



“Human-ites”

by J. Scott Miller, Dean



Photo by
David John Arnett
(Photography '24)

SEVERAL YEARS AGO, alumnus Christoph Luschin ('06) wrote in to describe his six-year-old daughter who, while staring intently at a copy of the *Humanities* magazine and referring to faces on the cover, asked, “Who are they? Are they the Human-ites?” Apparently, the girl assumed that our magazine described yet another tribe in the Book of Mormon’s saga of warring factions.

Some days, when I venture into the world of social media attacks on BYU and the College of Humanities, I feel like I am entering a turbulent world. We live in a time of “identification,” where a myopic focus on political or group identity robs our communities of the valuable benefits that can come from our differences. Add to this the fact that rage mongers use unmonitored public forums to monetize our natural fear of others, and we find our world mirroring the enmity and dysfunction of the *-ite* societies described by Alma and Helaman.

One primary marker of identity is language, a trait that often defines us as human at a very fundamental level. Among the thousands of languages spoken on the planet, some (such as Ainu, Bantu, Diné, and Inuit) are called by their word for *human* or *the people*. Other language names (such as Cherokee, Sioux, or Comanche) are applied to their speakers by outsiders to describe their inability to speak the observer’s language. The in-group and out-group differentiation that language marks can become an impassible barrier. But if one is willing to leave one’s comfort zone and seek to understand how others see the world, language can be a portal into remarkable new worlds and insights.


Professor Allen Christenson (Interdisciplinary Humanities), who speaks fluent Mayan and spends time doing fieldwork in Guatemala, notes that Mayans call themselves “corn people” based upon a folk belief that one is, literally, what one eats. When North Americans come to visit, Mayans attribute their inability to speak Mayan to the fact that the outsiders eat wheat. They insist that if the visitors change to a corn diet they will, over time, become corn people too and will thus be able to speak Mayan. And it works: after nine months or so of eating corn and living among the Mayan people, visitors do, in fact, begin to understand and speak basic Mayan, a physical and linguistic change that will open them to both smooth communication in everyday exchanges and also a

worldview that stems from different conceptions of time, nature, relationships, and cosmology.

When we learn a second language, we become, in a very literal as well as figurative sense, doubly human because we acquire a new identity, sometimes even a new name. This can be a very humbling and disorienting experience, but it also teaches us a great deal and can be a source of remarkable personal, intellectual, and spiritual growth as we find ourselves strangers in a strange land. Among bilingual people who share the same language, code-switching between languages can add unique layers of nuance, an experience that monolingual speakers may never access. Learning other languages changes us forever, turning us into new creatures with more complex identities and new ways to belong—helping us escape the monochromatic identities often foisted upon us by those who choose to see the world through narrow, polarizing glasses.

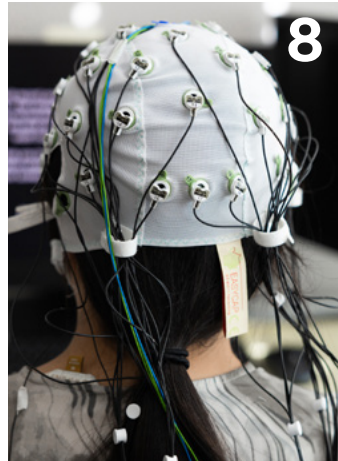
The humans of the College of Humanities represent a remarkable collection of people who, at face value, seem fairly homogeneous but, under the surface, live wildly rich lives with complex identities. Some have spent years traveling and living in foreign countries, speaking several languages fluently and moving seamlessly between very different communities. Others have invested the time and energy to polish talents or have cultivated interests that connect them with experts around the globe.

Yet others have become world experts in fields and cultures that require significant feats of inquiry and imagination. These diverse scholars are amazing, multidimensional resources of empathy and human understanding who unselfishly choose, semester after semester, to share their talents and insights with students from across the entire university. On top of this, their very presence on campus demonstrates their abiding commitment to support our sponsoring church, adding the identity of disciple to that of scholar and teacher.

This issue of *Humanities* explores the breadth and depth of the unique community of disciple-scholars that makes up the College of Humanities at BYU. We hope that it will help you better understand the grand, unfinished project underway here, as well as the hope we nurture that our students, after months or years of consuming the bounteous intellectual and spiritual feast we provide, will gradually become multilingual, brightly faceted “human-ites” who identify themselves, and all humankind, as children of a common God. 

**When we learn a
second language,
we become doubly
human.**

In This Issue



William Glackens. *Family Group*, 1910–11. Courtesy National Gallery of Art, Washington;
Photos by David John Arnett (Photography '24)

2 To Be Human

by Ellie Smith

8 State of the Discipline: Linguistics

by Simon Laraway with Joshua J. Perkey

13 Celebrating 10 Years of the BYU Humanities Center

by Rex Nielson

14 University Thinking

by Frank Christianson, Leslee Thorne-Murphy,
and Jeff Turley

20 Comics, Computers, and the Digital Humanities

by Hanna J. Muhlestein

5 Lexicon

6 Reader Response

12 Perspective

23 Faculty Publications

24 College Updates

26 Comings and Goings

28 Vox Humana

29 Crossword

Publisher J. Scott Miller

Editor Joshua J. Perkey

Editorial/Design Team Jenica Freeman, Juan Pablo Gutierrez,
Brett Hilton, Julie Irvine, Simon Laraway, Hanna J. Muhlestein,
Brynli Myers, Ellie Smith, Lauren Walker

Photographer David John Arnett

Design Advisor Laura Ricks

HUMANITIES magazine is published twice per year for
alumni and friends of the BYU College of Humanities.
2022 Brigham Young University. All rights reserved.

Feedback? We would like to hear your veils, your
memories of campus, or an update on your life since
leaving BYU. Please email humanitiespr@byu.edu.

**For information about giving to students in
the College, contact J. Scott Miller, dean, at
801-422-2779 or scott_miller@byu.edu.**

BYU College of Humanities
4002 JFSB
Provo, UT 84602
801-422-2775
hum.byu.edu

To Be Human

by Ellie Smith (English '23)

Art, culture, and language. Faculty in the College of Humanities use all of these and more to better understand what it means to be human.



William Glackens. *Family Group*, 1910–11. Courtesy National Gallery of Art, Washington

The College of Humanities constantly evaluates what it means to be human. What better way to ponder that question than through the most moving humanistic subjects: culture, language, art, literature, philosophy, history, and religion. These subjects reveal the most about what it means to be ourselves and why that matters. Simply put, they analyze the human condition.

The College utilizes a variety of approaches in this study, but each one emphasizes the same core competencies—cultural navigation, communication, and information literacy—to better understand and navigate the human

condition. For example, Visiting Assistant Professor Jarron Slater (Rhetoric, Professional Communication) says, “The humanities are a process of educating people so they can act and live in accordance with their true nature, a nature shared by all human beings.” Human nature is woven through all aspects of culture, from language to religion; hence, human nature provides a perfect framework to discuss the goings-on in the College.

Language and Culture

Across the College, faculty use language and culture as a way to connect meaningfully with

their research. For example, 71 languages are analyzed and taught regularly in the College, and 35 majors are offered—most of them language focused. Professor Matthew Christensen (Chinese) says, “Humanities is the study of human nature and human interaction and what makes us all human. And foreign languages and literature are all about understanding other people from other cultures.”

However, connection does not come from simply speaking the same language as someone else. Assistant Professor Jim Law (Historical Linguistics) spoke of the need for education to connect people. “We cannot

understand a people without understanding their language: not just how to speak it, read it, or sign it but also its structure, its rhetorical patterns, its artistry and diversity. The humanities offer us a language-shaped window through which to see the people of the world more clearly.” With more language programs at BYU than most universities, faculty can look through many different windows. Adjunct Faculty Joyce Guidi (French) reaffirmed this idea. “It is absolutely amazing to be working with people from such a huge variety of cultures every single day and learning from them. That is something I would be less exposed to in any other college.”

People understand more about themselves as they teach their language to others, something seen prominently in the English Language Center. The center provides a laboratory school for teachers learning to teach English to speakers of other languages, as well as high-quality English language instruction for students desiring to learn English and improve their English language skills. The English Language Center program coordinator, Ben McMurry (English Language Teaching and Learning), put it this way, “We think of the humanities as students coming to the university to learn, but really what we are doing that makes BYU so unique is we are providing an opportunity for our students to teach.”

Computer programming languages offer another perspective of humanity. Tory Anderson, the senior web application developer for the Office of Digital Humanities, says, “Working in digital humanities, I like to think we are riding the crest of up-and-coming humanities. By virtue of my work and research, I

“Learning about cultures helps us develop charity, ‘the greatest of all’ gifts.”

get to straddle humanities and computer science, where humanities provide the question-asking power and computer science provides the question-answering power. As computer solutions become increasingly accessible to the masses, humanities are more important than ever to see that those solutions are ethical and meaningful.”

The study of culture weaves through the study of language—often in collaboration with scholars across disciplines. Professor Jennifer Bown (Second Language Acquisition) says, “The term *humanities* suggests that we

study humanity: its achievements, its culture, its enduring questions. But the study of humans is broad. As a linguist, I study language but often use social science methods to do so, and I have collaborated on research with faculty members from around the university, including from the College of Physical and Mathematical Sciences and the College of Family, Home, and Social Sciences.

“One of my recent projects involves the ways in which ethnic group affiliation might be affected by geopolitics. Together with colleagues in Linguistics, we are studying how the war in Ukraine has affected ethnic Russians living in former Soviet countries.”

Art and Literature

Though the study of art is particularly emphasized in the Department of Comparative Arts & Letters (art history is housed in the department), faculty throughout the College study art and its role in culture and society. Art can evoke empathy for others, teach about different cultures, and promote unity. Associate dean and professor Corry Cropper (French) explains, “The humanities allow us to grapple with complicated issues and get away from the ‘us against them’ mentality that dominates social media. Reading literature, studying art, and learning about cultures help us develop charity, ‘the greatest of all’ gifts.”

Cinema, another artistic form, captures and displays emotion in a visually powerful medium. Film is used to express personal experiences from people around the globe, and International Cinema brings those films to faculty and students at BYU. The program also holds regular lectures on Wednesday evenings to provide context and analysis on the films.

Professor Julie Allen (European Silent Film, Danish Literature), an author of several books about silent cinema, says, “The humanities give color and meaning to our world; flesh out abstract philosophical, economic, and political questions with stories of real people; and help us appreciate the diversity of God’s creations. Even in black-and-white silent films, the centrality and vibrancy of people’s lived experiences—of love, loss, joy, fear, pain, and delight—is what speaks to viewers’ hearts and minds across time, space, and cultural divides.” Cinema reaches a wide audience; the diverse international films provide context for other cultures.

Pop culture combines art and literature into exciting new expressions of humanity. The study of pop culture aims to remind students of the importance of choosing media critically. Visiting Instructor Joseph Darowski (Pop Culture Studies) says, “We can gain empathy and understanding through the stories we consume. Popular culture surrounds us, and being able to think critically about the media around us is vital, no matter what role we find ourselves in.”

Of course, these stories are found in literature, myths, and legends. Creation stories can help people understand where they came from and examine their purpose in life. Slater suggests that the divine nature of all humans, our status as children of God, is what connects humankind.

He says, “We understand that it is not just our humanity that we have in common but our divine potential as future heirs of eternal life. To discover what makes us human is at the same time to discover our innate and potential divinity. From this perspective, the common story that unites us all as human beings is the story that we all lived together in the premortal life, that we exercised faith in Jesus Christ there, and that we are here on earth to again exercise faith in Christ, repent, and participate in God’s work.”

“The humanities have taught me to see both the bowl and the fish rather than simply being entertained by the latter.”

This perspective suggests that our potential, not just our divine heritage, defines us as humans. Slater emphasizes that understanding naturally influences our actions. “Seeing one another as fellow children of God helps us in our interactions with one another. When we see not only the humanity of one another but the potential divinity of one another, we are led to be kinder, more forgiving, more respectful, and more charitable.”

The study of literature, of course, is foundational throughout the College. Scholars dig deep into literary analysis to learn about the human condition, but they also analyze literature to help teach critical thinking and communication skills and even dive into cultural analysis. Such study elevates both faculty and students. Associate Professor Jamie Horrocks (Victorian Studies) explains, “Because consuming literature and art means being required to think the thoughts—experience the experiences—of other people, the humanities have helped me to see beyond myself and to appreciate that my perceptions are just that, my perceptions, limited by my own biases and cultural ideologies. To use Toni Morrison’s famous analogy, the humanities have taught me to see both the bowl and the fish rather than simply being entertained by the latter.”

Understanding other people enables outreach and empathy. In these acts of kindness, people connect, and in connection lies humanity.



Vincent van Gogh. *The Olive Orchard*, 1889. Courtesy National Gallery of Art, Washington

Philosophy, History, and Religion

In the Philosophy Department, students ask big questions with abstract answers. These questions often revolve around humankind's past and the concepts that inform religion. Associate Professor David Jensen (Ethics and Value Theory) explains that understanding the humanities helps us understand religion. "Philosophy is a discipline that studies our most fundamental concepts and principles, things like beauty, truth, morality, personhood, existence, knowledge, and so forth. As it turns out, religious teachings and questions often share an abstract and nonempirical character with philosophy.

