Hemingway's "The Big Two-Hearted River," a two-part story, follows a veteran who returns to his hometown in hopes of finding himself. A main theme in the story is the idea that people can identify with and find themselves through nature. Detachment from society is another theme as Nick struggles to rejoin society after his return from war. He is eager to pick up his old life, so he ventures into the woods for a fishing trip, where his only companions are elements of the outdoors. This theme follows Dobrin's idea, in "Writing Takes Place," that people are influenced by "relationships: between individual writers and their surrounding environments, between writers and texts, between texts and culture, between ideology and discourse, and between language and the world". The readers see through Nick's journey the struggle of a lost individual who uses his surroundings to connect to a side of himself that has been lost. Through his interaction with nature Nick acquires valuable information missing in his life. The human footprint he once left in the woods he frequently visited served as a key to the identity he locked away before departing.

Jacob Porter, Dickinson Continuation Center: "Emotion Through Music"

There are a lot of ways people express different emotions, such as crying, laughing or even just yelling at the top of your lungs in anger. No matter how we do it, we eventually show our emotions but what if we had hidden emotion? Ones we did not even know we had? What if they are pent up inside begging to be let out? In this presentation, I suggest we all do: I call it musical emotion. I first found out about these when I picked up my first instrument, the trumpet. When I was in the sixth grade band and we had just been taught the basics and with this new skill I learned I went home and started playing every song I knew. It was amazing, as if a new part of me was born that day and I did not want that feeling to end. I sought more ways to generate this feeling and ended up with another instrument, the guitar. This was not in the school band, so I was free to express myself like never before. Later, I added the piano and it helped me tap into dramatically different feelings. That was when I found out that I truly could express my deepest emotions through and because of music. When I found this information I realized that humans have expressed themselves with music since the Egyptians and that this is why there is music in our human footprint.

Hayley Salazar, College of the Mainland: "The Narrative of Marriage: The Story of the Idea"

When thinking about the narrative of us, I consider the story of marriage. It is through storytelling passed down from older generations that we find out who we are. Storytelling affects our ideas of marriage—I say idea because it is just that: an idea. We grow up hearing stories and seeing what we consider to be "ideal" images of marriage and we learn that good relations should be long-term and within married couples. We learn to see marriage as the key. Yet today with society and cultures changing as much as they are, ideas about marriage also are changing. Because of the stories by authors like Yasmine Galenor and singers like The Battles, our morals are ever changing and with them our ideas about family structures. With all the changes that are ongoing, it is no wonder that traditional ideas of marriage have gotten lost. I hope to examine marriage closely and help tell the story of how we got to our modern-day ideas concerning marriage.

Fatimah Beydoun, College of the Mainland: "An Unfiltered Glimpse of Arab Women's Experiences in Arranged Marriages"

Literary art is a way in which the writer can explore and express values and beliefs pertaining to where they stand in life. Many people choose to become part of then build a family to satisfy the commanding need of purpose. The piece presented will provide some exposure on the Middle Eastern cultural perspective of arranged marriages. To be more precise the piece will highlight the feelings and actions of Arab women who have accepted the process of arranged marriages expressively. This will be achieved through performing a live reading of a creative non-fiction tale from a narrative standpoint. The scope of the work questions whether it is necessary to have an element of romance in a successful marriage. The dominant view that reassures an outcome of content to those looking into arranged marriages is that one can always learn to love their partner. In specific sub cultures of Middle East, it is argued that the core value in having marital prosperity is sharing and upholding the same morals and ethics upon which the couple will raise their children. The piece is expected to display a raw picture of the experiences, doubts, success and overall emotional effects of arranged marriages.

Amy Waltz-Reasonover, Lee College: "Hulga's Emasculation: Repurposing Gender in O'Connor's 'Good Country People'"

In the decades following World War II, the field of prosthetics made monumental strides aimed primarily at returning men and women to gender normative roles. During these years, Jess Libow says, "the value of prosthesis lay in their capacity to achieve fantasies of gender and productivity". Prosthesis existed to allow men who were missing limbs the ability to perform seemingly masculine work and women who were missing limbs the ability to perform domestically. It was during this time that Flannery O'Connor lived and wrote her often confrontational works challenging both stereotypes of disability and gender. As language and understanding regarding gender and gender roles evolve, O'Connor's characters take on lives of their own and readers narrate the human footprint from a contemporary perspective. Such is the case with Hulga, the main character from O'Connor's "Good Country People," who, when viewed with a modern understanding of gender can be seen as sharing characteristics with gender non-binary populations or transgender men.

