

A Wintry Welcome to 2007

Warm greetings to you all this chilly winter semester, and welcome to the winter 2007 issue of the MALS Newsletter. Inside, we feature for the first time interviews with recent MALS graduates who share their reflections on the program and their current activities as new graduates. We also introduce several students new to the program – many of you as readers of the newsletter will be able to relate to their experiences as they launch their graduate school careers.

Courses for the Spring and Summer 2007 terms will be posted on the MALS website by the end of February. For information on courses or other matters related to the program, please contact the MALS secretary, Graciela Osterberg at (248) 370-2154.

letter from the director

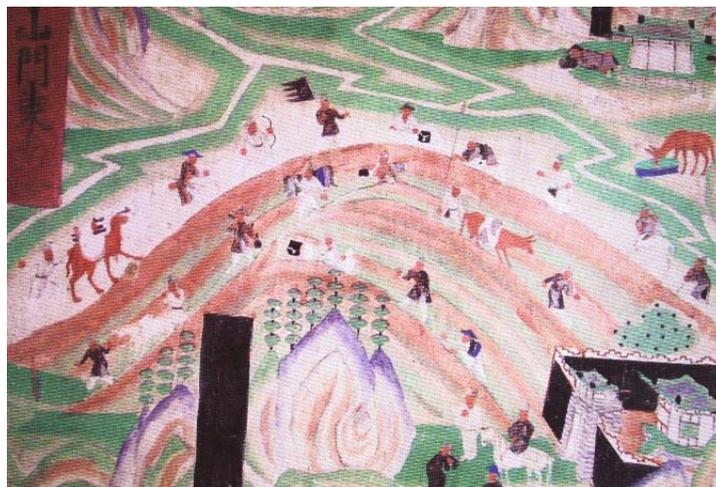
One of the pleasures of being the director of the MALS program is talking with colleagues about new courses to offer MALS students. The line-up of new courses that has emerged for next year is especially rich. Not only will courses feature intriguing new topics, but also for the first time in the fall term there will be two core seminars to choose from (one in science, one in the humanities), as well as the colloquium (LBS 500). If you have been waiting for the perfect course, next year offers some excellent candidates!

The seminars in fall of 2007 focus on a single intriguing topic: the existence of evil. Professor Elysa Koppelman-White, Department of Philosophy, approaches the subject from a humanities perspective, exploring the origins and nature of evil as a human phenomenon. Professor Barbara Oakley, School of Engineering and Computer Science, uses a scientific approach for her examination of “evil genes.” The latter is the subject of her new book which will be published later this year. Both courses promise a probing look into the human condition and the roles played by society, religion, thought, and genetics in defining and dealing with evil.



Uighur Children

The MALS colloquium, which has been offered in the winter semester the past two years, will now shift to the fall term. I will be teaching the course for the first time and have chosen as my subject the storied Silk Road. For over 2000 years, merchants, missionaries, warriors, and diplo-



Dunhuang, China. Painting illustrating the Silk Road

matic envoys traveled this renowned trade route which traversed the entire Eurasian continent. The Silk Road provides a great subject for an interdisciplinary examination of trade and cultural exchanges over space and time. For more information on each of these new fall courses, please see the individual descriptions on pages 10-11 of this newsletter.

The winter term of 2008 will also feature a new course. Professor Barbara Mabee, Modern Languages and Literature, will lead an examination of German literature entitled “United Germany and Its Discontents.” Please see further details on this exciting literary option on page 11. Information on the winter courses will also be a feature of the fall 2007 issue of the Newsletter.

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- ♦ Reviews of previous MALS courses by students, page 6-7.
- ♦ Film festival coordinated by a MALS graduate, page 8.
- ♦ Future courses, page 10-11.

New: watch for the first MALS student handbook to be released in 2007.

letter from the director

(continued from page 1)

As professor of Chinese history here at Oakland, I would like to close with best wishes for the Chinese New year which falls on February 18, 2007. This is the Year of the Boar, renown as a year of goodwill. Under this sign's auspices, entertaining friends and getting involved in charitable and social functions are both favored, so there has never been a better time for getting involved and forging new connections within your community.



