

## STUDENT FELLOWS AT THE CENTER FOR THE HUMANITIES FALL 2006

The Center for the Humanities invites applications from students in their junior year interested in participating as Student Fellows in the Fall 2006 Faculty Seminar directed by four Distinguished Visiting Professors in the Humanities. Up to five students will be selected as Fellows to join a working group of faculty and the visiting professors that will meet weekly to discuss selected readings on the seminar theme "Pleasure." The seminar will meet Wednesdays from 4:15-6:00 p.m. Student Fellows will also be invited to a weekly lunch of seminar participants on Fridays.

### Seminar Theme: "Pleasure"

**Aug. 28 - Sept. 15 -- Professor Carolyn Dean (History, Brown University):** Recent discussions of identity politics and 'victim's culture' suggest that questions about the proper place of affect in public life are far from resolved and have perhaps become more insistent. This seminar will address the following questions from various disciplinary perspectives and in relation to different historical periods, cultures, categories of analysis, with reference to ideological investments in victimization and its political and social consequences: How do religious and secular concepts of victimhood intersect to produce ideological and socio-political conflicts, cultural memories, identities, and social solidarities that resonate, but also change, across time and space? What kinds of victims and modes of dying generate more or less public sympathy and how does that sympathy mobilize response in political, social, and religious contexts? Why has victimhood become such an obsessive topic of concern in contemporary Western scholarship? Finally, how, in many kinds of discourses, including that of human rights, does the body of the victim become a source of truth, of obfuscation, and often of ambivalence?

**Sept 25 - Oct 13 -- Professor Shuen-Fu Lin (Chinese Literature, University of Michigan):** Three topics will be explored in successive weeks: 1. "In the Beginning . . . : World Views and the Patterns of Happiness"; 2. "The Pleasures of the Garden and the City in Traditional China"; 3. "Through a Window of Dreams: Traditional Chinese Dream Theory and the Literary Dream."

**Oct. 23 - Nov. 10 -- Professor Janice Radway (Literature Program, Duke University):** This seminar will focus on romances, chick lit, zines, pleasure, and the construction of subjectivity. We will discuss selections from my *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy and Popular Literature*, an example of chick lit (perhaps *Bridget Jones Diary*), some zines, and some selections from Judith Butler and others.

**Nov. 13 - Dec. 1 -- Professor Claire Colebrook (English Literature, University of Edinburgh):** "Life, Time, Death, and Happiness": Both Freud and Bergson describe the genesis of the self from processes, forces and temporal tendencies that are subsequently belied by linear clock-time. Both of their accounts seek to diagnose the present and both regard the bounded self as a negation of life. Freud and Bergson might nevertheless be regarded as offering radically different accounts of how, in the present, we might deal with the rigidity of the intellect (Bergson) or the excessive demands of the superego (Freud). This seminar will consider the following questions: is it possible to consider non-linear forms of temporality that would answer to the alternative logics proposed by Freud and Bergson? To what extent are such calls for a redemptive temporality indebted to a modernist aesthetic? What is the norm or image of life that underpins these accounts and what relevance does it have for today's current interest in 'life'? Readings will be drawn from Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* and Bergson's *Creative Evolution*.

#### Eligibility:

Students interested in becoming Student Fellows at the Center for the Humanities can have majors in any department. All applicants must have an overall GPA of 3.5 or higher and must be able to attend the weekly meetings. Students will not receive credit for their participation and no formal writing assignments will be required. Students will be encouraged to think about how their work during the semester might be developed into a MAP during the Spring semester.

#### Application Procedure:

To apply to be a Student Fellow at the Center for the Humanities, interested junior students should submit the following:

- ◆ A statement of their interest in the topic of the Seminar (no more than 750 words)
- ◆ A transcript of their coursework at Grinnell
- ◆ Names of two faculty references

**Deadline for Applications:** Applications must be turned in by Friday, April 14, 2006 at 5 PM to Sondi Burnell, Goodnow 107. Selected students will be notified before pre-registration.

**Review Committee:** The Center for the Humanities Advisory Board will review the applications. Further information about the Center and the four Distinguished Professors can be found at: <http://web.grinnell.edu/CentHumanities/index.html>