The philosophical study of our intellectual bedrock—the study of questions about truth, knowledge, morality, the purpose of life, and so forth—can therefore help us better understand gospel principles and commitments."

All study at BYU is influenced by religious beliefs, so when examining all of these facets to the humanities, Assistant Professor Cherice Montgomery (Spanish Pedagogy) reminds students that religion is what makes the humanities at BYU special: "One of the most unique features of the humanities programs at BYU is their persistent invitations to students to integrate learning by study and also by faith. The faculty research that feeds the humanities programs at BYU is also incredibly creative. As a result, I think our programs engage students in intriguing ways that inspire testimony, illuminate possibilities for social change, and encourage innovation."

"It was religion that shaped society for most of human history."

Historical study informs scholarly understanding of most subjects; linguists look into how words form over time; art historians see how people create based upon what they have learned from past artists; philosophers examine how ideas of the past have influenced the current state of countries today. Assistant Professor Kevin Blankinship (Arabic Language and Literature) says, "Religion is the root of culture. It was religion that shaped society for most of human history. Cities were built around temples and mosques. Parties were thrown for religious holidays (the word *holiday* itself means 'holy day' or 'sabbath'). Music, art, grammar, and philosophy began as expressions of faith and tools for reading sacred texts. And the list goes on."

Relating this idea back to BYU, Blankinship says, "Given religion's huge impact on history and culture, plus the fact that BYU students typically think about and practice religious ideas in their daily lives, those students are readier than almost any college population to study past peoples and cultures. This also means that BYU humanities can plunge deeper into its subject matter than most topflight secular schools, where students may struggle to grasp how faith could be the force behind literature, art, and thought from the past. Ignoring religion in culture and society robs the humanities of their power, just as acknowledging the role of religion enriches and fulfills the humanities as only a faith-based life can."

What It Means to Be a Human

So just what are the humanities? Culture, language, art, literature, philosophy, history, and religion are the base subjects, but by expanding on them in numerous creative ways (think International Cinema, the Office of Digital Humanities, and the English Language Center), these subjects compose our study of what it means to be human. That lies at the heart of the humanities. Assistant Professor Johnny Allred (English) sums it up nicely: "I have seen how a study of the humanities can connect young people across time and cultures, expanding their worldviews and providing a space for powerful discussions of morality, friendship, love, and courage. We need the humanities, perhaps now more than ever." ■



August Macke. *People by the Blue Lake*, 1913. Courtesy National Gallery of Art, Washington

Human ['hju:mən]

by Jacquelyn Christensen (Early Modern English)

Noun. One who has the characteristics of humans as compared to other beings or species.



Paula Modersohn-Becker. *Portrait of a Peasant Woman*, 1898–99. The Art Institute of Chicago

Every time we say *humanities*, we first say *human*. The word *human* labels what kind of being we are (not dogs, not angels). But *human* also describes us: our fallibility (human error), our creativity (human pretzel), and our innate goodness (human kindness). The humanities explore human experience, which can, in George Eliot's words, enlarge or amplify our own "experience and extend our contact with our [fellow humans] beyond the bounds of our personal lot." Eliot claimed that "art is the nearest thing to life."¹ Her term *art* encompasses what we do in the humanities, and this art can—and should—change us.

Early uses of the word *humanity* mean "the quality of being humane."² *Humane* was, until the 18th century, a variant spelling of *human*. The meaning we now associate with *humane* is closely related to the Latin word *humanus*, meaning "characteristic of people, civilized, cultured, cultivated, kindly, considerate, merciful, indulgent."³ Relatedly, humane learning was seen as that which would civilize and better students. Even now, we study humanities seeking to be better.

Latin also had a word for the opposite, *inhumanus*, which we have taken as *inhuman*, "destitute of natural kindness or pity; brutal, unfeeling, cruel."⁴ Shakespeare used *inhuman* for his worst villains: Lady Anne calls Richard (who will become Richard III) "inhuman"⁵ and Roderigo calls Iago an "inhuman dog" when he finally sees Iago for what he is.⁶ How chilling that we humans can turn from our humanity!

We study the humanities to develop compassion for others. At the end of *The Tempest*, Prospero listens to the spirit Ariel admit that his "affections would become tender" for the shipwrecked nobles "were [he] human."⁸ Ariel is setting himself apart from humans, but he is also describing an essential characteristic of humans: humans feel compassion. Ariel's plea to Prospero is the moment that diverts Prospero from

his revenge plot. In that moment, Prospero turns away from inhumanity and chooses to join humanity again.

We study the humanities to make ourselves more human. George Eliot argued that what we gain from art is "the extension of our sympathies." In particular, she said, "a picture of human life such as a great artist can give, surprises even the trivial and the selfish into that attention to what is apart from themselves."⁹ As we study the humanities, we grow in the ability to attend to others, to understand what is apart from ourselves.

Each of us can meet only a few people in this life, and most of them will be more or less like us—they will live at the same time, perhaps in the same place, maybe have similar lives. But humanity is much broader, much deeper, than the few people we know. When we study the humanities, we study from the inside what it meant to be human in the distant past, what it means to be human in diverse cultures, what it means to be human far "beyond the bounds of our personal lot." And with that knowledge we can become not only human but truly humane. ■

1. George Eliot, "The Natural History of German Life," *George Eliot Archive*, www.georgeeliotarchive.org.

2. *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "humanity," www.oed.com.

3. *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "human."

4. *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "inhuman."

5. *Richard III*, eds. Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2018), 1.2.62. References are to act, scene, and line.

6. *Othello*, eds. Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2017), 5.1.74.

7. *The Tempest*, eds. Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2015), 5.1.23–24.

8. *The Tempest*, 5.1.26.

9. George Eliot, "The Natural History of German Life."

Reader Response to *Humanities Magazine*

In this Reader Response, we asked readers to consider the role they see humanities playing in the broader BYU mission, how their humanities education impacted their lives, and how their humanities education helps them engage with different cultures.



Mary Cassatt. *Under the Lamp*, c. 1882. The Art Institute of Chicago

Q1: How does studying the humanities play a role in your life, your community, or BYU's mission to provide a balanced, uplifting, and productive education?

A1: Humanities education provides context to all other learning by giving us understanding of the continuum of human experience and creativity. It helps us understand and revel in our place in the universe as beloved children of God with a divine destiny and eternal purpose. Through the humanities, we feel the worth of a soul and the wonder of the human mind through depictions in literature, music, history, art, and philosophy. We appreciate the divinity we see in the creations of our sisters and brothers who have shared this planet. The humanities help us see beyond an earthly finite to the heavenly infinite.

A2: I think that humanities, more than other subjects, allow students to explore points of view other than their own. I felt more comfortable as a queer BYU student with my French professors than with professors from any other department and wouldn't have survived without them. I feel like my professors presented new ideas in fun and interactive ways that made me interested in different topics and made me want to continue to learn.

A3: The College of Humanities gave me a home to explore my questions, and my classes provided tools to aid me in the journey. As I sharpened these tools in my study of the humanities, I left my undergraduate study equipped with skills that have helped me navigate every aspect of my life—from my personal relationships to my faith journey to career goals and responsibilities. In short, my study of the humanities helped me learn who I was and wanted to be, which has impacted all my decisions since then.

A4: The humanities help me see God as the living Father of us all and His Son as the Savior of mankind.

A5: I taught English for over 12 years at a therapeutic boarding school for troubled youth in Provo. I feel like my broad education literally blessed the lives of my students since I was often able to instill a love of learning in them, which they would take home with them when they left.

A6: I think the humanities provide the “why” behind why people and organizations do things. Other colleges on campus may emphasize the “how.” But without the “why,” it's easy to get lost. We need both.

A7: My humanities education has made me a curious person. I'm a generalist and don't shy away from describing myself as such. My general understanding of the world has helped me to communicate with just about anybody in an engaging matter. In my professional life, this skill is indispensable.

A8: My humanities education allows me to approach the world with curiosity instead of judgment. When I think of the elements of human nature that I read about in literature, I recognize those in real life.

“My humanities education allows me to approach the world with curiosity instead of judgment.”

A9: In a world that is so technology driven, the humanities provide a refining, softening, and ennobling element.

A10: I am a physician, and I can think of no better way to prepare one not only for the rigors of medical school and residency training but also to lead a balanced life as a physician. My BYU humanities education grew my ability to care, to understand, and to feel in addition to enhancing skills of critical thinking, speaking, and writing all within a framework of spirituality.

A11: I loved the interdisciplinary nature of my American studies major—looking at American history and culture from literary, historical, religious, musical, political, and economic perspectives was deeply enriching and just left me wanting to learn more and more.

A12: As a homeschool mom, I feel that having a broad base helped me be prepared by knowing about a lot of areas—but more so how to evaluate the effect it would have on my children and their upbringing. I often think that every person should be trained in the humanities because it helps us think outside of ourselves.

A13: My study of linguistics in the humanities has been a benefit in my own life in many ways. It has proved very useful in genealogical research when it comes to deciphering old documents, including names and naming patterns, and how the meanings and spellings of words have changed. It also helped me when I worked for the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. I was involved in transcribing audio material of interviews with alleged war criminals and war victims for lawyers to use in later trials.



Rembrandt van Rijn. Lieven Willemsz van Coppelend, Writing Master: The Smaller Plate, c. 1658. The Art Institute of Chicago

Q2: How has your study of the humanities helped you understand the importance of learning other languages or impacted your desire to engage in different cultures?

A1: Language learning opened my eyes to new worlds. Rich cultures enhanced and shaped my own culture. Three times in my career I lived and worked as an expatriate in foreign cultures where I was not a visitor but an immersed denizen. I credit my humanities background for giving me a strong curiosity for language and culture.

A2: BYU gave me the BEST education in this. From study abroad to professors uniquely qualified through their experiences and study, I realized long ago that my education in language and culture far exceeded that of my colleagues who attended other universities in the same field.

A3: Other languages and cultures open us up to new ideas and new ways of thinking. This provides opportunities for expanding our knowledge but also challenges the ideas we have. Often, I have found that seeing things from a different perspective has strengthened my own beliefs as I see the flaws in other ways of thinking. In other situations, I've seen that my ways of thinking need some changes.

“Rich cultures enhanced and shaped my own culture.”

A4: My study of humanities makes me feel like I should learn much more than just the language; understanding the history and folklore better will help me connect better with my Chinese family and teach Chinese to my daughter. I also love learning about other cultures through food and music.

A5: At a minimum, the study of other languages and cultures broadens our understanding of our own language and culture. Such study also broadens our view of the world, especially our fellow brothers and sisters scattered across the whole earth. As we learn more about their interaction with one another and with the world in which they live, we deepen our understanding and appreciation for them and for the larger world in which we live. It also deepens our feelings and appreciation for our Heavenly Father and His plan for all His children.

A6: Completing a French study abroad in Paris and studying French really opened my eyes to how little I know about the world. This made me want to keep learning about different languages and cultures and meet different people and hear their stories. I believe that if people know only one language and do not travel to learn about other cultures, their view of the world is really limited.

A7: Learning other languages opens up new worlds, both outside and within our own country. Although I am of Japanese ancestry, I never felt Japanese until I learned the language. I am not German, but I appreciate things German since I have studied the language. I even feel I get new insights from reading the ancient and modern scriptures in German. In some ways, a new language reveals a different worldview beyond material culture.

A8: Studying the humanities taught me about one of Christ's crowning characteristics. As our Savior, He understands us perfectly. It is for that reason that He can succor us so perfectly. Studying the humanities allows us to be like Him in that it teaches us to understand others. While we will never be able to understand with perfection as the Savior can, to understand others is to emulate Christ. **H**

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

ACROSS 1. ways, 5. Santa, 10. road, 14. Arte, 15. on top, 16. side, 17. side of the pillow, 20. ate, 21. SSN, 22. outlet, 27. kimono, 33. unban, 34. ACL, 37. Calif, 38. to have, 40. lie, 41. behalf, 42. inside job, 43. Izzard, 47. ver, 48. bonsai, 52. Duomo, 53. ERS, 54. aphid, 55. eterna, 57. strode, 58. Sno, 61. RCA, 63. hit the broadside, 72. ICEE, 73. roams, 74. Ore!, 75. deal, 76. Depot, 77. back

DOWN 1. was, 2. ARL, 3. YTD, 4. see, 5. soft, 6. ante, 7. nth, 8. toes, 9. apps, 10. RSL, 11. oil, 12. ado, 13. dew, 18. oar, 19. ink, 22. outside, 23. UNO, 24. TBH, 25. Laa, 26. enviton, 28. iceboat, 29. mah, 30. ola, 31. nil, 32. offside, 34. alive, 35. cider, 36. leers, 39. end, 41. bob, 44. zur, 45. Zoe, 46. AMR, 49. NPR, 50. Sho, 51. Aid, 56. ash, 57. sad, 59. nerd, 60. oboe, 61. Romo, 62. cast, 63. hid, 64. ice, 65. tea, 66. tel, 67. rap, 68. sob, 69. Ira, 70. Dec, 71. elk



STATE OF THE DISCIPLINE: LINGUISTICS

by Simon Laraway (Editing and Publishing '23)
with Joshua J. Perkey (Manager of Digital Media and Communications)

Over the last 30 years, the Department of Linguistics has grown dramatically, expanding its majors and professional development for students and adopting an interdisciplinary and collaborative approach to research.

