

Peace and Conflict Studies Program

Humanities Program

The University of Kansas



Fall 2015

Best Wishes to James Woelfel and Robert Shelton

In Spring 2015, two founding members of the Peace and Conflict Studies Program, James Woelfel (Philosophy and Humanities and Western Civilization) and Robert Shelton (Religious Studies) retired.

Professor Woelfel was instrumental in starting the Peace and Conflict Studies Program at KU, and led the program from its beginning in 2003 until 2011. He developed and taught a core course for the PCS minor, major track, and graduate certificate: PCS 550, Classics of Peace Literature. The course features key philosophical and literary texts spanning the Reformation era to the present that investigate the stakes of war and the nature of peace.



Professor Woelfel also oversaw the development of the PCS major curriculum, which is now in place as the Peace and Conflict Studies track of the B.A. in Humanities offered by the Humanities Program.



Professor Shelton was a member of the Program's steering committee, and offered central courses in the PCS curriculum. REL 667, Religious Perspectives on War and Peace, examines views of war and peace in various faith traditions around the world. REL 669, Human Conflict and Peace, examines the religious, cultural, and social traditions related to the nature and purpose of conflict and nonviolent approaches to managing conflict.

We thank both Professor Woelfel and Professor Shelton for their invaluable contributions to the Program. We will miss them both and wish them the very best in their retirement!

Congratulations to our 2015 PCS Graduates

Minors

Jordan Burrows, major in Communication Studies

Jordan Silverman, major in Sociology

Graduate Certificate

Meaghan Kelly completed her MA in English and her PCS Graduate Certificate in December 2015. Her Master's Thesis, which she defended with honors, was titled "The Child-Soldier Deject: Abjection, Subjectivity, and Systemic Marginalization in Uzodinma Iweala's *Beasts of No Nation* and Ahmadou Kourouma's *Allah is Not Obligated*."

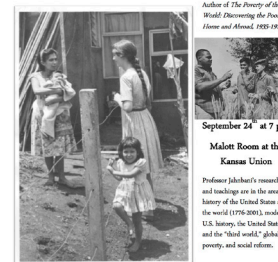
Annual PCS and Seaver Lecture

PCS steering committee member and Associate Professor of History, Sheyda Jahanbani, was selected as this year's Seaver and PCS Lecturer by the Humanities Program. In September, Professor Jahanbani spoke on "Inventing Global Poverty in Midcentury America." The talk drew on her recently published book, *"The Poverty of the World: Discovering the Poor at Home and Abroad, 1935-1975"* (Oxford University Press, 2015).

The Seaver Lecture, named after James E. Seaver, long-time director of the Humanities and Western Civilization Program, offers early to mid-career faculty at KU the chance to present their research related to "continuing issues in Western Civilization." The program's annual PCS Lecture features a scholar whose work focuses on understanding and resolving conflict between societies.

The Humanities Program presents...
Inventing Global Poverty in Midcentury America

The 27th Annual James Seaver Lecture
2015 Peace and Conflict Studies Lecture
Professor Sheyda Jahanbani
Associate Professor of History at the University of Kansas



Author of *The Poverty of the World: Discovering the Poor at Home and Abroad, 1935-1975*

September 24th at 7 pm

Malott Room at the
Kansas Union

Professor Jahanbani's research and teaching are in the area of history of the United States and the world (1776-2001), modern U.S. history, the United States and the "third world," global poverty, and social reform.

PCS Welcomes New Steering Committee Members

PCS steering committee members offer invaluable support to the program. They represent the programs and departments that offer core courses in the PCS minor, major track, and graduate certificate, and advise on PCS curriculum and programming. We welcomed the following new members this fall:

Danika Swanson, Education Program Specialist and Outreach Coordinator at the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies. She holds a Master's Degree in Theological Studies from Harvard Divinity School, where she studied the interrelationship of religion, ethics, and politics. She is currently participating in training for a Domestic Mediation Certificate.

Elizabeth Esch, Assistant Professor of American Studies. Her research focuses on U.S. Empire, Working Class Studies, Race and Racism, and Transnational Studies.

Don Haider-Markel, Professor and Chair of Political Science. His research focuses on Public Policy, American Politics, Public Opinion, Civil Rights, Criminal Justice, and Counterterrorism.

