



# ASLE News

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*A Biannual Publication of the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment*

## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

### Thoughts on the Conference and Other Confluences

I thought I would be writing this column as I waited to give birth to my second daughter at the end of February, two weeks or so after I had responded to all the paper proposals for our upcoming conference this June. But childbirth, like other forces of nature, has a way of reminding us that there are larger powers at work in the world, and in our own bodies, than our individual human egos. Instead, Lucinda Rose was born two weeks early, and I am writing this column just after her third-week birthday, in fits and starts as she sleeps. Contrary to all my hopes and plans, she was born by cesarean section in response to her sideways position and a condition called polyhydramnios (excess amniotic fluid), which could have made a conventional birth quite dangerous. This turn of events has me thinking differently (and more gratefully) about medical intervention in childbirth; I still have nature to thank for my daughter, but I also understand that this was a case where nature and culture worked together for a most positive goal.

The other thing I've been thinking about is our upcoming 7th biennial conference celebrating the theme "Confluence: literature • art • criticism • science • activism • politics." My own recent experience, informed not just by the demands of my body and my baby's, but also by the multiple stories, cultural politics, and medical practices surrounding childbirth, is in its way a perfect example of this type of confluence, the rich territory where so many of us in ASLE work.

This territory is amply illustrated by our plenary speakers: Bill McKibben, who follows in the tradition of writers such as Muir, Leopold and Carson in putting his literary talents in the service of environmental advocacy; Cecelia Tichi, whose critical work has deepened our thinking about the role of technology in American culture and the ways that environmental attitudes are expressed in literary and cultural texts; Nalini Nadkarni, who vigorously practices and promotes collaboration between scientists and artists; and poets Di Brandt and Fred Chappell, who evoke the importance of place and environment in their



2007 ASLE President Karla Armbruster

work. Also joining us will be writer John Biguenet and environmental justice scholar and advocate Robert Bullard to address the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. In addition, we will feature several panel-style plenaries, which should allow for energetic exchange among the panelists as well as between speakers and audience: a panel sponsored by *Orion Magazine* on "The New, New Environmental Writing," another addressing the literary/scientific collaboration represented by the newly published *Home Ground: Language for an American Landscape*, and a third focusing on the Carolina Coast.

Our concurrent sessions promise an even more astonishing variety of topics relating to literature, culture, and environment, including bioregionalism, pedagogy, the representation of animals, ecocriticism and science, environmental justice and toxic discourse, hurricane literature, Appalachian literature, science fiction and detective literature, and films such as *Safe* and *Grizzly Man*. In addition to discussions of ecocritically familiar

**see PRESIDENT on page 3**

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ASLE News—the biannual newsletter of the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment—reports ASLE business and publishes information of interest to its membership. Have any news or ideas? Contact newsletter editor Kathryn Miles at [kmiles@unity.edu](mailto:kmiles@unity.edu). Thanks to editorial assistant Jennifer Smiechowski for her work on this issue.

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*Sandstone cliff, Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, Michigan. Photo by Lewis Ulman.*

ASLE News accepts advertisements of interest to our members at rates of \$200 for a full page, \$150 for a 1/2 page, \$100 for a 1/4 page and \$75 for an 1/8 page. Contact Kathryn Miles, [kmiles@unity.edu](mailto:kmiles@unity.edu), with inquiries.

## **PRESIDENT continued from page 1**

authors such as Thoreau, Carson, and Silko, we can look forward to examinations of writers such as Shakespeare, Goethe, Dante, Dickinson, and Wallace Stevens and international texts from countries including Japan, India, Russia and Mexico. As usual, presentations will include both scholarly papers and creative works of poetry, fiction, and nonfiction.

Another reason to look forward to this conference is its site – by all indications, a particularly warm and welcoming one this year. The city of Spartanburg, SC, is so pleased we are coming that it is throwing a party for us on Tuesday afternoon to kick off the conference. And the welcome extended by Wofford College is even more impressive: our hosts, Ellen Goldey and John Lane, have been working for the past several years to provide us with everything we will need – not the least of which is the conference website (<http://www.wofford.edu/asle/>) full of important information and convenient, online ways to register and pay for almost everything conference-related.