Linda Benson

With happy New Year's wishes to you all,
Linda Benson

Cheryl Cole Pope scholarship

deadline reminder

**Applications are due
the first Monday
in April Annually**

Our previous issue of the MALS newsletter featured information on the first scholarship specifically for MALS students. This year, the first Cheryl Cole Pope Scholarship will be awarded in the amount of \$1500.00.

The minimum requirements for applicants and the application process are both described on the MALS website. All materials must be submitted to Professor Linda Benson, Director, MALS Office, by April 2, 2007, for applicants to be considered. The Director and Executive Committee will make the award announcement at the end of the semester.

The Cole Pope Scholarship was established in memory of Cheryl Cole Pope, R.N., M.S. (1953-2002) by her parents, Mr. and Mrs. James F. Cole of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, her brother, John Cole M.D. of New Orleans, Louisiana, and her sister, Natalie Bell Cole, of Royal Oak, Michigan.



Cheryl Cole Pope

Cheryl Cole Pope was a dedicated oncology nurse who appreciated literature and the arts, ardently believed in life-long learning, and practiced service to her community through founding the S.A.F.E. House Animal Rescue in Houston, Texas and serving as a Child Advocate in the Houston court system.

Her life and death were the inspiration for the first MALS core course on Death and Dying in Literature, Art and Film in Winter 2004, and for the elective Medical Fictions course in Fall, 2005.

Read more about application guidelines and requirements at www2.oakland.edu/mals/scholarships.cfm

**letter
from
the
editor**

It seems as if fall semester really flew by and at the current pace winter semester will do the same. I was busy in the beginning of the term working on the fall newsletter, open house, handbook and other projects.

I had an opportunity to take LBS 512 Victorian Literature with Professor Natalie Cole as well as LBS 503 Rich / Poor and Other Inequalities in America with Professor David Maines. Both courses were interesting and challenging. In LBS 512, in addition to other assignments, I had an opportunity to prepare a short presentation discussing WWI British photography from the trenches. It complimented a section of the course where we read war poems by Rupert Brooks, Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen. Through this project, I learned a lot about the shift in the contemporary aesthetic of the period as well as the use of propaganda and censorship that remain pervasive in media today.

Please let me know if you may be interested in contributing to the newsletter. We welcome articles, interviews and essay ideas.



Angela Kayi

Best regards,
Angela

**Thoughts
About
Research**

**commentary by
Laura Zimmerman**

Research for a MALS paper takes a variety of forms and often leads down unexpected paths as well. For Professor Tamara Machmut-Jhashi's MALS colloquium "Russia: Art, Culture, and Film," I chose to compare photography in the USSR and the USA in the 1930s. Not only did I learn the similar intentions of both governments to shape citizens' perceptions of society, culture, and politics, but I was surprised to realize how the U.S. government utilized propaganda on its own people while a mere twenty years later, during and after the Korean War, our leaders expressed out-

rage against North Korea for using propaganda to "brainwash" American soldiers.



Laura Zimmerman

Each student presented their research to the class integrating visuals ranging from PowerPoint presentations to film clips to overheads, and class members evaluated the presentations along with Professor Machmut-Jhashi who provided summaries of the comments to each student. In Professor Gary Shepherd's "Sociology of Religion" course, research was conducted by student teams and included personal visitation and interviews with members of New Religious Movements (NRMs). My team researched Church Universal and Triumphant, and although we were initially apprehensive about

attending a meeting at the Church and talking with its members (fear of the unknown!), we were pleasantly surprised to learn that they were "regular" people with similar beliefs to our own and that they were not secretive or "evil." They were warm and inviting, welcomed our inquisitiveness, and answered all of our questions. Each team member focused on a particular area of research such as beliefs, history, practices, education of children and new members, etc., and we presented our research as a team orally to our classmates and individually in a paper to Professor Shepherd.

