Alumna Profile: Molly Bachmann in Sierra Leone

I recently spoke with Ms. Molly Bachmann, an OU and Honors College alumna who earned a B.A. in Multidisciplinary Studies in 2013.

Q: Thanks for speaking with me. Let me start off by asking you when and why you initially came to OU?

MB: I arrived in Norman as a classically trained ballerina in pursuit of a BFA from the finest ballet program in the country. Coming from Columbus, Ohio, Oklahoma was a very foreign place. I entered the ballet program in the fall of 2010. My dream had come true!

Q: And yet your trajectory changed over time. Why did you shift to the Multidisciplinary Studies major?

MB: As I continued through the program, began to take classes in other disciplines and became involved in student organizations, my dreams began to shift.

Continued on p3
Events Calendar

- June 7-September 14: “Oil and Wood: Oklahoma Moderns George Bogart and James Henkle” at the Fred Jones Jr Museum of Art.
- August 22: Boggess Organ Series: Showing of silent film "The Cameraman" with guest organist Peter Krasinski. 8:00pm at Sharp Concert Hall.
- September 9: Gallery Talk with Artist Jim Henkle. 12:30pm at the Nancy Johnston Records Gallery.
- September 11: “College Night.” 7:00pm in the Dee Dee and Jon R. Stuart Classroom in the Fred. Info: mbendure@ou.edu
- September 15: Sutton Concert Series featuring the OU Symphony Orchestra. 8:00pm at Sharp Concert Hall. Box Office: 325-4101.
- September 23: Performance by the Beijing Normal University Art Troupe. 8:00pm at Sharp Concert Hall.
- September 29: Norton Artist Series presents Alex McDonald, piano. 8:00pm at Sharp Concert Hall. Box Office: 325-4101.
- October 19: OU Combined Choirs. 3:00pm at Sharp Concert Hall. Box Office: 325-4101.
- October 24-November 2: Contemporary Dance Oklahoma. 8pm (3pm on 10/26 and 11/2) at Reynolds Performing Arts Studio. Box Office: 325-4101.

For more event listings and event information, search the following:
- College of Fine Arts (https://www.ou.edu/content/finearts.html)
- Fred Jones Jr. MoA (http://www.ou.edu/fjjma)
- Sam Noble Museum (http://www.snomnh.ou.edu/)
I no longer saw myself as an artist limited to the physical stage. My stage had expanded. I became passionate about the betterment of humanity, passionate about travel and adventure; passionate about providing sustainable solutions in a world inherently plagued by disease, poverty, climate crisis, and a lack of educational resources. I wanted to be a part of the solution and I was determined to change things with art in whatever form. I consequently changed my major to one which would allow me to become an active global citizen. I chose Multidisciplinary Studies because I could essentially create my own major and write my own curriculum. My dual focus was Health Studies and Dance Arts with a minor in International Studies, in addition to declaring Pre-Physical Therapy.

Q: I know that you traveled extensively during your undergraduate years. Where did you go and what did you do?

MB: My studies took me to Italy with the Honors College in the summer of 2011 and continued to guide me to Switzerland where I worked as a counselor, English teacher, and dance instructor at the American School in Switzerland in the summers of 2011, 2012, and 2013.

Combining my interests in Public Health, Travel, and Education, I traveled to India, China, and South Africa with the School of International Training’s International Honors Program for a study abroad experience in the Fall of 2012. This program compared the health practices and standards of these three countries, specifically looking at the ways in which health and culture interacted.

Throughout my time at OU, I continued to dance with Sooner Dance Company and initiated a dance program for a local underserved elementary after school program. Sooner Dance Company provided a vital artistic outlet to continue my love of performance and more importantly to share that passion with children in hopes doing so would broaden their perspectives on this increasingly interwoven world.

Continued on p4
I also traveled to Dindefelo, Senegal to intern and volunteer with the Jane Goodall National Institute, building children’s outreach programs and exposing youth to environmental issues and the arts. I taught dance classes at a local school and was a student of local dance traditions, and assisted in a classroom that used art to teach children about environmental issues in their immediate and global communities. These experiences significantly aided in my defining goals for the future and realizing the power of dance not only as a method of physical healing, but an opportunity for improving mental health and initiating social and cultural movements by empowering youth.

Q: That is definitely a lot of travel. When did you graduate and what have you been up to since that time?

MB: I graduated from the University of Oklahoma in May 2013. Since then, I completed the Physical Therapy pre-requisite requirements, worked with the American Red Cross in Disaster Relief, and began teaching dance at my home studio in Columbus, Ohio. I have also become an avid runner and cyclist. I ran the Columbus Marathon in 2013 and trained for the 2014 Tour of the Scioto River Valley, a 200 mile bike race. This year I have also spent a lot of time with family and dear friends as I prepared to leave for Sierra Leone in June for two years with the United States Peace Corps. I will be working in Secondary Education as well as in the health sector. After my service, I plan to attend graduate school to earn a doctorate in Physical Therapy so I can help provide sustainable healthcare.

Through my experiences, performance has taken on new meaning. With or without the sequined costumes or the bright lights, the stage has been set. The stage must become a place where all people can become active participants in story-telling, in the birth of imagination and creativity, and in a place where the simplicity of childhood dreams exist. This is the world I wish to call home.

Q: Ambitious! So, what advice do you have for younger Honors students at OU?

MB: To those college students who are anxious about graduation, stressed about the final paper worth 50% of your grade due in about one hour, and/or lost in academia searching for a vocation . . . fear not! You will get "there," wherever your "there" happens to be. Take a break: fifteen minutes, one day, one year, five years. It is in these moments that people find their greatest clarity. Secondly, take advantage of the resources in front of you. Take advantage of the time with your friends; there is no other place on earth where one can be surrounded by hundreds of their academically stimulating, creative, passionate best friends 24/7. Take advantage of your incredibly gifted and wise faculty; Go to office hours even if unrelated to your academic class! And lastly, seize opportunities to learn and become a stronger, more empathetic human being. Put yourself in situations that make you uncomfortable and that have a different social dynamic, such as a foreign country where you don’t speak the language. In those moments, be guided by the question "What would you do if you weren’t afraid?" Good always comes from trying times!

Q: That sounds like great advice to me – thanks for sharing it and thanks so much for speaking with us today!

Editor’s Note: Just before going to press, the Honors College’s Dr. Andreana Prichard informed me that Molly was recently evacuated from Sierra Leone by the Peace Corps because of the Ebola scare. Molly is currently at home and healthy, and looks forward to returning to Sierra Leone as soon as she is able to safely do so.
Honors Engineering Advising

Are you a member of the Honors College?
Are you an Engineering Major?

The Honors Engineering Liaison, Javen Weston, is available to give you advice on various topics:

- How to fit Honors Electives into an Engineering curriculum.
- How to complete the Honors Research (3980) requirement
- How to contract for Honors Credit

Advising is available for all Engineering Honors College Students

Monday/Wednesday/Friday
3:00pm-5:00pm
In Boren Hall, room 125

Alternatively, e-mail Javen to set up an appointment: javen@ou.edu
August 2014

Honors At Oxford, Summer 2014

Contact Dr. Melanie Wright for information regarding next year’s Honors at Oxford program:

405-325-9428
mwright@ou.edu
Dr. Marie Dallam is an Assistant Professor in the Honors College. Marie is from the northeast (Philadelphia and Hoboken) and earned a Masters from Harvard and Ph.D. from Temple. Her specialty is Religious Studies, and she has an affinity for religious groups which have been marginalized in the U.S. I spoke with her to learn more about her academic and non-academic interests.

Q: What is compelling to you about Religious Studies?
A: I look around the world and I just see religion. I see how religious belief affects people’s behavior and how people’s behavior then effects their religious belief and religious practice. I recognize that other people see the world differently. It’s the aspect of culture that I’m really interested in, that always keeps my mind going, that always fascinates me and I want to learn more and more about it so… I don’t know why I’m predisposed to that but it’s just kind of the way I see things.