This paper will explore how Hulga's masculinity, embodied in her prosthetic leg functions as a mask to conceal her vulnerabilities similar to William Pollack's "mask of masculinity" described in his work *Real Boys: Rescuing Our Sons from the Myths of Boyhood*. In unstrapping her mask, Hulga ultimately exposes her vulnerabilities, allowing herself to be emasculated and male gender code is reinforced. Using Pollack's work as an analytical lens, Hulga can be seen as a character struggling with the female body and identity that has been given to her while trying desperately to live within the bounds of a masculine personality.

Steve Cervantez, College of the Mainland: "Cotton Mather: Narrating the Salem Witch Trials"

Religious dogmatism, local disputes, anxiety and psychological distress all contributed to the atmosphere surrounding the infamous Salem witch trials. In 1692 all of these factors helped to fuel the most significant episode of mass hysteria and witchcraft accusations in colonial American history. Cotton Mather, remembered today for narrating these witchcraft trials in his *The Wonders of the Invisible World* (1693), contributed to the hysteria and misperceptions about these events throughout Salem and beyond. Mather wrote about these trials with inconceivably biased language choices, using words like "rampant hag" and "Queen of Hell" to describe the accused. Besides *The Wonders of the Invisible World*, which includes *The Trial of Martha Carrier*, Mather wrote earlier works such as *Memorable Providences* that reveal a previous mindset regarding his perceptions of the reality of witchcraft. Throughout all of these texts, Mather creates a perilous narrative through his language and structural writing choices. Mather purports to neutrality about the trials but his writings say otherwise. Besides labels like "rampant hag," Mather uses detailed language to describe the injuries to alleged victims, creating pathos from his intense and vivid language. Mather, a man of importance and influence, tells this story from his own Puritan, restricted perspective. As his account shows, use of language can shape our stories, history, debates and political context. As this analysis and presentation will demonstrate, while eyewitness testimony is notoriously unreliable, the Salem trials still depended on such testimony as well as other-less-than-concrete evidence. The narratives of those involved with or serving as witness to events can continue to shape supposed knowledge of conflicts and provides the footprint for others to follow as they read and consider history. The impact of Mather's writings serves as an example of how one man's narrative and language choices can influence public opinion and continue to shape how events are perceived throughout history.

Michele Chapman, College of the Mainland: "Memento Mori"

"Fighting death is what keeps us alive." (The Good Doctor, TV series, David Shore, 2017 - present)

Death is a part of the human fabric which connects us over many cultures and ways of life. Death is not a new concept. Death exceeds the boundaries implemented by all cultures as no one can escape it. Death is always there, whether unplanned or natural. Artists from all walks of life have depicted death in many ways over centuries. Creative minds have incorporated death into paintings, sculptures, literature and music since the beginning of time. These depictions show death as an accepted fate, as a warrior's triumph, a lesson in choices or as a reminder to live.

By looking into our past and tracing the lines of death in art, we can see the symbolism and origins of death in our human culture and how death connects us. We can examine how the depiction of death in art has traveled throughout time and how it has affected the way we treat death personally and socially. We also can view the culture of death in art in the present and how it may affect our future understanding in what it actually means to live.

Isis Rendon, College of the Mainland: "Giving Reason to Our Past"

The ability to remember our past and apply what we've learned from it to our future actions is said to be "a hugely advantageous attribute in our survival and development as a species" (*The Human Memory*). Society in general has a collective memory, one that desires to preserve the events of our past because of their benefit to our future. But, just like we share a collective memory, we also take part in a collective forgetting, one that greatly contributes to the repetitiveness of history and which allows a forgetting of those suffering in our present. The Holocaust is one of the most memorable acts of genocide in our history though it is not the only one, yet our forgetfulness and in-difference prevents their recollection. And like the many forms of genocides that have and continue to exist, slavery, racism, discrimination and wars remain in our present as well. Why? Because we forget the past, one which has left behind footprints aimed at guiding us and showing us where we've been and ways we can avoid similar undesirable paths. The footprints of our past are erased when we forget it and deem it irrelevant. When we fail to learn from the mistakes of our past we allow a continuation of past holocausts and the lives of past victims to become simply casualties of war. In "Giving Reason to Our Past," I strive to express how by maintaining the memory of the past and by choosing to learn from it, we might avoid the same mistakes, injustices and sufferings that have already happened in our history from occurring again in our present and in our future. In sum, I hope to call to mind the realization that we must change the purpose behind the deaths of past victims by remembering them and preventing their sufferings from being repeated.