MALS research is an enlightening and adventurous experience not only for the opportunity to cross the

boundaries of different academic disciplines, but also to connect with fellow students of varying backgrounds, sharpen one's writing and speaking skills, and learn that research and learning is so much more than opening books in a library and scrolling through pages on a computer screen or a microfiche reader. It is integrative and interactive, and inspires even further curiosity about the world around us, the world before us and the world yet to come. Enjoy! ■

**LBS 600
Thesis Project**

**commentary by
Alyssa Hunton**

I knew when I started the MALS program in 2004 that I wanted to have a foreign film series as my LBS 600 project. I remember not wanting to tell other MALS students about my project for fear they would "steal" my idea and do it first before I had a chance. Silly me! The *World Focus Foreign Film Series* which was held this past fall at Oakland University was a lot of work, and even more anxiety, but I'm so glad I did it. I had a chance to share with others what I consider to be true works of cinematic art from great foreign filmmakers. The film series was also offered as an "enrichment" class, or elective, at the International Academy (IA) high school in Bloomfield Hills. The IA offers German, Spanish and French languages to its students, which fit in perfectly with three of the films offered in my series.

And had it not been for my recent experience with hosting and organizing *World Focus*, I would not have even considered applying for a grant from the French American Cultural Exchange which twice a year offers universities and colleges \$1,800 grants as part of its Tournées festival program to show French films on their campuses. But I did apply and the "Tournées French Film Festival at Oakland University" will begin January 14, 2007. Five current French films will be shown on Sundays at 2 p.m. at 124 Wilson Hall. Please go to page 8 for a complete list of dates and description of the films. ■



Alyssa Hunton

An Interview

with

Holly Gilbert

by Angela Kayi

Has the interdisciplinary education of your MALS degree influenced your work? If, so please explain the benefit?

It's been mind expanding; a steady stream of new ideas, ideals and theories for four years has resulted in a list of story ideas that will have to be handed over to my great grandchildren.



Holly Gilbert

What was your MALS thesis topic?

The topic was journalism and art and whether the two can co-exist in an "objective" realm. I wrote a play about the issue, featuring W. Eugene Smith, the photojournalist. His dialogue was entirely based on his life, but the storyline was, well, surreal. The play has been used in several journalism classes here and at MSU. I've seen it performed a few times, and played one of the roles once. I kid my husband, who wrote a stunning thesis for his master's in history, that mine gets taken off the shelf more!

Has your MALS thesis research proven applicable to your current endeavor?

I'm a journalist and the study about art and journalism and objectivity entirely changed my worldview about the profession and it's intentions.

Did you originally see the MALS degree as a stepping stone in your professional advancement?

Yes, I hoped it would shore up my CV of course, and help me keep my beloved day job (teaching); but I also wanted to stimulate my gray matter.

Are you currently working? If so, what are you doing?

Yes, I'm a journalist and I'm on the faculty here in the journalism program at OU.

Do you plan to stay in the area?

I'll go where things take me. But for now, yes, I'm here.

Are you working on any projects or volunteering currently?

I always have four or five projects "in my drawer" and volunteer wherever needed.

Have you been traveling since completing this program? If so, please tell us about your experiences.

I travel whenever possible.

If there is a piece of advice that you could pass on to current and incoming MALS students, what would it be?

Be discerning but open-minded about what you take. Stretch beyond what you know and beyond your comfort level. I wrapped my mind around things that I never thought possible ...■

An Interview

**with Former MALS Graduate Assistant
Dan Brown**

by Angela Kayi

What was your MALS thesis topic?
Spaghetti Westerns and the Cold War.

Has your MALS thesis research proven applicable to your current doctoral studies?

Not really since I'm working now with British literature in the Victorian period. All writing is good practice, though. Even if it isn't your best work, you still learn something from the experience.

Did you originally see the MALS degree as a stepping stone to your next degree program?

Not when I first started. I initially thought it would be useful for developing a career in librarianship. Once I got into the classes, though, I realized I wanted to go on for a PhD.

What drew you to the program at the University of Florida?

I applied to Florida because they offered a generous fellowship in Victorian studies. I got accepted to Florida and Ohio State. I chose Florida for three reasons: a) the money b) change of location c) the openness of their curriculum.

How do you like living in Gainesville?

It's ok. It's a small town so there isn't very much to do. The campus is pretty, though, and it's much warmer and sunnier than Michigan.

How and when did you decide to pursue a PhD in English?

Professor Cole's courses got me interested in Victorian literature. She provided me a great deal of encouragement and support throughout the program. I think the pivotal experience, though, was when I presented a paper I wrote for one of her courses at the British Association for Victorian Studies. This is something I would never have done without her guidance. That experience really confirmed to me that I wanted to pursue the PhD in English.

Tell us about your program?