Q: Is Religious Studies primarily of intellectual interest to you?
A: Absolutely. And I’m always attracted to outsider religions, to marginalized people. To the voices that some might say are not legitimate or not as important as some other religion. Those are the voices I want to shed light on, those are the ones I want to hear.

Q: I know you are interested in the Cowboy Church phenomenon but you also study the connections between food and religion. Are the two related in your mind?
A: They are, because they are tied to my marginalization idea. When we started talking about religion and food in the academy five or six years ago, people gave us funny looks, like ‘what are you talking about? That’s a five minute conversation.’ But there is something really interesting to be said here and so we created a seminar within our national organization and we had dozens and dozens of people attending every year and then we came out with this book to show that there was a substantive conversation. The book, Religion, Food, and Eating in North America,” came out earlier this year and I’ve already been approached by an editor from another press saying they would like to follow up by doing another book on religion and food. So we proved there’s something important there.

Q: Marginalization keeps coming up here. That seems to be of genuine interest for you.
A: I think about all different forms of marginalization: social, religious, geographic, racial, and others, rather than religious boundaries. So in the U.S. for example, what religions get marginalized? It can be Nation of Islam, just as it could be some sectarian Christian group.

Q: So what is it about marginalization writ large that fascinates you?
A: I’m a champion for the underdog. I want to put attention on that which has been neglected to show what’s valuable about it.

Q: Okay. So what are some of the marginalized groups that loom large in your work right now?
A: Continued on p8
Dallam, continued from p7

A: Well obviously the Cowboy Church. It’s an alternative form of Christian practice and I think some people look askance at it like ‘what is this crazy thing you’re doing? How dare you wear a hat in church. I find this offensive.’ There are some people who are very caught up in certain kinds of religious practices and the cowboy church is stepping outside of that and suggesting that it’s really about belief and faith and a sacred text as the focus instead of focusing on whether you’re wearing dirty boots in church. I’ve been visiting cowboy churches in Oklahoma and Texas for a couple years and getting a sense of the lay of the land and talking to different leaders and that’s what I’ll be writing about next.

Q: Is cowboy church something that is gaining in popularity in this part of the country?
A: Definitely, but it’s not so urban, it’s suburban and rural. You’re not going to find too many in Norman or Oklahoma City and when you do those are going to be unusual ones anyway because it’s more of a rural thing.

Q: What else do you focus on?
A: I’ve recently been asked to write an article for a Religious Studies newspaper. A special issue this fall will focus on issues in teaching new religious movements. I’m excited that they thought this was important enough to feature in this national newspaper and of course I am excited to write my own part of it.

Q: What will the article be about?
A: It’s about a particular assignment I give, a mini-review essay assignment. I have students pick a new religion they want to learn about and they have to read one academic book about it and one popular book. Then they write about what they are able to learn from the different sources and how they function together to determine what the value of the popular source might have. I think sometimes popular sources get dismissed as irrelevant for academic settings but I don’t think that’s always valid.

Q: I want to read this one when it comes out- you’ve got a new fan!
A: Yay!

Q: So let’s move away from academics just a bit. What do you like to do for fun? I’ve talked to some people who say, ‘well, for fun I like to do more research.’ It seems as if work and fun are

Continued on p9
Dallam, Continued from p8

completely one for some people. Is that true for you?

A: It’s largely true. I’ve been trying to acquire some hobbies because I’m afraid I’m too wrapped up in work work work because work is fun for me. But I really like house projects. I love working on my house, painting something or trying to fix something.

Q: I know you have an older home and there must always be things that need doing. What have you done and where did you pick up your skills?

A: Well, I had a much older home in Philadelphia. It was from 1872 and now owning a home that was built in 1910 makes it feel like it’s really new and modern. I can do some minor carpentry work. Actually right now we are repainting the exterior ourselves.

Q: Wow, that’s a two story house isn’t it?

A: A three story house!

Q: That’s a lot!

A: Well we haven’t gotten to the third story yet and we might never get there. But it’s putting me in an immediate connection with the condition of the exterior and there is so much tiny repair going on. Every little pane of each 12 pane window needs wood putty and sanding.

Q: And you call this quote unquote enjoyable?

A: It is! Its very detail oriented and it gets my mind off of stuff...like last year I got way involved in fixing a broken ceiling fan/light. I did everything, everything Brian.

Q: And how is the ceiling fan these days?

A: Eventually I had to replace it! The day came when I smelled burning and realized it was just broken.

Q: I have a fan that started humming in my house. That’s not your problem unless... what are your hourly rates?

A: I come very cheap.

Q: Okay we’ll talk more about home repair later. Let me bring us back around to where we started. You are from the northeast and Oklahoma must seem like a very different place. What do you think of Oklahoma?

A: I like it. I like how friendly people are and how easy going things are. In the northeast I feel like there is a lot of anger and bitterness and aggression from the get go for people when they encounter each other versus here where people are just nice to each other to start off and it’s rare when that’s not the case. It just makes living here so much easier.

Q: And as for OU and the Honors College?

A: I love the freedom from a set curriculum. I can teach really interesting material and I can teach really interesting material and engage students in discussions of real issues, some of which arise in the middle of a semester. I actually also like the intellectual diversity among the faculty, you know just talking with everyone. It’s amazing how our work can connect and we inspire each other in very surprising ways.

Sometimes I hear students ask what’s the point of Honors. It’s a legitimate question and I feel like, one of the values that I’ve only come to realize as I’ve aged is that when you go out in the world and you say I graduated from X place with a major in Y, and with honors, that actually means something to people. People in the world know that that means you had an extra rigorous set of requirements that you completed, that you chose to complete. You didn’t have to do it but, it suggests that you’re kind of a go getter and you go above and beyond. I think there’s a long term value in that that is very difficult to convey to someone who is 18 or 19.
Are you looking for advice about professional, educational, or personal opportunities?

Successful Honors College graduates are offering their time and advice through the new e-mentoring correspondence program! Our e-mentors are experienced with:

- Medical Schools and Careers in Medicine
- Working and Living Abroad
- Government Affairs, Politics, and Public Policy
- Graduate Schools
- Law Schools and Law Careers
- Energy: Oil and Gas
- Business Schools and Professional Development
- Computer Science and Engineering Programs

Just go to www.ou.edu/honors/mentor and log on to the program. Browse through the list of e-mentors and select the mentor(s) you would like to contact. Then, write to honorsEmentoring@ou.edu and the Honors College will put you in communication with the e-mentor(s) of your choice.
Honors Student Association News

Just prior to the start of the semester, H.S.A. hosted a very well-attended student-led Honors freshman orientation. Thanks to the upperclassmen who presented and helped make the event a great success.

During the first week of class, H.S.A. also hosted a welcome picnic—again, a great success!

Find us on Facebook:
OU Honors Student Association

Congratulations to the newly H.S.A. officers: Jeremy Allen (President), Kunal Naik (Vice President), Audra Brulc (Secretary), and Cici Zhou (Treasurer). The Executive Members at Large are Derrick Jones, Alice Barrett, and Sean Templemore-Finlayson
JC Fischer is an interesting young man who is set to graduate soon with degrees in both Religious Studies and Business Administration in Accounting (summa cum laude for both). We spoke recently about JC’s experiences at OU and his general attitude toward life. Here is what he had to say.

Q: Thanks for talking with me JC. Start us off by telling us where you from.

JCF: I am from Flower Mound, Texas, which is a suburb of the Dallas-Fort Worth area. I usually just tell people I’m from Dallas.

Q: What are you passionate about, academically or otherwise?

JCF: I love basketball first and foremost, along with the other major sports. I’m a Dallas Mavericks fan. Playing basketball is the number one way I relax and relieve stress, as I love to compete and work with a team.

I also read a lot, and my favorite two genres are high fantasy and books on the financial industry.

Q: Any recommendations?

JCF: Michael Lewis is a GREAT author for this area!

I also tend to take an interest in the legal issues surrounding these passions, e.g. the recent decision to allow Northwestern University’s football team to unionize.

