

# **a** ASSOCIATION FOR INTEGRATIVE STUDIES **is** NEWSLETTER

Volume 30, Number 4 (December 2008)

ISSN 1081-647X

William H. Newell, Editor

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The *AIS Newsletter* is published quarterly by the Association for Integrative Studies, Western College Program, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio 45056. Phone: 513-529-2659 or 513-529-2213 Fax: 513-529-5849 E-mail: Phyllis Cox at [coxpa@muohio.edu](mailto:coxpa@muohio.edu) or Bill Newell at [newellwh@muohio.edu](mailto:newellwh@muohio.edu)

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## ***A center for the study of interdisciplinarity: Not just another interdisciplinary center***

By J. Britt Holbrook, Assistant Director, and Robert Frodeman, Director, of the Center for the Study of Interdisciplinarity at the University of North Texas

This past fall, the University of North Texas (UNT) established the world's first center for the study of interdisciplinarity. Interdisciplinary centers for the study of this or that issue are common, as are centers that focus on one or another aspect of interdisciplinarity (e.g., the University of Bielefeld's Center for Interdisciplinary Research or Harvard's Project Zero), but no center has focused on the issue of interdisciplinarity in itself and, insofar as possible, in its entirety.

Having just participated in the 30<sup>th</sup> annual Association for Integrative Studies conference in Springfield, Illinois, we think UNT's Center for the Study of Interdisciplinarity (CSID) adds something unique to the intellectual activities of AIS. CSID is a research center, not a professional organization, and we approach interdisciplinarity less as a profession and more as the problem of the value—or, what today we think of as management—of knowledge. Interdisciplinarity in this sense is something that arose originally with

the pre-Platonic philosophers. We think this take on interdisciplinarity will complement the kinds of rich theoretical discussions to which AIS members are already accustomed (e.g., the exchanges between Szostak and Mackey [2002], and Newell et al. [2001]).

Admittedly, establishing the study of the whole of interdisciplinarity itself as the goal of a new center expresses a certain degree of hubris. It is not by chance that (the philosopher) Nietzsche described philosophers as "monsters of pride and sovereignty." Indeed, our ambition is to reclaim philosophy *as* interdisciplinarity, in opposition to the nook-dweller's task the discipline of philosophy has become since Nietzsche's time. Our efforts to interdisciplinize the institution of philosophy, is related—perhaps as the flip-side of the same coin?—to AIS members' ongoing discussions about attempts to define or institutionalize interdisciplinarity (or interdisciplinary studies—see Newell, 2007).

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## **Raymond C. Miller receives Kenneth Boulding Award**

The Association for Integrative Studies recently announced Professor Ray Miller as the recipient of the Kenneth Boulding Award during its 30th anniversary conference in Springfield, Illinois. The Boulding Award is the organization's highest honor bestowed on scholars and teachers whose work has made major, long-term contributions to the concept or enactment of interdisciplinarity.

Miller is a past president, founding journal editor, and longtime member of AIS. He is also the past president of the Society for International Development and Professor Emeritus of International Relations and Social Science at San Francisco State University. He received his PhD from Syracuse University and MA from the University of Chicago. His

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Ray Miller and his wife, Anja, attended the 2008 AIS conference.

## Center for Study of Interdisciplinarity ...

(continued from page 1)

Institutional support for CSID is part of a larger set of efforts at the University of North Texas. UNT is currently competing with six other “emerging research universities” in Texas to become the state’s next top-tier research university, and interdisciplinarity is the weapon of choice. UNT President Gretchen M. Bataille recently announced plans to spend \$25 million over the next five years for the creation of several new interdisciplinary research clusters, and plans are underway for the institution of interdisciplinary First Year Seminars for undergraduates beginning in 2009. Although both initiatives are welcome enhancements to UNT’s research and education portfolios, AIS members well know that both research clusters and interdisciplinary courses have been tried before (Sá, 2006; see also the AIS collection of interdisciplinary syllabi at <http://www.units.muohio.edu/aisorg/syllabi/index.shtml>). What’s unique is the center prong of UNT’s interdisciplinary trident: the creation of CSID.

CSID aims to generate a virtuous (as opposed to a vicious) circle of interdisciplinarity by (1) providing intellectual and financial resources for UNT faculty, staff, and students interested in interdisciplinary research and education; (2) networking faculty, staff, and students across campus to help put together the best teams for the best projects; (3) studying interdisciplinary research and education activities to identify institutional barriers to interdisciplinarity; (4) establishing metrics for the success or failure of interdisciplinary projects; and (5) developing a set of best practices for interdisciplinarity. This, we hope, will generate a cycle of improved interdisciplinary practices/increased sponsored research/greater enthusiasm for interdisciplinarity at UNT and provide a model that can be instructive for colleges and universities worldwide.

CSID is taking different approaches to different constituencies. For those

faculty, staff, and students who are already interested in interdisciplinarity, we will provide networking services, a venue for discussing their interdisciplinary successes and travails, and guidance and support (when asked!). In return, CSID will receive “inside” access to interdisciplinary activities across campus that will allow us to identify barriers impeding and best practices for fostering interdisciplinarity. The research clusters and the First Year Seminars will provide excellent case studies in this regard, since all participants in both initiatives already want to pursue interdisciplinary research or education, and they are quite open to CSID. CSID is also partnering with UNT’s Chile Program, <http://www.chile.unt.edu/>, to contribute to internationalizing our joint interdisciplinary approach.