They have also made sure we have a range of accommodations available, including discounted rooms at the Marriott (just a 5-minute walk from campus), dorm rooms, student apartments, and ASLE's first ever official tent village (with access to bathrooms). Please don't wait to make your reservations; rooms are available on a first-come, first-served basis, and the conference rate at the Marriott is good only until May 1. We're also offering the opportunity to buy attractive conference t-shirts and caps, but this year you MUST order ahead of time (by May 1).

Ellen and John have also organized an exciting variety of Thursday afternoon field sessions relating to environmental justice, toxic waste remediation, "green" business, local horticulture, and the incorporation of field work into courses; for those who want to journey off campus mentally but not physically, there will also be a documentary film. The post-conference field trips they have arranged include visits to Connemara (Carl Sandburg's home in North Carolina) the Biltmore Estate, and the U.S. National Whitewater Center in Charlotte, NC. For those with a bit more time to spare, we have an especially tempting opportunity: an overnight trip to the Penn Center on St. Helena Island, SC, for tours, demonstrations, and discussions about Gullah culture, coastal history, and the coastal environment. Visit the website at <http://www.wofford.edu/asle/> and see the links under "Special Activities" for more information about these events.

One last note about the program: this year, we have tried especially hard to provide opportunities for sustained critical conversations beyond plenaries and concurrent sessions; in addition to continuing the tradition of pre-conference workshops, we are offering scholarly seminars (in which participants produce and discuss position papers) and workgroups (three-hour long intensive dialogues) on

topics of ecocritical interest which will result in "state of the field" documents to be posted on the ASLE web site. In this way, we hope to encourage even more confluences of the many streams of research and interest that flow into the ASLE community. (We are extending the deadline to register for open workshops and workgroups until the end of March; please check the web site for details.)

I would like to end with a note of thanks to our officers whose terms ended with the new year. Amy Patrick, graduate liaison, has been a strong advocate for graduate students. Executive Council members Wes Berry and Ellen Goldey have served with wisdom and grace, and each continues to work for ASLE: Ellen as conference co-coordinator, and Wes as liaison to international affiliates. Though Ann Fisher-Wirth remains as past president, we owe her many thanks for her good humor, dedication, and leadership as president. And outgoing past president Allison Wallace has been not just an exemplary leader but also an invaluable help to me as I work on the conference program and other details. We are a better organization because of all of them.

—*Karla Armbruster, President*

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## **From the Managing Director**

2006 was an eventful year for me. Taking advantage of the fact that there was no conference, I gave birth to my second child, Daniel, last May. My sincere thanks to everyone for their patience as I learned to balance the needs of an infant and a nonprofit simultaneously!

At the close of 2006, the organization retains assets of approximately \$64,000, about half of which remains invested in short term CDs for a better interest return. For more details about the 2006 fiscal year and ASLE finances, please see the financial statements page in the "About ASLE" section of the website (<http://www.asle.umn.edu/about/finance/>).

I am still interested in feedback from members regarding our income-based fee structure. One of my (post-conference!) ideas for this year is to conduct a membership survey to collect input from members about current satisfaction with ASLE and also how you would like to see us change and grow. Our membership now consists of about 850 active ASLE supporters from nearly every state and more than 20 countries as well.

Finally, a little housekeeping. ISLE 13.2 (Summer 2006) was sent at the end of January and should be in your hands by now. The 2007 Membership Directory was also mailed at the end of January, but due to a change in bulk mailings in our region there was a significant delay. If you have not yet received it, please contact me at [asle.us@verizon.net](mailto:asle.us@verizon.net) or 603-357-7411, and I will send you one-first class!

—*Amy McIntyre, Managing Director*



# In Their Own Words

## Conference Plenaries Bill McKibben and Nalini Nadkarni On Environmental Change, Writing, and Building Connections

This year, ASLE conference attendees will enjoy a true confluence of ideas and perspectives. In no place is that more apparent than the impressive slate of plenary speakers and panels scheduled throughout the conference. In this issue of *ASLE News*, we spotlight two of the plenary speakers and their current work in the field of environmental studies and writing.