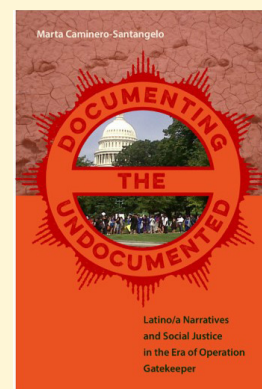
Musa Olaka, Librarian for African and Global and International Studies. His research interests include Genocide Studies, Information Policy, Human Information Behavior, and Library and Information Science Education.

Jacqueline Brinton, Assistant Professor of Religious Studies. Professor Brinton researches Islamic Studies, Popular Religion, and Media and Religion.

John Hess, PhD Candidate in History. John Hess is currently working on his dissertation, titled *Coping with Crisis: the U.S. Army's Occupation of Bavaria*. He has been a TA for PCS 220, Introduction to Peace and Conflict Studies, and will teach two independent sections of the class next year.

PCS Steering Committee Member Activity

Marta Caminero-Santangelo (English) is currently teaching a first-year seminar titled "Storytelling for a Better World: Literature and Social Justice." Her book, *Documenting the Undocumented: Latino/a Narratives in the Era of Operation Gatekeeper*, is forthcoming from University of Florida Press.



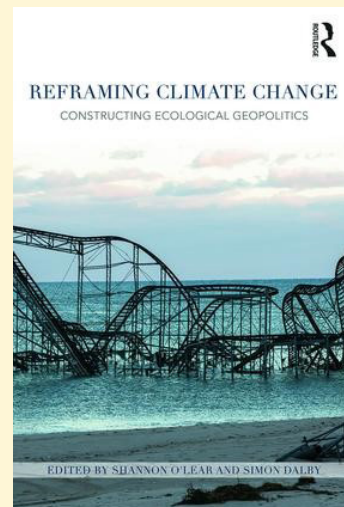
Allan Hanson (Anthropology) is in his third year of phased retirement and currently teaching his two favorite courses—“Theory in Anthropology” and “The Social Construction of the Self.” This fall, he traveled to New York to serve on a Fulbright Selection Committee that recommends students who want to go to New Zealand or another Pacific island for their research.

Marike Janzen (Humanities Program) published an article titled “Experiencing Form, Service Learning in the Literature of Human Rights Classroom” in the volume *Teaching Human Rights in Literary and Cultural Studies*, edited by Alexandra Schultheis Moore and Elizabeth Swanson Goldberg and published by the Modern Language Association.

Rachel Schwaller (American Studies) passed her MA thesis defense last semester and is now a PhD student. She presented a paper “Occupy ‘Til I Come: A Study in David Barton’s Hermeneutic” at the MidWest Popular Culture/American Culture Association in Cincinnati.

Shannon O’Lear (Geography, Environmental Studies) completed her latest book project. Together with Simon Dalby, she co-edited *Reframing Climate Change: Constructing Ecological Geopolitics* (Routledge, 2015). The book brings together established as well as newer scholars who take critical approaches to understanding climate change. Topics include: how climate is misunderstood as a factor in armed conflict, how science is selectively communicated to policy makers, why the term “climate refugee” is politically contested, how climate engineering misunderstands geography, and why religious and military organizations often take a similar stance of being proactive in climate adaptation.

With that book completed, Professor O’Lear is beginning work on her next book, *Environmental Geopolitics*, under contract with Rowman & Littlefield.



Last fall, **Danika Swanson (Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies)** taught a course titled “Gandhi and his Legacy.” This course focused on the life, work, and ever-evolving legacy of Mohandas “Mahatma” Gandhi, from his early movement in South Africa to his nonviolent campaign in India to his influence on nonviolent movements and leaders around the world, including Martin Luther King Jr., Aung San Suu Kyi, and the Dalai Lama. She also served as a facilitator for Soliya’s flagship program (Fall 2013, Spring 2014), the Connect Program, an online cross-cultural education program that guides students from the Middle East, North Africa, South Asia, Europe and North America in a sustained and substantive dialogue that: builds respectful relationships across national, cultural, religious and ideological boundaries; encourages students to establish a deeper understanding for the perspectives of others around the world on important socio-political issues and why they feel the way they do; develops critical thinking, cross-cultural communication and media literacy skills.

Offered by the Humanities Program, Peace & Conflict Studies is a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approach to the study of human conflict. It examines the origins and nature of conflict within and among societies and the various ways in which humans address conflict. Through academic coursework and the possibility of practical experience, Peace & Conflict Studies offers students a concentrated program of study of one of the most central and urgent human issues: the causes and consequences of human conflict and the achievements and possibilities of building peaceful and equitable forms of social existence.

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