CSID will employ a different strategy for engaging what we might call the recalcitrant disciplinarians. Recalcitrant disciplinarians are those who remain in their disciplines not because they believe they have cornered the market on knowledge, but rather because they see disciplinary knowledge as the only knowledge that counts. Recalcitrant disciplinarians often find it difficult to work with others in their own disciplines who have different intradisciplinary specializations (much less with experts from completely different disciplines) for the simple reason that they see cutting-edge disciplinary expertise as the *sine qua non* of epistemological competency. Expertise is hard won, and real communication with non-experts is close enough to impossible not to be worth the effort.

A recalcitrant disciplinarian is likely to be skeptical that interdisciplinary integration can meaningfully take place, even if there were agreement on the definition of interdisciplinarity, because the very depth and sophistication generated by the burgeoning professional literature on interdisciplinarity cuts off the possibility

of meaningful communication with all but those who are familiar with that literature (cf. Newell, 2007). As interdisciplinarians, we face a strategic dilemma. If we approach the recalcitrant disciplinarians as rank amateurs, then we will strike them as having nothing interesting to say. If we approach them as experts, then we may well strike them as having something interesting to say, but nothing that could possibly interest them. So, how do we avoid the horns of this dilemma? We propose to finesse expertise, as follows.

Of course, we will allow, experts in different fields cannot fully communicate their expertise to each other. Nevertheless, there exist certain interdisciplinary exigencies that even the recalcitrant disciplinarian must find a way to face. One of the most important of such interdisciplinary imperatives facing even the most recalcitrant of disciplinarians today is the demand that they demonstrate the societal relevance of their research in order to receive funding.

Take the National Science Foundation (NSF), for example. In order to receive NSF funding, every proposal must satisfy two criteria for project selection: (1) that it have intellectual merit (i.e., that it is “good science,” usually justified and judged according to disciplinary standards); and (2) that it have broader societal impacts (i.e., that it is relevant to the society that is funding this research). The trouble for the recalcitrant disciplinarian is that (most) experts in a field of science or engineering are *not* experts in broader societal impacts. Therefore, in order to satisfy the broader impacts criterion (BIC), experts in some field of science or engineering are required to work with experts in “broader impacts” fields, such as education, information science, or philosophy (Frodeman and Holbrook, 2007; Holbrook and Frodeman, 2007).

Yes, such interdisciplinary collaborations

will be difficult. However, we (disciplinary experts from different disciplines) are forced to work together (to become interdisciplinarians) in order to have the best chance to receive funding. That even recalcitrant disciplinarians will respond to such an appeal is also a hypothesis we are testing (see: <http://www.csid.unt.edu/about/bicteams.html>). Perhaps the most interesting question associated with this experiment is whether we can avoid multidisciplinary juxtaposition and encourage interdisciplinary integration. Those with whom we have already spoken in “broader impacts” fields (including education, learning technologies, library science, information science, applied anthropology, philosophy, political science, and radio, television, and film), have been overwhelmingly supportive of making the effort.

### CSID Service

CSID has begun networking across the UNT campus – giving a presentation at the Interdisciplinary Information Science PhD colloquium series in the School of Library and Information Sciences, and meeting with faculty and deans from the College of Public Affairs and Community Service, the College of Education, the College of Engineering, and the College of Arts and Sciences, as well as members of UNT’s new Research Development Team. We have also begun consulting with the new research clusters and the organizers of the First Year Seminars. Finally, we have instituted the CSID Speakers Series to bring exciting interdisciplinarians from around the world to UNT (see: <http://www.csid.unt.edu/service/>).

We are also involved in interdisciplinary education at UNT. This winter, Britt Holbrook will co-teach (with a conservation biologist) his second field course in biocultural conservation at the southernmost tip of South America (see: <http://www.csid.unt.edu/service/courses.html>), and next year Robert Frodeman

and Holbrook will co-teach a graduate seminar in The Theory and Practice of Interdisciplinarity.

### CSID Research

Given that CSID currently consists of four academics and three graduate research assistants, we have had to set aside our plans—temporarily—for establishing our own university as well as a set of foreign embassies. Instead, CSID is focusing on three research projects:

#### 1. Broader Impacts of Science and Technology

CSID is pursuing research on the integration of societal impacts considerations into the peer review process of five public science and technology funding agencies worldwide. This project, dubbed CAPR (“caper”) for the Comparative Assessment of Peer Review, is funded for three years by a \$400,000 grant from NSF’s Science of Science and Innovation Policy (SciSIP) Program (see: <http://www.csid.unt.edu/research/capr.html>). The knowledge we gain will both foster interdisciplinarity and improve the relevance of the scientific and technical research funded by these agencies. In addition, CSID personnel are guest-editing a forthcoming (2009) special issue of *Science and Engineering Ethics* devoted to better understanding the broader impacts of science and technology.