The fourth floor of the Joseph F. Smith Building is home to several mainstays of the College of Humanities: the Departments of English, Philosophy, and Linguistics, as well as the dean's office. The hallways are lined with scholars' offices, conference meeting rooms, and alcoves where students study (or nap). However, nestled between office spaces on the south-side hallway, visitors will find something that may seem incongruous: the Functional Near-Infrared Spectroscopy lab, easy to miss while walking down the hallway. The only thing to distinguish it from the surrounding offices is that its plaque bears not the name of a scholar but the acronym fNIRS. Inside the lab is equipment for analyzing brainwaves: helmets with attached electrodes, bulky computers, real-time graphs of brain activity flitting across monitor screens.

At first glance the lab might seem a little out of place in the College of Humanities. One might expect it would fit better in neuroscience or psychology (or, for that matter, a science fiction novel). But the location of the lab is no mistake. It belongs, in fact, to the Department of Linguistics. ("Neurolinguistics Language Sciences Lab," the subtitle on the plaque reads.) Faculty use the lab to study brain activity and language in their research on neurolinguistics and language acquisition.

This inconspicuous lab represents the Department of Linguistics as a whole quite well: it sits firmly within the College yet utilizes methods that extend beyond traditional notions of the humanities. This variety of approaches to humanistic questions opens the door to an especially broad range of scholarly work and teaching in the depart-

ment. As Professor Janis Nuckolls (Anthropological Linguistics) recently said, "I would characterize linguistics as the scientific and humanistic study of language in all of its possible dimensions."¹

LINGUISTICS AT BYU: A BRIEF HISTORY

Linguistics began at BYU in 1965 as a program within the English Department before becoming its own department in 1972. Since then, it has undergone several reorganizations and title changes—most recently, in 2018, going from the Department of Linguistics and the English Language to the Department of Linguistics as we now know it. Since

the beginning, linguistics offered students the opportunity to study the sounds, structure, history, and acquisition of language in a systematic way.

Over the last couple decades, the department has continued to add and adjust majors in a desire to better serve students. The department introduced a second major—the English language major (not to be confused with the English major)—as a way to study the English language through a linguistic lens. In 2022 the depart-

ment restructured and retitled this major, calling it applied English linguistics, to provide students with a more customizable yet focused experience.

"The idea was to breathe new life into the major," says Nuckolls, "with a new title, new emphases, and different foci to make it more appealing to a broader range of students." Now the major allows students to focus on four different emphases of linguistics: linguistic computing, language acquisition, language in history, and language in society.





Student Anna LaTour participates in an electroencephalogram (EEG) study in the fNIRS lab. The cap she wears records her brain activity as she responds to prompts on the screen in her second language. Photo by David John Arnett (Photography '24)

Faculty regularly meet with students to help them plan and customize their studies. Associate Professor Wendy Baker-Smemoe (First and Second Language Acquisition) adds, “We focus on helping students with their research and with their projects as well.” Further, the department has always been closely involved with TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) and other language courses at BYU. As faculty realized, BYU’s unique student body offered perfect opportunities for research on language teaching and acquisition. Baker-Smemoe says, “We have such perfect subjects here at BYU who have served these missions in these interesting places, so we can ask questions about languages that other departments can’t.” Shared interests in acquiring languages forged continuing bonds between the department and the College’s English Language Center and the Center for Language Studies, as well as other departments and centers that teach a spectrum of languages. The department accordingly introduced a TESOL MA and a TESOL minor for students looking to work in the booming English language teaching industry.

THE EDITING AND PUBLISHING MAJOR

As department faculty evaluated the professional needs of their students, they identified another significant opportunity—the ever-growing need for professionally trained, skilled editors. Professor Don Chapman (History of the English Language) says, “We’ve been trying an experiment for the last twenty years, more intensely in the last five years, and that is to have editing in linguistics.”

The integration of editing into linguistics is an experiment perhaps because of how interdisciplinary editing is. Some might see editing as naturally fitting into the Department of English or the School of Communications. But faculty realized that approaching editing from a linguistic standpoint made a lot of sense. “We recognize not just the value but also the essential nature of linguistic language to talk about editing,” explains Associate Professor Jacob Rawlins (Editing and Publishing). Editing courses aimed to give students a professional training

based on a foundation of formal linguistic principles. And it turned out that the two approaches to language—the professional and the theoretical—worked together harmoniously. Studying editing from a linguistic perspective produced students who “want to be able to think and contribute and to think more broadly about language issues as editors,” says Department Chair Dan Dewey (Language Acquisition).

Since the formation of the editing and publishing major in 2018, faculty have continued to bolster the curriculum and teaching strength. As students have flocked to the major, the field has evolved into a subject of scholarship in its own right at BYU. Rawlins says, “The people we’ve hired and the collaborations we have within our department allow us to develop editing and publishing as a full discipline, rather than just a professional application of linguistics.”

Now with over 200 students in the major and 70 students in the minor, editing in the department continues to bear great fruit.

1,000 WAYS TO BE A LINGUIST

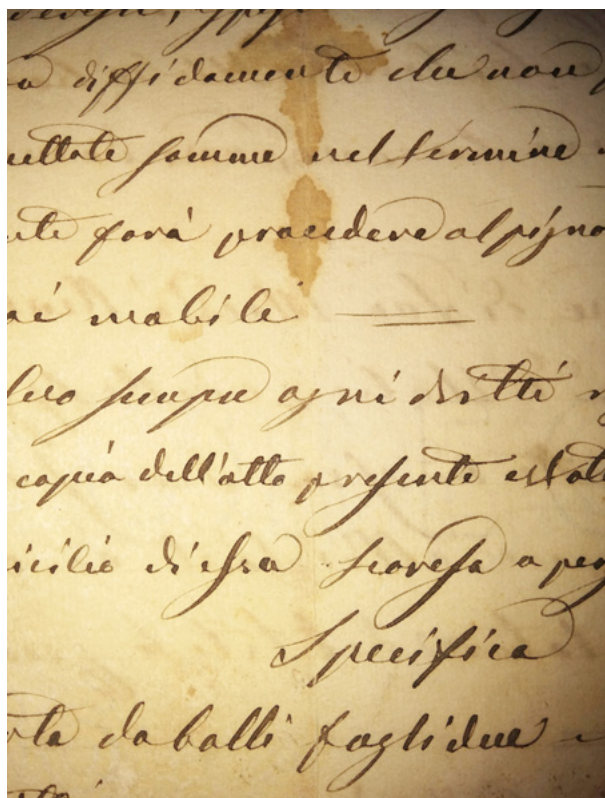
A broad survey of the department opens our eyes to the many areas that the Department of Linguistics covers at BYU—from the theoretical to the applied to the professional. “There are 1,000 ways of being a linguist if you take linguistic classes here at BYU,” Nuckolls says. “We have a broad brushstroke by which we approach language—whether it’s poetic language, whether it’s computational linguistic data, whether it’s structural linguistics, whether it’s editing and publishing. We have broad brushstrokes.”

These broad brushstrokes lend themselves to faculty research and teaching in a variety of areas and collaborations aplenty. For example, Nuckolls’ specialty is anthropological linguistics: she studies the Kichwa language in Ecuador to better understand the culture and customs of its aboriginal speakers. Where Nuckolls takes an anthropological approach, Assistant Professor Jeffrey Green (Sentence Processing, Language Acquisition) and Dewey take a neurological approach to studying language: they are the primary users of the aforementioned fNIRS lab. But these

“We have a broad brushstroke by which we approach language.”

differing approaches to language proved complementary as Nuckolls, Green, and Dewey collaborated on a neuroimaging project of Kichwa speakers during a recent study abroad trip to Ecuador; they used their seemingly disparate modes of research to a common end of understanding these unique people through their language.

Another area of emphasis in the department is computational linguistics—a rather different approach to language, though one in which the department has a strong legacy. BYU is especially recognized in the arena of corpus linguistics—the computational analysis of large, digitized bodies of text sourced from the real world called corpora. The field offers diverse opportunities for research and almost innumerable applications, from the creation of dictionaries to the interpretation of laws to studying patterns in language learners’ writing. Following are some examples of the research being performed with corpus linguistics: Associate Professor Deryle Lonsdale (Morphology, Formal Syntax, and Semantics) recently collaborated with Professor Yvon LeBras (French Language and Culture) to create a frequency dictionary of French based on a 23-million-word corpus; Assistant Professor Brett Hashimoto (Corpus Linguistics) uses corpus linguistics to answer questions about legal language in collaboration with the J. Reuben Clark Law School; Professor Earl Brown (Language Variation in Spanish and English) uses spoken-language corpora to investigate language variation in Spanish speakers.



A picture of an ancient notarial document coming from the south of Italy. Photo by Alessio Fiorentino/Shutterstock

Corpus linguistics and neurolinguistics are just a sample of the sort of cutting-edge research that goes on in the department. Faculty are increasingly willing to embrace these sorts of novel methods, but these technological approaches still balance comfortably against the theoretical studies we more readily associate with typical linguistics. For all the 1,000 ways to be a linguist, all aspects of linguistics scholarship have common threads: “Rules and systematicity—really that’s what linguistics is about. Understanding the systematicity of language,” says Dewey.

LINGUISTICS’ ONGOING AND FUTURE ROLE AT BYU


Differing methodologies in studying language, varied research tools, and diverse faculty specialties do not prevent collaboration within the department. In fact, they bolster opportunities for collaboration inside and outside the department.

Baker-Smemoe emphasizes that collaboration is frequent and productive: “If you ask somebody about their research in the department, by the end of that conversation you have a study you’re going to do together. . . . There’s just this idea of collaboration that we’re going to help each other along and we’re going to work together.”

“The department is remarkably congenial,” confirms Nuckolls. “When we meet together as a group, we are remarkably good at achieving consensus.” Undoubtedly this congeniality rests on a shared commitment to the importance of appreciating and studying language in all its forms.

The department also places a strong focus on the needs of students. The diverse skill sets that can be gained in the department, all of which rest on a firm basis of linguistic aptitudes, equip students for work and study in myriad areas. Students that graduate in linguistics go on to work as translators, teachers, lawyers, researchers, instructional designers, professors, publishers, editors, writers, and more. Rawlins says, “Students are leaving with professional qualifications but also with a firmer foundation in the understanding of and curiosity about language.”

President Spencer W. Kimball’s imperative issued in his 1975 “Second Century Address” that BYU become a “language capital of the world”² serves as a unifying goal for the department. Former department chair Lynn Henriksen says, “In the coming years, as we all work our hardest and do our best in our individual fields of academic endeavor, . . . as our graduates leave BYU and enjoy a wide range of successes based on the foundation we provided for them here, as our scholarly reputations increase, as visitors come to campus and see what great programs and facilities we have, as all these things happen, we will be making significant strides toward truly becoming an ‘acknowledged language capital [in] the world.’”

Dewey adds, “We’re teaching about language and learning and studying about language in a way that’s consistent with that prophetic direction to study the languages of the earth. And I think that makes us unique. It’s not simply a disciplinary interest that exists at the university; it’s a disciplinary interest that connects with the prophetic mission of the university and the Church.” 

1. Janis B. Nuckolls, “Finding Wonder in Remote Places” [Brigham Young University devotional, Aug. 2, 2022], 1, speeches.byu.edu.

2. Spencer W. Kimball, “The Second Century of Brigham Young University” [Brigham Young University devotional, Oct. 10, 1975], 6, speeches.byu.edu.

SKETCHY MATERIAL

by Kerry Soper (Popular Culture and Comedy)



Photo by David John Arnett
(Photography '24)

FOR 20 YEARS I have been trying to say the phrase "I study cartoons" while keeping a straight face and not laughing apologetically. There is no reason to be embarrassed about this, of course; I have colleagues in the College of Humanities, after all, who unselfconsciously study horror movies, fairy tales, anime, and video games. My lingering discomfort probably comes from having started my career (in the late 1990s) when an older model of the humanities—one that was mostly about an exclusive and highbrow canon (the greatest hits of Western art and culture)—dominated our curriculum. While we have not completely abandoned that traditional legacy (trying to keep the best parts and shedding the problematic ones), it is nice to be working now in an era when the humanities have expanded to include the study of popular, folk, and minority cultures—as well as non-Western cultural perspectives and traditions. In my own field, it has been exciting to figure out new ways to study, curate, and sometimes create popular texts that are not shaped by the outdated assumption that all things mainstream are hopelessly shallow or lowbrow. To elaborate, as I study cartoons, I try to think about the ways that distilled, iconic images can alternately invite potent reader identification, communicate essentialized ideas and social types in goofily poetic and vivid ways (sometimes for good and at other times for ill), and use a hybrid verbal and visual text to deliver comedic ideas in succinct and surprising ways. (I wish my own cartoon were a better illustration of those dynamics; maybe you can pull out one of your dog-eared *Calvin and Hobbes* or *The Far Side* books if you need a good reminder.) ☐

THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW WERE "HUMANITIES"



SOPER 22

Celebrating 10 Years of the BYU Humanities Center

by Rex Nielson, Director (Luso-Afro-Brazilian Literature & Culture)

This year we celebrate 10 years since the founding of the BYU Humanities Center, a major institutional initiative originally sponsored by Dean John Rosenberg. Under the creative and inspired direction of Professor Matthew Wickman (Scottish Literature, Interdisciplinary Literary Studies), the center's founding director, the Humanities Center has grown and evolved while developing a wide variety of activities that have advanced the influence of the College of Humanities. Through its 10 years of evolving programs, its mission has remained consistent: to promote innovative scholarship and teaching in areas pertaining to the language, literature, thought, culture, and history of the human conversation.

