

Friendship

Spring 2011 Humanities Symposium | Feb. 21–25, 2011

Friendship belongs essentially to the human condition and underlies our ability to relate meaningfully to one another and our surroundings, whether individually or collectively. It signifies the care, concern, trust, hospitality and reconciliation that human persons extend to each other as we seek to build satisfying interdependent bonds. Relationships based on friendship may also exist, not just among individuals, but between communities and nations — and extend even to relationships with the environment and the divine. Throughout history and across cultures, friendship has provided one of the foundational binding forces connecting human beings, institutions and societies, guiding their beliefs and actions.

Friendship can therefore be the source of intense emotions ranging from attachment, longing and hope to despair and betrayal. Through it, we understand a range of human experiences from the relations of prehistoric hunter-gatherers with their emerging agrarian neighbors to its recent digital avatar in social networking sites like Facebook (with more than 400 million members at this point). The idea of friendship also informs our understanding of kinship, citizenship, service and civility. Given this rich context, the nature, relevance and diverse expressions of human friendship will continue to generate serious study and vigorous debate in years to come. These and other expressions of friendship will be explored in the 2011 Humanities Symposium.



James Leach, Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities

Friendship in the Public Sphere: Civility in a Fractured Society

Keynote Address | Hostetter Chapel
Friday, Feb. 25 | 8–9:15 p.m.

Monday, Feb. 21

Opening Reception

Howe Atrium, Boyer Hall | 3:45–4:30 p.m.

Student Colloquia:

The Impact of Historic Power and Fame on Friendships

Boyer Hall 130 | 4:30–6 p.m.

Panel Discussion: *Natalie Burack, Elizabeth Coon, Megan Keller, Alexander Lovelace, Colin Riddle*

Power, status and celebrity are factors that have always influenced friendship, but what if these reach historic proportions? How would they shape friendships between historic figures? The History Club sponsors this session, in which students will explore such friendships between the historic figures George Patton and Dwight Eisenhower; C. S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien; Winston Churchill and Franklin Roosevelt; Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels; and Bing Crosby and Louis Armstrong.

Student Colloquia:

Friends as Writers

Boyer Hall 134 | 4:30–6 p.m.

Alumni Panel Discussion: *Rachel McGahey, Brittany Mountz, Sarah Rinko, Alison Roncin*

Writers by definition require a readership, yet what would be the dynamic between author and reader if both were friends? Would close relationships enable or inhibit honest critique and exchange, and should writers develop a personal relationship with their audience? A panel of English major alumni will discuss how their friendships have influenced the writing process based on their own weekly meetings modeled on the famous Oxford Inklings working group and have continued down to today.

Symposium Faculty Lecture Series:

Becoming Acquainted With the History of Friendship

Boyer Hall 131 | 7–8:30 p.m.

Panel Discussion: *John Fea, Joseph P. Huffman, Jim LaGrand, Bernardo Michael, David Pettegrew, Anne-Marie Stoner-Eby, Norman Wilson*

Friendship is a phenomenon as diverse as the number of cultures and historical moments in which it is experienced. The faculty of the Department of History will present examples of friendship throughout the past from a wide array of historical periods (ancient, medieval, modern) and geographic regions (U.S., Europe, Africa, Asia), followed by a conversation with the audience about the lessons we can learn from an historical understanding of friendship.

Musical Performance:

Friendship in the Age of Social Media: Selections From “Edges: A Song Cycle”

Poorman Recital Hall | 9–10:30 p.m.

Bethany Bogle, Joseph D’Ambrosi, Starleisha Gingrich, Eric Hartman, Kimberly Lambertson, Gabriella Saramago, Hannah Faye Zarate

Social networking and virtual relationships via a growing range of communication platforms are redefining how we experience friendship. An exploration of these emerging dynamics and their impact on friendship was explored in the recent musical “Edges: A Song Cycle” (2005), and this evening event will showcase a selection of these songs. A talk-back session on both the musical itself as well as our experiences of its insights will follow the performance.

Tuesday, Feb. 22

Common Chapel:

Spiritual Friendship: Sowing an Ethic of Love

Brubaker Auditorium | 9:45–10:30 a.m.

Eldon Fry, College pastor

Drawing from historic biblical art and spiritual writings on friendship, this address will consider the capacity of spiritual friendship to supplant exclusivity, loneliness and isolation with relationships that fulfill the human need for companionship.

Faculty-Student Colloquia:

Christian-Muslim Friendships

Boyer Hall 130 | 4–5:30 p.m.

