

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

BILINSKI FELLOWSHIP COLLOQUIUM



**Humanities Presentations by Doctoral Students Awarded the 2020/2021
Bilinski Dissertation Fellowships**

The Russell J. and Dorothy S. Bilinski Fellowship is a program of the Bilinski
Educational Foundation

12:50 – 4:00 PM
Thursday, November 19, 2020
Zoom Meeting ID: 955 4808 8408
<https://unm.zoom.us/j/95548088408>

**Bilinski
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The Bilinski Colloquium Program

12:50 P.M. – Welcome

1:00 P.M. – Presentations, Part One

Leah “Candolin” Cook

Gerard Lavin

Marcel Lebow

Lauren Perry

2:15 P.M. – Break

2:30 P.M. – Presentations, Part Two

David Puthoff

Idris Robinson

Moises Santos

3:15 P.M. – Q & A with Fellows

4:00 P.M. – Concluding Remarks

MEET THE FELLOWS



Leah “Candolin” Cook – “The Wild Ones’: Murder, Mania, and the Last Apaches of the Sierra Madre”

Abstract: This dissertation provides a microhistory of an international incident known as the “Fimbres Affair” or “Fimbres Apache Expedition,” which took place in the Arizona-Sonora border region in the late 1920s and early 1930s. The Fimbres Affair involved the kidnapping of a Mexican boy by Apaches living in the Sierra Madre, the American expedition to recover him, and the media frenzy that ensued. This dissertation uses the event to better understand social, cultural, and economic dynamics between borderlands communities in the early twentieth century; as well as to analyze broader societal attitudes concerning race, gender, myth, and identity. Candolin also hopes this dissertation will add to discussions exploring the tension between modernity and a mythic past in western spaces, as well as in the minds of the American people.

Bio: Candolin Cook is a doctoral candidate in the Department of History. Her research focuses on social and cultural histories of the American West, with an emphasis on myth, memory, and popular culture. Candolin is also a freelance writer and editor, and recently stepped down as co-editor of Edible New Mexico magazine and as an associate editor at the New Mexico Historical Review.



Gerard Lavin – “Literacy, Rhetoric, Tradition, and Truth in the Age of Bede”

Abstract: In the early Middle Ages, many cultures that had long maintained themselves through oral transmission of traditions and stories increasingly embraced the technology of literacy. One result was a dramatic transformation of the rhetorical foundations that had long stabilized and united their societies. Historians have often failed to account for the complexities of this process.

The central premise of my investigation has been to view written evidence from the early medieval kingdom of Northumbria, in what is now northeast England, not only in the context of the literate culture and traditions it had begun to adopt, but also within the dynamics of the oral culture and rhetorical assumptions that continued to dominate the political and social worlds of the region for centuries.

My dissertation examines the Life of Wilfrid, by Stephen of Ripon, to explore some of the ways in which literate sources of rhetorical authority were selectively accepted and rejected by political actors and to map out the rhetorical environment into which they were absorbed. It then considers how historical texts, such as the Venerable Bede’s Ecclesiastical History, were constructed to function within this largely oral rhetorical context.

The audience that mattered to Bede included not only those educated monks who were able to read his erudite Latin, but also everyone who might eventually hear his stories translated into English, repeated, refined and embellished in the telling and remembering. This expectation should color our understanding of the structure of these works, which consist largely of short narrative episodes, often packaged with clear theological interpretations in portable, self-contained units that could easily be learned, remembered, and shared orally. It should also transform the way we understand the sense of history that shapes them. Interested though he was in factual accuracy, Bede’s rhetoric focused on establishing the kind of communal consensus—created and maintained through oral personal relationships—from which authority continued to derive throughout the medieval period. My dissertation attempts to model the functioning of this network and situate Bede’s historical work within it.

Bio: Gerard Lavin is a doctoral candidate in British and Irish Literary Studies, with a focus on the interactions between textual and oral cultures in the Middle Ages. He holds an MFA in Theatre from Michigan State University and a BA in English from the University of Notre Dame. He is currently finishing a dissertation about the use of oral rhetoric in the works of the Venerable Bede.