Finally, I try to follow major Supreme Court cases, especially those that involve the first amendment religion clauses (e.g. Hobby Lobby v. Sebelius).

Q: That’s a pretty varied set of interests. What else do you like to do?

JCF: I suppose I touched on this a little already, but I love to play basketball. In addition to what I’ve already said regarding basketball, I play other sports and have always been active in OU’s intramural programs. I love to compete, generally.

I also like to just relax and share a meal with friends. I do my best to never eat alone, because I feel that “breaking bread” with people brings you closer together. I very consciously make sure that I stay in touch with my closest friends, so when I get free time I usually end up spending it with people, especially those close to me.

Q: What have you been up to lately, and what are your plans for the summer?

JCF: I have recently settled on a graduate school, and will be attending both Stanford’s Law School and School of Management. This came after a long admissions and decision process rife with visits across the country, and I’m wrapping up those last few classes before graduation. My softball team is also undefeated and we have the #1 seed in the playoffs, so we’ll see if we can bring home another championship before we graduate.

I’m using this summer to recharge before graduate school. I’ll play basketball, travel some to catch up with family and old friends, and spend some time in Colorado hiking. While I’m at home in Dallas I also hope to officiate some summer league basketball games. That’s a job I’ve held in the Norman area for a few years now and really enjoy.

I suppose I’ll also be finding an apartment and roommate(s) in Stanford!

Q: Good luck with all of that, and congratulations on being accepted to Stanford! That lays out a very busy near future for you, but where do you hope to be in the next five or ten years?

JCF: In five years I hope to be clerking for a federal appellate judge. In ten years, I hope to have had experience working for McKinsey & Company, a federal clerkship, and a corporate law firm. It’s difficult to

Continued on p13
really predict things ten years out, because so many opportunities I have had in the last five years have been unexpected and turned out very well. I suppose what I truly plan for is to have married and either begun or planned to start a family, to be happy with whatever I am doing professionally, and to be moving along a path that allows me to remain open to whatever opportunities may materialize. I’d like to position myself for an eventual foray into politics, the potential to return to academia as a professor, and the ability to work as in-house counsel somewhere. I’m not one to say I’ll know exactly which path will be perfect for me and for my family a decade from now, but I do know that one of those paths is most likely. We’ll see what comes down the road!

Q: We shall see. Before I let you go, let me ask what advice you might have for younger Honors students?

JCF: Hahaha – I don’t know how qualified I am to be giving advice, but I’ll give it a shot.

Q: Go for it!

JCF: 1) Always remember that relationships matter above all else. Be it with classmates, older students, professors, or colleagues, the people you meet will help you grow and will impact your life in so many unforeseen ways it is difficult to imagine. 2) Never eat alone. I mentioned this earlier, but I truly believe there is no better time to connect with someone than over a shared meal. 3) Don’t be afraid to take risks and dive right in. I have never truly regretted doing anything, but I definitely regret not doing some things.

Perhaps most importantly, I’ll end with two thoughts that are intricately linked: Know yourself and your limits, but also your abilities. Also, be sure to make time for yourself and the maintenance of your mental health.

Together, those two pieces of advice are easily the things that most helped me be “successful” in college. For example, I know that I’ll perform better on an exam with four hours of study and eight hours of sleep than with nine hours of study and three hours of sleep. I know that I’ll be more able to stay engaged mentally throughout the week if I play basketball or otherwise engage my body physically at least a couple nights a week.

Knowing who you are and what you need to be effective allows you to make sure that you meet those needs and perform to the best of your abilities.
Outdoor Adventure, Summer 2014

Outdoor Adventure is an Honors College-sponsored trip for incoming freshman. The trip takes students to the Pecos Mountains in northern New Mexico. For information concerning next summer’s trip, please contact the main Honors Office at 405-325-5291 or Honors@ou.edu.
Starting its second year, the Society for Innovative Education is jointly sponsored by the Honors College and the College of Education. We are seeking twelve students to serve as Research fellows during the 2014-15 academic year. The attached flyer describes the Society and the position of student Research Fellows.

If you are interested, complete the application (also attached) and return this cover page and your statement to ECH 100 or 160 David L. Boren Hall by September 1, 2014 at 5:00pm. Applicants will be notified by email on September 15th. For candidates with equal qualifications, we will give preference to juniors and seniors over freshmen, assuming freshmen will have opportunities to apply again.

American education at all levels is facing numerous major challenges; this is your chance to join the discussion and help formulate possible solutions.
Honors Events for August

- 8/14: New Sooner Convocation. 4:00pm at the Lloyd Noble Center
- 8/16: Freshmen Orientation and Reception. 8:00pm in the Nancy Mergler Library
- 8/18: New Honors Student Lounge officially opened in DLB 120
- 8/21: Honors Picnic. 5:00pm on the DLB southwest lawn
- 8/21: Reading Groups Open House. 7:00pm in DLB 180
- 8/25: “The Last Orientation” (No Faculty Allowed). 7:30pm in Dale Hall 200

Dr. Bob Lifset’s Latest Book Published

Congratulations to Bob Lifset on the publication of Power on the Hudson: Storm King Mountain and the Emergence of Modern Environmentalism. Great job, Bob!

Dr. Carolyn Morgan Retires

Although Dr. Morgan retired in May, we are happy to announce that she will be back with us starting this fall! Dr. Morgan will continue helping students with Honors-specific advising and will teach “Community Citizen,” an Honors course which emphasizes volunteerism.

Honors Scholarship Opportunities

Find out about the wide assortment of scholarship opportunities available in the “Application Corner” of the Honors website: ou.edu/honors/

Honors College Workshop Series on Presentation and Interview Skills

Confidence, poise, and oral communication skills are not the domain of the talented few, but can be acquired by all students through guidance and practice. Watch your e-mail for information about signing up for a FREE non-credit workshop series on presentation and interview skills. The workshops will build on the popular program developed by Dean David Ray and Honors/musical theater student Kyra Wharton in Spring 2014. This fall semester, Dr. Amanda Minks will lead the workshops along with Kyra Wharton. Students who complete the entire workshop series will receive a certificate and an invitation to dinner with a special guest. Workshops will be offered on Wednesdays from 9:30-10:20 a.m. and from 10:30-11:20 a.m. and will run from September through November. If you have questions, feel free to send an e-mail to amandminks@ou.edu.
Undergraduate Research Day Award Recipients

Presentation Awards

Roland Lehr Phi Beta Kappa Award for Distinguished Undergraduate Research

- Sarah Cocks (Faculty sponsor: Dr. Christopher Carter): “The Visual/Digital Rhetoric of Weight Loss and Fitness”
- Gabrielle Skillings (Faculty sponsor: Dr. Allen Hertzke): “Liberal Peacemaking Efforts in South Sudan”

Phi Kappa Phi Award for Distinguished Undergraduate Research

- Keaton Cizek (Faculty sponsor: Dr. Catherine Barrett): “Sacred, but Imperfect: A Postmodernist Paradox?”
- Kacie Morgan (Faculty sponsor: Dr. Jennifer Saltzstein): “Courting the Shepherdess: Class and Gender in the Thirteenth Century Pastourelle Motet”

Honors College Award for Distinguished Undergraduate Research

- Sarah Barnes and Sarah Yung (Faculty sponsor: Dr. Chen Ling): “Tornado Warning Displays: A study on display design effectiveness”
- Nick Kantack (Faculty sponsor: Dr. Lloyd Bumm): “Improved small-spot illumination system for single-nanoparticle spectroscopy”
- Alina Lorant (Faculty sponsor: Dr. Kenneth Smith): “Novel Tools for Elucidating the Immunology of Allergy”
- Melanie Maguire (Faculty sponsor: Dr. Aparna Mitra): “Community-Based Wildlife Management - Saving Endangered Species with Economic Incentives”
- Gretchen Scheel (Faculty sponsor: Dr. Susan J. Schroeder): “Thermodynamic Stability of pRNA packaging Motors”

Poster Presentation Awards

Honors College Award for the Best Undergraduate Research

- Adam Dachowicz, Marli Sussmann and Colton Hill (Faculty sponsors: Drs. Chung-Hyun Goh, Farrokh Mistree, and Janet Allen): “Concurrent Design and the Gear Manufacturing Process”

Honors College Award for Meritorious Undergraduate Research

- Megan Lambert (Faculty sponsor: Dr. Ron Peters): “Culture and Constitution in the Antebellum United States”
- Jeremiah Miller (Faculty sponsor: Dr. Boris Wawrik): “Hexanol Synthesis in Clostridium Acetobutylicum”
- Bennett Oden (Faculty sponsor: Dr. Anthony Burgett): “From Natural Product to Treatment: SAR studies of Maximiscin”
Webster Endowment: Major Gift to Honors College

The University of Oklahoma has received a $1.1 million gift from Will and Helen Webster of California to encourage teaching excellence and enhance the educational experience of students in the Joe C. and Carole Kerr McClendon Honors College. The Webster’s gift will be directed to an endowment for the new Presidential Faculty Fellows Program.