It's a strong program with a great deal of openness and flexibility. I really enjoyed my course on Victorian masculinities last semester.

Next semester I'm taking a course on the "woman question" in late Victorian England and a course on comics and animation from a Blake scholar.

What is your current research topic?

I just finished a seminar paper on representations of "primitive" masculinity in some of Paul Gauguin's paintings and writings.

I'm not sure about my dissertation topic yet, but I might like to do more with gender studies in the Victorian period.

Has the interdisciplinary education of your MALS degree influenced your course work? If so please explain the benefit?

Definitely. For instance, last semester I wrote a paper on a French Impressionist painter in a course on British Victorian literature! I definitely like incorporating elements of the visual with the literary. I also like drawing together ideas from seemingly disparate thinkers, like philosophers, writers and painters.

Are you currently working? If so, what are you doing?

Part of my fellowship requires me to teach two semesters in my first and third year of the program. Last semester I taught "Introduction to Argument and Persuasion", basically an introductory composition course. Next semester I'm leading a discussion section of a course on multiculturalism in America.



Dan Brown

If there is a piece of advice that you could pass on to current and incoming MALS students, what would it be?

Take advantage of as many opportunities as possible. As a MALS student, I managed to travel, give public presentations and readings, work on several newsletters and publications and prepare for entrance to a doctorate degree. It's a very versatile program and the more you do, the more it works for you. ■

LBS 504

The Nuclear Age

Two Views

by Jane Hellman and Lori Heublein

The Nuclear Age class, taught by Professor Mabee and Professor Sevilla, combined the disciplines of history, science, art, psychology, and sociology. Through video, documentaries, student presentations and class discussion we learned about nuclear physics and warfare, as well as nuclear energy. Of particular interest was the primary text, Hiroshima in America, which detailed the development and subsequent use of the atom bomb. This also included an in-depth analysis of the rationalizations for dropping the bomb, including the official narrative as devised by government and military leaders – a narrative written by Harry Stimson, Secretary of War, and published in Harper’s magazine.

Each student was assigned four topics during the semester, and after researching those topics presented their findings to the class.

My first assignment dealt with the history of the Manhattan Project and the previous research that had been conducted worldwide in nuclear physics relating to the splitting of the atom, especially those experiments conducted in the early 20th- century. I researched the details of the Manhattan Project and those individuals involved in its development – from scientists to military and government personnel.

The role of the United Nations in terms of international control of nuclear weapons and disarmament was



Jane Hellman

the topic of my second assignment. The third involved researching the life and thoughts of Robert Oppenheimer – from his childhood, through the Manhattan Project, to the rescinding of his national security clearance, to his later years. Included in this biography were the details of Oppenheimer’s evolving mental struggle concerning his part in the development of the atom bomb and the consequences of its use.

Each assignment included not only the presentation but also an accompanying paper. The final project, however, was the basis also for our term paper. I chose to research and discuss Hiroshima – the two tales of one city. By reading John Hersey’s Hiroshima I learned of the devastation and aftermath of the dropping of the atomic bomb on that Japanese city. Not just the devastation to the physical landscape but also the toll taken on individual human lives as revealed through the personal stories of six Hiroshima victims. Certainly mental and emotional trauma was prevalent but so was radiation sickness, an illness with numerous symptoms and long-term effects that occurred as a result of the nuclear explosion. Military and government officials, however, vehemently denied the existence of radiation sickness. A massive cover up was undertaken, but the truth slowly emerged, partially as a result of Hersey’s book.



Second atomic bombing of Nagasaki, Japan. Published August 1945. Official U.S. Army Air Force photograph. Library of Congress.

The Nuclear Age class gave me the opportunity to study and learn about one of the major discoveries of the 20th-century: the splitting of the atom. Professor Mabee and Professor Sevilla effectively combined the elements of science and history to create a productive and thought-provoking learning environment. ■

Jane Hellman

another point of view...