**Bill McKibben** revolutionized politics and environmental writing with his best-selling book, *The End of Nature*, which was the first major treatise on the problems of global climate change. A journalist by training, McKibben has authored numerous articles and books about our role in and impact on the natural world. Currently, he is a scholar in residence at Middlebury College; Middlebury is also the headquarters of his civic action project, *STEPITUP07*, which seeks to organize and facilitate hundreds of climate change rallies across the country on April 14<sup>th</sup> of this year.

For ASLE President Karla Armbruster, the decision to include McKibben among the featured speakers was a natural one. “We are long overdue to have Bill McKibben as a plenary speaker,” she said. “His career is a model of the ways that literature and science can be joined in the work of activism and politics.”

Bill McKibben sat down with ASLE to talk about his recent efforts to combat climate change and his distinguished career as an environmental writer.

*Recently, much of your effort has been dedicated to STEPITUP07, a national day of climate action. Tell me about the initiative.*

McKibben: About a year ago, I reached a point where I became very despairing about climate change: things were not happening nearly as quickly as they needed to, and it occurred to me that we had never built a movement around climate change. I talked with ASLE’s John Elder, who is also at Middlebury College in Vermont, and said, “let’s walk to the state capital and get arrested at the Federal Building.” He happily agreed to go along, but he was also smart enough to call up to Burlington to see what would happen if we did. He learned that we really couldn’t get arrested, so we turned it into a five-day pilgrimage instead. We began at Robert Frost’s summer writing cabin with 300 participants. By the time we reached Burlington, we had 1000 people—that made us the largest protest about climate change in the country. We thought that was pathetic. So we decided to see if we could turn this into a national movement by initiating a national day of action on April 14<sup>th</sup>.



*Bill McKibben, opening plenary speaker at the 2007 ASLE Conference.*

*After looking at your website (<http://www.stepitup07.org/>), it seems to me like you are well on your way.*

McKibben: It’s extremely moving and exciting. We had hoped we might attract a few dozen demonstrations, but at this count we have over 700 planned in 48 states.

*Who’s missing?*

McKibben: The Dakotas. But we’re working hard to get them. And all of the groups will be saying the same thing: Step it up, Congress! Enact immediate cuts in carbon emissions, and pledge an 80% reduction by 2050. No half measures, no easy compromises—the time has come to take the real actions that can stabilize our climate.

*How do you balance this initiative and your career as a writer?*

McKibben: I suppose I’ve been doing a lot of writing for STEPITUP, but I’m afraid it’s not all that spectacular—mostly op-ed and blog writing. Still, I’ve been able to complete some magazine pieces, and we were recently the cover story for *Christian Century*. I’m supposed to be in the middle of a book tour for my forthcoming book [*Deep Economy: The Wealth of Communities and the Durable Future*. Times Books, 2007], but I’m afraid that’s getting less of my attention. I believe this project is just too important.

*The passion you bring to environmental issues and your writing has become legendary. National Geographic characterized you as something akin to “a biblical profet” for the environmental movement. How do you respond to that characterization?*

McKibben: That seems a bit much, doesn't it? I mean, I don't have a beard or anything (He laughs). But in reality, I've been writing about this issue of climate change as long as anyone. *The End of Nature* was one of the first books on the subject, so I've had a lot of time to think about the importance of the issue. And in terms of Biblical prophecy, I at least agree with the importance of bringing religion to environmentalism. The religious movement needs to be a part of it, and I think I've finally found a way to get at that. The four most effective words I ever wrote were "what would Jesus drive?" This was part of an early campaign against SUVs, and it was one of the first to actively involve Christian groups.

*What interested me about that campaign was Detroit's response. Car companies came out with a counter ad that asked, "What would Jesus—a Hispanic, middle class, American family man—drive? Their answer was, 'a big SUV.'"*

McKibben: That's good. It means we got under their skin. Sometimes that's what writing is about.