#### 2. Research into the State of Interdisciplinarity

Frodeman is the editor-in-chief of the forthcoming (2009) *Oxford Handbook of Interdisciplinarity*. Like other Oxford handbooks, this one will be composed of 40 varied-length chapters—including several authored by leaders of AIS—dealing with such topics as the history of interdisciplinarity; different forms of interdisciplinarity (cross-disciplinarity, multidisciplinary, transdisciplinarity, antidisciplinarity, postdisciplinarity, etc.); interdisciplinarity in the sciences, social sciences, humanities, and arts;

and methods and difficulties in the practice of interdisciplinarity. Because it conceives of interdisciplinarity in a broad sense, the handbook will also include chapters on teamwork, partnerships, and collaborative agreements—all of these both inside and outside the university (for further information, including a table of contents, see: <http://www.csid.unt.edu/research/HOI/index.html>).

#### 3. Philosophical Dimensions of Climate Change

CSID is also pursuing research on the philosophical dimensions of climate change. Our research, funded by a \$150,000 grant from NASA, will ask how scientists and policy makers can become more sensitive to the cultural and philosophical dimensions of climate change issues. How do more refined data and improved computer models change the ethical dimensions of climate policy? How are the burdens and benefits of climate change likely to be distributed both nationally and internationally? How can governments, businesses, NGOs, and individuals better appreciate the ethical dimensions of scientific insights? This project will also explore the interdisciplinary context of climate science—how different methods, perspectives, timelines, and interpretive frameworks are blended to create a holistic interpretation of use to policy makers and the public (for further information, see: <http://www.csid.unt.edu/research/pdcc.html>).

Future plans for research include a critique of the current status of philosophy as regional ontology and books by Frodeman (*Interdisciplinarity and the Limits of Knowledge*) and Holbrook (*Unexamined Research is Not Worth Funding: A Philosophical Treatment of the Peer Review of Grant Proposals*). Our future research plans also include contributing both in person and in print to the intellectual life of AIS.

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## 30<sup>th</sup> Annual AIS Conference:

*Theme of engaged citizenship was a natural fit*

By Karen Moranski, University of Illinois at Springfield

We few, we happy few, we band of . . . (mostly) sisters at the University of Illinois at Springfield are honored to have had the opportunity to host the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference for AIS. Choosing the theme of engaged citizenship for the conference was a natural fit—UIS has built a 40-year history on public affairs, interdisciplinarity, and community service, and invested its future in a new general education curriculum based on life-long learning and engaged citizenship.

For a small institution of less than 5,000 students, a conference like this one was important in the intellectual life of the campus. The financial support of the Provost, Dr. Harry Berman, was crucial to making the event happen and essential for the participation of almost 30 UIS faculty and staff, who were eager to get feedback on their interdisciplinary research and teaching and to learn from the work of others. As Dr. Berman mentioned in his welcome to conference-goers, conferences are about connections between people and ideas, and UIS was so proud to serve as the site for those connections around the theme of engaged citizenship and the subthemes of higher education, public policy, and global awareness. The synergy between UIS's mission and the conference theme worked well, and by all measures, the conference was a smashing success! The conference themes, the diversity of the conference participants, and even the location in Springfield, Illinois, converged to create an energizing atmosphere for celebrating and moving forward interdisciplinary and integrative studies.

Part of what was so exciting for those of us who hosted the conference is that even though Springfield was a

“small venue,” we were able to draw people from 26 states, the District of Columbia, and 4 foreign countries (Canada, Australia, Chile, and the Netherlands). In the end, we hosted 159 participants, 99 of whom were first-time attendees to an AIS conference. One of the graduate students who participated in the conference, Jordan Hill, debuted an important new survey of interdisciplinary programs: the *Interdisciplinary Master's Program Directory* (available through the AIS website at <http://www.units.muohio.edu/aisorg/Masters/mastersdirectory.shtml>). Graduate students Matthew Haar Farris and Jordan Hill were also featured in a session hosted by Dr. Wolfgang Natter from Virginia Tech on “Preparing for a Future in the Academy and Beyond.”

It was perhaps fitting that AIS's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary conference could take place in Springfield, a place where past, present, and future have intersected recently in complex ways. Springfield is currently in the midst of honoring two important historical moments. The first set of commemorations concern the terrible events of the 1908 Springfield Race Riots that disclosed deep divisions of race and class in the community and helped provide the impetus for the founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The second set of events concern the celebration of the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth, and by extension, the life and achievements of Abraham Lincoln.

These two historical circumstances are themselves deeply connected as part of the history of race relations in America—both the shame and the reconciliation—and AIS conference-goers had the opportunity to learn

more about this complex history in the town where Senator Barack Obama announced his candidacy for presidency and began a path leading to his election as the first African-American President of the United States. The difficult path leading to the groundbreaking November 4 election might be symbolized by the Springfield Race Riots of 1908, discussed in a thought-provoking lecture at the conference by Dr. Roberta Senechal de la Roche, author of the only book-length study of the riots (recently re-issued as *In Lincoln's Shadow*, SIU Press, 2008). Senechal identified the African American victims and white rioters by class, occupation, and city geography and examined the reasons why racial violence exploded in this place and time.

A gala event at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum, Springfield's world-class tourist attraction, afforded conference-goers the opportunity to explore the career of the man whose efforts to protect the Union and end slavery were accompanied by political and moral ambiguity, as well as personal and national sacrifice. History, political science, geography, sociology, and the visual arts represented at the museum came together to provide the framework for both the Senechal lecture and the museum event.