I'll have to admit I was a bit hesitant about taking the Nuclear Age class. The Nuclear Age may have a definitive start with the Manhattan Project but there is no ending. This was a subject that, obviously, had no clear-cut answers, which made it scary but exciting to tackle at the same time. Within the class we went beyond talking about the schematics of a nuclear bomb. We talked about the conception of nuclear weapons and their influence on the past and the present. There were discussions of how these nuclear weapons were perceived by, not just the America government but also other world governments, such as Britain and Russia. We read books and articles, watched films, and debated the purposes of this powerful weapon. We may not have reached any earth shattering conclusions but I did come out of this class with an understanding of how the fast the world has changed with the discovery of nuclear power. For my part in the class I also had to give three smaller presentations throughout the semester along with my final paper.



The XX-34 BADGER explosion on April 18, 1953, as part of an operation at a Nevada test site. (Public Domain).

I began with Henry L. Stimson's, reasoning as to why the atomic bomb was used in 1945. Stimson was one of many key players in the bombing of Japan. This was a great primary source but as we found over the weeks in class there are many sides to a complex situation. My next two tasks were to look at a more worldly view of the nuclear bomb. I did a report on a group of British scientists, who formed the MAUD committee to discuss the "uranium problem." It can be argued that it was this that pushed for the United States to complete the creation of a nuclear bomb. I also took a look at the World Court Project and their mission to end any making or use of the nuclear bomb. To this day there are organizations appealing to the United Nations and to the International Court of Justice to come to agreements concerning Nuclear weapons.

For my final report I chose to look at the movie *Good Night, Good Luck*. The movie is not a bio-pic on Ed-

ward R. Murrow but a glimpse at one important moment of his life and a high point in the United States' history of journalism. Ed Murrow was the first television reporter to speak out against the McCarthy hearings. In 2005 actors George Clooney and Grant Heslov wrote and directed a movie called *Good Night, Good Luck*. There are two major themes of the movie that I focused on. First it looks at the fear that infiltrated into the lives of many Americans during the 1950's.

Fear can be seen in the characters faces as they discuss what could happen to them if they were to be labeled communist. There is also the fear and tension that the audience experiences, knowing that the world had become a scary place for the characters in the movie and wondering if that fear would penetrate the walls of the CBS studio. There is also the theme of guilt by association. This idea surrounded the McCarthy hearings and Clooney never let the audience forget that. But the end of the movie shows how the news told in its honesty can affect a nation, not necessarily an over night affect but a gradual one. In the beginning McCarthy may have used the media, especially television, to play off the fear that embraced the American people but it could be argued that it was television that led to his eventual downfall. George Clooney and Grant Heslov set out not to take sides but to show us that we as Americans need to be told the truth and when we think we are not hearing it, it is ok to editorialize what is happening and to question our authorities' actions just as Ed Murrow had. ■



Lori Heublein

Lori Heublein

the MALS executive committee

Linda Benson
Prof. History
MALS Director (Chair)

George Gamboa
Prof. Biological Science

Barbara Mabee
Prof. German, Modern
Lang. and Lit.

Phyllis Rooney
Assoc. Prof. Philosophy

Debra McGinnis
Asst. Prof. Psychology



Tournées French Film Festival
at Oakland University

coordinated by
Alyssa Hunton
(2006 MALS graduate)
Oakland University
Ph: 248-364-6106
E-mail:
hunton@oakland.edu

A mini French film festival featuring five films will be held at Oakland University. All films are in French with English subtitles. Films are free of charge and will be shown on Sunday afternoons at 2 p.m. on the campus of Oakland University in Rochester, Michigan.

January 14 – *La Femme de Gilles* – Set in a small mining town in France in the 1930’s, Elisa is a devoted wife and mother who learns her husband is having an affair with her younger sister. The film explores Elisa’s emotional upheaval as she deals with the events surrounding her husband’s infidelity.

Location – 124 Wilson Hall, Oakland University



La Femme de Gilles

January 21 – Based on the true story of SS officer Kurt Gerstein, *Amen* exposes how the Catholic Church and many Western European powers remained silent while the Nazis sent thousands of Jews to death camps.

Location: 124 Wilson Hall, Oakland University

January 28 – *Cache* –A television talk show host and his

wife are terrorized by a series of videotapes they find on their front porch. On the tapes, they discover that their house has been filmed by a hidden camera. As more tapes arrive, and secrets from the past are revealed, the couple becomes unhinged.

Location: 124 Wilson Hall, Oakland University

February 4 – *Abouna* – A 15-year-old boy and his younger brother in Chad, Africa are abandoned by their parents and placed in the care of a Koranic school far from their home. Unhappy in the sometimes brutal environment, they make a plan to escape.