One of the things that makes the Humanities Center at BYU so remarkable is that less than three percent of higher education institutions have one. The fact that BYU sponsors the center highlights the university's deep commitment to valuing

a humanities education that prepares students to address some of the most pressing issues in society today. The center also highlights the leading roles BYU humanities faculty are playing in contributing to humanities scholarship, teaching, and public service.

The BYU Humanities Center currently sponsors a broad array of creative activities that foster scholarship, interdisciplinary connections, and student development. For example, we host a weekly research colloquium where College faculty present new scholarship and works in progress. Distinguished guests and faculty from other institutions regularly come to our campus to work with faculty and students and share new research. We also support a yearly symposium of student-driven re-

search projects in addition to other workshops and meetings to discuss current issues facing the humanities. We're especially proud to sponsor projects like the Cambodian

The center highlights the university's deep commitment to valuing a humanities education that prepares students to address some of the most pressing issues in society today.




English professor Matthew Wickman hosting the BYU Humanities Center's *Faith and Imagination* podcast. Photo by David John Arnett (Photography '24)

Oral History Project, directed by Professor Dana Bourgerie (Chinese) and Assistant Research Professor Brian Croxall (Digital Humanities, American Studies), which represents some of the best ways that humanities scholarship can contribute to preserving memory, connecting generations, and enriching Cambodian culture.

Additionally, we sponsor 10 different research groups that bring together faculty working on different topics, including medieval and Renaissance studies, the digital humanities, education and leadership, translation theory, and many more. And we partner with a number of other entities around campus to promote collaborative, interdisciplinary projects.

While promoting teaching and scholarship at the university, the Humanities Center also actively looks for ways to contribute to local and national (and even international) conversations. This past summer, for example, we sponsored six lectures and workshops at BYU Campus Education Week, where hundreds of attendees were enriched in a variety of topics from finding Christ in the devotional writings of a remarkable Italian Renaissance woman writer to how a humanities education led one of our colleagues to the gospel from Myanmar to India to Utah. We also regularly connect faculty with opportunities to speak at local public libraries; publish articles on faith, scholarship, and the liberal arts in the *Humanities Center Blog*; and produce our far-reaching podcast, *Faith and Imagination*.

Now 10 years into its existence, the BYU Humanities Center occupies a central role in the College of Humanities; we look forward to the opportunities ahead in helping faculty and students enrich our university community and beyond. 

For more information about the Humanities Center, please visit our website or contact the center director, Professor Rex Nielson. For free access to the publications mentioned here, along with other humanities-related resources, go to our website at humanitiescenter.byu.edu.

University Thinking

IN A YEAR that saw the passing of Todd Britsch, one of the College of Humanities' most influential voices, it is fitting to pause and recognize the recent retirement of three faculty—John Tanner, Debbie Harrison, and John Rosenberg—who epitomized what Britsch called “university thinkers.” By this he meant professors who were “engaged in the life of the university beyond their own classrooms and their own departments,” Tanner says, even as they remained master teachers. As a professor of humanities and academic vice president, Todd Britsch had an outsized contribution to the life of the university (see page 27 for his bio). In some ways his vision of

university thinking seems inspired by the humanities; it suggests that the disciplines of the humanities cultivate a breadth of thought that naturally seeds the ground of inquiry and work beyond the sometimes-narrowing bounds of individual scholarship.

This is certainly true of Professors Tanner, Harrison, and Rosenberg. As their service comes to a close, these three leave a legacy worthy of recognition and emulation.

John S. Tanner: Leader and Humanist

by Frank Christianson (19th-Century Transatlantic Literature)

John Tanner's humanities scholarship built a foundation for his lifelong leadership and service to BYU.

“How can we love neighbors as ourselves whom we do not understand? The humanities deepens our understanding of neighbor.”

In reflecting on a 40-year career that took him far beyond the confines of the English Department, Professor John S. Tanner (Early Modern and Milton Studies) is emphatic that “the humanities informed all phases of my career. They are an inextricable part of who I am.”

From when he arrived as an assistant professor in 1980, Tanner's career took a number of surprising turns as he was called upon early and often to serve the university outside the immediate scope of his teaching and research obligations. First as associate academic vice president, then as English Department chair, academic vice president, and, most recently, as president of BYU-Hawaii, Tanner found himself pulled repeatedly from his first love of teaching for nearly three-quarters of his career. Even so, he found rewarding service in grounding his work on three loves he termed his Professional Pyramid: love of Savior (Church service), love of subject (professional and scholarly work), and love of student (university service). A renowned Miltonist, Tanner enhanced the English Department's reputa-

tion through his substantive body of Renaissance literary studies. Beyond his scholarship, Tanner has been a prolific speaker and writer of essays, hymns, and poetry.

Freedom and Faith

As Tanner took on new and unexpected roles and challenges, he saw the value of his humanities training in everything he did. Perhaps nothing demonstrates the humanities-inflected nature of Tanner's service than his work as primary author of BYU's Academic Freedom Policy and the Mission & Aims of BYU. Recalling that effort, former Seventy and BYU provost, Elder Bruce C. Hafen, called Tanner BYU's Thomas Jefferson, a wordsmith who personally embodied “the educated, mature, well-disciplined liberty he was raised up to describe.”¹ Of his work on the Academic Freedom Policy, Tanner “felt a growing conviction that maybe, just maybe, this was work I was supposed to do. Perhaps, unknown to me, this is why I studied Milton and Kierkegaard, two ardent advocates for liberty and faith.” These accomplishments underscore the truth that

enduring university *thinking* requires inspired and masterful university *writing*. BYU would only have turned to the humanities and the wordsmithery of a genuine disciple-scholar to create some of the most foundational and far-reaching representations of its institutional identity.

Master Communicator

In their years working together, Tanner also came to remind Elder Hafen of another master communicator, Elder Neal A. Maxwell. Observing that both men shared an “intuitive confidence in gospel premises as the best foundation for sound reasoning,” Elder Hafen praised Tanner’s “high degree of awareness about cultural context; equally fluent, even native tongued, in both the language of the scriptures and the language of liberal education.”² Perhaps nowhere is this bilingualism more apparent than in essay collections *Notes from an Amateur* and *Learning in the Light*. Drawn from talks and essays shared with students and faculty over several decades, this work demonstrates Tanner’s commitment to use writing to explore and reflect on the responsibilities and rewards that come with teaching and learning at the university.

His annual University Conference addresses, described as “masterfully sculpted scholarly sermons” by colleague Justin

Collings, reminded BYU faculty how words can inspire us to see our work as vocation, motivated by a sense of calling to a greater purpose. “Scholarly sermons” is an apt description of this body of work that is, as Tanner acknowledges when asked about humanities influence, “shot through with literary references” that are “far from ornamental.” Tanner’s public expressions are steeped in the tradition of Western letters, but their unique capacity to inspire goes beyond the specific allusions. As he says, the humanities were always “supplying the contours of how I approach my work.” The humanist’s model of leadership that Tanner has embodied constantly sought new ways of seeing and understanding our shared purpose and the ways and means of fulfilling it.

Living as a Disciple

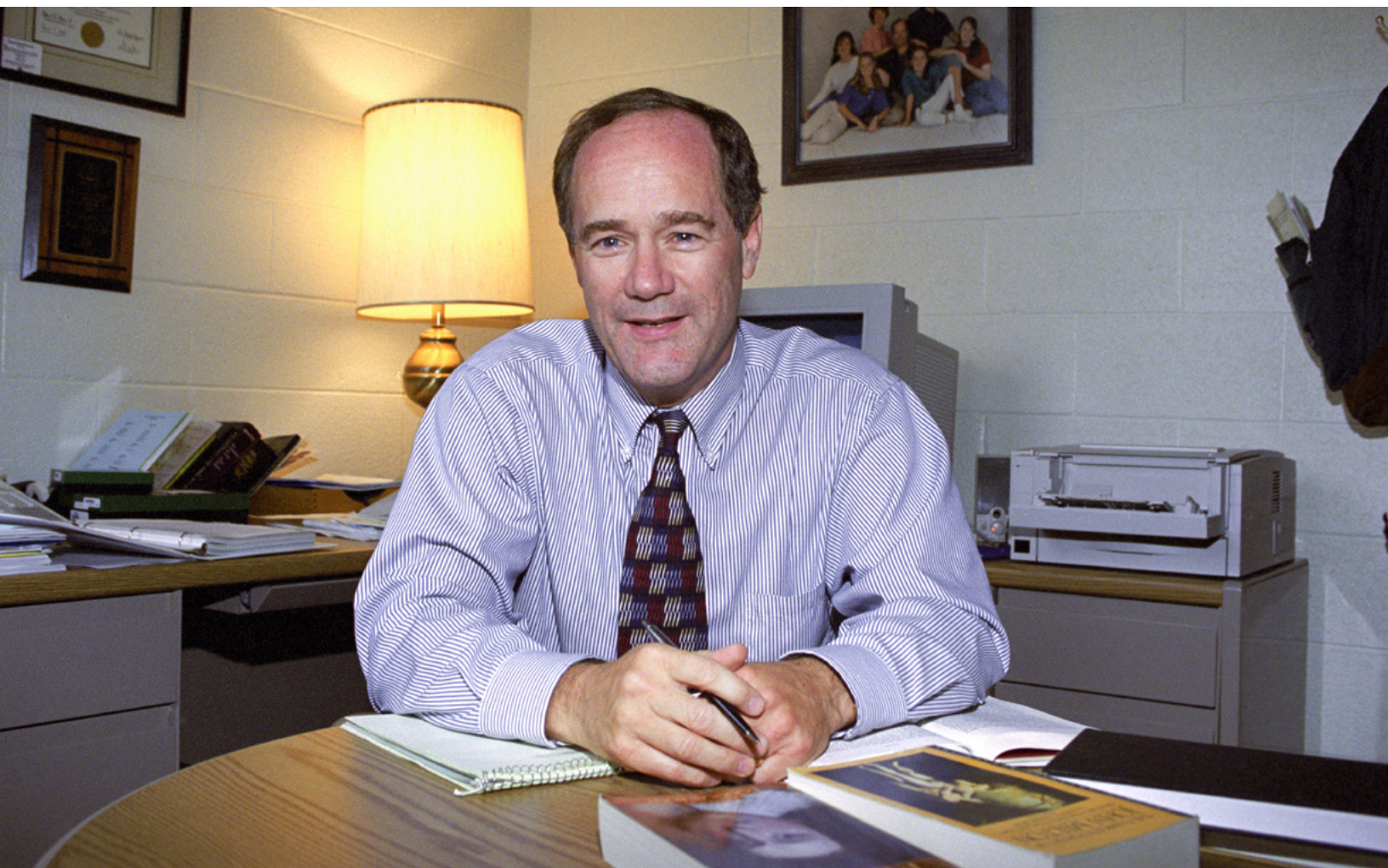
Central to Tanner’s vocational vision is a notion of discipleship that encompasses scholarly discipline. In his essay “A Gospel Ground for the Humanities,” he expresses the conviction that “we are called to love God with all our minds. Love of God should inform all other loves. It is the first and greatest commandment. We are expected to be disciples in our disciplines. We are also expected to love our neighbor, the second commandment. The humanities comes in rather directly here, for how

can we love neighbors as ourselves whom we do not understand? The humanities deepens our understanding of neighbor.”³ The second commandment includes a cultural dimension for Tanner, it “implies a responsibility to care about our neighborhoods, . . . where God is either glorified or despised, . . . living as disciples of Christ pertains not just to prayer, evangelism, and Bible study, but also our enjoyment of literature and music, our use of tools and machines, our eating and drinking, our views of government and economics, and so on.”⁴

This integrated vision of work and service and discipleship is Tanner’s legacy to the BYU community. His willingness to yield his individual course to serve the greater interests of the university and the Church is the most concrete example of that integrity, and he has played an integral role in shaping BYU for the better over the past 40 years.

1. Bruce C. Hafen, “Envisioning Brigham Young University,” *BYU Studies Quarterly* 56, no. 1 (2017): 4, <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/byusq/vol56/iss1/10>.
2. Hafen, “Envisioning Brigham Young University,” 7.
3. John Tanner, *Learning in the Light*, (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 2017), “A Gospel Ground for the Humanities,” Overdrive.
4. Tanner, *Learning in the Light*, “A Gospel Ground for the Humanities.”

Photo by Mark Philbrick/BYU Photo



Deborah L. Harrison: Clear, Clean, Compelling

by Leslee Thorne-Murphy (Associate Dean, British Literature)

Adjunct faculty play a crucial role in the College of Humanities, none more so than Debbie Harrison.