“This gift from Mr. and Mrs. Webster demonstrates their deep sense of loyalty and generosity to the University,” said OU President David L. Boren. “We are honored they have chosen to make numerous major commitments to improve the quality of education our students receive.”

This is the most recent gift by Mr. and Mrs. Webster to the Honors College. Previously, they provided funds for the Honors College’s Informal Reading Groups and for a program to help students with their public speaking and interviewing skills.

Their latest gift provides endowed funds for a program modeled after an initiative established in 1994 as a merit-based incentive program to reward and retain the university’s best and brightest professors. The Presidential Faculty Fellows Program provides annual stipends to university professors who excel at teaching and mentoring students and allows them to teach exclusively in the Honors College. Faculty will be competitively selected to teach two Honors courses per semester for a term of three years.

“The years of my involvement with OU, President David Boren has built a unique legacy, and Helen and I are pleased to be a part of it,” Will Webster said. “Since we began our relationship with OU, we have discovered how unique the University of Oklahoma is: it’s unique in location, it’s beautiful, and it is an outstanding academic institution. OU is very, very special to us,” he added.

The Websters’ interest in OU is far ranging, including support for the Heart Rhythm Institute, scholarships and endowed faculty positions, the Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History, and OU’s American Organ Institute, to name a few.

With more than 2,500 students who participate in classes of 19 or fewer, the Honors College is one of the most successful and largest honors programs among public universities in the nation. The Presidential Faculty Fellows program will impact OU’s ability to attract entering freshmen who graduate in the top five percent of their high school class and will further strengthen retention efforts designed for these high achievers.

~Public Affairs
We invite you to give back and go forward with us as we foster academic excellence by providing the best education possible for high achieving students at OU.

To GIVE ONLINE click on any one of the 5 WAYS to give back to OU HONORS COLLEGE students.

THANK YOU!

To learn more about these programs and other giving opportunities in the Honors College, contact the office of Alumni and Development.

LISA TUCKER
Director of External Relations
ljtucker@ou.edu
www.ou.edu/honors
(405) 325-9088

5 WAYS

To give back,
To change a life,
To make a difference.

TO POSITIVELY IMPACT THE FUTURE.

1. **Presidential Teaching Fellows**
   Join us in establishing an endowment to attract, honor, and retain teachers of academic excellence well-matched to OU’s highest achieving students.

2. **Honors Study Abroad Scholarships**
   Students become global-minded citizens through Honors at Oxford, Ireland, Journey to Africa, and other OU approved study abroad programs.

3. **High Honors**
   Support the development and implementation of a more intensive curriculum for high achieving Honors students at OU.

4. **President’s Associates**
   Join the President’s Associates today and designate a portion of your gift to the Honors College.

5. **Alumni Mentoring Association**
   100 members strong, Honors College alumni provide advice and mentoring on fields in which they have experience and expertise.
Joe C. and Carole Kerr McClendon
Honors College

Informal Reading Groups
Fall Semester 2014

Meet just one hour per week with 10-15 Honors College students to discuss roughly 50 pages of reading from specific books on the topics described in the following pages. The only commitment you make is a good-faith effort to complete the reading and attend group meetings as often as you can, with the understanding there may be one or two weeks when you are unable to attend.

- No tuition or fees
- No quizzes or tests
- No grades
- Free books
- Discuss important topics of mutual interest with other Honors College students

Reading groups will begin the week of August 25th and will meet for 3 to 18 weeks as indicated in this brochure. Books will be distributed at the first meeting.

To participate in any of these groups, email your request after Wednesday, August 13th to HonorsReading@ou.edu. Groups are filled on a first-come, first-served basis, so it is helpful to indicate a second choice.
A MATHEMATICIAN’S LAMENT
by Paul Lockhart

Mondays 1:30 to 2:20
214 Cate Center
2 weeks

How School Cheats Us Out of Our Most Fascinating and Imaginative Art Form

A Mathematician’s Lament is Paul Lockhart’s contribution to the growing body of literature regarding America’s failed efforts to educate its children in mathematics. Having been both a professional mathematician and a teacher, Lockhart has a unique and incisive perspective on what is being done wrong and why.

Written whimsically but with forceful arguments, Lament represents a plea for more rational and effective teaching tools and styles in the classroom – ones based not upon memorization and rigid lessons, but rather upon puzzles, free-form creativity and problem solving. If you are hard-pressed to imagine creativity and, well, fun mixing with the math you learned (or are still learning) in school, Lockhart’s reasoning is very much worth considering.

Prof. David Ray will serve as moderator for this group.

PATRIOT OF PERSIA
by Christopher de Bellaigue

Wednesdays 2:30 to 3:20
217 Cate Center
6 to 8 weeks

Muhammad Mossadegh and a Tragic Anglo-American Coup

Iran’s Muhammad Mossadegh, the democratically elected prime minister overthrown by US and British agents in 1953, was a man who declined a salary, returned gifts and collected tax arrears from his beloved mother. This aristocrat enraged the West by insisting that Iran, not Britain, should own, sell and profit from Iranian oil. In this new biography, Christopher de Bellaigue, Tehran correspondent for The Economist, sympathizes with Mossadegh in his attempt to bring democracy to Iran but does not let him off the hook for its failure. The book presents a nuanced portrait of an enigmatic man whose brilliance and fair-mindedness fatally collided with his pride and rigidity. It also provides context for the dismal state of U.S.-Iran relations today.

Prof. David Ray will serve as moderator for this group.

FLASH BOYS
by Michael Lewis

Fridays 12:00 to 12:50
217 Cate Center
5 to 7 weeks

Flash Boys: A Wall Street Revolt, written by former Salomon Brothers employee and bestselling author Michael Lewis, details the sudden, insidious inundation of the financial markets with shadowy middlemen known as “high-frequency traders.” Lewis, who has previously written several books on finance, brings detailed knowledge of stocks, stockbrokers and the massive institutions that control them to bear on the subject. Flash Boys follows the story of the creation of IEX, an alternative stock exchange designed to thwart the techniques of high-frequency traders.

This reading group looks to discuss the impact of technology on the financial industry and touch on Lewis’ major theme – that as computing speed, dark pools and programming expertise become the norm on Wall Street, a populace that has billions of dollars invested in the stock market is beginning to lose sight of where its money is and how it is being used.

Prof. David Ray and Walter Beanson will serve as moderators for this group.
MAN, ECONOMY, AND STATE
by Murray N. Rothbard

This group will be scheduled by online Doodle poll

Simultaneously used by intellectuals as a guide for their investigations and read by novices as an introduction to the economic way of thinking, Murray Rothbard’s magnum opus develops the Austrian school of economics beginning with the basic logic of choice and drawing out its implications to present explanations of vast economic phenomena. Where other schools of economics begin with a series of assumptions about the nature of an ideal economy and then use empirical data to verify their theories, the Austrian school begins with an analysis of methodology. Finding most economic models unsatisfactory, Austrian thinkers have developed a system of analysis that produces a unique understanding of economics. By analyzing institutions and understanding the actions of individuals, this network of ideas explains why rational behavior looks radically different in various settings and gives recommendations for the ideal environment to unleash human innovation and cooperation.