Dinah Lemonier, Lee College: "Crippling Conventional Notions"

Society's moral ambiguity has always caused decision-making to be a conflicting matter. In Martin Scorsese's film *Silence*, viewers see two Portuguese Jesuit priests who are morally challenged as they travel to a country that forbade Christianity: seventeenth century Japan. The two priests go to rescue a fellow priest who was captured, brutally forced to apostatize his faith and live a Buddhist life. As the two priests, Rodrigues and Garupe, reach their destination, they soon encounter "Japanese Christians." These converts lie in secret because they fear the policy enforcers who roam Japan and will eventually torture and kill them unless they apostatize their faith. Because of the Christian activities taking place in Japan, the Japanese enforcers discover the two priests and taunt them into apostasy by detaining and killing many Japanese Christians. Rodrigues, harrowed by the dilemma, begins to "fight against" God's apparent absence of voice (*Silence*), causing him to take the issue into his own hands and act solely on the trite notions of which he has been taught. This paper uses sources that show how the process of learning new ways and enlightening ideas is difficult to conquer while trying to give up the mainstream ideas of the past. The sources further augment the argument that individuals, such as Rodrigues, in uncontrollable situations often subscribe to mainstream thinking, subscribing to the micro-level perspective. More closely, this paper examines how close-mindedness is still a continuous issue of human nature that people today must conquer in order to move into a brighter future. Through Plato's "The Allegory of the Cave," viewers of the film gain a greater understanding of how *Silence* argues that in times of distress, humans close-mindedly resort to shadows and illusions of conventional notions and subscribe to the micro-level perspective of affairs.

Bryce Fitzgerald, Brazosport College: "Isaac Asimov and the Future of the Human Footprint on Space and Technology"

Isaac Asimov was one of the most prolific scientific and literary authors in history with a body of over five hundred pieces of literature to his credit. This presentation is focused on Asimov's contributions to the literary world and its effect on humanity and the scientific community. While providing information on how Asimov became one of the most important minds of the twentieth century, there is also an in-depth analysis of his literary works and their effects on the scientific community. Asimov's writings shaped the way humanity perceives and uses technology in the modern world, and it has become a predictor of the power of the human footprint to move into the future with technology, artificial intelligence and possible colonization of other areas of space. One such example is a technological singularity known as "Galaxia" that was developed in one of his novels. He had the ability to create worlds that inspire feelings of wonder and sublimity, while at the same time guiding the reader toward a rational and scientific explanation of events and ideas in his works. For this reason, his literary works have become popular with the general public even with the addition of advanced scientific concepts. He could write for the public and specific science communities, which is a rare talent. This presentation not only discusses humanity's technological footprint in the present, but it may also give insight to its future.

Cody Grace, College of the Mainland: "The Truth of Triteness and the Virtue of the Self"

Philosophy is a tool used by humans to grasp at existential concepts and come to terms with the harshness of the reality we inhabit, since humans began to use this tool it has bestowed upon us the truths and falsities of the human condition within the cosmos. One of these truths happens to be the scale of existence and from that knowledge dawned nihilistic understanding. A revelation of perspective is one that focuses on our footprint and how it is without impact when compared to the macrocosm of the universe. A solution can be proposed however, one that is heavily inspired by the works of German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche. Nietzsche proposed ethical egoism as a solution to the increasingly nihilistic world view that occupied the minds of his time. This piece will advocate heavily for the said ethical proposal and elaborate on the positives of the inference of self when attempting to shift focus from the macrocosm to the microcosm. Instead of primary relevance being to that of stars and galaxies one may begin to truly find meaning and motivation through relating things to themselves first.