*You also often say that writing is about change. In your essay "A Deeper Shade of Green" you write, "we need a kind of cultural environmentalism that asks deeper questions than we're used to asking." What would that cultural environmentalism look like?*

McKibben: That's the subject of my new book. Traditionally, environmentalism has been about making small changes to fix small problems: we identify a smokestack that pollutes, so we create and install a filter for the pollutants. Fossil fuels are different, though. If we're going to address that issue, we're going to have to make big changes in our lives. I'm trying to figure out what that would look like. Most of my current work has been examining the economic dimensions and the way fossil fuel has allowed us to become hyper-individualists in our communities and our lives. I'm delving into new research from mainstream economists that examines whether or not the economy we've built has made us happy or not. I think it hasn't.

*What role will environmental writing play in making this ideological shift?*

McKibben: I think it's probably key. Every important part of environmental history has been preceded by a book or books: whether it was John Muir launching the conservation movement or Aldo Leopold or Rachel Carson, they all gave us a grammar to talk about wildness in a new way. We're in a great flowering of writing about the natural world right now. It's helping people to realize the importance of what they're being told and also what their hearts are telling them. I'm so impressed with this spread of people thinking, writing, and doing art about the environment. The work that people are doing with literature and environmen-

## ASLE Conference Updates

### Conference Hotel

ASLE encourages those who are attending the biennial conference this summer to stay at the official conference hotel, the Spartanburg Marriott, which is a short five minute walk from Wofford. It is an extremely nice hotel with very gracious staff and service. The opening plenary will be held there, and live music on several evenings has been arranged for conference participants. The deadline to receive the conference rate is May 1st. To reserve your room with the Marriott please go to <http://cwp.marriott.com/spamc/asle>.

### Airport Shuttle

If you are attending the conference and need a ride in the shuttle from GSP airport to Wofford, please e-mail Dr. Ellen Goldey at [goldeyes@wofford.edu](mailto:goldeyes@wofford.edu) to make arrangements. The charge is twenty dollars for a round trip to and from the airport (ten dollars one way), and signup deadline is May 1st.

### ASLE Conference Hats & Shirts

This year, caps and t-shirts are available by pre-order only to cut down on waste, and will not be available for general sale at the conference. To reserve a conference cap or tee-shirt, go to <http://www.wofford.edu/asle> and click on "Get your ASLE Gear."

### Post-Conference Trip to St. Helena Island

An exciting trip opportunity occurs just after the Confluence conference. Come to St. Helena Island with Dr. Stephen O'Neill of Furman University to learn more about coastal South Carolina's rich Gullah history and tradition. To learn more about this enriching experience at the Penn Center, please go to <http://www.wofford.edu/asle/content.aspx?id=19328>.

### Childcare Arrangements

If there is enough interest from conference participants, childcare for both daytime and evening can be arranged by the conference coordinators. If you are interested in taking advantage of such a service, please email conference co-coordinator Ellen Goldey at [goldeyes@wofford.edu](mailto:goldeyes@wofford.edu) by April 15, 2007.

see **PLENARIES** on page 6

## PLENARIES continued from page 5

tal studies is in the spirit of making a difference, and as a society we need to see that it's just as important as engineers, chemists, and economists. We're not going to make the scale of change we need without involving hearts as well as heads. One of the things I'm realizing is that we're still looking for the next great metaphor to explain the world around us. We've been obsessed with the idea of 'more' for a long time. It's time to think past that.

**Nalini Nadkarni** speaks for the trees. That's a grand statement, and yet it's one that doesn't do justice to her impressive research and outreach. For ASLE member John Calderazzo, nominating Nadkarni as a plenary speaker just made good sense. "She is an extremely lively and smart and inspiring speaker, and I couldn't recommend her more highly," he writes. "She is passionate in a zillion smart ways about getting scientists and artists together."

A canopy ecologist, Nadkarni is widely considered one of the leading scholars of temperate and tropical forests. She is also one of their biggest advocates. With support from the John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship Program, The National Geographic Society, and the National Science Foundation, Nadkarni has created powerful outreach programs that bring the importance of forest ecology to the general public. She currently shares a faculty position at The Evergreen State College with her husband, Jack Longino, an entomologist.