Panel Discussion: *George Pickens, Richard Hughes, Jan Hughes, Joseph P. Huffman, Crystal Downing, Sharon Baker, Bernardo Michael, Kim Yunez, Chad Frey*

In the current climate, the majority of Americans hold negative opinions of Islam, and many Christians in particular believe that Muslims cannot peacefully co-exist with them—let alone be their friends. Is this a self-evident truth and the only story to be told, or has friendship ever defined relationships between Christians and Muslims? A panel of faculty and students from across the campus will present accounts of Christian-Muslim friendships that will widen our vision of both the possibilities and the realities of Christian-Muslim friendship.

Faculty-Student Colloquia:

Building Unexpected Friendships Across Barriers of Ability

Boyer 134 | 4–5:30 p.m.

Panel Discussion: *Nancy Patrick, Jennifer Fisler, Gretchen Devine, Olivia King, Meghan Compton, Carolyn Partridge*

A pilot program in a local school district has brought Messiah College education majors together with high school students with special education needs. The relationships that have resulted, however, are not defined merely by a hierarchical mentoring model, but rather by a reciprocity based on friendship. This colloquium will therefore explore what friendship looks like that reaches across the social barrier of differences in cognitive ability.

Genesis of Relationships:

Imago Day Exhibit

Hess, Naugle and Witmer Residence Halls | 7–9 p.m.

First-year students will speak about their Core Course projects in an exhibit staged in Hess, Naugle and Witmer Residence Halls.

Wednesday, Feb. 23

Faculty-Student Colloquia:

Public Friendship and Civility in the Humanities

Boyer Hall 130 | 4–5:30 p.m.

Panel Discussion: *Norman Wilson and Students in the Humanities Seminar*

Should we understand public friendship and civility primarily as a means of political and civic engagement in a community or alternatively as the social bonds of mutual affection that bind a community together? Humanities majors in the Spring Seminar will explore this question through an interdisciplinary analysis of a variety of human societies.

Faculty-Student Colloquia:

Friendship as a Catalyst for Change: The “Kupcakes for Kris” Campaign

Boyer Hall 134 | 4–5:30 p.m.

Poster Presentation: *Nance McCown and Lauren Schick (PRSSA president)*

Poster Presentation: Dr. Nance McCown and Lauren Schick (PRSSA president) Friendship’s capacity to energize individuals to collective action is the focus of this colloquium. Members of the college’s chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) will present the story of how friends of Kris Greene rallied to help their fellow public relations student and her family – not only with treatment and personal expenses but also with inaugurating a living legacy that will extend assistance to other friends and their families dealing with cancer.

Center for Public Humanities Guest Lecture Series

Literary Friendship: Henry James and Edith Wharton

Boyer Hall 131 | 7–8:30 p.m.

Jill Karn (adjunct professor at the University of Rochester)

Professor Karn will speak on the early 20th-century friendship between literary giants Henry James and Edith Wharton. In particular, she will focus on their letter correspondence, which reveals a literary exchange about fiction that formed the core of their friendship and deeply influenced their own literary production.

Center for Public Humanities Film Series

“The Wooden Camera: Friendship in Post-Apartheid South Africa”

Boyer Hall 137 (Parmer Cinema) | 8:30–10 p.m.

Anne-Marie Stoner-Eby

This engaging 2003 film by Ntshavheni wa Luruli explores the power of adolescent friendship in the context of the continuing divide between the poor black townships and the wealthy white suburbs of post-Apartheid South Africa. The film provides an opportunity to consider the impact of social context on friendship, which here includes poverty, cultural and ethnic divides; moral choices; and parental betrayal. History professor Stoner-Eby will introduce the film and then facilitate a time of discussion at its conclusion.

Thursday, Feb. 24

Alternate Chapel:

Breaking the Silence: Friendship and Sexuality
Boyer Hall 131 | 9:45–10:30 a.m.

Panel Presentation: Ellie Addleman, Mike Blount and students

Both student and College staff members who participate in the sexuality reading group will offer a panel presentation on their findings concerning how friendships affect sexual choices, ethics and healing.

Faculty-Student Colloquia:

The Transformation of Friendship in St. Augustine’s Confessions
Boyer Hall 130 | 4–5:30 p.m.

Panel Presentation: Cynthia Wells and students in the Core Course

St. Augustine had a great deal to say about friendship and its influence on his spiritual journey. Students and faculty from the Core Course, in which his autobiography *The Confessions* is read, will consider St. Augustine’s theology of friendship. They will explore in particular how his theology transfigured the classical Greco-Roman understanding of friendship and what, in his own experiences of friendship, led him to this transformed understanding.

Faculty-Student Colloquia:

Cross-Cultural Friendships in Colonial Hispanic America
Boyer Hall 134 | 4–5:30 p.m.