Solomon Roady, College of the Mainland: "School Terrorism Threats"

School threats are a serious and surprisingly common issue that the population is woefully ignorant of. There has been a dramatic increase in terror threats in the past 20 years. This increasingly common issue negatively impacts students and citizens alike. Schools are being locked down, children are being traumatized and families are terrified. The people behind these threats are typically students and their motivation varies wildly. Some students want to be immortalized in history, others simply have a troubled upbringing and lack support from their family; no two cases are the same. There has been a flood of school terror threats in the short weeks since the shooting at Parkland Florida high school. These copycat threats have been occurring all across the country, even in our local school districts. Less than a month after the Florida attack both Santa Fe and Clear Lake high schools fell victim to terror attack scares. Students all across the county have been staging walkouts and protesting against our current gun control laws. The news coverage over the attacks and protests have focused on gun control as the only way to stop this plague of terror in our country. This has been the argument for decades and yet terror is on the rise. We will be investigating more direct methods of conquering this issue from inside our education system. There are simple but significant steps our country can take to reduce terror in our community.

Karen Camero, Clear Falls High School: "Gun Control Impacting America"

This paper focuses on how guns are impacting society and what should be done to help prevent future gun-related deaths. With an average of 96 people dying a day from gun related incidents, it is time to find a way to add limitations to how guns are obtained. With an attempt made in 1994 with the Federal Assault Weapons Ban, results proved it effective, but there was not enough attention brought to it, causing it to not be renewed in 2004. The ultimate goal is to limit who can purchase guns by implementing a plan that would require an intensive course, similar to the one required to get a driver's license, before someone could go out and purchase a gun. With the blame usually falling on the mentally ill, the facts go to show that they are merely responsible for 3-5% of all crimes committed. In reality, the blame should fall on people who are prone to violence and have a history to show it. A thorough background check before the purchase of the guns would be responsible for making sure that people with a violent past are not able to make the purchase. Shootings in America are a problem and sitting idly by is no longer an option.

GUEST SPEAKERS AND ABSTRACTS

**Dr. Nicholas Castle**

Keynote Speaker

Dr. Nicholas Castle graduated with a BS in geology from Lehigh University in 2004 before becoming an environmental consultant. After working for a few years in assessment and remediation, he decided to pursue a life-long dream of working for NASA and applied for graduate school. He initially earned a MS from the University of Washington in 2012 before heading to the University of Alberta to finish a PhD in 2017. He is now a postdoctoral fellow at the Lunar and Planetary Institute in Houston, working with a number of scientists there and at the NASA Johnson Space Center. His core research projects focus on experimental studies of Martian meteorites and asteroidal basalts, but also include studies of Martian surface compositions as a member of the CheMin X-ray crystallography team for the Mars Science Laboratory (Curiosity) mission. Although a field geologist at heart, he now performs laboratory studies to examine how the Earth and other planets formed and differentiated, both in the beginning of the solar system and today.

Abstract

"Science and the Art of Storytelling"

We all know the story of "one small step for man," as astronauts walked on the surface of the Moon. It was the first time that anyone had stepped off of the Earth and on to another world. Recently, many of us watched Elon Musk launch his Tesla Roadster into space on a Falcon Heavy rocket, the biggest rocket anyone has launched since the days of the Saturn V. Others found the story of the Martian rovers so interesting and compelling that Andy Weir wrote a fictional account of a future man exploring the surface of Mars and it made it to the top of the *New York Times* best seller list.

And isn't that the role of storytelling? To capture the imagination and to inspire others? Storytelling can be how we share our dreams, but dreams only become reality through hard work. Much of that hard work can be inspiring others to share a vision, to buy in to the dream, so that they want to take part in the work of transforming that dream into reality.

There are any number of reasons to tell a story. My own story started early, discovering a passion for science as a four year old while playing in the mud after a visit to the Grand Canyon. From those early days of ill-conceived flume models to the present day working with meteorites and the Mars rovers, I love to tell stories. They are how I communicate – the tool I use to share what I know to others around me and I hope, to inspire others to dream of new realities.

In my talk, I aim to do two things. The first is to tell a bit of my story, sharing who I am, what I do and how I got here. The second is to ask a question – what is storytelling? Certainly, we all recognize a story when we're reading a work of fiction, or when we're sharing tales around a campfire, but does a story exist in science? In classes we all learn that observations are at the heart of the scientific method of discovery, but I argue that story is how we synthesize those observations, to create the rational laws we use to describe nature. I hope by the end of my talk to convince you that story has a valid role in my work and is as critical to use well in the sciences as it is in the humanities.

