

Spring 2007

Shannon Lawson, Director  
Taryn Malone, Student Coordinator  
Susan Montavon, Secretary

# The Challenge

Honors Program Newsletter

## I Said “High Heels,” Not High Hills!

*One SSU Student’s Reveries of an Honors Excursion Along the Shawnee Trail*

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Graziani at Museum	2
Gottschalk Visits SSU	3
Honors Alumni	4
Fall Course Offerings	4

By: Taryn Malone

Let me be the first to admit that, even as a life-long resident of the anti-urbane village of South Webster (pop. 2,000), I have never readily answered to the nickname “Nature Girl” in my life. Yet, as Student Coordinator for the Honors Program, I felt an obligation to my fellow Honors students to participate on March 10 in what was advertised as a five-mile hike along the glorious Shawnee Trail. None of our group was aware that both literal and figurative twists and turns were about to occur to us during our hike.

I carpooled out State Route 125 with Honors Program Director Shannon Lawson and SSU students Chris George and Julia Woods to Shawnee Lodge, where the hike was to commence at 10:00 AM. The hike was organized by the park system, and was open to the public, and so various public school teachers and SSU faculty and staff members were also in attendance. As we were standing around the large wooden bear (see picture) in the lobby of the lodge, it dawned on me that some people actually participate in these naturalist excursions for *fun*—a concept that is completely alien to a lethargic, potato-chip popping English major such as myself.

Although I was leery of the hike before it even began, it was when our tour guides bused us out into the middle of nowhere to drop us off at our starting location that my life—and some of the more sordid scenes out of the legendary film *Deliverance*—flashed before my eyes.

But it wasn’t until some jelly-bean-sized rain drops pelted us against our heads as we



(L-R) SSU Honors Students Julia Wood, Chris George, Jane Tolle, Student Coordinator Taryn Malone, Director Shannon Lawson, and Tour Guide Jenny Richards

threw several slabs of heavy stone into a 6” deep creek to create a crossing that a voice deep inside me said that there were no snack machines at the end of this tunnel.

However—the trip was not without its share of unforeseen highlights, either. For instance, during one of our rare breaks along the trail, Shannon Lawson offered me some CVS Cranberry Nut Trail Mix, which consisted of a motley conglomeration of yogurt-covered cranberries, dried cranberries, walnuts, almonds, and raisins. I highly recommend this specific trail mix to anyone who may find his- or herself stuck in the middle of a densely-foliaged labyrinth of hills and hemlocks. Another lesson that can be gleaned from this particular tangent is that life-long bonds begin by sharing food.

**STORY CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

### IMPORTANT

#### REMINDER!!!

- As an Honors student, you have the privilege of registering for classes on the *first day of registration* (when only seniors are typically allowed to register.)
- This is regardless of your current class standing (Freshman, Junior, etc.)
- Since SSU is transitioning to semesters, you may have to see your Academic Advisor to receive clearance to register, regardless of whether you are an Honors student. (ALL English majors are required to see their advisors!)
- The first day of registration for Fall Semester is Monday, April 23.
- Log on to MySSU to register:

<https://myssu.shawnee.edu/ics/?>

## “High Heels” Continued

### CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Our hike also proved to be educational. There was a lot of talk about lichen and fungi, as we saw various species of these growing on dead trees along our hike. I really still don't know how to tell the difference between lichen and fungi, as it all looks the same, but some of the orange and turquoise specimens were aesthetically pleasing to the objective eye.

Jenny Richards, the hike organizer, also found some spearmint twigs, and broke some off to share with the group. If you chew on the twigs, you can literally taste the mint inside, which was really neat, even for disgruntled individuals like me who would rather save time by picking up some Breath Savers at the local BP station. Really, who is going to care that you have bad breath when you are worlds removed from civilization?

Lastly, toward the end of our hike (when I could especially feel the burn in the joints that connect my legs to my torso), we spotted some large clusters of frog eggs, and actually got to see frogs mating. One of the naturalists actually picked the amphibians up so that I could take a picture of them doing the dirty. Though it sounds inherently disgusting, it was actually morbidly fascinating to see how another species procreates. Apparently frogs don't actually have intercourse, however. The guy just climbs on the girl's back and covers her eggs with a clear liquid as she pops them out, one by one. I also learned that day that frogs are notorious participants in orgies—but that, in such cases, there is always only one female present. I don't know about you, but for me, that tidbit of information gave a whole new meaning to the term “multi-tasking.”

When our group finally emerged from the darkness of the woods onto a rural road, a park ranger drove his cop car down to where we were and offered to transport some of us up to where the vans were parked. Shannon and I immediately volunteered, and so we both got to ride in the back of a state vehicle with metal bars partitioning the backseat from the driver's seat. Indeed, we were rebels.