In the spring of 2022, Adjunct Faculty Deborah L. Harrison (Writing and Editing) retired after her 46th year of teaching university-level writing and editing courses. She began teaching at BYU as a graduate student, spent 21 years teaching at Whitworth College in Washington state, then returned to teach 22 more years at BYU. Even after so many years, Debbie never tired of teaching writing, editing, and usage. She says, “Every semester you get new students, and you know that what you’re teaching them is going to matter when they go on because they need to know how to write and research well.”

Debbie taught her students how to research their topics, understand conflicting views, reason through those views carefully, develop their own convictions, and express those convictions with confidence and grace.

A Teacher at Heart

Professor Harrison, or Debbie as her colleagues know her, always aspired to be a teacher. As she puts it, when she was in elementary school, she wanted to be an elementary school teacher; when she was in junior high, she wanted to be a junior high teacher; when she was in high school, she wanted to be a high school teacher. But it was when she taught writing as a graduate student that she knew she had found her calling: teaching university students.

While at BYU, Debbie earned a BA in English and Spanish, with a secondary education teaching certificate, then continued on to pursue an MA in humanities so she could combine the study of literature, art, and history. It was in graduate school that she met her husband. After they both graduated with their master’s degrees and had started their family, they moved to Spokane, Washington. There she found work at Whitworth College (now Whitworth University), a private Presbyterian liberal arts school where she says both faculty and staff “were amazing and devoted Christians” who created a caring atmosphere for work and study. While her family expanded to include six children, Debbie continued to teach a range of classes from freshman composition to the Structure and Development of the English Language.

It was at Whitworth that Debbie discovered her love of teaching language usage, the study of how people actually use written and spoken language. This was a love that she continued to nurture and share when she returned to BYU and eventually undertook teaching English Language 322: Modern American Usage for 19 years. As she explains, she taught her students “the guidelines for determining whether something would be appropriate or not in both writing and speaking.” Understanding how to make these determinations,

“[Professor Harrison] revitalized for me a life perspective that reminds me to treat others with kindness, without judgement.”

she says, gives students confidence in their language choices and the freedom to develop and practice their own voice.

Inspiring Students

BYU student Leanne Chun (Editing and Publishing ’22) says she learned confidence combined with respect while studying under and working with Professor Harrison. Leanne recalls walking into a modern usage class “red pen in hand,” envisioning herself as “a big shot editor.” Debbie, on the other hand, taught students that “all language, regardless of dialect or idiolect, is valuable in its own right.” Leanne muses, “While Professor Harrison taught me to appreciate all language, she was teaching me to appreciate all people, and she revitalized for me a life perspective that reminds me to treat others with kindness, without judgment.” In addition, Leanne says that Debbie “taught me to be confident about my beliefs (e.g., what I know to be true of *lay* and *lie*) and to communicate those beliefs with polite firmness (but not without mediation), regardless of the outcome.” This is a skill set, Leanne explains, that she implements not only in her editing work but also in her personal life.

Another student, Maren Johnson (Communications: Public Relations ’20), comments, “I really do feel like I owe a lot of where I am today to her guidance, encouragement, love, and lessons.” Maren took Debbie’s Writing 150 class, a freshman composition course meant to introduce students to the writing and research skills they need to thrive in college courses. After guiding them through a number of writing assignments, Debbie had Maren and her classmates select a research topic they were passionate about and then compose and revise a paper until it was academically rigorous as well as “clear, clean, and compelling.” These last three attributes are deceptively simple but remarkably difficult to achieve.

Maren relates that Debbie “encouraged me to do my absolute best on my research paper, and I spent months working on that paper until it became one of the best papers I have ever written. Eventually, I was able to publish that paper and use it to get into graduate school.” Papers from



Photo by David John Arnett (Photography '24)

freshman composition courses are typically first attempts at university-quality writing; rarely do they develop into graduate-level work. The combination of a gifted and motivated student and a talented and devoted professor, however, can work miracles. Truly Debbie embodies the ideal of “inspiring learning.”¹

Happy to Be in the Classroom

Enjoying and appreciating the importance of the topics she teaches brings a richness to Debbie’s classroom. During the COVID-19 pandemic when Debbie taught online, she would periodically need to review recordings of her class periods, and she was surprised to realize that she unconsciously smiled all through her classes. “I think this is because I am genuinely happy to be there, to be teaching something I love to them, something that I think will make a difference in their lives.”

Debbie strove to ensure every class had a warm, welcoming atmosphere, to make her subject matter relevant to students’ everyday lives, and to keep her class structure organized and clear. What she “loved best about teaching was seeing the light come into [her]

students’ eyes when they ‘got’ something or when they realized that they actually could write and might even enjoy it.”

Making Things Sound Better

Debbie has applied her hard-earned skills not only in the classroom but also as a freelance editor of 34 published books—from serious academic tomes to fantasy adventure novels. She explains that the art of editing is in “maintaining the author’s voice when you edit” as you help refine the writing. “I love to help writing read clearly and smoothly,” she observes.

Indulging a Personal Passion

Debbie thought that she might have an overabundance of time to read when she retired, but she is finding great pleasure in allotting much of her time to family history work, spending time with family members, and exploring the varied beauties of nature while camping. Ultimately, she resorts to her lifelong habit of reading before falling asleep. “It’s my reward for being responsible all day,” she explains. “It’s like taking a vacation when I read, because I am simply there, in the story or ideas.”

A Legacy of Service

As she retires, Debbie leaves behind a legacy of devoted teaching and mentoring in the College of Humanities. Her exemplary 46-year career is the realization of living and applying the principles of a humanities education. Debbie has been a dedicated colleague, professor, mentor, and friend who has inspired many with her passion for language that is “clear, clean, and compelling.”

1. Kevin J Worthen, “Inspiring Learning” [Brigham Young University devotional, Aug. 22, 2016], speeches.byu.edu.

John R. Rosenberg: A Scholarly Life

A discussion with Jeff Turley (Department Chair of Spanish & Portuguese, Hispanic Linguistics)

Professor John R. Rosenberg (Spanish Arts and Letters) began his academic career at BYU in 1985, having earned both his BA and MA from BYU, then an MA and PhD from Cornell University. His academic interests emphasized 19th- and 20th-century Spanish letters and art. During his career, Rosenberg served as the chair of the Department of Spanish & Portuguese and as associate dean and then dean of the College of Humanities. At the time of his retirement, Rosenberg had been serving as the associate academic vice president over undergraduate studies. Additionally, he spent two decades with the BYU-Public School Partnerships.

Professor Rosenberg always preferred the dialectic format, and his interlocutor, Professor Jeff Turley, has obliged us with a Q&A format to share Rosenberg's thoughts about the humanities and his career.

Photo by BYU Photo



Which of your initiatives as dean of Humanities informed your work as associate academic vice president for undergraduate studies?

JR: The 18 years I spent in the College of-
fice (eight as associate dean, ten as dean) were sufficiently transformative for me that nearly everything I did or said in the administration building had a humanistic echo. But to choose one, the notion of the human conversation—more of a worldview than an initiative—surfaced most frequently in the university forums.

By organizing our six annual forum assemblies around a theme (“Becoming a Beloved Community,” “In Pursuit of Democratic Character,” “What It Means to Be Educated”), we attempted to explore a big idea from the perspective of different disciplines. The forums were an experiment to demonstrate how we might approach the questions that matter most to us from multiple points of view. In other words, they attempted to model the human conversation.

At the close of your tenure at BYU, what are your thoughts on the human conversation? How important is this conversation now?

JR: The English philosopher Michael Oakeshott understood the human conversation (in part) as the recognition of and exchange between different ways of knowing and experiencing the world: there are voices of science and poetry, history and religion, voices of knowing *about* and of knowing *how*. “Liberal” (i.e., liberating) education occurs when the domains of knowledge enter into conversation. Sadly, the descendant of liberal education, our curricular experiment known as general education, too often allows each voice to exist in relative isolation. Often students are not taught to see how their class in physical science is part of the same conversation as the course in Western civilization. We call “training” what happens when a student is exposed to a single way of knowing; “education” occurs when one is inducted into the human conversation.

You spent a considerable amount of your career considering the role of public and private school administration, including BYU, democracy, and the connections between them. How would you summarize your thoughts on the role the university should play in the project of public education?

JR: At a university we view ourselves as stewards of our disciplines; we want those fields of study to be relevant and timeless, welcoming, and challenging, a *humanitas* (“humanity, kindness”) that nurtures *caritas* (“charity, esteem”). We rightly think that disciplinary stewardship manifests itself in our

classrooms and scholarship and in the preparation of new generations of the professoriat. However, we must also be concerned with the prospering of the humanities in the schools because all children, including those not bound for college, must be introduced to our common stories and languages and varieties of humanity (i.e., humanities)—what we call the human conversation.

Second, university and school people have much to learn from each other. Professors are wealthy in content that can enrich the K-12 classroom; schoolteachers are creative pedagogues, expert in the creation of engaging learning communities and sensible in rigorous self-reflection about practice. Third, in all democracies, but especially in composite democracies like ours, learning (both as noun and verb) is essential for both social and political democracy to function. Public schools, as political theorist Benjamin Barber insisted, are places of publicness, where we learn what it means to be a public and where we begin to understand how to be a people (versus a collection of persons).

“There is no education without continuing conversion of self.”

One of your central themes as administrator was stewardship. How did this concept evolve over your career, and what would you say to new faculty who are starting their careers as you are finishing yours?

JR: We use the term *stewardship* often as if it were something performed in isolation. The talent-bearing servants go about their business during the master’s absence in apparent independence, one’s choices disconnected from the others’. For me, stewardship makes community possible, relying as community does on shared accountabilities. Yes, I am an agent for my classroom and my time, but I am not an independent contractor. I am part of a department, a college, a university, each with a *vocation* that depends on me but is always larger than me. I occasionally used the term “transgressive stewardship,” one in which we take a step across (*trans* “across” + *gradi* “walk”) our stewardship into someone else’s. We do so not to meddle but to assist, because as a community steward I am as committed to my neighbor’s success as I am to my own.

You have found Paracelsus’ idea compelling, namely that the world is God’s book whose pages we turn by walking through it “pilgrimly.” During your final years at BYU, you became a pilgrim in the literal sense as you completed the medieval Spanish pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela and mentored students through the same experience. How has the Camino enlarged the metaphor of life as pilgrimage for you?

JR: It enlarged it by making it smaller, by changing the scale. The idea of life as pilgrimage is a metanarrative, a big idea rich in abstractions. The scale of the Camino de Santiago, nearly 500 miles of it on the route we follow, exists at the level of the footstep, the flower, the stony crossing of a brook; the scale is measured in material faces and places not always understood but always embraced—if one learns to walk pilgrimly. A physical intimacy on the Camino subverts grand metaphors, empties them out. And yet the miracle of the Camino is watching how what is material, quotidian, or trivial becomes transcendent.

You often quote Romans 12:2, where Paul admonishes us to not be conformed to this world but rather to be transformed by the renewing of our minds. What role does education play in that renewal?

JR: Education (versus schooling) is that renewal: there is no education without continuing conversion of self. A few years ago, when I first walked the Camino de Santiago, I entered a church I had not seen for a couple of decades. I saw it as if for the first time. The 700-year-old building had not changed; I had. And as I left, I wondered how much more experience and learning would be required before I could see that church again—as if for the first time. It is worth noting that Paul tells us why transforming is better than conforming: so that we can “prove” (test, experience) the will of God. ☐

Comics, Computers, AND THE Digital Humanities

by Hanna J. Muhlestein (Interdisciplinary Humanities '23)



PEANUTS © Peanuts Worldwide LLC. Dist. By ANDREWS MCMEELE SYNDICATION. Reprinted with permission. All rights reserved.



Exploring digital humanities: where art and ideas meet innovation and technology

The Office of Digital Humanities (or ODH) plays a key role in the College of Humanities at BYU. Through the emerging study of digital humanities, faculty and staff in ODH engage in endeavors that complement and enhance the work of faculty throughout the College. They utilize tools and technological skills to build websites and databases, conduct discoveries by digitizing and compiling data, and have fun while they do it.

What Is Digital Humanities?

Digital humanities refer to the study of the humanities from a digital and technological standpoint. In the digital humanities program, students create websites and learn how to typeset, compile and interpret digital data, do close readings of digital art, or acquire human skills such as language or critical thinking through the use of computers.

“It’s a complicated, innovative field,” says Associate Research Professor Jeremy Browne (Digital Humanities), that is “becoming more and more common over the years.” However, many (when they are not wondering what it is in the first place) still consider this field a novel approach to the humanities. But, Browne added, “that is part of the fun.”

The innovative field of digital humanities engages in the application of digital arts and skills, involving the use of languages like HTML and CSS, design programs like Adobe Creative Suite, and text-analysis programs such as WordCruncher.

Digital humanities take a humanistic approach to thinking about the digital culture we all live in, looking at how we think about the world in relation to memes, video games, or art created by artificial intelligence and asking questions about what it all means. They also take a digital approach to thinking about the human culture we live in by analyzing texts and publications.