MEET THE FELLOWS



Marcel Lebow – “Of a Different Mind: Schelling and the Problems of Panprotopsychism”

Abstract: The aim of my project is to develop an interface between the earlier/middle periods (1794 ~ 1810) of the philosophy of F.W.J. Schelling and some of the work done in the contemporary philosophy of mind, which investigates the nature of mental states and their potential connection to the body and world at large. In doing so, I hope to draw out a comparative, historical, and critical study of Schelling’s work with the overarching aim of contributing to the current research done within the philosophy of mind. I believe the primary point of connection is in Schelling’s prescient articulation of a hypothesis that is today called panprotopsychism, which holds that (some) basic physical entities possess the primitive properties required for the emergence of mental states.

Furthermore, I intend to argue that the fine-grained tools of conceptual analysis available to today’s philosopher of mind (e.g., predicate logic, counterfactuals, types of supervenience, the principle of explanatory exclusion, etc.) can be utilized in a study of Schelling’s own theory. In situating Schelling against contemporary research and in connecting his work with the tools just mentioned, I hope to craft a three-pronged examination whereby I maintain which of Schelling’s ideas (1) anticipate contemporary positions in the philosophy of mind, (2) withstand today’s standards, perhaps even developing positions yet to be considered by current research, and (3) fail by their own merit as well as against contemporary criticism. The consequences of such research should yield both critical and historical results.

Bio: Marcel Lebow is a PhD candidate in the Department of Philosophy at the University of New Mexico. He holds an MA in Philosophy from UNM and a BA in Philosophy from the University of California at Riverside. His research interests include the philosophy of mind as well as 19th and 20th century European philosophy. He was born and raised in Los Angeles, California. Aside from philosophy, Marcel is interested in snorkeling, music, and cooking. He is also an avid traveler and has backpacked through twenty-four countries.

MEET THE FELLOWS



Lauren Perry – “Animal Texts: Critical Animal Concepts in Environmental Literature for the Anthropocene”

Abstract: Lauren’s dissertation, “Animal Texts: Critical Animal Concepts in Environmental Literature for the Anthropocene” illustrates the immense contribution environmental literature makes to animal studies and the environmental movement in its effort to redefine human-animal relationships. She analyzes the work of prominent environmentalist writers of nonfiction that, through animal studies readings, establish critical conceptions of our animal counterparts in the environment. “Animal texts” redefine the humanities’ role in environmentalism. Her first chapter begins in the late nineteenth century with Sarah Orne Jewett’s “A White Heron” (1886) and Jack London’s “To Build a Fire” (1902) and interrogates how turn of the century environmentalists and animal activist writers used the short story to critique two pivotal types of humans; the hunter naturalist and the outdoorsman. London and Jewett’s texts question the basis of human-animal relationships of both the domestic sphere and that of wildlife and naturalists. Chapter Two analyzes Aldo Leopold’s *A Sand County Almanac* (1949) and Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* (1962) for how they create and insist on Animal Time as a means of avoiding environmental end-times. Lauren’s Chapter Three uses Edward Abbey’s *Desert Solitaire* (1968) to show how his desert journals construct a layered definition and recognition of Animal Consciousness. Chapter Four argues that Terry Tempest Williams’ *Refuge* (1991) blends genres in alignment with Animal Studies to create a new kind of Animal Memory. Lauren’s fifth and final chapter uses Dan Flores’ *Coyote America* (2016) and Nate Blakeslee’s *American Wolf* (2017) to define the new subgenre of Animal Texts as the crowning concept of a new kind of animal in literature. These concepts showcase the powerful possibility of animal studies at work in literary texts. The contemporary moment’s willingness to rethink animal life amongst and in relation to humans is especially relevant. The reexamination of animals within literature stands to resituate humanities as a crucial tool for environmental activism. Climate change demands a redefinition of human values, specifically for how we understand animals. Lauren’s dissertation constructs a new animal paradigm as it exists in key pieces of environmental literature and scholarship surrounding the rereading of animal presence and lives.