But the greatest twist in our adventure was not to occur until after our hike had actually come to a close. When we made it back to the vans, the park ranger pulled out his map and told us that we had actually covered eight miles of uninhabited terrain, not five. When we questioned Jenny Richards about this, she said, “Well, of course I knew that! But if we advertised the hike as being eight miles long, no one would show up!” You don't say...

## Honors Professor Lectures at Local Museum

SSU Art History professor Isabel Graziani, Ph.D., recently presented “Art and Power: A Female Perspective” on March 13 at the Southern Ohio Museum. The presentation was one of a series scheduled by SSU's Women's Center in lieu of March being National Women's History Month.

Many of the artists Graziani discussed were from European and Eastern countries outside the U.S. For example, one of the highlights of the presentation was a video clip of a religious worship service in an Iranian mosque. The video was one female artist's condemnation of the

repressing social and political structures that dictate daily life in Iran today.

Professor Graziani, who is a native of Italy and who now divides her time between her residences in Portsmouth and Athens, Ohio, is currently teaching an Honors section of Introduction to Art, and plans to offer other Honors Art History courses in the future.

Graziani has also served as a mentor for previous SSU Celebration of Scholarship presenters, and is currently organizing a week-long special topics study abroad course to either France or Italy for December 2007.

“I found I could say things with colors and shapes that I couldn't say any other way—things I had no words for.”

—Georgia O'Keeffe



Above, Dr. Graziani delivers her speech. Left, a self-portrait by artist Frida Kahlo.

## Gottschalk Visits SSU

**By: Chris Dunham**

This spring, Barbara Gottschalk, executive vice president of Seeds of Peace visited SSU as a Woodrow Wilson Visiting Fellow.

The Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation is an organization that works to assist students at smaller liberal arts colleges. The Visiting Fellows program allows a powerful person to interact with powerful people that they normally wouldn't get to meet.

Gottschalk was on campus as a part of the Visiting Fellows program to talk about her life and organization Seeds of Peace.

Barbara Kunkle, SSU's coordinator for the Visiting Fellows program was thrilled to have Gottschalk on campus.

"When looking for a Visiting Fellow, she stood out as someone who would have a lot to say to people on our campus," Kunkle said. "There are many lessons our students can learn from (Gottschalk)."

The Visiting Fellow arrived on a Monday, and over the course of the week visited more than a half dozen classes in the political and social studies fields.

"I would like these students to recognize that it only takes one idea and one person to get a whole new thing started," Gottschalk said. "It's not always as hard as some think it is to make an impact."

One focus of Gottschalk's talks was the organization she helps to run. Seeds of Peace, founded in 1993, is dedi-

cated to spreading peace around the world through the youth of various nations. Each summer, the organization brings teenagers from countries around the world to a camp to get to know their "enemies."

Seeds of Peace started in 1993 with 46 teens from Israel, Palestine, and Egypt. Over the course of its existence, the organization has touched the lives of more than 3,000 young people from many countries.

"We help these kids to see through what they've been taught to believe," Gottschalk said. "We want them to get beyond arguments to talk to the real person."

Many students had an opportunity to learn from Gottschalk that week. Kunkle acknowledges that there are many lessons students can learn from her visit, but points out some key areas.

"Gottschalk demonstrates by her life and work that one person can make a difference," she said. "It's a very empowering message."

Kunkle also noted that her acts of goodwill could inspire others to reach out and help others.

The highlight of the week had been Gottschalk's public lecture entitled "Out Beyond Ideas." On Tuesday evening in the Flohr Lecture Hall, she hosted a two-hour session with students, faculty members, and people from the

community to discuss her work.

"I want to talk about the foundation of seeds of peace," she said before the lecture. The title of the lecture "Out Beyond Ideas" comes from a poem by Jelaluddin Rumi that reads "Out beyond ideas of right-doing and wrong-doing, there is a field."

"That poem had an enormous impact on the foundation of the organization," Gottschalk noted. "I like to think of Seeds of Peace as that field."



**"Out beyond ideas of right-doing and wrong-doing, there is a field." –Jelaluddin Rumi, "Out Beyond Ideas," a poem that inspired Gottschalk to begin Seeds of Peace**

### UPCOMING HONORS ACTIVITY

Some possible events include: dinner and planetarium show featuring new material recently obtained by SSU's planetarium, a trip to Huntington Museum of Art (or similar museum in Cincinnati, Columbus, etc.), an outing to Carter's Caves in Kentucky, etc.

Something that I (Taryn) would like to do (if enough people are interested) is visit Cleveland and tour the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

If you have activity suggestions, e-mail Taryn Malone at malonet@shawnee.edu.

Also, keep your eyes peeled for fliers and/or e-mails announcing upcoming activities!!