Two highlights of the conference program were the keynote speakers, Dr. Ray Miller, AIS Past President and Founding Editor of *Issues in Integrative Studies* and Dr. Larry Golden, Professor Emeritus at UIS and Co-Director of the Downstate Illinois Innocence Project. Each keynote speaker offered a nuanced understanding of interdisciplinary and integrative studies based on years of experience. Ray

Miller's long history with AIS and his own interdisciplinary specialty of international political economy made him the ideal keynote speaker for a 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary conference focusing on higher education, public policy, and engagement local to global. Miller's keynote speech was a model of integration, as he wove the history of the field of political economy and the history of AIS together with a discussion of the need for interdisciplinarity studies in higher education for the betterment of society. At once sobering and hopeful, Ray Miller convinced the audience that collaborative and engaged problem-solving is the way to improve our economy and society.

Dr. Larry Golden's keynote address was a harrowing account of the work of the Downstate Illinois Innocence Project to exonerate people who are falsely accused of felony crimes in Central Illinois (<http://cspl.uis.edu/ILAPS/DownstateIllinoisInnocenceProject/index.htm>). In relating the intricate story of the conviction and eventual exoneration of Julie Rea Harper of the murder of her son, Joel, Golden showed the audience how integrative and interdisciplinary problem-solving has made a difference in individual human lives and has contributed to righting some of the wrongs of our criminal justice system. Conference participants had the opportunity to learn how higher education institutions committed to civic engagement and community involvement can effect changes in public policy.

To find the real source of satisfaction for the folks who attended the conference, however, you need to understand the value of the individual sessions. Like the collage of Lincoln on the cover of the conference program, the labor on interdisciplinary and integrative research and pedagogy done at universities across the world, adds up to a total greater than the sum of its parts. One of the perennial laments of AIS conference attendees is the inability to see and do it all. Too

many choices, too little time! Concurrent sessions being a necessary evil to keep the conference to a manageable length, we tried to provide tracks that would help people choose a path through the sessions. Our tracks this year were:

- Engagement and Knowledge Making;
- Engagement and Public Policy;
- Engagement in Teaching and Learning; and
- Engagement and Action.

As one of the folks putting those tracks together, I can tell you that putting sessions into those tracks was sometimes a challenging business, since many presentations and sessions could easily have fit into more than one track. Boundary crossings happen no matter how we try to organize, and we wouldn't want anything less!

At the wrap-up session on Sunday morning, Dr. Fran Navakas of North Central College and an AIS Board Member helped lead conference-goers through a review of the themes that bubbled up organically from the individual conference sessions. One of those themes was, in fact, boundary work happening in the disciplines—how the academy and areas within it define discipline. As always, in the margins of disciplinary boundaries, we re-evaluate, re-assess, and re-define. A variety of sessions played with definitions in the sciences, the humanities, and the social sciences, such as the presentation by the team from University of North Texas reporting on efforts to re-envision the discipline of philosophy by engaging with people outside the discipline or the panel discussion that (re)examined the roots of disciplinary knowledge and explored the implications of new theories for integration.

Another theme mentioned at the wrap-up session was the significance of the humanities, and changes that have occurred in the humanities over time. Those changes were evidenced by

two presentations in a session called "Transformation in the Humanities," as well as in a session on "Interdisciplinary Humanities." Some presentations connected the humanities and the liberal arts in general with the professions, including law and health care. Others connected disparate parts of the academy, such as the humanities and the STEM disciplines (science, technology and math). For example, conference participants heard about Project Cement at Indiana University of Pennsylvania that connects English and math teachers. They heard about the team of engineers, social scientists, and humanities scholars at the Colorado School of Mines working on humanitarian engineering and sustainable community development and Wofford College's philosophy/physics learning community on citizenship.

As is usual at AIS conferences, pedagogy and curriculum development is a thread that unites many of the sessions and presentations. The workshop on "Nuts and Bolts of IDS Development and Assessment," run by Pauline Gagnon and Allen Repko was a terrific hands-on how-to session, praised highly by those who attended. As Fran Navakas noted at the wrap-up, the work being done on interdisciplinary and integrative studies in classrooms across the world cuts across baccalaureate and graduate degree programs. Moreover, the work being done is both more holistic and more detailed than ever before as those of us involved in implementing coursework grow more sophisticated in our techniques for turning theory into practice. Substantial case studies dealt with general education, capstone courses, core curricula, co-curricula, living-learning communities, study abroad, and integration across traditional higher education divisions like student affairs and academic affairs. The importance of experiential and service-learning for engaging students was evident in individual sessions, as

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# 31<sup>st</sup> Annual AIS Conference

October 8<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup>, 2009

Hosted by the University of Alabama

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA  
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES



Dear Colleagues:

On behalf of the organizing committee, the New College program, the College of Arts and Sciences, and the Creative Campus Project at the University of Alabama invite you to join us in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, from October 8<sup>th</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup>, 2009, for the 31<sup>st</sup> annual conference of the Association for Integrative Studies.