Bio: Lauren Perry is a PhD Candidate in American Literary Studies. She earned her Master of Arts in English Literature from the University of Wyoming in 2012. Before moving to Albuquerque in 2015 to begin her doctoral studies at the University of New Mexico, she served as full-time Humanities faculty at Northwest College in Powell, Wyoming. At Northwest, she taught Intro to Literature, Composition, Graphic Novels, and Writing. Since beginning her studies at UNM, she has served as the Taos Writers Conference Graduate Assistant, the C19 Society for Nineteenth Century Americanists Graduate Assistant, taught and designed many of her own courses, and received various scholarships, grants, and awards for both her teaching and scholarship. Most recently she was awarded the Student Research Grant from GPSA and the 1st Place Larry Memorial Scholarship Award for her dissertation work.

Lauren’s publications include her chapter entitled “Teaching the History and Theory of American Comics: 20th-Century Graphic Novels as a Complex Literary Genre” in *Teaching Graphic Novels in the English Classroom: Pedagogical Possibilities of Multimodal Literacy Engagement* (Palgrave Macmillan 2017). Lauren also authored nine entries in the *Edinburgh Biographical Dictionary of Scottish Writers* (Forthcoming, University of Edinburgh Press). She has recently had three of her five dissertation chapters accepted for inclusion in scholarly collections about animals in literature on *Animals and the Pandemic*, *Nonhuman Animals*, and *Ecopedagogy*.

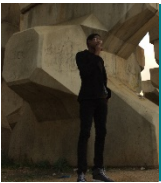
MEET THE FELLOWS



David Puthoff – “The End of One Will Be the End of All”: The Realization of Solidarity in 19th Century African

Abstract: This dissertation examines how several key texts in African American literature illustrate the complex ways Black authors thought about solidarity in the periods before, during, and after the Civil War. The study of solidarity as a political emotion emerging in the 19th century relates to important activist movements, including abolitionist conventions, the Underground Railroad, and slave revolts. Many authors in this study were participants in activist movements, but the function of solidarity in their written work composes a relatively new field for investigation. My close readings of David Walker’s *Appeal to the Coloured Citizens of the World* and Frederick Douglass’s *The Heroic Slave* reveal ways in which African American author-activists imagined the Black and white characters and historical actors assisting one another across racial or class lines in a period where such work is often characterized as antagonistic. Texts such as Harriet Wilson’s *Our Nig*, Frank Webb’s *The Garies and Their Friends*, and Francis Harper’s *Iola Leroy* show the ways in which solidarity across occupational and gender lines gradually emerges from existing practices of marriage, family, and extended kinship networks. By examining novels, short stories, speeches, and archival documents, including sailor’s journals, the dissertation demonstrates that solidarity emerges as other historical and hierarchical social configurations come under attack by activists fighting slavery, white supremacy, and capitalism. These author-activists work to imagine and enact new forms of social configuration.

Bio: David Puthoff is a 2020-21 Russell J. and Dorothy S. Bilinski Fellow and received the Lydia Maria Child Social Justice Award in 2019. He is a Graduate Instructor and a PhD candidate in American Literary Studies at the University of New Mexico, where his research focuses on the practices of collective identity in the nineteenth century. The journal *Utopian Studies* will be publishing his article, “‘To Make Discoveries in Those Latitudes’: Utopia and Settler Colonialism in Equality; or, a History of Lithconia” in an upcoming issue. He is an assistant editor for *Optopia: A Solarpunk Zine* and lives in New Mexico with his partner and three cats.



Idris Robinson – “Paradigms and Logical Morphology in Wittgenstein’s Philosophy”

Abstract: I plan to discuss the role of paradigms and logical morphology in both the early and the mature philosophical contributions of Ludwig Wittgenstein. Starting with the young Wittgenstein of the *Tractatus*, I will demonstrate how his appropriation of mathematical symbolic logic signaled an early indication of his later approach. However, I will explain how Wittgenstein, throughout his transitional phase, came to see various limitations inherent within mathematical symbolic logic that had the propensity to inhibit his goal of philosophical clarity. Finally, I will close by showing how the mature Wittgenstein developed a more expansive and rigorous philosophical methodology based in logical morphology, which was capable of correcting the shortcoming implicit in symbolic logic. Furthermore, I will also argue that the late Wittgenstein’s realist and materialist account of paradigms offers a prime example of how logical morphology can help elucidate many of the classical problems of Western metaphysics.