Wade Craig and Gregory Boyle will serve as moderators for this group.

CAPITAL IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY
by Thomas Piketty

Wednesdays 4:30 to 5:20
214 Cate Center 1
13 to 15 weeks

What are the grand dynamics that drive the accumulation and distribution of capital? This question lies at the heart of political economy, but satisfactory answers have been hard to find for lack of adequate data and clear guiding theories.

In Capital in the Twenty-First Century, Thomas Piketty presents ideas that have transformed the debate and set the agenda for the next generation of thought about wealth and inequality. Piketty demonstrates that, while we have avoided inequalities on the apocalyptic scale predicted by Karl Marx, the underlying structures of capital are nonetheless faulty.

A work of extraordinary ambition, originality and rigor, Capital in the Twenty-First Century reorients our understanding of economic history and confronts us with sobering lessons for today.

Kevin Hadley will serve as moderator for this group.

THE CITY & THE CITY
by China Miéville

Wednesdays 11:30 to 12:20
217 Cate Center 1
6 to 8 weeks

Science Fiction? Alternate-history? Mystery/Noir/Thriller? The City and The City, China Miéville’s 2009 novel, is all of these and more. Inspector Borlu must investigate the murder of a foreign student Mahalia Geary, but in order to do so he must make the dangerous journey from his hometown of Beszel to the hostile environment of its “twin city,” Ul Qoma. Things get strange very quickly as Borlu confronts the seeming impossibility of the two cities both occupying the same geographic coordinates. The City and the City explores the tensions which arise when competing and antithetical ideologies are at odds with one another, and in so doing cuts to the very dark heart of humanity, posing challenging philosophical questions within the confines of a thrilling narrative.

Dr. Brian Johnson will serve as moderator for this group.
QUEEN OF THE OIL CLUB by Anna Rubino
Thursdays, 12:00 to 12:50
217 Cate Center 1
6 to 8 weeks

Wanda Jablonski was an investigative reporter, publisher and power broker who came to wield exceptional influence on twentieth-century geopolitics by shedding light on the secretive world of oil from the 1950s through the 1980s.

Nicknamed the midwife of OPEC, Jablonski exposed the vulnerabilities of the major oil companies and encouraged the rise of oil nationalism. Her scoops, commentaries and private networking helped shape the debate that led to the creation of OPEC, the oil shocks of the 1970s and the largest transfer of wealth in history.

Working for the Journal of Commerce and other New York publications, Jablonski defied the prevailing view that a woman reporting on business had no credibility. In 1961, divorced and suddenly jobless, she took a big gamble by starting her own newsletter, Petroleum Intelligence Weekly, which was soon dubbed the "bible" of the oil world.

Dr. Robert Lifset will serve as moderator for this group.

THE IMPOSSIBLE STATE by Wael Hallaq
Mondays, 9:30 to 10:20
217 Cate Center 1
10 to 12 weeks

In eloquent, succinct fashion, The Impossible State manages itself to do the apparently impossible: criticize the foundations of the liberal democratic state and present the reasoned Islamic alternative. To us Westerners, the excellence of democracy and modern society are self-evident in history. We read our success in the resilience of our economies, the openness of our culture and in the plurality fostered by a secular society. It seems ludicrous, then, to suggest that the last century's surge of Islamism and its continuation today in radicals declaring a Sunni caliphate has any basis in a legitimate critique of what scholar Wael Hallaq calls the "modern project." Yet The Impossible State offers precisely that and then some. Hallaq articulates a criticism of the very notion of a state and presents Islam's counter-offer: a vision of moral, largely communal governance that we Americans have dismissed far too quickly, without careful examination.

Daniel Meschter will serve as moderator for this group.

EURIPIDES I
Alcestis, the Medea, the Heracleidae, Hippolytus
Mondays, 11:00 to 11:50
217 Cate Center 1
8 weeks

Euripides was one of the most significant and influential tragedians of ancient Greece, along with contemporaries Sophocles and Aeschylus. His works have had an immense impact on drama. Considered "the most tragic of poets," Euripides creates heroes out of common people in extreme situations.

Reading these plays will give us an insight into ancient Greek culture, as Euripides' works highlight the moral atmosphere of that era. In these tragedies, we will find themes common and popular in literature throughout history, such as love, gender roles, etc. We will discuss the ideals presented by Euripides' characters and search for remnants of this ancient culture in today's society.

Kristin Black and Lindsay Floyd will serve as moderators for this group.
THE BRIEF AND WONDROUS LIFE OF OSCAR WAO & THIS IS HOW YOU LOSE HER
by Junot Diaz

Mondays 12:30 to 1:20
214 Cate Center 1
10 to 12 weeks

Junot Diaz’s first novel, The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao, was named “#1 Fiction Book of the Year” by Time and earned Diaz the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 2008, establishing itself as a modern classic. While encapsulating Dominican-American history, the book chronicles both the life of Oscar Wao, an overweight Dominican boy growing up in Paterson, New Jersey who is obsessed with science fiction and fantasy novels and with falling in love, as well as the curse that has plagued his family for generations.

This is How You Lose Her, Diaz’s acclaimed collection of short stories, revolves around the haunting, impossible power of love. At the heart of these stories is the irrepressible, irresistible Yunior, a young hardhead whose longing for love is equalled only by his recklessness—and by the extraordinary women he loves and loses. In prose that is endlessly energetic, inventive, tender, and funny, the stories in this New York Times Best Seller lay bare the infinite longing and inevitable weakness of the human heart.

Stephanie Allred will serve as moderator for this group.

EAST OF EDEN
by John Steinbeck

Tuesdays 3:00 to 3:50
217 Cate Center 1
11 to 13 weeks

Set in the rich farmland of California’s Salinas Valley, this sprawling and often brutal novel follows the intertwined destinies of two families — the Trasks and the Hamitons — whose generations helplessly reenact the fall of Adam and Eve and the poisonous rivalry of Cain and Abel.

In East of Eden, Steinbeck created some of his most memorable characters and explored his most enduring themes: the mystery of identity, the inexplicability of love, and the murderous consequences of love’s absence.

Considered one of the greatest American novels, and indeed one of the greatest novels of any stripe, Steinbeck’s magnum opus examines the outer extremes of insidious hatred and betrayal — and the bitter consequences thereof.

Christine Elliot will serve as moderator for this group.
TALES FROM KALILA WA DIMNA [Arabic]
edited by Munther A. Younes

Thursdays 4:30 to 5:20
Second Wind Cafe
5 to 7 weeks

Translated and edited from the original Sanskrit work the Panchatantra into Arabic by Ibn al-Muqaffa’ in the 8th century C.E., Kalila and Dimna is a collection of animal fables and folktales considered to be an early masterpiece of Arabic literary prose. In this version, the eloquent classical prose of the original work is redacted into simplified Modern Standard Arabic, serving as a teaching tool for Intermediate and Advanced level students.

While entertaining and amusing, Kalila and Dimna is also a book of wisdom aiming to educate aspiring statesmen how to survive and thrive in the perilous court politics of the Umayyad and Abbasid empires. The central story narrates the schemes of two jackals, Kalila and Dimna, to gain the favor of Shankaza, a lion that rules the jungle they inhabit.

Genevieve Schmitt, Program Coordinator for the Arabic Flagship Program, will serve as moderator for this group. For more information about the program, contact flagship@ou.edu.

CONSIDENCE
by Edward O. Wilson

Thursdays 11:00 to 11:50
217 Cafe Center 1
7 to 8 weeks

One of our greatest living scientists presents us with a work of brilliance and ambition whose central argument is both groundbreaking and as old as the Enlightenment. Biologist Edward O. Wilson believes that all knowledge is intrinsically unified, and that behind disciplines as diverse as physics, biology, anthropology and the arts lie a small number of natural laws. “Consilience” is what Wilson calls the interlocking of these laws.