Location: 124 Wilson Hall, Oakland University

February 18 – *Le Fils* – Olivier is a carpentry teacher at a vocational school coping with the death of his son. When his son’s killer is released from juvenile detention and ends up in his class, he becomes obsessed with the boy.

Location: 124 Wilson Hall, Oakland University

“The Tournées French Film Festival was made possible with the support of the Cultural Services of



Abouna

the French Embassy, the French Ministry of Culture (CNC), the Florence Gould Foundation, the Grand Marnier Foundation and the Franco-American Cultural Fund.”

tutorial assistance

Questions concerning computing, research and writing?

Contact:
Angela Kayi
Graduate Assistant
457 Varner Hall
248.370.2674

alkayi@oakland.edu

Office hours: Mon. 1-4 and Wed. 1-4 and by appointment.

Why did I enroll in the MALS program?

commentary
by
Susan Walsh

I was asking myself that very question as I pulled into the parking lot at OU on January 4. What was I thinking? Going back to school? I hadn't been in a classroom in, well, never mind, let's just say the last time I was a student, I had no computer, no cell phone, and no credit card. I decided I was just crazy, but would go ahead with it. Before the first class had ended, so had the panic.

I was/am excited about the MALS program and Oakland University. I had never intended to be away from school for so long, but until I found the MALS program, nothing really lured me back.

I have an eclectic personality, and, as a senior writer at an international advertising agency, my career involves a daily interdisciplinary study. So, the MALS program is an uncannily good fit. The curriculum will help me to be a better advertising professional. The degree will help me when I decide I no longer want to be an advertising professional. The whole process will, I hope, make me a better, more informed human being. Besides, no math is involved. ■

Susan Walsh
Senior Writer, McCann Erickson Detroit
I have one child, Sally who's 12; a husband, Richard; a dog, Flo; and two cats, Tasmine and Angel.

Thoughts about the MALS Program

commentary
By
Renee Uitto

I was accepted in the MALS program last fall. That semester I took *Theory and History of the Press* with Professor Gilbert. The class was cross-listed at the undergraduate and graduate level for journalism students, but it also counted as credits in the MALS program. My thinking was stretched in several ways as I truly realized how journalism shaped American History. This semester I'm taking the *Seminar in China* with Professor Benson and I'm getting a real taste of what it is like to be in a master's program. I like the small class size and how teachers want their students to succeed. That's what I appreciate and encourages me to do my best. ■

Renee Uitto

Greece
travel opportunity

Spring 2007



*Parthenon, Athens, Greece.
Photograph by Andrea Eis*

**April 27
through
May 4**

Athens

Delphi

Mycenae

Epidaurus

**Explore antiquity through the mythology
and the architectural design of Greek
sacred spaces.**



*Delphi, Greece.
Photograph by Andrea Eis*

Coordinated by
Professor Andrea Eis,
Department of Art and Art History
in cooperation with the
Masters of Arts in Liberal Studies
Program
eis@oakland.edu
248.370.3376

LBS 504

Evil Genes

Core Seminar Fall 2007
Monday 6:30p.m.-9:50p.m.

Professor Barbara Oakley
Department of Electrical
and Systems Engineering

Evil Genes is a cutting edge course that covers how the latest findings in genetics and modern medical imaging can provide fascinating insight into why some people can be downright **EVIL**.

Using psychology as a frame, Professor Oakley uses cutting-edge images of the working brain to provide startling support for the idea that “evil” people act the way they do due to subtle dysfunction. In fact, some deceitful, manipulative, and even sadistic behavior appears to be programmed genetically—suggesting that

some people really are born to be bad. But there are unexpected fringe benefits to “evil genes.” We may not like them—but we literally can’t live without them.

The format will be seminar style. Discussions include implications of the findings from science on social organizations such as hereditary aristocracies, totalitarian and democratic political regimes, modern international business, and cults and religious organizations. This course is designed to help you look in interdisciplinary fashion at the human social structures that surround you.

