



Volume 26, Number 1, March, 2004

Experiencing Interdisciplinary Learning. Review of *By the Torch of Chaos and Doubt: Consciousness, Culture, Poiesis, and Religion in the Opening Global Millennium* by Guy Burneko (Creenskill, NJ: Hampton Press, Inc.), 2003. Paperback (ISBN 1-57273-281-4p). Reviewed by Tanya Augsburg, Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies Program, Arizona State University. Scholar Guy Burneko takes up the very human experience of interconnectedness, which we tend to associate with religious or natural mysticism, in this extremely eclectic and provocative book. Burneko perhaps has a leg up over many more conventionally-minded academics (including academic interdisciplinarians) by viewing multiple and complex interdisciplinary problems holistically, as symptomatic of even larger transdisciplinary problems concerning ecology, spirituality, higher education, culture, consciousness, language, and thought. Readers of this newsletter will be most interested in Burneko's critique of higher education in America, as well as his prospectus for interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary education.

AIS Launches New Initiatives: Seeks Member Input and Involvement. Last spring, AIS surveyed its membership as part of its self-study. The Fall issue provided a full report on this comprehensive self-study and AIS planning and initiatives that will lead us into the next decade. One such initiative involved providing additional avenues for communication and inquiry among members between annual conferences. At the AIS conference in Detroit last October, conference attendees brainstormed possibilities that might form the core of member interaction and study over the next year or two. As a result, the AIS Board has identified several projects or services the Association might help to foster, involving the collection, analysis, and dissemination of information via in part by new pages on the website.

2003 AIS Conference a Success. Wayne State University hosted the 25th annual conference of the Association for Integrative Studies October 9-12, 2003, in Detroit, Michigan. The event coincided with the 30th anniversary of the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies at Wayne State and the 10th anniversary of the Master of Interdisciplinary Studies Program there. The conference included 173 participants from 26 states, as well as Canada, Switzerland, and Austria. There were 123 presenters in 63 conference sessions. There was also a substantial undergraduate and graduate student presence (22). Carol Geary Schneider, president of the Association of American Colleges & Universities, gave the keynote address, "New Frontiers in Integrative Learning." This was the third time that Wayne State had hosted the AIS conference.

Call for Proposals:

- The 26th Annual Conference of the Association for Integrative Studies will be hosted October 14-17, 2004, by Johnson C. Smith University, Charlotte, NC. The theme will be: "Practices of Integration: Improving Interdisciplinary Teaching and Learning." The deadline for proposals is April 30, 2004.

Job OpeningFellowship Opportunity

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Culture Studies, Literary Studies & Interdisciplinary Studies. Review of *Interdisciplinarity*, by Joe Moran. The New Critical Idiom Series, John Drakakis, ed. (London: Routledge), 2002. Paperback (ISBN 0-415-25132-X). Cloth (ISBN 0-415-25131-1). Reviewed by Karen R. Moranski, Associate Professor of English and Associate Director, Capital Scholars Program, University of Illinois at Springfield. Joe Moran's *Interdisciplinarity* examines the crossing of disciplinary boundaries within the field of literary studies. Moran has two primary purposes in writing: He explores the definitions of interdisciplinarity and the ways those definitions play out in critical theory, and he introduces students to a variety of integrated approaches used by the humanities, social sciences, and sciences.

Graph Theory, Mathematical Modeling & Interdisciplinarity. Review of *The Mathematics of Structure*, by John N. Warfield, AJAR Publishing, 2003. (ISBN 0-9716962-2-5). Reviewed by Paul Bugl, Associate Professor of Mathematics, University of Hartford. John N. Warfield in his 1976 book, *Societal Systems: Planning, Policy, and Complexity*, presented a detailed methodology for employing the technique of Interpretative Structural Modeling (ISM) so that groups could efficiently and effectively perform tasks. ISM, to quote Warfield, "is a computer-assisted learning process, with which groups can structure complex issues to form interpretable patterns." In *Mathematics of Structure*, he presents the mathematics necessary for implementing structural theory. That mathematics falls under the rubric of "graph theory."

New Consortium Explored: To Strengthen General and Liberal Studies Worldwide. An article by Peg Downes, University of North Carolina at Asheville, President-Elect, Association for General and Liberal Studies. On April 17, 2004, the officers of AGLS, Association for Core Texts & Courses, and the Association for Integrative Studies met with other interested parties to explore the possibilities for the cooperation of these three national organizations in a new project: the formation of an international network to encourage and strengthen the development of general and liberal studies programs worldwide.

Convocation Discusses Effective Practices. The National Academies Convocation on Facilitating Interdisciplinary Research drew participants from throughout the nation to Washington, DC in January 2004 to discuss effective practices for overcoming barriers to interdisciplinary research.

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'Intersections of Permanency and Passage': Interdisciplinarity from Perspective of Science Policy and Practice, Peter Weingart and Nico Stehr (eds.). A review by Francine G. Navakas, Integrative Programs, North Central College. In a year when the Association for Integrative Studies completes its 25th anniversary celebration, conversations about the intersections of disciplines abound. ... Peter Weingart and Nico Stehr's edited volume, *Practising Interdisciplinarity*, is a welcome development in the discourse. ... In *Practising Interdisciplinarity*, they have joined forces to explore institutional innovation in interdisciplinary science research. Both expansive and particular, their collection of essays on policymaking in the sciences sheds light on the connections between disciplinary and interdisciplinary forces at play in organizations and research arenas across Europe and North America.

Power in Focus well-chosen for interdisciplinary approach, Subhash Durlabhji, ed. Review by James C.