COM ADMINISTRATION



Dr. Elaine Childs
Lunch Speaker

Elaine Childs grew up on a chicken farm in East Texas. Since then, she has lived in Lubbock, Texas; Knoxville, Tennessee; and Osijek, Croatia. In 2010 she received her doctorate in 20th-century literature from the University of Tennessee for a dissertation about the symbol of the holy woman in W. B. Yeats' poetry. Her current research interests

include the internet, care ethics, blank space and existential dread. She is Professor of English at College of the Mainland and lives in League City with her husband and a pack of four rescue chihuahuas.

Abstract

"The Language of Memes"

Linguists and neuroscientists have found that learning a second language may literally change the structure of the brain. When you learn a new language, you must learn how to use the nuts and bolts of that language—what words mean, how they should sound and/or look, what order they should go in—to communicate meaning and to understand what others communicate. Your brain must switch between languages, must monitor how well you're using each one and must suppress the language you don't want to use at the moment. These processes, according to psycholinguist Ping Li, reorganize the brain in a positive way.

In the last few decades, humans have developed a new way of "talking" to each other, one that uses a different set of nuts and bolts: instead of grammar and vocabulary, we now often communicate using space and layout, allusion and imagery, characterization, juxtaposition and parody. Strategies that once were confined to great literature can now be put to use by anyone with a smartphone.

Composition scholar Jeff Rice calls this "the rhetoric of cool." I prefer to think of it as the language of memes. We "get" memes—or fail to—based on how much we know about the language system they are part of. This presentation will look at several well-known memes to analyze their modes of communication and to leave you with the question: how might memes be changing us and the way we look at the world?



Dr. Warren Nichols
COM President

Warren Nichols began his tenure as president of College of the Mainland in February 2017. He has since been working with the Board of Trustees, faculty and staff to develop processes and strategies to keep the college's focus on student success and providing a qualified workforce.

Prior to COM, he had stints as vice chancellor of community colleges for the Tennessee Board of Regents which supported 13 Tennessee public community colleges, president of Volunteer State Community College in Gallatin, Tennessee, and vice president of academic affairs at Darton College in Albany, Georgia.

A native of Fort Worth, Nichols began his career as a police officer in Arlington, Texas, before transitioning to higher education. Nichols earned a doctorate in higher education administration from the University of Houston. He received his master and bachelor degrees from the University of Texas at Arlington, and began his journey in higher education at Tarrant County Junior College in Hurst, Texas.

Already making an impact in the community, the Texas City-La Marque Chamber of Commerce honored Nichols with the Rising Star award in January 2018. The award recognizes an emerging leader whose record reflects ongoing and exceptional growth and contributions to the profession.



Dr. James R. Templer
Interim Vice President for Instruction

Dr. James R. Templer lives in League City, Texas, with his wife, Lisa. He was a college professor of art (23 years) and vice president of instruction (11 years). He retired from College of the Mainland in August 2010.

Templer was asked to return to COM as interim vice president of instruction in September 2016 and is currently serving in that role.

Templer holds a bachelor's and master's of fine arts in painting from East Texas State University. He earned his Ph.D. in the medical humanities, arts and visual studies from The University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston.



Dr. Vicki Stanfield
Vice President for Student Services

Dr. Vicki Stanfield has served in administrative positions in academic and student affairs to improve student success by working with faculty, instructional and student service leaders to create new programs and practices. At COM, Vicki serves as vice president for student services, providing leadership over admissions

and records, recruitment, testing services, financial aid, advising and counseling, TRiO, Title V – HSI grant and student life. She also serves as co-chair of the Student Success Council. Vicki holds an Associate of Art from Lone Star College-North Harris, and a B.A.T. in English—Summa Cum Laude, Master of Education in counselor education and doctorate in educational leadership from Sam Houston State University.



Dr. Clen Burton
Vice President for Fiscal Affairs

Clen Burton is the father of Clay and Shelby, boy and girl twins. He is married to the former Michelle Barkate and is a native of Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

He currently serves as the COM vice president of fiscal affairs and as an adjunct accounting instructor. From 2004 to 2012,

he served as the vice chancellor of finance and administration for River Parishes Community College. Previously he worked in health care, public accounting and the construction industry.