The course instructor is Barbara Oakley, Ph.D. from the Department of Electrical and Systems Engineering. Professor Oakley has won a number of teaching awards, including the National Science Foundation New Century Scholar and New Faculty Fellow Awards, the John D. and Dorth J. Withrow Teaching Award, and the Naim and Ferial Kheir Teaching Award. The material covered in the course is based on Oakley’s forthcoming book, *Evil Genes: How Rome Fell, Hitler Rose, Enron Failed, and My Sister Stole My Mother’s Boyfriend*, Prometheus Books, Fall, 2007.



Adolph Hitler, 1938. (Image courtesy of The Associated Press.)

LBS 504

Evil: A Philosophical Exploration into the Origins and Nature of Evil

Seminar in the Humanities Fall 2007
Tuesday 6:30p.m.-9:50p.m.

Elysa Koppelman-White
Department of Philosophy

Examine the historical origins and impact of “evil” as an enduring element of philosophical conjecture and explore assumptions about evil and its impact on ordinary people’s lives in this new MALS seminar.



Edvard Munch *Scream* (1895), Lithograph. Public Domain

LBS 590

Independent Study in Liberal Studies

2 or 4 credits

The Masters of Arts in Liberal Studies program at Oakland University is pleased to announce the availability of *LBS 590 Independent Study in Liberal Studies* as of spring 2007. This option provides students with an opportunity to investigate specific areas of interest with a scholar in that field.

Please note: you must arrange this in advance by having permission from the professor with whom you will work as well as the program director’s signature in order to register.

LBS 500

The Silk Road: Trade and Cultural Exchange Over Two Millennia

Colloquium Fall 2007

Professor Linda Benson
 Director MALS, Professor Department of History



Kashgar in northwestern China's Xinjiang region.

Over 2000 years ago, Chinese fabrics flowed along the trade network known today as the Silk Road, ultimately reaching the far distant markets of the Roman Empire. For centuries after, ideas and merchandise traveled this storied route, enriching the cultures of the Eurasian continent. Today, the Silk Road's dusty tracks have given way to railroads and highways, as this renown trade artery again plays a pivotal role in world affairs.



Outside Kashgar, a stop on the Silk Road for over 2000 years.

This interdisciplinary course introduces the Silk Road's history as a conduit for exchange between China, Central Eurasia, and Europe. Over the semester, we will examine recent archaeological

discoveries and a variety of written and printed sources that trace the transfer of trade goods, religious beliefs, and technology from East to West. Together, these allow us to assess the impact of these exchanges on some of the world's great civilizations from ancient times to the modern era.

Professor Benson's area of research is northwestern China through which the old Silk Road passes on its way to Central Eurasia. Her next book, *Across China's Gobi*, will appear late in 2007.

LBS 501

United Germany and its Discontents: Issues of Memory, Identity, and Community

Core Seminar,
 Language and Literature Winter 2008

Professor
 Barbara Mabee
 Department of Modern Languages and Literatures

This seminar explores the continuing divisions that mark contemporary German society through an exploration of literary texts, predominantly grounded in the former East Germany and in cultural, economic, and political debates in the "new" Germany since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. Readings will consist of memoirs, autobiographies, fiction and poetry, utilizing various literary modes such as the fantastic, satire, irony, sarcasm, humor, as well as background readings through books and essays about the history of Germany and debates and discourses in the post-unification era.



The Brandenburg Gate

Taught by Professor Barbara Mabee, author of numerous books and articles on German language and literature, the course will also explore the life and work of a German woman writer, Elke Erb, who is the subject of Professor Mabee's current book project.



Master of Arts in Liberal Studies
 College of Arts and Sciences
 221 Varner Hall
 Rochester, MI 48309-4401

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|---------------------|--|
| January 26 | Last day to file application for degree for winter and spring term 2007. |
| February 24—March 4 | Winter recess. |
| April 18 | Classes end. |
| April 20-April 26 | Exams |
| May 5 | Commencement |
| May 7 | Spring Classes Begin |
| May 28 | Memorial Day Holiday |
| June 25-June 27 | Exams |
| July 2 | Summer Classes Begin |
| July 4 | Independence Day |
| August 20-August 22 | Exams |



save the date

September 28, 2007 Open House
 Oakland Room at the Oakland Center
 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.
 Refreshments will be served

Please contact Professor Linda Benson, the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies program Director at (248) 370-2539 or (248) 370-2154 for an application or other program information.