Our theme is “Creativity and Play across the Disciplines,” and we invite you to participate in sustained reflection upon dramatic changes in the knowledge economy that make urgent approaches to learning, scholarship, research, and engagement that activate the creative capacities of higher education communities. From Richard Florida’s accounts of the emergence and dominance of the new “creative class” to Daniel Pink’s insistence that “right brainers will rule,” interdisciplinarians are working hard to fully assess and activate all the ways in which creativity gives meaning and depth to learning and understanding.

Come to Tuscaloosa, Alabama, for our marvelous fall weather, our good food and hospitality, and to enjoy the historic campus of the University of Alabama. The municipal and university communities are home to major collections of American art, one of the finest archaeological parks in North America, superb music, theatre, and dance facilities and programs, and the Paul Bryant Museum of College Football. We are, in other words, the perfect site for reflecting on creativity and play in higher education, and we look forward to your presence, ideas and engagement.

In early December of this year you can check our website—<http://aisconference.ua.edu>—for updates and opportunities.

We look forward to providing you with southern hospitality and extended and memorable conversation, debate, and challenge.

For the committee,

Jim Hall  
Director, New College



## CALL FOR PROPOSALS

31<sup>st</sup> Annual Association for Integrative Studies Conference

October 8<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup>, 2009

Hosted by the University of Alabama

### Creativity and Play Across the Disciplines

Dramatic changes in the knowledge economy make urgent approaches to learning, scholarship, and engagement that activate the creative capacities of higher education communities. From Richard Florida's accounts of the emergence and dominance of a new "creative class" to Daniel Pink's insistence that "right brainers will rule," scholars and students alike are being encouraged to discern and highlight the role that creativity can and should play in giving meaning and depth to learning and understanding. This not only means celebrating and enhancing the traditional role of the arts in building cohesive learning communities, but a fuller investigation of how the paradigm of creativity can lead to a compelling vision of integration and interdisciplinarity.

To facilitate this consideration, we welcome proposals for presentations in multiple formats, including, but not limited to, roundtable discussions, integrated panels, single papers, and performances that address issues such as:

- Creativity as Core Educational Value – creativity as assessment outcome; arts participation and general education; creative capacity as distinct intelligence; creativity and empathy; creativity as introduction to diversity; creativity and the integrative learning process; creativity and interdisciplinarity; leadership and the arts; the arts in the non-arts classroom; creativity and professionalism.
- Creativity and Collaboration – building innovative campus collaborations amongst artists and engineers, scientists, designers, and others; creativity as a paradigm to bridge the "divisions" of humanities, natural and social sciences; interdisciplinary research on creativity; creativity, entrepreneurship and career development; invention, innovation, and economic growth.
- Creativity as a Means of Integrating Campus and Community Economies – community/campus arts partnerships; confronting deficiencies in K-12 arts education; supporting students as arts entrepreneurs; creativity and community renewal; creativity and the knowledge economy; culture as an economic base.

While the program committee welcomes the sharing of best practices, we are especially interested in presentations, events and conversations that self-consciously consider the complex and dynamic relationship among creativity, interdisciplinarity, and integrative learning. As always, the Association for Integrative Studies welcomes more general presentations that advance its mission to promote the interchange of ideas among scholars and administrators in all of the arts and sciences on intellectual and organizational issues related to advancing integrative and interdisciplinary studies.

Proposals (250 words) should be sent to [AISconference@bama.ua.edu](mailto:AISconference@bama.ua.edu) by March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009, and we expect to respond to proposal writers by May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009.





## Remembering Joseph Kockelmans

By Julie Thompson Klein with Ray Miller, Stan Bailis, Carl Mitcham, Bob Frodeman, Darryl Farber, and Beth Casey

The Association for Integrative Studies has lost a friend and a major scholar of interdisciplinarity. Joseph J. Kockelmans, a distinguished Professor Emeritus of Philosophy at Pennsylvania State University, died on September 28, 2008, at the age of 84. Born in The Netherlands, Kockelmans received a PhD in philosophy in Rome and did postdoctoral work in mathematics at Venlo, physics in Leyden, and philosophy at Louvain. He was an internationally known expert on phenomenology and philosophy of science, a past president of the American Philosophical Association, and from 1973-1996 Director of the Special Individualized Interdisciplinary Graduate Program in the Humanities (SIIDGPH) at Penn State. *Interdisciplinarity in Higher Education*, the book he edited for Pennsylvania State University Press in 1979, situated interdisciplinarity within the historical development of knowledge and higher education. Written by Kockelmans and his Penn State colleagues, it was cited throughout the American academy for years and was the counterpart of the seminal book by European scholars published in 1972 by the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development, *Interdisciplinarity: Problems of Teaching and Research in Universities*.

AIS members came to know Kockelmans directly at two annual conferences. In 1985, he was the keynote speaker for the meeting at Eastern Kentucky University. His address, "Interdisciplinarity and the University: The Dream and the Reality," appears in Volume 4 of *Issues in Integrative Studies* (1986, 1-16). AIS members would see Kockelmans again when he hosted the 1987 meeting at Penn State, with a focus on

interdisciplinarity and public life. In one of the featured sessions, he spoke along with Rustum Roy, a fellow author in the 1979 anthology. In 2000, Roy went on himself to edit a collection on *The Interdisciplinary Imperative: Interactive Research and Education, Still an Elusive Goal in Academia*. Published by Writers Club Press, the book was based on a conference at Penn State on interactive research and materials science.