Using the natural sciences as his model, Wilson forges dramatic links between fields. He explores the chemistry of the mind and the genetic bases of culture. He postulates the biological principles underlying works of art ranging from cave drawings to Lofty. Synthesizing Wilson’s latest findings in prose of wonderful clarity and eloquence, Consilience is science in the path-clearing tradition of Newton, Einstein and Feynman.

Taylor Hamstra and KC Poe will serve as moderators for this group.

ENDER’S SHADOW
by Orson Scott Card

Wednesdays 3:00 to 3:50
101 Cafe Center 1
7 to 8 weeks

Ender’s Shadow is a “parallel novel” to the critically-acclaimed work of science fiction, Ender’s Game. While it helps to have read the latter, the novels can be enjoyed in either order. If you enjoyed Ender’s Game, the parallel sequel will provide an exhilarating and unique read based on a perspective shift.

After devastating invasions by the sentient, insect-like “Formics,” humankind takes desperate, ethically-questionable measures to survive. These include the training of a group of exceptional young children in Battle School, a space station where students learn military tactics and leadership. Ender’s Shadow centers around Bean, the brightest trainee at Battle School, who will eventually become Ender Wiggin’s crucial second in command for the war with the Formics. Potential discussion points include the ethics of war, literary perspective and the meaning of consciousness.

Typ Whinnery will serve as moderator for this group.
The Chilean poet and author Roberto Bolaño (1953-2003) was a towering presence in the Spanish-language literature of the late twentieth century. Bolaño began his career as a leftist activist and a literary enfant terrible known for his poetry. He is now almost a cult figure, most renowned for his fiction, which treats the jarring and violent experiences of his Latin-American contemporaries with dark humor, complex symbolism and deep ambiguity. This novel is a 130-page rant -- part confession, part justification, part delirium -- by a dying man, Father Sebastian Urrutia. He tells a disjointed story of his young literary ambitions and what he did to pursue them. After the violent military coup of 1973, he gives a weekly seminar for the generals, and attends a literary salon given by a woman who worked for the secret police and whose house was used for interrogations.

Prof. David Ray will serve as moderator for this group.

Meditations is one of the last works of the stoic philosophers. Written by the Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius, it catalogues many of his private ideas, opinions and recollections. Famed as one of the greatest Roman emperors, Aurelius was an able administrator, statesman, soldier and philosopher in equal measure. He was primarily an advocate of stoicism, which taught both moderation and inner calm through times of both triumph and calamity, and the humble acceptance of events outside of man's control.

Though broken into short chapters, Meditations' brevity doesn't sacrifice any depth of thought. Its rich pieces chronicle Aurelius' methodology in applying stoicism to his life. Practical and readable, they lack the abstraction sometimes found in philosophical works and have persisted through the centuries as masterpieces of thought.

Benjamin Acker will serve as moderator for this group.

Albert Camus (1913-1960) was a French author and journalist and one of the key philosophers of the 20th century. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1957. Published in 1946, this novel is Camus' compelling and troubling tale of a disaffected, apparently amoral young man. It has earned extraordinary popularity in part because it reveals so vividly the anxieties of its time: alienation, the fear of anonymity and spiritual doubt. The plot is simple. A young Algerian, Mersault, afflicted with a sort of aimless inertia, becomes embroiled in the petty intrigues of a local pimp and, somewhat inexplicably, ends up killing a man. Once he's imprisoned and eventually brought to trial, it becomes apparent that his crime is not so much the arguably defensible murder he has committed as it is his deficient character.

Nicole Smith will serve as moderator for this group.
THE BEST AMERICAN NONREQUIRED READING 2013
Edited by Dave Eggers
Thursdays 11:00 to 11:50
214 Cate Center 1
3 weeks

The Best American Nonrequired Reading 2013 is a lively, entertaining collection of the year’s best fiction, nonfiction, poetry, comics and other illuminating inducements. Compiled by Dave Eggers and high school students from around the country, this well-received annual promises the offbeat, quirky, cynical or just plain uproarious viewpoint that’s been missing from your classroom. Wide-ranging and thought-provoking, the collection delivers a kaleidoscopic view of the issues and intrigues that visit many of the so-called “Millennial Generation,” while also managing solid reportage on such incidents as the Best American Term Paper Assignment, the Best American Poem about a Particle Accelerator and the Best American Apocryphal Discussion Between Our Nation’s Founding Fathers (all real features contained within the 2013 edition).

Justin Mai will serve as moderator for this group.

TWENTYSOMETHING ESSAYS BY TWENTYSOMETHING WRITERS
Wednesdays 7:00 to 7:50
217 Cate Center 1
5 to 7 weeks

As part of a supposedly self-obsessed, apolitical, layabout, consumeristic generation, no one can write more truthfully about being a twentysomething in this time than twentysomethings themselves. This anthology is a poignant discussion of 21st century youth written by millennials themselves and collected by Random House. In what began as an essay-writing competition and ended as a brutally honest reflection on what it means to be young today, the meditations cover subjects ranging from higher education to minimum wage jobs, from feeling like a child to having a child, from financial chaos to lack of finances, from romance to loneliness. Composed of individual essays revolving around a common theme, Twentysomething Essays by Twentysomething Writers offers the perfect starting point for a discussion about the growth of our generation.

Sarah Miles and Jesse Coker will serve as moderators for this group.

CONSIDER THE LOBSTER
by David Foster Wallace
Tuesdays 4:30 to 5:20
214 Cate Center 1
6 to 8 weeks

One of the most celebrated authors of the past 20 years, David Foster Wallace left an indelible impression on the American literary culture. His idiosyncratic, deftly crafted prose, vivid, off-the-wall imagination and thoroughly empathetic analytical eye set him apart as one of the most influential writers in modern American fiction and nonfiction.

In Consider the Lobster, a collection of his essays, Wallace covers a variety of different topics such as ghostwritten sports autobiographies, a Maine lobster festival, an adult film convention and John McCain’s 2000 presidential primary campaign, all with vibrant curiosity, resonant analysis and often a great deal of humor. Charles Mogen and William Goree will serve as moderators for this group.
MANAGED BY THE MARKETS
by Gerald Davis

Wednesdays 10:30 to 11:20
217 Cate Center 1
5 to 7 weeks

As financial institutions, corporations and the stock market insert themselves ever more into the daily lives of Americans, it is vital that we undergo a parallel increase in our understanding of these phenomena. In Managed by the Markets, Gerald Davis sketches a history of business in America, its trends and what we can expect in the future – including the rise of global corporations that rival governments in size and power.

Among other subjects, Davis explains in detail the worrying intermingling of commercial and investment banks and the changes in American law that have impacted corporations and mergers, all with an eye toward the culminating influences these had on the financial crash of 2007.

Prof. David Ray will serve as moderator for this group.

THE LIES OF LOCKE LAMORA
by Scott Lynch

Thursdays 3:30 to 4:20
217 Cate Center 1
13 to 15 weeks

Hailed by George R.R. Martin as “a bright new voice in the fantasy genre,” Scott Lynch captivates his audience with this thrilling tale of adventure, loss and revenge. Situated in the “Venice-esque” medieval city of Camorr, the novel quickly immerses its readers in the complex underworld that controls much of the city. Led by Capa Barsavi and working under the Secret Peace, the thieves of Camorr carve out for themselves a decent existence. However, Locke Lamora’s greedy nature has him and his gang disregarding the established rules by designing elaborate schemes to dupe the nobility of Camorr, despite the risk of punishment from the Capa. All the while, the mysterious Gray King lurks in the shadows as a constant threat to not only Locke’s gang but also the peace of the entire city. Locke must use his quick wits, ordinarily reserved for grand heists, just to ensure his survival.

Stephen Lindstrom and Aubrey Haverkamp will serve as moderators for this group.