Bio: Idris Robinson is a PhD candidate in the Department of Philosophy at the University of New Mexico. He holds a BA in philosophy from the Carnegie Mellon University. His research interests include contemporary Continental philosophy, early analytic philosophy, ancient Greek thought, and open comparative philosophy.

MEET THE FELLOWS



Moises Santos – “Alternative Chicanx Educational Activism in the U.S. Southwest, 1945-1975”

Abstract: My dissertation topic, titled “Alternative Chicanx Educational Activism in the U.S. Southwest, 1930-1975,” studies the use of independent newspapers, community theater, and independent Chicana/o colleges by activists to educate their community. Geographically, my study is placed in the Southwest states of New Mexico, Texas, and California. Using the theoretical frameworks of Southwest Borderlands Studies and Critical Race Theory in Education, I contextualize the historical racial power dynamics of U.S. takeover in the Southwest region that influence oppressive and exclusionary educational practices, and the challenge to those institutions by the alternative educational activism at the center of my study.

Chapter one of my dissertation is dedicated to analyzing the educational sophistication of newspapers in New Mexico from 1930-1975. The next chapter focuses on the work of Teatro Campesino in Delano, California during the late 1960s, applying a new analysis to these well-known theater productions with an argument that they also had an educational purpose. Lastly, a third chapter tells the story of Colegio Jacinto Treviño (1969-1976), based in Merced, Texas, which was established by agrarian workers in coalition with community and professional intellectuals and aimed to provide transformative education to their educationally neglected community. My research demonstrates the ingenuity and commitment that educational activists employed in their goal to provide educational materials to their communities when they needed them the most. Additionally, these activists filled the role that educational institutions failed to meet with Mexican descent communities for much of the twentieth century by providing culturally relevant and politically conscious education. While at times they were only temporarily successful in this venture, these educational activists impacted the larger struggle for equitable education. Furthermore, my project introduces a new element to the narrative of educational activism among Mexican-descent communities by focusing on grassroots, non-institutional, and non-traditional educational strategies and mediums.

Bio: Moises Santos is originally from Long Beach, California but moved to New Mexico in 2013 to pursue his Ph.D. after receiving an M.A. from UCLA in Latin American Studies. He is currently a Ph.D. Candidate in the Department of History. His areas of study include Chicanx History, Borderlands History, Chicanx Educational Activism, and Transnationalism. He has previously taught for the Chicana/o Studies Department at UNM and the History and Cultural Studies Departments at CNM. His dissertation studies alternative Chicanx educational activism in the U.S. Southwest in the middle of the twentieth century. Moises currently resides in Albuquerque with his family.

Thank you!

The College of Arts & Sciences and the UNM Foundation thank Bonnie Severiotti, President and Executive Director, and the Trustees of the Bilinski Educational Foundation for their generous support.

About the Bilinski Educational Foundation

Russell J. and Dorothy S. Bilinski's goal in life was to be independent and challenged intellectually. They strongly believed in people being self-sufficient, ambitious, and above all, responsible. Both Russell and Dorothy were true intellectuals, as well as being adventuresome, independent and driven. Russell was a researcher, academician and an entrepreneur. Dorothy was an accomplished artist and patron of the arts. Russell and Dorothy believed that education was a means to obtain independence, and this is the legacy they wished to pass on to others.

In furtherance of that goal, when Russell and Dorothy died, they left a significant gift for the formation of a nonprofit corporate foundation. The Bilinski Educational Foundation seeks to fulfill this legacy by providing fellowship funds for post-secondary education for students who have demonstrated, and are likely to maintain, both the highest academic achievement and good moral character, but who lack the financial resources to complete their post-secondary education.