Julie Klein, former AIS President and co-editor of the forthcoming *Oxford Handbook of Interdisciplinarity*, remembers meeting Kockelmans in the early 1980s. She wrote to him seeking a private meeting to discuss ideas for a book on the history, theory, and practice of interdisciplinarity:

"I was thrilled to find a letter from him in my mailbox. 'If you are already coming to Penn State,' he wrote, 'we can meet.' I lied. I was not planning to visit anyway but made a special trip just to see him. I remember vividly his greeting in the lobby of the campus union. He was a soft-spoken and gracious man. We talked at length about interdisciplinarity. 'I would not use the same philosophers you do,' he admonished gently. But his feedback was enormously valuable, and through the years he continued to offer support and accepted my invitation to deliver the keynote address for AIS in 1985. He also became a role model for me of what an academic should be—rigorous in mind but always humane in character."

Ray Miller, past president of AIS and founding editor of *Issues in Integrative Studies*, met Kockelmans in 1985 at the conference in Kentucky. He remembered him as "a quiet, scholarly man with proper European dress and manners.

Despite his pre-eminent stature in philosophical circles of both Europe and the United States, you would never notice him in a crowd." Miller also recalled the impact Kockelmans' 1979 book had on the faculty in the Interdisciplinary Social Science department at San Francisco State University, who organized a semester-long faculty seminar around it:

"Each of us took responsibility for leading discussion on one of the 11 chapters. He wrote two of them himself, probably the best known of them the essay, 'Why Interdisciplinarity?' He argued that the fragmentation in modern society was created partly by disciplinary specialization and that it was undermining the ability of society to effectively address its practical and spiritual needs. Only a holistic, coherent and harmonious philosophical system that was widely shared could bring us together and save our civilization. Other chapters addressed personal, institutional, and research problems faced by interdisciplinarians and, because of Kockelmans' belief in comprehensiveness, he included major articles by representatives of science and social science as well as his own realm of the humanities."

Upon hearing of Kockelmans' passing, Stan Bailis, Miller's San Francisco State colleague and former editor of *Issues*, dug out his copy of *Interdisciplinarity and Higher Education*. Looking through heavily underlined pages, Bailis found himself returning to his personal debate with the book, which struck him as "more programmatic than argued and expressed in indefinite ways. Not surprising," he reflected, "since his main man, Husserl, strikes me that way, too." At the same time, Bailis was struck by three major



contributions Kockelmans made:

- His emphasis on the educational/organizational aspects of interdisciplinarity in universities;
- His warnings against an overzealous promotion of interdisciplinarity as the solution to all problems;
- His sense of disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity as complementary practices.

Carl Mitcham, Director of the Hennebach Program in the Humanities at Colorado School of Mines and another co-editor of the forthcoming *Oxford Handbook of Interdisciplinarity*, also offered his remembrances. Mitcham first met Kockelmans when interviewing for a job at Penn State in 1987. “He was undoubtedly the member of the Department of Philosophy and the Science, Technology, and Society (STS) Program who was most sympathetic to my own somewhat eccentric interdisciplinary background.” When Mitcham joined the Penn State faculty with a split appointment between Philosophy and STS, Kockelmans became one of his most supportive mentors and invited him to join the SIIDGPH that he had created more than a decade earlier. Kockelmans also introduced him to the literature on interdisciplinarity and the different approaches to interdisciplinary practice. When Kockelmans retired in the mid-1990s as Director of the SIIDGPH, he was instrumental in getting Mitcham appointed as his successor. Like many colleagues, Mitcham remembers they did not always agree:

“From Joe’s perspective, it was not possible to do interdisciplinarity without first being a disciplinarian; I argued otherwise, that one could become interdisciplinary right from the start and then acquire appropriate levels of disciplinarity as needed. We argued this issue for years. What was wonderful about Joe was his willingness to argue with someone who was so much less

knowledgeable than himself, and then to support me when necessary even though we disagreed. I directed my first PhD dissertation under his watchful eye, and learned repeatedly to seek his counsel in dealing with the academic bureaucracy. One of his favorite principles with regard to interdisciplinarity was that it functioned best when it operated under the radar. He strongly resisted public promotion and my occasional efforts to confront the disciplinary powers. ‘You don’t need to do that,’ he’d say. ‘Quieter is better.’”

Looking back now, Mitcham is struck by how Kockelmans’ broad knowledge of the history of philosophy and ideas informed his commitment to interdisciplinarity:

“I see his implicit Aristotelianism and Thomism as the foundation of the kind of interdisciplinarity that was always taking things in without ever becoming an ideology. He was what I might call a conservative rather than a radical interdisciplinarian. Yet, he was a strong supporter of such more fire-breathing radicals as Rustum Roy and Ivan Illich and the idea that philosophy must engage with the world that science and technology were in the midst of transforming. He was one of the most substantive interdisciplinarians I have known.”