NOLI ME TANGERE
by José Rizal

Tuesdays 11:30 to 12:20
101 Cate Center 1
9 to 11 weeks

Noli Me Tangere is a story of corruption that explores the turpitude of the Catholic Church in the midst of the Philippine Revolution. A tale of forbidden romance and false accusation, this sharply crafted book is sure to spark an intriguing dialogue of faith and society.

José Rizal, a polyglot of over 13 languages, wrote a book to spur on a revolution in which he was fated to die. His work is now required reading in all Philippine schools and considered one of the finest works of Spanish-language literature. Come read and discuss with us the excellent German English translation.

Cooper Williams will serve as moderator for this group.
A Tale for the Time Being
by Ruth Ozeki

Wednesdays 5:30 to 6:20
217 Cate Center 1
7 to 9 weeks

Award-winning novelist, filmmaker and ordained Zen Buddhist priest Ruth Ozeki’s remarkable Booker Prize shortlisted third novel, A Tale for the Time Being, addresses with beauty and compassion the harsh realities of modern existence. Ozeki writes through the twinned narratives of Nao, a Japanese schoolgirl recently uprooted from her family’s home in Silicon Valley after the dot-com bubble of the 1990s, and Ruth, a Japanese-American writer who discovers Nao’s diary over a decade after it was written. Across years and generational gaps, communicating with each other exclusively through the words of Nao’s diary, these women face everything from small-town gossip to extensive cyberbullying. A Tale for the Time Being deals with Zen Buddhism’s philosophy of passivity toward the violence manifest in the planet’s very workings, and the ways in which we shape our stories and those of the violent world in which we live.

Ivana Jaworski will serve as moderator for this group.

The Fountainhead
by Ayn Rand

This group will be scheduled by online Doodle poll

Illustrating her unique philosophy of objectivism, Russian-born novelist-philosopher Ayn Rand demonstrates the importance of individuality and reason in her first widely successful novel: The Fountainhead. Throughout the novel, protagonist Howard Roark chooses to remain true to his singular conception of architecture at the cost of success and fame. Despite the growing trend amongst competitors to borrow from the great architectural styles of ancient history to please public demand, Roark refuses to compromise his vision. Instead, he challenges himself to continuously create innovative, uncorrupted designs.

The Fountainhead offers the reader a glimpse into Rand’s philosophical system through themes of independence, self-reliance and the individual’s duty to himself. More than 6.5 million copies have been sold worldwide, and it was the book that first sparked Rand’s popularity—which has helped her to remain a popular figure to this day.

Wade Craig and Adrienne DePrisco will serve as moderators for this group.

Grimm’s Fairy Tales
by Jacob & Wilhelm Grimm

Mondays 5:00 to 5:50
217 Cate Center 1
3 to 5 weeks

Ever suspect Prince Charming was too sweet? Doubt that Rapunzel’s hair could support the body weight of a well-built man in his twenties? Ponder that seven dwarves living with a young woman was not a normal family unit? Want to know what really happened to Little Red Riding Hood?

Explore the not so happily-ever-after world of Wilhelm and Jacob Grimm’s original fairy tales, sans the Disney romanticizing. [Warm milk provided.]

Kiersten Strachen will serve as moderator for this group.
WAKING FROM THE DREAM
by David Chappell

Wednesdays 4:30 to 5:20
217 Cate Center 1
4 to 6 weeks

The Struggle for Civil Rights in the Shadow of Martin Luther King, Jr.

This book focuses on the years after Martin Luther King’s assassination — and provides a sweeping history of the struggle to keep the civil rights movement alive and to realize King’s vision of an equal society. OU history professor David Chappell demonstrates that, far from coming to an abrupt end with King’s murder, the civil rights movement entered a new phase. It both grew and splintered. These were years when decisive, historic victories were no longer within reach — the movement’s achievements were instead hard-won, and their meanings unsettled. Chappell, author of A Stone of Hope, called “one of the three or four most important books on the civil rights movement” by The Atlantic Monthly, will join this reading group for its last discussion.

Prof. David Ray will serve as moderator for this group.

STUPEUR ET TREMBLEMENTS
[French]
by Amélie Nothomb

Mondays 3:00-3:50
217 Cate Center 1
3 to 4 weeks

Stupeur et tremblements is a semi-autobiographical novel by Amélie Nothomb, which won the Grand Prix du roman from l’Académie Française in 1999. It is the story of a woman, Amélie, who was born in Japan but moved to Belgium with her family when she was five. She remained so enamored with Japanese culture, however, that she returned to Japan as an adult. The novel tracks Amélie’s difficulties trying to work in the corporate world in a culture which she loves so much but does not truly understand.

Her emotional journey is especially relevant to students who have already or will study abroad, as they will experience a similar immersion into a culture they may adore but come to realize they do not fully understand.

Laura Pearson will serve as moderator for this group.

THE HOT ZONE
by Richard Preston

Wednesdays 11:30 to 12:20
201 Cate Center 1
8 to 10 weeks

The Ebola virus kills nine out of ten of its victims so quickly and gruesomely that even biohazard experts are terrified. It is airborne, it is extremely contagious and in the winter of 1989, it seemed about to burn through the suburbs of Washington D.C.

At Fort Detrick’s USAMRIID, an Army research facility outside the nation’s capital, a SWAT team of soldiers and scientists wearing biohazard suits was organized to stop the outbreak of the exotic “hot” virus. The grim operation went on in secret for eighteen days, under unprecedented, dangerous conditions.

The Hot Zone tells this dramatic story, giving a hair-raising account of the appearance of rare and lethal viruses and their “crashes” into the human race. Shocking, frightening and impossible to ignore, The Hot Zone proves that truth really is scarier than fiction.

Avik Mukherjee will serve as moderator for this group.
THE GOOD BODY & THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES  
by Eve Ensler  
Mondays 7:00 to 7:50  
182 David L. Boren Hall  
3 to 4 weeks  

The Vagina Monologues is required reading for anyone interested in contemporary feminist literature and is frequently performed on college campuses (including OU’s every February). The monologues (originally performed in 1996–7) are based on the playwright’s interviews with approximately 200 women about what they thought about their vaginas, as well as topics including sex, relationships and violence against women.

The Good Body is a follow-up to The Vagina Monologues and has to do with the rest of the female body. This collection was inspired by the playwright’s attempts to rid her stomach of flab and covers such issues as plastic surgery, botox injections, fad diets and more. Expertly dissecting the worldwide obsession that women have with their bodies, The Good Body also presents testimonials of women who have come to terms with their bodies and accept them as they are.

Taken together, these books will introduce reading group participants to one of the most creative and insightful playwrights of our time. They will also encourage participants to engage in productive dialogue about contemporary women’s issues and body politics—two topics which directly affect the lives of today’s college students.

Dr. Julia Ehrhardt will serve as moderator for this group.

THE BOOK THIEF  
by Markus Zusak &  
WAS GOD ON VACATION?  
by Jack van der Geest  

Thursdays 4:30 to 5:20  
217 Cate Center 1  
14 to 16 weeks  

The Book Thief and Was God on Vacation book club hopes to introduce extensive debate on how style, narration, fiction versus nonfiction, length and a myriad of other literary elements convey the horror and triumph of various Holocaust survivors’ experiences.

The Book Thief is a fictitious work by Marcus Zusak in which the Holocaust is seen through the eyes of a young, adopted girl as she comes into her womanhood. Was God on Vacation is a short book based on the life of Jack van der Geest, a Dutchman who was one of only eight people ever to escape from Buchenwald concentration camp. As the Third Reich invades his home country, van der Geest becomes more involved in the Dutch resistance to the Axis occupation.

Both books will leave many speechless, but in entirely different ways — the unity created by reading these authors in conjunction is truly stunning.