### May 17, 2007 Program at a Glance

9:00-9:50 a.m. Oral Presentations

10:00-10:15 a.m. Welcoming Remarks,

President Rita Rice Morris

10:15-11:15 a.m. Invited Speaker, Jennifer Pauley-Gose, PhD

11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Campus Cookout

Noon- 12:50 p.m. Posters, Oral Presentations

1:00 – 1:50 p.m. Oral Presentations

2:00 – 3:00 p.m. Keynote Speaker, Kendra McSweeney, PhD

3:10 – 3:30 p.m. Awarding of Door Prizes

## FALL SEMESTER 2007 HONORS COURSE OFFERINGS

### HONORS PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION

Director: Shannon Lawson  
Phone: 351-3295  
Office: Massie 422  
E-mail: slawson@shawnee.edu

Student Coordinator: Taryn Malone  
Phone: 351-3095  
Office: Massie 135  
E-mail: malonet@shawnee.edu

Secretary: Susan Montavon  
Phone: 351-3177  
Office: Massie 124  
E-mail: smontavon@shawnee.edu

### ENGL1102 (12) T/R 10:00—11:20 am (Lawson)

#### Composition: A Vehicle for Communicating Across Gender, Class, and Cultural Divisions

The course will be an enhanced introduction to college composition. Students will be required to actively participate in class discussions of original readings relevant to the goals of the course. The course will focus on how we use language, both written and oral to communicate with one another. Students will develop their critical thinking and analysis skills. Students will also produce an electronic portfolio featuring a collection of their writing pieces and reflections upon their development as a writer.

In addition to the standard departmental reader, students will read *A long way gone : memoirs of a boy soldier* by Ishmael Beah. Beah began writing his memoirs when he was a junior at Oberlin College. His story begins in Sierra Leone during the civil warfare of the 1990s. At the young age of twelve, he witnessed the brutal killing of his family at the hand of attacking rebels. Within a year, he had been recruited into the government army, and at the tender age of thirteen, discovered he was capable of horrific violence. When he was finally released by the army and sent to a UNICEF rehabilitation center, he labored to reclaim his humanity. For more info, consult the official website at [http://www.alongwaygone.com/long\\_way\\_gone.html](http://www.alongwaygone.com/long_way_gone.html).

### PHIL2230 (51) T/R 4:00—5:20 pm (Valentine)\*\*

#### Social and Political Philosophy

“Below the Radar: Rogue States, Failed States and Non-State Actors”

The course will begin with a brief survey of the various social sciences. It will then examine some of the classical texts of Western social and political philosophy to determine the basic presuppositions Western thinkers have made regarding political communities and human rationality.

The course will then focus on how well these classical Western presuppositions enable us to comprehend the potentials and limitations of rogue states, failed states and non-state actors to impact the world in which we live. Special attention will be given to how well these presuppositions enable us to think through the implications of modern science and technology (the internet, WMD, genetic engineering), and the challenges of world views and movements that espouse the rationality of martyrdom (al Qaeda, Jemaah Islamiyah).

Readings will include Huntington's *The Clash of Civilizations*, Barber's *Jihad vs. McWorld*, and contemporary work by foreign policy intellectuals such as Henry Kissinger, Zbigniew Brzezinski and Robert Litwak.

\*\*\*This class satisfies the GEP Social Science Requirement.

### VISIT US ON THE WEB!!

[http://www.shawnee.edu/  
acad/hon/index.html](http://www.shawnee.edu/acad/hon/index.html)

## Honors Alumni Spotlight: Derrick Gray

Derrick Gray, former SSU Honors Student, graduated from Shawnee in Spring 2005. After finishing his studies at SSU, Gray decided to pursue a Master's degree in Philosophy from Ohio University in Athens. He is currently working on his thesis, which centers around Alasdair MacIntyre's book, *After Virtue*, to which Gray was initially exposed by Dr. Meriwether in his undergraduate PHIL499 class on contemporary political philosophy. Gray plans to have completed work on his thesis by Summer 2007. After this, he will be headed to Texas, as he was just accepted into Rice University's prestigious Ph.D. program in Philosophy.

When questioned as to which Honors

classes were his favorites, Gray immediately responded that he loved Dr. Darren Harris-Fain's Junior Honors Seminar on science-fiction (which SSU may eventually offer again as a special topics course.) Gray reminisces that Harris-Fain's in-class discussions covered just about every topic—including philosophical topics—known to man, and that, unlike many class discussions, the subjects covered always remained within the realm of relevance.

Derrick also applauded Dr. Chip Poirot's Honors Senior Seminar class, in which students discussed important figures in the philosophy of science. Gray admits that he wished that the class would have had more time to

cover all of the interesting topics, but that, although only ten weeks in duration, the class benefited him considerably.

Derrick added that the enthusiastic mentorship offered to him by Dr. Nick Meriwether during Gray's graduate school application process was indispensable. In fact, Derrick has asked Meriwether to be an outside reader of his M.A. thesis.

Lastly, Gray commented that he thinks that the Honors Program can do much good for SSU as it continues to thrive in this small, young university town.

If you would like to write Derrick about grad school, philosophy, etc., drop him an e-mail at: [dg219005@ohio.edu](mailto:dg219005@ohio.edu)