Tributes also arrived from former students. Robert Frodeman, senior editor of the *Oxford Handbook* and Director of the Center for the Study of Interdisciplinarity at the University of North Texas, knew Kockelmans when he was completing a PhD in Philosophy at Penn State from 1983-1988. Frodeman took several graduate courses with him and visited him in his office frequently. In 1984 Kockelmans invited him to become his assistant for the International Kant Congress. Frodeman recalled his introduction to what would become a continuing debate between the two of them about the nature of philosophy and the philosopher:

“I was simultaneously impressed and repelled by the intricate, recondite level of scholarship embodied by the savants attending the Kant Congress. Later, I took his course in Heidegger’s *Being and Time*. The only assignment for the course was the writing of a 20-page paper. I acutely remember seeing him as he walked out of the graduate student commons after returning my paper. ‘I could have given you an F, you know,’ he said. ‘But I have given you an A. You think of yourself as a philosopher, don’t you?’

‘I am not a philosopher,’ he continued. ‘I am a scholar. If you insist on writing this way you will either be a philosopher or a fuddy-duddy.’”

Frodeman saw Kockelmans only one more time after leaving Penn State, at a conference sometime in the early 1990s. “What I remember of Joe,” he reflected, “is his unfailing kindness and old world manners, his vast erudition, and his commitment to fair-mindedness. In a philosophy department filled with characters, Joe Kockelmans embodied a standard of dignity which I find growing in importance with the passing years.”

Darryl Farber sent a remembrance of Kockelmans, who served as a committee member for his interdisciplinary PhD degree. Farber later remained in touch with him and visited him in a nursing home when his health declined. He recalled a recent conversation about the nature of interdisciplinary graduate study, during which Kockelmans made two essential points:

“The first is that the student must be free to explore and develop his or her own ideas and the second is that it is the responsibility of a graduate committee to ensure that the student has a firm grounding in disciplinary thought. The student then is empowered to work at the intersection of disciplines in a grounded and disciplined manner. The interpretation of a problem through different disciplinary views opens an intellectually productive path and new ways of thinking.”

(continued on page 11)

**30th AIS Conference ...***(continued from page 5)*

well as in the workshop hosted by UIS's Experiential and Service-Learning Program. Finally, Allen Repko, AIS Board Member and author of *Interdisciplinary Research: Process and Theory*, had the opportunity to share his book on the pedagogy of ID research, reflect on his work and its application to the classroom, and sign copies for conference-goers.

The overarching conference theme of engagement produced a workshop by the UIS Center for State Policy and Leadership on public policy, lobbying, and engaging students in policy debates. It also produced a strong set of individual sessions on sustainability, social justice, and globalization. The panels and presentations this year look ahead to the 2010 AIS conference, hosted by Stuart Henry from San Diego State University, the theme of which will be sustainability.

Another cross-cutting theme visible at the conference was, perhaps not surprisingly, the language of interdisciplinary and integrative studies, language that characterizes the process and explores the diverse public and international faces involved in interdisciplinarity today. This theme was visible in a variety of sessions that introduced theoretical constructs such as "dominanta," "epistemological negotiation," and "integral thinking," neologisms such as culecopolsology, and new areas of analysis such as library classification. Sessions that framed the challenges of multiculturalism, the oppression of the "other," and exclusion in American culture provided opportunities for reflection and calls for action.

The language of interdisciplinary and integrative studies gains breadth and depth through internationalization. *The New Oxford Handbook of Interdisciplinarity*, forthcoming in Spring 2009 and introduced at the

conference by its co-editors Robert Frodeman, Julie Thompson Klein, and Carl Mitcham, and its managing editor J. Britt Holbrook, testifies to the global impact of interdisciplinary studies. In addition, the conference highlighted work being done in the Netherlands at Utrecht University and the University of Amsterdam and in Australia at Murdoch University that is expanding our understanding of theory and practice. There was exciting talk at the conference about the development of ID organizations in Europe and Australia. The prospect of international conferences has some of us already packing our bags!

Less a part of formal sessions and more a part of the buzz of conversation at the conference were the topics of the economy and the national election. The economy and its implications for funding in higher education held particular resonance for those at the conference who had struggled to find the resources to travel. At the wrap-up session, we noted that the causes and effects of the economic crisis deserve further analysis by interdisciplinary scholars, as does the outcome of the national election.

There are so many problems, issues, and topics that need investigation by interdisciplinary scholars and practitioners, and we can continue the conversations of the 2008 conference by attending the next AIS conference to be held in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, hosted by Jim Hall, Director of New College at the University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa. The theme of next year's conference is "Creativity Across the Disciplines." Look for the Call for Proposals in this newsletter, and plan to propose a session. Be an AIS regular, find an interdisciplinary home with us! We had a great time hosting the conference in Springfield, and we look forward to taking a large contingent from UIS to the conference next year!

■■■

**Job Postings**

The Association for Integrative Studies has received the following job announcements for posting on the AIS website. Find complete information on applying for the positions on the Jobs in Interdisciplinary Studies page, <http://www.units.muohio.edu/aisorg/Jobs/index.shtml>.

**Assistant/Associate Professor of Anthropology or Sociology**, Spalding University, School of Liberal Studies. Contact: John Wilcox, Chair, School of Liberal Studies, Spalding University, 845 S. Third St., Louisville, KY 40203. Phone: 502-585-7122. E-mail: [jwilcox@spalding.edu](mailto:jwilcox@spalding.edu).

**Assistant Professor, Interdisciplinary Social Science**, New College, The University of Alabama. Contact: Dr. Jerry Rosenberg, New College, The University of Alabama, Box 870229, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0229. E-mail: [jrosenbe@bama.ua.edu](mailto:jrosenbe@bama.ua.edu).