He has a doctorate in human resource education, a master's degree in accounting and a bachelor's degree in speech communication from Louisiana State University. Later in life, he earned an associate degree in computer information systems from Bossier Parish Community College. He is a certified public accountant.

A member of the Dickinson Rotary Club, he has an unhealthy passion for LSU football and officiated high school football for seven seasons.



Mary Ann Amelang
Vice President for Institutional Advancement

Mary Ann Amelang is CFRE, vice president for institutional advancement and executive director of COM Foundation. She has over 25 years of experience in resource development, the last 19 of which were at community colleges. She returned to COM in September 2013 after seven years at Lee College in Baytown, Texas, as executive

director of institutional advancement. She previously served as executive director of resource development at COM from 1999 to 2006. She holds a Master of Arts in humanities from the University of Houston-Clear Lake and a Bachelor of Arts in English from the University of Houston. Mary Ann served four years on the board of the Council for Resource Development. Over the past 15 years, Mary Ann has presented resource development and grant writing workshops regionally and nationally.



Dr. Steven L. Sewell
Dean of Academic Programs

Dr. Steven L. Sewell serves as dean of academic programs at COM, having formerly served as chair of the Social and Behavioral Sciences Department and as a professor of history. Steve served as director of instructional assessment and co-chair of COM's Institutional Effectiveness Council. Steve earned his B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. in

history from Oklahoma State University. He has published extensively on the history of labor in the Oklahoma coal mining industry. He recently published a chapter entitled, "The Spatial Diffusion of Beer from its Sumerian Origins to Today" in *The Geography of Beer* (2014). Steve taught at Oklahoma Panhandle State University, Medgar Evers College of the City University of New York and Texas Tech University.



Dr. Carla Boone
Dean of Workforce & Continuing Education

Dr. Carla Boone is the COM dean for workforce and continuing education. Carla is a COM graduate and has worked in a number of positions at COM since 1986. Carla received a B.S. in health care administration from UTMB Galveston, an M.S. in instructional technology from UHCL and an Ed.D. in community college

in administration from Texas Tech University.



Dr. Kris Kimbark
Dean of Students

Dr. Kris Kimbark has over 15 years in higher education administration as well as over 15 years as a health care administrator in brain injury rehabilitation. She has served COM in many capacities, including director of student support services, associate vice president of student services and most recently as dean of students. She

has her doctorate in educational leadership with an emphasis in higher education. She has been published in the *Community College Research Center* journal on the topic of student success in community college. Dr. Kimbark also was honored by PTK in 2015 with the Hallmark Award. She is passionate about helping students succeed in their educational endeavors, especially disadvantaged students.

She acquired a Bachelor of Arts degree from Southeastern Oklahoma State University and her master's degree at the University of Michigan followed by her doctorate in education at the University of Houston-Clear Lake.

THANK YOU

To College of the Mainland's Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Sigma Delta Chapter future officers and members who served as student hosts for this event.

Thank you to College of the Mainland's staff and faculty who served as our judges and moderators. Thank you, Brian Anderson, John Mohr, Robert Castro, Teri Walker, Diana North, Matthew Busby, Shinya Wakao, Sheena Abernathy, Jennifer Bieszke, Ryan Smith, Stacey Burlison, Kristy Peet, Doug Alvarez, Luis Sabido, Candice Ratley, Herman Trivilino, Tom Johnson, Sandra Coleman, and Madeline Jones for volunteering your time and talents.

Thank you to all the professors who served as student presenter advisors.

Thank you to Dr. Nick Castle for serving as keynote speaker and Dr. Elaine Childs for serving as the lunch speaker.

Thank you, Gulf Coast Intercollegiate Consortium, for your indispensable financial underwriting!

A special thanks to our administration for your support.

Thank you, all to Marketing and Communications, Facilities, the Technology Department, Cindy Cobb, and the Humanities Department.

A special thank you to Lauren Davila for helping with all logistics.

Lastly, thank you, to the Board of Trustees for being valuable advocates for College of the Mainland. Events such as these would not be possible without your support.

Sincerely,

Dalel Serda, Associate Professor of English

GCIC Academic Symposium Chair

G.C.I.C.
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