The Office of Digital Humanities

While digital humanities may feel like a new field, ODH and the responsibilities it fills have been around for a while. Some faculty have been doing research for over 30 years. ODH has its roots in language translation, foreign language testing, and as a humanities resource center. In 2013, ODH became its own office within the College. ODH faculty and staff continue to work with foreign language acquisition as well as support research; their projects range from building web services for Russian-language essay contests to processing data about advertisements printed in a historical Utah women’s magazine.

ODH collaborates on a large collection of projects, both on and off campus. The office builds websites and software for projects like the Cambodian Oral History Project and for language learning around campus. It also supports other projects through already existing tools, such as WordCruncher.

WordCruncher is a tool for searching, studying, and analyzing texts that started 30 to 40 years ago as the first digital version of the Latter-day Saint scriptures. The program can perform tasks like calculating word collocations, which allows a reader to find terms that occur near one another. Current WordCruncher projects include a collaboration with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on the papers of Brigham Young.

Jesse Vincent, the director over WordCruncher, is focused on helping any professor or student, or even alumni, get started with WordCruncher to help analyze digital texts in insightful ways. WordCruncher is a tool available to anyone (see WordCruncher.com).

ODH is more than just a supporting office though. Run by full-time faculty who teach courses and engage in their own research, ODH houses the digital humanities and technology minor. It also offers several classes integrated into other major and minor programs and available as electives. In 2019, students ranked Digital Humanities 250: Web Publishing number three for must-take electives at BYU.

Every program on campus benefits from a digital humanities class or two, if not an emphasis via the minor. The offered classes provide opportunities to gain marketable skills and expand one’s qualifications in quantifiable areas such as web design or digital research methods.



ABOVE: Photo by Professor Brian Croxall

LEFT: This comic from January 23, 1952, features Charlie Brown breaking the fourth wall and Schroeder speaking in a blackletter typeface (which Schulz replicates for his signature).

The Peanuts Gallery: Familiar Texts, New Methods

University wide, scholarship often involves pattern finding and interpretation. Chemists, historians, and poets all look for patterns in their studies and then try to interpret what those patterns mean. Humanities students get lots of practice finding patterns and meanings through closely examining elements of a specific text or work, but that is not the only way to approach humanistic scholarship.

Assistant Research Professor Brian Croxall (Digital Humanities, American Studies) teaches one of those other approaches in his class called Research in the Digital Humanities (Digital Humanities 315). He says, “There are different ways of approaching humanities texts than just reading them and thinking about them. It’s not that [a digital approach] is better or more right.” A part of teaching this research class “is just suggesting to the students, ‘Hey, what if we did something really different? What if we came at studying the humanities from a different angle?’” And his students do just that. They take familiar humanities questions and answer them through new methods and tools.

In Digital Humanities 315, students do the familiar close examinations (or close readings) of a text using XML encoding. One of Croxall’s students calls this “closer than close reading.” They also practice distant reading, a method of reading that digitally compiles words and elements from many texts written by one (or more than one) author, or in one time period, and analyzes the data to answer questions. In Croxall’s class, the questions explore things like the ways Snoopy plays pretend or how characters co-occur in 50 years’ worth of *Peanuts* comic strips.

The popular *Peanuts* research started with Amy Schulz-Johnson, linguistics MA student at BYU and daughter of Charles Schulz, author of the *Peanuts* comic strips. When she returned to BYU as a nontraditional student to finish her bachelor’s degree, she learned about WordCruncher. With the help of ODH students, she began a linguistics study of her father’s comics that she carried over to her master’s thesis.

Schulz-Johnson’s work inspired Croxall’s Digital Humanities 315 class curriculum. Over the last three years, Croxall and his students have been doing their own separate research. Focusing on a few years of the 50-year run of *Peanuts*, the students are creating highly annotated digital editions of the strips. The editions record which characters

appear in each panel, details about the shape of speech bubbles, settings for the strip, activities the characters engage in, and much more.

Using this information, students create charts, graphs, and other sorts of visual and digital data to answer questions about the text. They research questions that range from “Which characters show up most commonly with each other?” to “What does each character’s speech and thought patterns reveal about them over the course of the comics?”

To some, questions like these might not look like they have much substance on the surface. They could be useful to social scientists or interesting to illustrators and writers studying their craft, but much of the inspiration for asking these questions lies in applying digital methods and tools, learning how to conduct research, and having fun while making discoveries. Croxall wants his students to ask questions he does not know the answer to yet. “We are trying to do something a little different rather than write an essay about something I already know all about. I point them in a direction, and we work together toward it.”

Furthermore, utilizing digital tools to ask and answer questions gets students familiar with thinking about data. Giving them the tools to think about data gives them a leg up when looking for a job and helps them relate to how other people across the university think about research.

Technology Enables the Humanities

Technology has never been truly separate from the study of the humanities. Ancient Roman aqueducts and domes, the invention of the printing press, the study of the human impact on the environment—all are commonly studied by humanities faculty and within humanities classes. Programming, recording, transcribing, and brain scanning are just modern iterations of how ideas and creation meet innovation and technology.

Using digital tools is an additional way to think about and analyze human culture. The multifaceted Office of Digital Humanities takes a decidedly 21st-century approach to culture, both old and new. The tools found within the realm of digital humanities “do not replace, just enable,” says Browne. In the College of Humanities, ODH provides the tools that enable students and faculty to use technology to engage in scholarship through classes, research projects, tool building, language learning, and more. ■



This comic from May 27, 1971, captures the first-ever appearance of Joe Cool, one of Snoopy’s most well-known guises.
PEANUTS © Peanuts Worldwide LLC. Dist. By ANDREWS MCMEEL SYNDICATION. Reprinted with permission. All rights reserved.

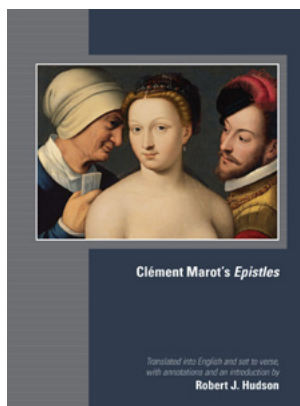
Faculty Publications



Fatal,
by Kimberly Johnson



Healthcare in Latin America: History, Society, Culture,
edited by Douglas J. Weatherford



Clément Marot's Epistles,
edited and translated by Robert J. Hudson

The Myths of the Popol Vuh in Cosmology, Art, and Ritual.

Allen J. Christenson, editor.

The Lost Cinema of Mexico: From Lucha Libre to Cine Familiar and Other Churros.

Brian Price, editor.

Rudolf Steiner: Schriften. Kritische Ausgabe, Band 1: Frühe Schriften zur Goethe-deutung.

Christian Clement, editor.

No One Weeps for Me Now.

Daryl R. Hague, translator.

A History of Chinese Classical Scholarship.

David B. Honey.

Healthcare in Latin America: History, Society, Culture.

Douglas J. Weatherford, editor.

The Bible and the Latter-day Saint Tradition.

Eric A. Eliason, editor.

Publishing in Wales: Renaissance and Resistance.

Jacob D. Rawlins.

Discovery & Wonder: The Harry F. Bruning Collection at Brigham Young University.

Jack Stoneman.

Returning Home: Diné Creative Works from the Intermountain Indian School.

James R. Swensen and
Michael P. Taylor.

Screening Europe in Australasia: Transnational Silent Film Before and After the Rise of Hollywood.

Julie K. Allen.

The Silent Muse: The Memoirs of Asta Nielsen.

Julie K. Allen, editor and translator.

Learning Korean: A Language Guide for Beginners.

Julie Damron and **Juno Baik**.

Asian American Literature: An Encyclopedia for Students.

Keith Lawrence, editor.

Fatal.

Kimberly Johnson.

Linguistic Preferences.

Laura Catharine Smith, editor.

Contemporary Italian Diversity in Critical and Fictional Narratives.

Marie Orton, editor.

Life to the Whole Being: The Spiritual Memoir of a Literature Professor.

Matthew Wickman.

Questions and Answers on the Avatamsaka-sūtra: An Early Korean Hwaeom Text.

Richard D McBride II, editor
and translator.

Clément Marot's Epistles.

Robert J. Hudson, editor
and translator.

Manual de fonética e fonologia da língua portuguesa.

Willis C. Fails.



Interested in reading more? Scan the QR code to learn where to purchase these books.

College Updates



Students in the Korean House. Photo by Juno Baik

1 A Foreign Language Student Residence by Any Other Name

The Foreign Language Student Residence has changed its name to the Language Immersion Student Residence, or LISR. The name change clarifies that the LISR is available to any student interested in language immersion—for “foreign language” students, not for foreign “language students.” The LISR is primarily a language immersion experiential learning program sponsored by the College of Humanities.

The LISR currently offers nine languages in this immersive style: ASL, Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. While physically living at the LISR, residence students pledge to speak only their house language. This creates an environment that immerses them deeply in the target language.

2 New College Leadership, Effective July 1

DEPARTMENT OF GERMAN & RUSSIAN

Professor Jennifer Bown (Second Language Acquisition) replaced Professor Grant Lundberg (Slavic Linguistics) as the chair of the Department of German & Russian. Bown anticipates her service will include navigating the current geopolitical situation between Russia and Ukraine as it affects faculty, students, and university programs. She also hopes to increase student interest in German and Russian language and culture.

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

Associate Professor David Jensen (Ethics and Value Theory) recently replaced Professor David Laraway (Philosophy of Art, Hispanic Literature) as the chair of the Department of Philosophy. Previously, Jensen served on the College Rank & Status Committee and as associate chair of the department. Jensen brings administrative, teaching, and research experience to the department.

ASSOCIATE DEAN

Professor Grant Lundberg (Slavic Linguistics) replaced Professor Frank Christianson (19th-Century Transatlantic Culture) as associate dean in the College. Lundberg served for six years as chair of the Department of German & Russian prior to this appointment.

HUMANITIES CENTER

Professor Rex Nielson became the new director of the Humanities Center (see page 13).

3 College Convocation Prelude Music Celebrates Cultural Diversity and Female Composers

As masses of parents and friends shuffled inside the Marriott Center on Friday, April 22, 2022, they were greeted by the welcoming sounds of organ music played by Associate Professor Miranda Wilcox (Early Medieval Religious Culture). The prelude and recessional music included composers from the many cultures represented by the departments within the College.

Wilcox was excited for the first in-person convocation since COVID-19 began, so she volunteered to compile the songs and play the organ for the event. As she prepared, Wilcox decided that each of the eight departments within our college deserved to be represented in the convocation. She selected lesser-known composers to find one that she felt represented each department. Wilcox specifically chose five female composers (Pei-lun Vicky Chang, Elizabeth Stirling, Nadia Boulanger, Elfrida Andrée, and Florence Beatrice Price) to recognize women whose music is often underrepresented. Her efforts created a warm and inviting atmosphere for attendees.

4 College Hosts First Conference on Gender and Women's Studies

On March 24–25, 2022, the BYU Global Women's Studies (GWS) program hosted the first annual Utah Southwest Regional Conference on Student Research in Gender and Women's Studies. BYU and Weber State University (WSU) programs came together to share and to celebrate their research in this two-day inaugural event. This conference was specially designed to provide students opportunities to connect with peers and mentors in their field from places outside of their own university program. Professor Valerie Hegstrom (Spanish Literature), director of BYU Global Women's Studies, and WSU Professor Melina Alexander (Special Education), director of WSU's Women and Gender Studies, organized the conference.

The event was held primarily in the Kennedy Center and the Harold B. Lee Library, where students and faculty from both universities met for exhibits, a speed-networking luncheon, and, of course, student research presentations. In addition, three special keynote sessions shared the spotlight with the students.

5 BYU Student Takes Second Place in Regional Chinese Competition

BYU student McKay McFadden (Mechanical Engineering, Chinese '25) took second place in the 21st annual Chinese Bridge language competition, held from April to June 2022. The theme for the competition essay was "One World, One Family." McKay competed in the Washington, DC, region along with eleven other students from nine other schools around the United States.

McKay's talent (calligraphy) and essay were inspired by the book *The Anatomy of Peace*. His submissions focused on the importance of seeing people as complex individuals. McKay tied his essay's theme to his talent by performing calligraphy of a Chinese poem called "Climbing White Stork Tower" by Wang Zhi-huan from the Tang dynasty. His essay took first place.

6 Graduate Students Fuse Academic Discipline with Faith

Attendees of the summer 2022 annual Humanities and Belief workshop said it was "nothing short of transformative." Latter-day Saint graduate students in the humanities are frequently confronted with theories that can, on the surface, appear to undermine belief. This workshop supports these students and helps them find ways through, rather than around, the challenges to their beliefs. BYU faculty focused on showing the students examples of faithful scholars and discussing how to integrate belief and academic research. Attendee Sylvia Cutler, a PhD student of English literature at Johns Hopkins University, said, "It was lovely to reconnect with my community at BYU and allow myself to embrace a religious identity that I often feel I have to ignore in the more secular university setting I am currently part of."