**Adjunct Instructors** to teach online course in interdisciplinary studies, Center for Continuing Studies, University of Connecticut. Contact: Chair BGS Search Committee, c/o Beverly Salcius at <mailto:beverly.salcius@uconn.edu> or by mail to Beverly Salcius, Center for Continuing Studies, University of Connecticut, Unit 4056, One Bishop Circle, Storrs, CT 06269-4056. Additional inquiries and questions should be directed to Beverly Salcius at (860) 486-2064. ■■■

It's time to renew  
your membership in  
AIS for 2009. For  
information, e-mail  
[aisorg@muohio.edu](mailto:aisorg@muohio.edu).

## Remembering Kockelmans ...

(continued from page 9)

As program director, Kockelmans cultivated a community of interdisciplinary scholars, a vital source of camaraderie for an individualized program. Farber recalled, "Social gatherings once or twice a semester were well attended, highly intellectually stimulating, and good fun. Dr. Kockelmans devoted himself to creating a community for the pursuit of rigorous, interdisciplinary scholarship. He devoted himself to giving students the maximum creative freedom, provided it was well-grounded in scholarship."

Ray Miller concluded that, despite his personal reserve, Kockelmans "possessed the vision, the initiative and the scholarly stature to assemble the authors who wrote the first 'big book' on interdisciplinarity based on American university experience." The challenges articulated in that book are still with us today. So is debate on the relationship of disciplines and interdisciplinarity.

Beth Casey, the former AIS president who worked with Kockelmans in securing Penn State as the sponsor of the 1987 conference, linked his interest in furthering interdisciplinarity study and AIS to the current task of establishing a new practical *paideia* to prepare students for citizenship. Emanating from ancient Greece, the concept of *paideia* became central to liberal education. The concept, Kockelmans wrote in *Interdisciplinarity*, cannot be the result of "a system." It must be redefined in each era so that the real life of society can be addressed collectively, and integration must also take place within each individual in order to live a meaningful life in our world." As a prolific scholar and administrator, Casey reflected, "this modest, humble, and gracious man worked toward the meaningful integration of private and public worlds in all his ventures."

We join in honoring the example of the *paideia* of our fellow scholar, our friend, our mentor, and our teacher. We are much the richer for having known him.



### CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENT INDIVIDUALIZED MAJOR PROGRAMS: BEST PRACTICES AND BESETTING CHALLENGES

March 5-6, 2009 – Bloomington, Indiana

Dear Colleagues,

This conference – the first of its kind for individualized programs – had its genesis in discussions among three individualized major program directors who said, "Let's bring together faculty, advisors, staff, students, and graduates of individualized major programs across the country to share best practices and discuss besetting challenges." Indiana University has agreed to host the conference in Bloomington.

The provisional program includes panels on:

- Institutional arrangements for individualized major programs
- Program relationships with university departments, professional schools, and other units
- Encouraging interdisciplinary, integrative, and independent learning in individualized majors
- Advising individualized majors – through admissions processes, advising over writing, by faculty, professional advisors, and peers
- Creating, building, sustaining, and evaluating individualized major programs

The conference organizers encourage participants to volunteer for participation in panels and to bring poster presentations about their own individualized major programs for display at the conference.

We look forward to meeting you and having great discussions in Bloomington in March!

Dan Gordon, University of Massachusetts, Margaret Lamb, University of Connecticut, and Ray Hedin and the IMP Conference Planning Team, Indiana University Bloomington

Further details: <http://www.indiana.edu/~imp/conference>

## Center for Study of Interdisciplinarity ...

(continued from page 3)

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**Kenneth Boulding Award ...**

*(continued from page 1)*

culminating work, *International Political Economy: Contrasting World Views*, was published by Routledge press this past summer. Miller's "courage in the service to the public good" was cited as a key feature of his commitment to creating social change, another criteria of the prestigious Boulding award. Miller's contributions to interdisciplinary discourse and its applications extend beyond the academy into city and regional government, as a three-term mayor of Brisbane, California, and a member of Mateo County, California, commissions on planning, governance, and transportation.

Past winners of this award include:

Kenneth Boulding (1990), Ernest Boyer (1993), Jerry Gaff (1993), Julie Thompson Klein (2003) and William H. Newell (2003). ■■■■

## **AIS Conferences:**

*Put these dates on your calendar*

Plan ahead to attend the next AIS Conference and the ones coming up! Join us as we continue to celebrate interdisciplinary studies into the new decade:

31<sup>st</sup> annual AIS Conference, October 8-11, 2009, hosted by the University of Alabama—Tuscaloosa. Contact: James Hall (jhall2@nc.ua.edu).

32<sup>nd</sup> annual AIS Conference, October 7-10, 2010, hosted by San Diego State University. Contact: Stuart Henry (stuart.henry@sdsu.edu).

33<sup>rd</sup> annual AIS Conference, October 13-16, 2011, hosted by Grand Valley State University (held in Grand Rapids, Michigan). Contact: Christine Drewel (drewelc@gvsu.edu).

If you are interested in hosting an AIS Conference, please contact Roslyn Abt Schindler, AIS Board Conference Coordinator (rozschind@aol.com).



**Association for Integrative Studies**

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