Gladys Robalino and Spanish literature students

Complex and varied relations between early Spanish conquerors and colonizers of America sometimes produced unexpected forms of alliance with Native Americans. Students from the trans-Atlantic Hispanic colonial literature course will present their discoveries of cross-cultural friendships in early Spanish colonial America. They will analyze the contexts and conditions that determined these friendships as well as their lessons on the basis for Spanish-Native American relations in the continent.

Symposium Co-Curricular Educator Lecture Series:

Loneliness and Its Place in Friendship
Boyer Hall 131 | 7–8:30 p.m.

Rhonda Good, director of Housing/associate director of Residence Life

Loneliness is something that almost everyone experiences at some point in life, yet it is a topic that is rarely discussed. Some might even conclude that it is the antithesis of friendship. This presentation will offer a typology of loneliness based on current social science research and how it interacts with our friendships and closest relationships.

Center for Public Humanities Film Series

“Cautiva (Captive)”: Recovering Identity through Friendship
Boyer Hall 137 | Parmer Cinema | 8–9:30 p.m.

Robin Lauermann, Fabrizio Cilento

Couched in the specter of Argentina’s “dirty war,” this 2003 film by Gaston Biraben titled “Cautiva” (or “Captive”) reveals the trauma of military government and the value of friendship in recovering lost families. In the film, Sofia, a young woman who was taken as a baby from her dissident parents and given a false identity with another family, relies on the help of friends to learn her true identity as well as the impact of the war on her nation’s identity. Professors Lauermann (politics) and Cilento (communication) will introduce the film and then facilitate a time of discussion at its conclusion.

Friday, Feb. 25

**Symposium Student Lecture Series:
The Politics of Friendship**

Unequal Friendships:

Christian Service and the “Third World”

Boyer Hall 131 | 4–5:30 p.m.

Chimene Jackson (international business major)

Christian service can certainly be an act of friendship, yet only when the recipient is capable of being understood as a friend and not merely a recipient of charity. How then to bring the two parties into an equal and mutual friendship? This lecture will examine the idea of Christian service in a “Third World” context, where such service when offered by Christians from developed nations can promote unequal friendships that stifle genuine intercultural understanding.

Imagining Independence:

Political Friendship and the American Revolution

Boyer Hall 131 | 4–5:30 p.m.

Naomi Guerrasio (history major)

How did widely separated communities of artisans, farmers, yeomen and gentlemen find the means to unite across 13 different colonies and stage a successful political revolution of astonishing scope against the world’s greatest colonial power? This lecture will explore how a network of inter-colonial political friendships from Boston to Charleston functioned as a means to create feelings of sympathy and brother/sisterhood sufficient enough to unite the colonies in a common political purpose we know as the American revolution.

Keynote Address

Friendship in the Public Sphere:

Civility in a Fractured Society

Keynote Address of the Symposium | 8–9:15 p.m. | Hostetter Chapel

James Leach, Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities

See box below for details.



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James Leach, Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities
Friendship in the Public Sphere: Civility in a Fractured Society

Keynote Address | Hostetter Chapel | Friday, Feb. 25 | 8:00 – 9:15 p.m.

This year’s symposium keynote speaker is James Leach, chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Leach began his term at the NEH in 2009 after serving for 30 years in the U.S. House of Representatives. As a congressman representing southeastern Iowa, he chaired the Banking and Financial Services Committee, the subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs and the Congressional-Executive Commission on China. A life-long supporter of the humanities, he also founded and co-chaired the Congressional Humanities Caucus. After leaving Congress in 2007, Leach joined the faculty at Princeton University’s Woodrow Wilson School, where he was the John L. Weinberg Visiting Professor of Public and International Affairs until his confirmation as NEH chairman. Leach holds eight honorary degrees and has received numerous awards, including the Sidney R. Yates Award for Distinguished Public Service to the Humanities from the National Humanities Alliance; the Woodrow Wilson Award from The Johns Hopkins University; the Adlai Stevenson Award from the United Nations Association; the Edgar Wayburn Award from

the Sierra Club; the Wayne Morse Integrity in Politics Award; the Norman Borlaug Award for Public Service; and the Wesley Award for Service to Humanity.

In keeping with this year’s symposium theme of “Friendship,” Leach will speak on the role of civility in public life. Friendship that reaches across ideological and political difference means not just politeness, but an openness to listen, learn from and even collaborate with those with whom one disagrees. In the public life of a democracy in particular, such friendships—when seen in their public expressions of courtesy, curiosity in the other person’s views and decency in the treatment of one another— builds up the republic and sets an example for the best in citizenship. Civility as a virtue has meant not only “good citizenship,” however, but also a state of mind refined by a liberal education. Therefore, Leach’s words on civility as a form of public friendship will prove beneficial to us both as citizens as well as members of a liberal arts community.