7 Newly Translated Arabic Poetry Set to Music

Assistant Professor Kevin Blankinship (Arabic Language and Literature) helped create a choir concerto based on al-Ma'arri's book of poetry *Self-Imposed Necessity*. Blankinship's earlier work to

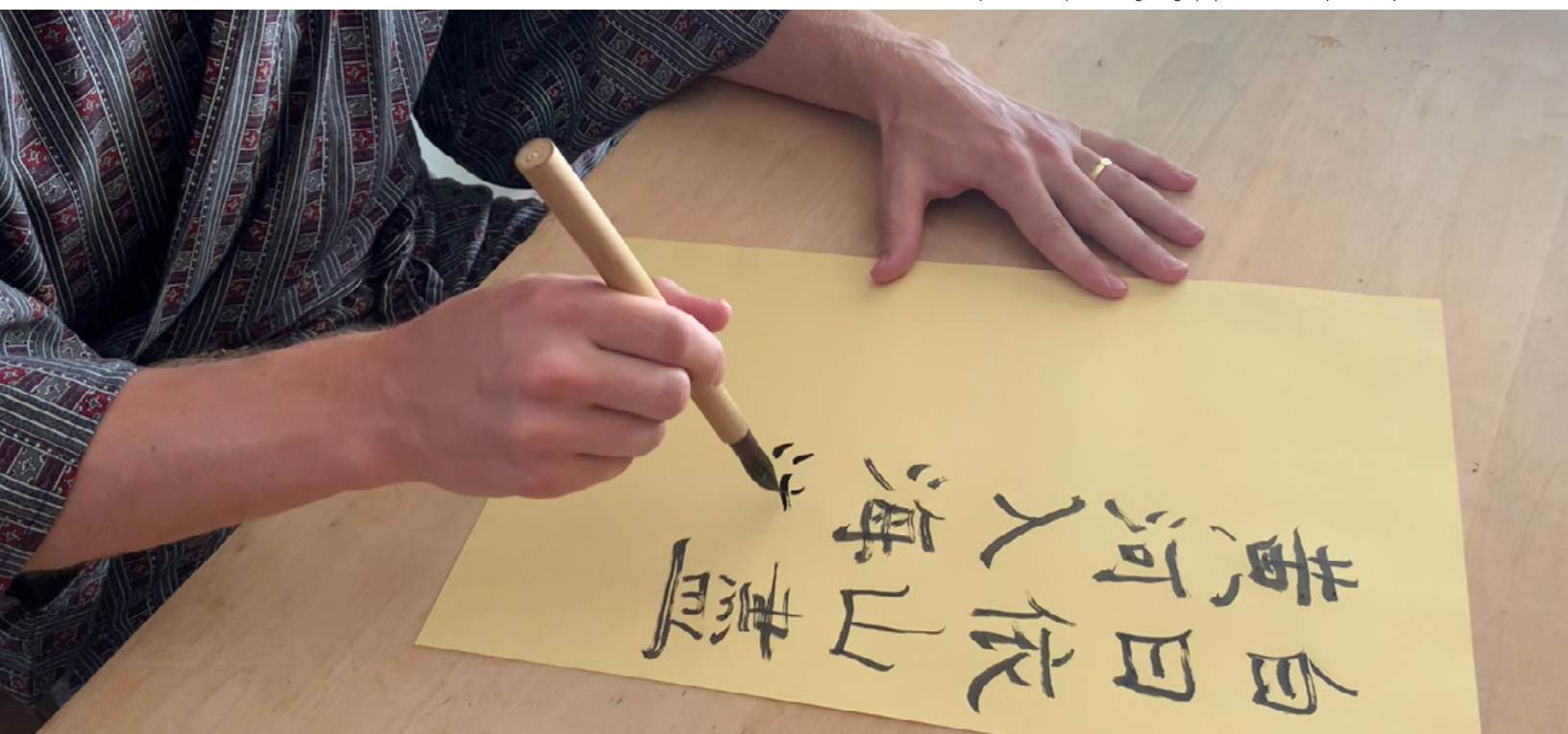
put al-Ma'arri on the public's radar led to Seattle-based composer and musician William C. White contacting him about the poet. Blankinship saw that music could be a great way to introduce the world to al-Ma'arri's work, and the two began collaborating in October 2020 to translate al-Ma'arri's work into English. Since the project began, Blankinship has translated dozens of poems from *Self-Imposed Necessity* that he and White evaluated as they determined which poems to include and how to translate them to retain their deeply resonant nature. Blankinship and White included seven poems, incorporated into seven movements, in the final composition.

Recently White flew to London to work with a professional choir to record the composition. Meanwhile, Blankinship intends to keep working until he is able to publish a complete translation of *Self-Imposed Necessity* in a few years, but for now we will soon be able to enjoy a musical rendition of these poems and gain our own understanding of the value of Arabic literature.

8 French Students Commemorate the Unknown American World War II Soldier

This past year four BYU French student interns participated in memorial services honoring American soldiers who gave their lives in service to France. In October 2021, Abigail McBride (Economics '23) represented BYU at a reenactment ceremony for the 100-year anniversary of the dedication of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Chalons-en-Champagne. On Memorial Day this year, Ethan Walch (Computer Science, French Studies '23) and Ben O'Brien (Economics, French Studies '23) laid wreaths at the Oise-Aisne American Cemetery and Memorial, including for Private First Class Stanford Hinckley, the elder brother of Gordon B. Hinckley, 15th President of the Church. And in August, Benjamin Brodie (Neuroscience '23) laid a wreath for Duncan Elijah Robinson, a Latter-day Saint from Utah in the 4th Armored Division who was killed in World War II in the Pont-Scorff battle, August 7, 1944. 

McKay McFadden performing calligraphy. Photo courtesy of McKay McFadden



Comings and Goings

FACULTY INTRODUCTIONS



Jeff Peterson (Asian & Near Eastern Languages) earned his PhD at Purdue University in applied linguistics/foreign language acquisition. He has taught Japanese courses across the entire spectrum and was the recipient of the 2022 Hamako Ito Chaplin Memorial Award for Excellence in Japanese Language Teaching. He specializes in Japanese language pedagogy and linguistics and is especially interested in extensive reading.



Jonathan B. Allred (English) earned a PhD in English education from the University of Arkansas, an MA in curriculum and instruction at Weber State, and a BA in English teaching at BYU. His research centers on English education, digital literacies, and dialogic pedagogy in secondary English language arts classrooms.



Matthew Wilcox (Center for Language Studies) joins the Center for Language Studies as an assistant professor of measurement and evaluation. He holds a PhD in educational inquiry, measurement, and evaluation from BYU. He is interested in assessment design and validation, and his research focuses on using experimental and statistical methods to examine language assessments.



Tyler D. Gardner (English) holds a PhD in English from the University of Notre Dame, where he was a Mellon Fellow in Religion. He received his MA at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley and graduated from BYU with a BA in English. Along the way, he worked in writing center administration at California Polytechnic State University and now as the Writing Center manager in the BYU Research & Writing Center.



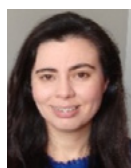
Erik Yingling (Comparative Arts & Letters) is trained in the history of art (Stanford, PhD), religion (Yale Divinity, MAR), and the ancient Near East (BYU, BA). His current research explores the art and imagination of mythical metamorphosis in Greco-Roman and Egyptian antiquity. In 2020 he curated an exhibition titled *Aura: Art and Authenticity* for Stanford's Cantor Arts Center.



Taylor-Grey Miller (Philosophy) earned a PhD and MA from the University of Texas at Austin and a BA in philosophy from BYU. He focuses mainly on issues in metaphysics—in particular, how to understand various kinds of explanation. He also is interested in the philosophy of religion and philosophical theology. He is also the cofounder (along with James Faulconer and Katharina Paxman) of the Latter-day Saint Philosophical Theology Project.



Kenneth Hartvigsen (Comparative Arts & Letters) holds a PhD in art history from Boston University, where he studied American art and visual culture. His research interests include 19th- and 20th-century painting, popular illustration, and the visual cultures of popular music. He has organized art exhibitions at the BYU Museum of Art, maintains his own art studio, and has taught art history at Boston University.



Desirée de Almeida Oliveira (Spanish & Portuguese) earned a PhD in applied linguistics from Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, an MA in Portuguese from BYU, and BAs from Universidade Federal de Viçosa and Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora. Her research interests include teacher education, text genres, motivation, language policy, and beliefs and narratives about language teaching and learning.



Laura Hatch (Comparative Arts & Letters) received her PhD in comparative literature at the University of California, Irvine. Her research focuses on trust, uncertainty, and decision-making in medieval and Renaissance literature and culture. Her current projects explore how trust, uncertainty, and literary form converged in medieval and Renaissance approaches to narrating the experience of indeterminacy.



Jordan B. Jones (Spanish & Portuguese) earned his PhD in Portuguese and Brazilian studies at Brown University, with a dissertation analyzing empathy and human rights in literature of the Americas. Jordan holds degrees in Luso-Brazilian literatures (BYU, MA), secondary English education (Johns Hopkins, MS), Portuguese and Brazilian studies (Brown, MA), and Hispanic studies (Brown, MA). He completed his BAs in English and Portuguese at BYU.



Luke Drake (Comparative Arts & Letters) received his PhD in religious studies from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, a master of theological studies in the New Testament and early Christianity from Harvard Divinity School, and a BA in English from BYU. His training is in ancient Mediterranean religions (early Christianity, early Judaism, Greek and Roman religions).



Tomás Hidalgo Nava (Spanish & Portuguese) holds a PhD in Hispanic literature from the Pennsylvania State University (2015), an MA in comparative literature from BYU, and a BA in journalism and mass communication from the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (2001). He is interested in studying the literary and audiovisual arts as vehicles of awareness and criticism of the functions of violence in Latin American and Mexican societies.

RETIREMENTS AND DEPARTURES



Alan Manning (Linguistics) taught English, editing, and linguistics at BYU beginning in 1994. He also taught at Louisiana State University, Stephen F. Austin State University, and Idaho State University. His research primarily deals with information design, editing, and semiotic analysis, and he served as the longtime editor of science fiction publication *Leading Edge*.



Blair Bateman (Spanish & Portuguese) joined the Department of Spanish & Portuguese in 2002 and taught an array of courses in both languages. He served as associate chair of the department and in many other roles, including president of the Utah Foreign Language Association. His research focuses on pedagogy, and he developed curricula for a number of courses in the department.



Devin Asay (Office of Digital Humanities) came to BYU in 1992 in the Humanities Research Center, the predecessor of the Office of Digital Humanities (ODH). He served as the director of ODH from 2016 to 2021. He was involved in building custom educational software tools for faculty and helping with other technological initiatives over the years. He enjoyed teaching technology topics to students who had never tried or believed they could program.



James E. Faulconer (Philosophy) joined the Department of Philosophy in 1975. During his time at BYU, he was named Richard L. Evans Professor of Religious Understanding. He also served as dean of undergraduate education and chair of the Philosophy Department and was a fellow at both the Wheatley Institution and the Maxwell Institute. His research focuses on contemporary European philosophy.



James Toronto (Asian & Near Eastern Languages) joined the faculty of Comparative Religion in 1992 before moving to the Department of Asian & Near Eastern Languages in 2000. He served as assistant director of BYU's David M. Kennedy Center for International Studies, director of BYU's Center for Cultural and Educational Affairs in Amman, Jordan, and coordinator of BYU's Middle East studies/Arabic program.



Martha Peacock (Comparative Arts & Letters) taught art history for 34 years at BYU, where she also served as director of the European studies program at the Kennedy Center. She contributed to and edited two BYU exhibition catalogs on the prints of Rembrandt and his circle and cocurated the 2013 BYU Museum of Art exhibit *Rembrandt's Amsterdam*. She received a number of awards and fellowships from BYU over the course of her career.

Photos by individual faculty members

IN MEMORIAM



James Karl Lyon (German & Russian) died in July 2022, aged 88. Jamie graduated from Harvard with a PhD in German languages and literature in 1963. He was adept at working undercover gathering intelligence from espionage sources behind the iron curtain. Jamie taught at Harvard University, the University of Florida, and was the founding provost of Eleanor Roosevelt College at the University of California San Diego. After retiring from UCSD, he taught at BYU for 14 years.



Gary Shelton Williams (Asian & Near Eastern Languages) passed away in November 2021 at age 85. He was one of the first postwar missionaries in the Far East, where he fell in love with the Chinese language and culture. During the course of his career he served as department chair, mission president, and inspiring teacher. After completing his PhD at the University of Washington, he was instrumental in founding the Asian Studies Department (now Asian & Near Eastern Languages) at Brigham Young University.



Todd Adam Britsch (Comparative Arts & Letters) died of cancer in April 2022 at age 84. Todd joined BYU as a faculty member in the College of Humanities in 1966 and spent the next 36 years as a full-time professor. Todd's scholarly interests ranged widely, increasingly focusing on 18th-century aesthetics and Rococo church architecture. Todd served BYU in a number of capacities, including as dean of the College of Humanities and academic vice president under President Rex Lee. The College of Humanities awards the Britsch Professorship in his honor, awarded to those whose service to the department, College, or university represents "university thinking."

Lyon and Britsch photos by BYU Photo;
Williams photo courtesy, Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University

Read about other retiring professors: John Tanner on page 14, Debbie Harrison on page 16, and John Rosenberg on page 18.