Hall, University of Alabama. Teachers of interdisciplinary and integrative inquiry are constantly faced with choosing between texts that are engaging in subject matter or theoretically nuanced, but, ironically, rarely do we get a satisfactory integration of the two. Surbhash Durlabhji's *Power in Focus* is then a welcome multidisciplinary meditation that at least partially provides the rich double-ness necessary to initiate students into the pleasures and possibilities of interdisciplinary inquiry and commitment. Indeed, Durlabhji's collection suggests that "power" may be the *only* subject that necessitates a productive looping of attention to "subject-at-hand" and disciplinary perspective. ... The book brings together an admirably international and distinguished group of contributors from fields as diverse as rhetoric, psychoanalysis, anthropology, neuroscience, applied physics, economics, and political science.

The University in Transformation: Global Perspectives on the Futures of the University, Sohail Inayatullah and Jennifer Gidley (eds.). Review by David Mayocchi. Originally appeared in the June-August 2004 issue of *Planning for Higher Education* 32(4):47-48. Reprinted with permission. Editors Sohail Inayatullah and Jennifer Gidley developed this collection of essays from an assumption that the university is a malleable entity and a belief that the best way to help shape the future of the university is by means of discussion about possible futures. The book is divided into four sections: Western perspectives, non-Western perspectives, alternative universities, and a final summary.

New resources added to website. Two useful resources have been added to the AIS website: "Designing Interdisciplinary Courses," an article by William H. Newell, originally published in *Interdisciplinary Studies Today* (1994, Jossey-Bass) and reprinted with permission from John Wiley & Sons, Inc., and "Guide to Interdisciplinary Syllabus Preparation," originally published by the *Journal of General Education* 45:2 (1996) and reprinted with permission.

Job Opening

Call for Papers:

- *Issues in Integrative Studies* offers an annual venue for publication of manuscripts on interdisciplinary and integrative themes. Additional publication guidelines can be found on the AIS website (<http://www.units.muohio.edu/aisorg>).

Call for Proposals:

- Arts Culture Nature has announced a call for proposals for its 2005 conference on the theme, "Earth Matters: Imagination and Practice in Sci-Arts Eco-Cultures." The conference is scheduled for May 19-21, 2005, at the University of Washington, Bothell. The deadline for submissions is Oct. 30, 2004.

AIS Notes:

- Dr. Donald Mager, chair of the 2004 AIS conference, has been appointed dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Johnson C. Smith University, Charlotte, NC.
- Congratulations to AIS member Ivan D. Kovacs on his recent retirement from California State University, Hayward. He was a longtime faculty member with the Department of Human Department, and he participated in 1979 in the national conference on "the teaching of interdisciplinary social science," at which AIS was founded.
- Dr. Faith Gabelnick, first dean of the Lee Honors College, Western Michigan University, and president emeritus of Pacific University, died June 13, 2004. She was 60.

2003 Issues now available. The 25th anniversary edition of *Issues in Integrative Studies* has been published. Stuart Henry and Roslyn Abt Schindler, both of the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, Wayne State University, served as co-editors. Copies of the 2003 edition were mailed to members in September, but a few copies are still available. For more information, contact Phyllis Cox, office manager, (513) 529-2659, or e-mail coxpa@muohio.edu.

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Creating a 'Humanities Policy': New Directions in the Earth Sciences and Humanities. an article by Robert Frodeman, University of North Texas Department of Philosophy and Religion Studies, frodeman@unt.edu, and Adam Briggie, University of Colorado Center for Science and Technology Policy Research, adam.briggie@colorado.edu. *New Directions in the Earth Sciences and the Humanities*, launched in 2001 with a \$15,000 grant from the Colorado School of Mines, consists of a series of projects based on the premise that the humanities represent a largely untapped resource for helping the earth sciences relate more effectively to society. It was launched in a milieu which has seen public science agencies increasingly turn toward philosophy and the humanities (what the authors call Humanities Policy) to integrate ethical and values concerns with their research.

ORUS & Interdisciplinary Seminar in Mexico. By Julie Thompson Klein, Wayne State University. ORUS, a federation of observatories in Central America, South America and South Africa, hosted an international seminar on September 27-28, 2004, focusing on four themes: interdisciplinarity and the challenges of university organization, interdisciplinary pedagogical and curricular strategies, the formation and constitution of interdisciplinary investigations and interventions, and civil and government projects that are shaping a public and political vision of interdisciplinarity. Further information about ORUS-related projects is available at <http://www.orus-int.org>.

26th AIS Conference draws diverse participation. A total of 153 persons attended the 26th annual conference at Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, NC, October 14-17, 2004. The theme was "Practices in Integration: Improving Interdisciplinary Teaching and Learning." Dr. Donald Mager was the chair. There were 123 presenters in 49 sessions. Several other features merit emphasis: The conference was the farthest south of any in AIS history; it was the first hosted by an historic black college/university; it was hosted by the smallest institution in the organization's history; sessions were of high caliber, and attendees were satisfied that their time was well invested; and 68 colleges and universities were represented, making the conference the most diverse in terms of participation in AIS history.

Job Posting

Call for Proposals:

- The Association for Integrative Studies and the Association for General and Liberal Studies has announced a call for proposals for its 2005 joint national conference on the theme, "Integrations: Liberal Learning in a Diverse World." The conference will be hosted by New Century College, George Mason University, October 6-9, 2005, in Fairfax, Virginia. The deadline for proposals is April 30, 2005.

For questions and comments, contact us at aisorg@muohio.edu