Emily Ratliff and Lauren Yeagle will serve as moderators for this group.
Better: A Surgeon’s Notes on Performance
by Atul Gawande

Thursdays 5:00 to 5:50
101 Cate Center 1
5 to 7 weeks

Better, written by Atul Gawande, is a book about the use of three virtues to find success in medicine: diligence, doing right and ingenuity. These components are essential “for success in medicine or in any endeavor that involves risk and responsibility.” Gawande argues passionately that society needs to return to the basics of medicine. By focusing essays on individual problems — such as the importance of hand washing, the World Health Organization’s efforts to eradicate polio or the role of physicians in executions — Better teaches readers to analyze performance with humility and creativity. Although undoubtedly a great read for students interested in the medical field, Better also appeals to students of a variety of disciplines. As Pauline Chen wrote, “With this book, Gawande inspires all of us, doctor or not, to be better.”

Elaine Griffeth and Asheema Pruthi will serve as moderators for this group.

Atlas Shrugged
by Ayn Rand

Mondays 11:45 to 12:35
101 Cate Center 1
18 weeks

Tremendous in its scope, this novel presents an astounding panorama of human life: from the productive genius who becomes a worthless playboy to the great steel industrialist who does not know that he works for his own destruction ... from the philosopher who becomes a pirate to the composer who gives up his career on the night of his triumph ... from the woman who runs a transcontinental railroad to the lowest track worker in her Terminal Tunnels.

Atlas Shrugged is a mystery, one about the murder and rebirth of man’s spirit. It is a philosophical revolution told in the form of an action thriller, a ruthlessly brilliant plot with irresistible suspense.

Laura Kincaide will serve as moderator for this group.

It’s Complicated:
The Social Lives of Networked Teens
by danah boyd

Fridays 10:30 to 11:20
217 Cate Center 1
5 to 7 weeks

Have you ever been scolded for using the Internet too much — or too little? Do you know anyone who fears that using Facebook and Twitter will ruin us? From 2005 to 2012, ground-breaking researcher danah boyd interviewed a diverse group of young people in an attempt to define our actual relationship with social media. It turns out, it’s complicated. When we stop focusing on what’s good or bad about teenagers’ use of social media, we start to see the more interesting stuff: the racial politics in the digital divide, the meanings of privacy and the realities of cyberbullying, to name just a few.

If you are a teenager or ever have been a teenager; if you plan to work with young people or with social media technologies; if you use or deliberately do not use social media, we want you in our reading group!

Hayley Hinsberger and Sarah Otts will serve as moderators for this group.
"Women hold up half the sky," according to a Chinese proverb. But what about places where women are prevented from attending school, working or determining their own futures? Pulitzer Prize winners Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn travelled across Africa and Asia to interview women struggling and succeeding through such hostile circumstances. Stories include a Cambodian teenager sold into sex slavery and an illiterate Ethiopian woman who experienced devastating injuries that turned her into a "modern-day leper." Although the stories can be distressing, they also offer hope: the Cambodian teenager escaped and now runs her own business, while the Ethiopian woman was healed and became a surgeon. Half the Sky is also full of practical ways that ordinary individuals can make a difference. To Kristof and WuDunn, lifting up women around the world is not only a moral obligation: it is also the best way to fight poverty and improve everyone’s welfare — male or female — around the world.

On November 15, 1959, in the small town of Holcomb, Kansas, four members of the Clutter family were savagely murdered by blasts from a shotgun held a few inches from their face. There was no apparent motive for the crime, and there were almost no clues.

As Truman Capote reconstructs the murder and the investigation that led to the capture, trial and execution of the killers, he generates both mesmerizing suspense and astonishing empathy. In Cold Blood is a work that transcends its moment, yielding poignant insights into the nature of American violence.

Holly Holmaas and Margaret Clark will serve as moderators for this group.

Cross-dressing, gay subtext, drunken revelry and a prank gone too far — it sounds like the stuff of reality TV, but it’s all in William Shakespeare’s comedy Twelfth Night. When Viola washes up in Illyria after a shipwreck, thinking her twin brother Sebastian dead, she dresses as a eunuch for her own safety and enters the employ of Duke Orsino, with whom she falls in love. Orsino, while he takes quite an interest in his new servant “Cesario,” has been pursuing the beautiful noblewoman Olivia for ages, and she’s using every excuse she can think of to dissuade him. Olivia, in turn, promptly falls for Cesario. Add a Puritanical yet gullible house manager, a drunken uncle, Sebastian (spoiler alert, he survived the shipwreck) and the sea captain who lusts after him, and you’ve got five acts’ worth of an identity crisis just waiting to happen.

Whitney Thompson will serve as moderator for this group.
THE PHILIP K. DICK COLLECTION

Wednesdays, 12:30 to 1:20
217 Cate Center 1
18 weeks

Surely You’re Joking, Mr. Feynman!
by Richard P. Feynman

Fridays, 9:30 to 10:20
217 Cate Center 1
6-8 weeks

This reading group will discuss the four novels contained in the first volume of the Philip K. Dick Collection — Ubik, Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?, The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch and The Man in the High Castle (winner of the 1963 Hugo Award). These works contain many of the themes that make Dick’s science fiction so iconic: plots that artfully toy with reality, what it means to be human and the effects of the inevitable passage of time.

In addition to reading anything by Philip K. Dick is to enjoy unprecedented access into one of the strangest, most interesting literary minds of the 20th century. Many of his novels are heavily autobiographical and could only have been written by someone with his unique combination of brilliance, mental instability and substance abuse. For that and many other reasons they are to be treasured.

Surely You’re Joking, Mr. Feynman! is a collection of anecdotes told by Richard Feynman, the physicist who won the 1965 Nobel Prize for his work in quantum electrodynamics. While growing up in the Bronx during the 1920s and ‘30s, Feynman developed an affinity for science and learning, ideals which he embraced and carried throughout his career. Feynman’s stories give insight into his fascinating life, in addition to recording his reflections on philosophy and science.

His autobiography includes anecdotes ranging from talking to prostitutes in Las Vegas about the physicist Murray Gell-Mann to playing drums in a Brazilian samba band. Not by any means a typical theoretical physicist, Feynman leaves a lasting impression about challenging conventions and preconceptions.

Prof. David Ray and Walter Bezanson will serve as moderators for this group.

John Ludwig will serve as moderator for this group.
THE SUN ALSO RISES
by Ernest Hemingway

Tuesdays 4:30 to 5:20
217 Cate Center 1
10 to 12 weeks

An iconic novel of the Lost Generation, The Sun Also Rises is considered Ernest Hemingway's masterpiece. Following a cast of characters from the famed 1920s Parisian scene to the bullfights of Pamplona, the book mirrors Hemingway's experiences as an expatriate in Europe and is filled with careful studies of some of his closest friends.

But it also fulfills a broader purpose: to serve as a ringing endorsement of the proud disillusionment felt by an entire generation. Few novels have encapsulated to such a degree the time in which they were written — in the aftermath of World War I and in the midst of a continent's overwhelming fatalism. Yet The Sun Also Rises does contain a message of optimism. It's a hint of the way Hemingway saw his 'lost' generation, as expressed in the epigraph, from Ecclesiastes: "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever."

Benji Burnett and Dakotah Rainwater will serve as moderators for this group.

THE OTHER WES MOORE
by Wes Moore

Mondays 6:00 to 6:50
214 Cate Center 1
4 to 6 weeks

Two kids named Wes Moore were born blocks apart within a year of each other. Both grew up fatherless in similar Baltimore neighborhoods and had difficult childhoods; both hung out on street corners with their crews; both ran into trouble with the police. How, then, did one grow up to be a Rhodes Scholar, decorated veteran, White House Fellow and business leader, while the other ended up a convicted murderer serving a life sentence?

In December 2000, the Baltimore Sun ran a small piece about Wes Moore, a local student who had just received a Rhodes Scholarship. The same paper also ran a series of articles about four young men who had allegedly killed a police officer in a spectacularly botched armed robbery. One was named Wes Moore. After Wes was convicted to a life sentence, the two struck up a correspondence based on the coincidence of their names.

In alternating narratives that take readers from heartwrenching losses to moments of surprising redemption, The Other Wes Moore tells the story of a generation of boys trying to find their way in a hostile world.

Laura Figueroa will serve as moderator for this group.