The Critical Role of Humanities

by Thomas B. Griffith

The fundamental role of the humanities is to teach us Christlike virtues.



An American Sign Language class taught by Tom Osmond in the College of Humanities in 1981. Photo by Mark Philbrick/BYU Photo

It is a common conversation on a university campus. An eager young student, anxious about what major he or she should pursue, seeks counsel from an older person. I had countless such conversations during the time I served as a BYU campus stake president. I always prefaced my counsel with a disclaimer: the views expressed are mine and not necessarily the Lord's. Not surprisingly, as a former humanities major, I strongly urged students to study the liberal arts. I would appeal to their sense of tradition. "The humanities have been central to the concept of a university since its inception." (Tradition, I have since discovered, has little appeal to most of the rising generation.)

I would entice them with dreams of power and wealth. "A disproportionate percentage of the titans of industry and the rulers of nations have been students of the humanities." (This argument was always greeted with skepticism. I am reminded of the promotional brochure created by a philosophy department trying to lure students away from disciplines that promised a greater financial return on investment: "Learn how to be the kind of person who won't be troubled that you aren't earning much money.")

Next, I told them they should study the humanities for the sheer practicality of it. I would try to explain, "We study the humanities to learn how to be a human!" (That argument was intended to elicit a smile. It rarely did.) Channeling Mortimer Adler, I would point out that humankind has been involved in a *great conversation* about the *ultimate questions* since the *dawn of time* (emphasis added to the italicized phrases in my most serious tone). To participate in that conversation may be the most fully human activity in which we can engage.

Had I been speaking with students at another university, my arguments would have run out there (and my guess is that finance or

engineering would claim another supplicant), but because they were BYU students, I felt free to offer my view about the most important reason to study the humanities. It comes from BYU humanities professor Arthur Bassett, whose teachings have changed many of our lives, where Jesus tells us that "life eternal" is to "know" God and Christ.¹ How can we "know" God and Christ, Brother Bassett asked, if we don't know something—in fact, a great deal—about Their major project: humankind? To study the humanities, Brother Bassett taught, is to learn how God works at that which He cares most about: bringing to pass the eternal life of humankind.² And the purpose of all that learning is that we might imitate Christ and thus be better able to help Him in His project.

This instrumental approach to the study of the humanities involves much more than relishing what appeals to our own sensibilities. In fact, much of what we learn about humankind will offend those sensibilities, and it takes the eye of faith to see God at work in many places. But we are learning what we can about humanity so we might be agents of at-one-ment, better able to understand and therefore help heal the wounds that are an inextricable part of the human condition so others can experience the abundant life Christ promises.

And with that learning, properly done, comes two virtues indispensable to a disciple of Christ: empathy and humility. *Empathy* by understanding that each person is endlessly complex and that his or her thoughts and feelings and actions are the result of a complex mix of biology, culture, and agency. *Humility* by understanding that we have much to learn from those G. K. Chesterton called "splendid strangers"³ and C. S. Lewis recognized as "the holiest object presented to our senses."⁴

And as it turns out, the measure of our lives will be taken by how well we learn from others. In a passage that tears down walls of separation put up by nationalism, tribalism, and a smug sense that we already know all there is to know about God and His ways, the Lord tells us in 2 Nephi 29:11 that He speaks to all people, "both in the east and in the west, and in the north, and in the south, and in the islands of the sea," and that He commands them to write what they have learned. That alone should spark our curiosity to read what others have written. But if it does not, the Lord adds a not-so-gentle reminder that we will be judged by what others have written.

Why that measure? Because learning how others experience life in all its variations gives us a better sense of how God sees the world and nudges us to be more like the Catholic teacher who saw in his belligerent, obnoxious, and arrogant student not a thing to be cast aside but only our Lord in one of his more unrecognizable forms.

We study the humanities not to copy the behavior of fallen men and women (although there is much to emulate) but to imitate Christ, whose Incarnation helped him to "know . . . how to succor his people according to their infirmities."⁵ ■

1. John 17:3

2. Moses 1:39

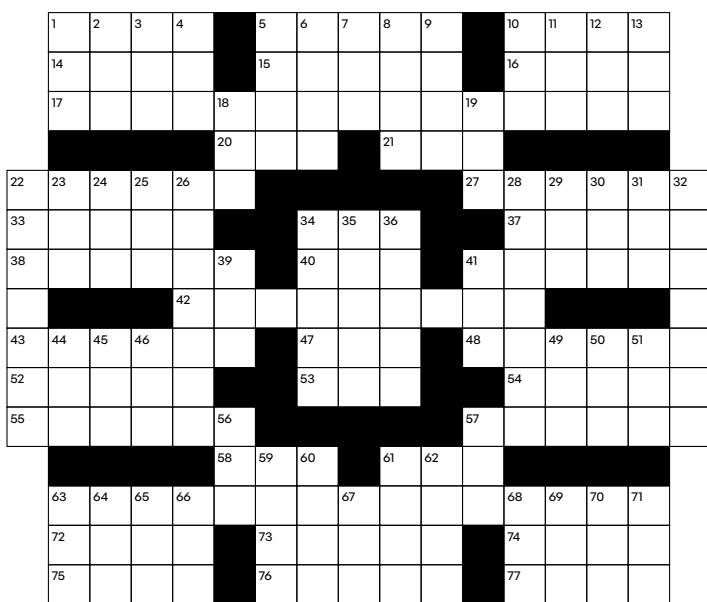
3. G. K. Chesterton, *Orthodoxy* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1995), 25.

4. C. S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory and Other Addresses* (New York: Macmillan, 1949), 15.

5. Alma 7:12

Sunny _____ of the Street

by Corry Cropper (Associate Dean, French)



* Clues with an asterisk are themed.

ACROSS

- 1 * How crabs walk
- 5 Jolly old elf
- 10 * Where fruit stands and diners are located
- 14 European cultural programming TV channel
- 15 Ahead
- 16 * Theme word added on the appropriate edge to complete the answers to 1, 10, 75, and 77-across
- 17 * "As cool as the other ____"
- 20 Consumed
- 21 Taxpayer ID
- 22 A place to plug in
- 27 Japanese robe
- 33 Take off the censored list
- 34 Frequently torn knee ligament (abbr.)
- 37 Home to LA and SF
- 38 "____ and to hold, 'til death do us part"
- 40 Fib
- 41 Donald Glover's producer accepted an Emmy on his ____
- 42 * Embezzlement, typically
- 43 British comedian Eddie
- 47 Lead in to -anda, -bal, -mouth, and -tigo
- 48 Mini trees
- 52 Il ____, famous cathedral in Firenze
- 53 Ambulance destinations (abbr.)
- 54 Unwanted broccoli plant visitor

- 55 La vita ____; aspiration of worshippers in 52-across
- 57 Walked with decisive steps
- 58 Hostess ____ Balls
- 61 Erstwhile American TV manufacturer
- 63 * "You couldn't ____ of a barn!"
- 72 Slurpee's cousin
- 73 Wanders
- 74 Former Dodgers hurler Hershisier
- 75 * Off-the-record agreement in the shadows of a bigger negotiation
- 76 Word with Home or Office
- 77 * Posterior

DOWN

- 1 "I ____ Made for Lovin' You" (song by Kiss)
- 2 Diamondbacks or Cardinals on a scoreboard
- 3 Since January (abbr.)
- 4 "Now you ____ me, now you don't!"
- 5 Piano
- 6 A small payment, up front
- 7 "To the ____ degree"
- 8 They go with heads, shoulders, and knees
- 9 Duolingo and Duo Mobile, e.g.
- 10 MLS team in Sandy, UT
- 11 "Thou anointest my head with ____"

- 12 Shakespeare's *Much ____ About Nothing*
- 13 "As the ____ from heaven distilling"
- 18 Granola morsel
- 19 Tattoo component
- 22 * Where this answer is, compared to a normal grid
- 23 Game with "reverse" and "skip" cards
- 24 "I'm being sincere" on Twitter
- 25 Said twice, it's one of the Teletubbies
- 26 Surround or encircle
- 28 Sailing vessel for a frozen lake
- 29 Unit of electrical charge used to measure battery life (abbr.)
- 30 Greeting in Lisbon
- 31 Zero in the British soccer press
- 32 * Where this answer is, sportingly
- 34 "Wanted dead or ____!"
- 35 * Fall apple beverage that includes a homophone of this puzzle's theme word
- 36 Stares lasciviously
- 39 Posterior
- 41 What a buoy might do
- 44 "____ alors!"
- 45 Common first name from the Greek word for *life*
- 46 Patriotic airline, on the NYSE
- 49 News outlet with hosts Steve Inskeep and Terry Gross
- 50 HBO competitor
- 51 Word after Kool- and Band-
- 56 Baseball bat wood
- 57 ☹
- 59 Dweeb
- 60 Double reed woodwind
- 61 Former Cowboys QB turned analyst Tony
- 62 "Don't ____ your pearls before swine"
- 63 Slipped out of sight
- 64 Berg component
- 65 Juicy news
- 66 Abbr. on a business card
- 67 Kendrick Lamar music genre
- 68 Have a good cry
- 69 *Science Friday* host Flatow
- 70 Last month of fall sem.
- 71 Moose's cousin

Check your answers on page 7.

BYU COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

Dean, J. Scott Miller,
scott_miller@byu.edu

Associate Dean, Grant H. Lundberg,
grant_lundberg@byu.edu

Associate Dean, Ray T. Clifford,
rayc@byu.edu

Associate Dean, Leslee Thorne-Murphy,
leslee_thorne-murphy@byu.edu

Associate Dean, Corry Cropper,
corry_cropper@byu.edu

College Controller and Assistant Dean,
Jared D. Christensen,
jared_christensen@byu.edu

Liberal Arts Advisement & Careers
Director and Assistant Dean,
Sherami Jara, sherami_jara@byu.edu

Manager of Digital Media and
Communications, Joshua J. Perkey,
josh.perkey@byu.edu

ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT CHAIRS

Asian & Near Eastern Languages,
Richard McBride II,
richard_mcbride@byu.edu

Comparative Arts & Letters,
Kerry Soper, kerry_soper@byu.edu

English, Lance Larsen,
lance_larsen@byu.edu

French & Italian, Daryl Lee, dlee@byu.edu

German & Russian, Jennifer Bown,
jennifer_bown@byu.edu

Linguistics, Dan Dewey,
ddewey@byu.edu

Philosophy, David Jensen,
davidj@byu.edu

Spanish & Portuguese, Jeff Turley,
jeffrey_turley@byu.edu

DIRECTORS AND COORDINATORS OF ACADEMIC CENTERS AND PROGRAMS

American Studies, Jamin Rowan,
jamin_rowan@byu.edu

Asian Studies, Marc Yamada,
my@byu.edu

Center for Language Studies,
Ray T. Clifford, rayc@byu.edu

Chinese Flagship Center,
Matthew B. Christensen,
matthew_christensen@byu.edu

English Language Center, Ben McMurry,
ben_mcmurry@byu.edu

Ancient Near Eastern Studies,
Cecilia Peek, cecilia_peek@byu.edu

European Studies, Heather Belnap,
heather_belnap@byu.edu

Global Women's Studies,
Valerie Hegstrom,
valerie_hegstrom@byu.edu

Humanities Center, Rex Nielson,
rex_nielson@byu.edu

Office of Digital Humanities,
Michael Call,
michael_j_call@byu.edu

Faith & Imagination Institute, Ed Cutler,
ed_cutler@byu.edu



COVER: Mary Cassatt. *Afternoon Tea Party*, 1890–91.
The Art Institute of Chicago

What does it mean to be human? This question—which itself demonstrates self-awareness, a highly developed trait in humans—invites each of us to participate in a journey of self-discovery and reflection, one that can influence not only our quality of life but also the contours of our relationships with others.

That idea is reflected in our cover image, *Afternoon Tea Party* by Mary Cassatt (1844–1926). (You can see another of her works on page 6.) Cassatt was an American artist fascinated by people interacting in common domestic experiences. Rather than seeing these moments as trivial, she uses accessibility of style to capture the underlying humanity of her subjects, inviting us to recognize ourselves in these interactions.

In this painting the host appears open and generous, looking directly at her guest as she leans forward to offer her a biscuit. The host is dressed in household attire and could be a servant or the lady of the house, her deferential gaze revealing her hosting role.

But there is a tentativeness reflected in the guest's body language. She sits straight-backed with her arms pulled tightly in as she barely reaches forward to receive the biscuit. Her eyes look down at the biscuit, not meeting the gaze of her host, and her expression is difficult to discern. It could be thoughtful, it could be expressionless, or there might be a hint of disdain on her face. She still wears her coat as though having just arrived or prepared to leave at any moment. There is a hierarchy to their relationship, but it is unclear exactly what that relationship is. There could be a class distinction; they could be sisters having a quick visit; or they might even be rivals. Either way, the painting opens to our view a private moment of human interaction—perhaps unremarkable except for its intimacy—where offering a biscuit and a cup of tea opens a window on a particular relationship.

Cassatt reminds us that our humanity shines through in more than just monumental gestures. To be human—and to study the humanities—is to seek understanding of our day-to-day, personal experiences.