*In 1994, you founded the International Canopy Network (ICAN), and you currently serve as its president. Tell me about the non-profit organization and its work.*

Nadkarni: Canopy studies is a fairly recent area of ecological study. It wasn't until the late 1980s and early 1990s that we figured out how to get into the canopy safely. At that time we began using mountain climbing techniques to access the canopy. I was beginning my career at that time, and discovered that my colleagues and I were all very isolated: there'd be one scholar in Costa Rica, another in Europe, and another in Asia. The discipline had new tools and new questions to answer, but no real way to communicate. ICAN began as a loose organization with an email bulletin board and newsletter. We added a virtual

library and collections of canopy references. Eventually, we expanded into a formal nonprofit group. The organization allows us to enhance communication among researchers, educators, and conservationists. We're also the clearing house for canopy research around the world, with a depository of over 7,000 entries. This creates dependable ways of communicating to educators and media.

*A great deal of your current work is based on your experience as a Guggenheim fellow and your collaborative projects with non-scientists. Can you describe that experience?*

Nadkarni: (laughing) I think it's in my genetic background to do this kind of work. My father was a scientist from India, and my mother was a demonstrative Jew from Brooklyn with a love of language, so I grew up in a household that valued both elements. I believe that you can't do anything if you can't communicate your work to other people. When I write my scientific papers, I know tourists visiting forests and parks won't be reading them,

so I began preparing slide shows and taking time to figure out how to communicate ecology to the general public. I was curious about why other scientists weren't doing this, since it's so important to examine connections. I decided to use myself as a guinea pig to figure out how we could overcome any obstacles, and that's how the Guggenheim fellow came about. I began with religion and invited myself to give a sermon at a Unitarian Church and then branched out. Trees are very spiritual things to me, so I said, 'let's look at the holy scriptures of all these religions and then report that information to these people.' Very quickly, it became evident to me that the message was falling on open ears. That's largely because I wasn't

going to their pulpit and lecturing about science; it was about me as an interested person who happens to know something about trees asking them about their faith. I think if more people were willing to take their scientist hat off for a Sunday morning, they'd find a dialogue waiting for them.

*The theme for our 2007 conference is "confluence," and it seems like that's exactly what your work is about.*

Nadkarni: Yes, that's what I call this outreach. There are innumerable bonuses when scientists work with artists in the field. I actually call this work a 'confluence'—anything that brings together scientists and artists and different perspectives. In 2002, we brought together five ecologists, a number of visual/musical artists, and a few people who had never seen a forest before—including two blind people and some Inuit people.



*Nalini Nadkarni, plenary speaker at the 2007 ASLE Conference.*

see PLENARIES on page 7



## PLENARIES continued from page 6

We spent all day sitting on canopy platforms. I repeated a similar project last summer. In both, I learned that scientists could provide some specific details, but artists were providing emotional connection. It was a really magical time, and I was struck not only by the insights but also the products made by the artists. For instance, a song writer helped us collect data and wrote a song about climbing up into the canopy. I saw him perform it four or five months later, and the audience was absolutely transfixed. If someone read my scientific papers with the same intensity, I'd be thrilled. There's something very productive when artists and scientists go out together. We're answering an important question: what can artists and scientists do together that we can't do alone?

*That question has led you into some interesting pop culture projects as well.*

Nadkarni: It's all about being an ambassador—there's a symbolic linkage there. But as academics, we also need a reverse ambassador who can get us to other audiences, like inner-city youth. I recently worked with a rap singer named Caution. For whatever reason, he was willing to listen to me, so I said, 'let's go take a walk in the forest.' We took 40 kids in the forest for a week. Along the way, Caution would pick up a stick of wood or nest and rap on it. The kids loved it. When we returned, they all recorded a CD about the experience. We've also developed a 'Treetop Barbie,' and we're working with Major League Baseball to get information about the forest on their baseball cards.

*These sorts of connections seem like a crucial part of your work. On your webpage you write, "A recurring theme in my professional work and in my personal life has been to juxtapose and integrate people from different disciplines in an atmosphere of mutual respect to raise awareness, gain new perspectives, and solve complex problems." What are some of the most effective ways that writers and scientists can work together to achieve this?*

Nadkarni: I think it'd be great if every science department had a pet journalist or writer—someone who is trained to communicate—and every writer had a pet ecologist—someone who could provide theories or concepts when they're needed. We're not always rewarded for it in our current academic system, but luckily that's changing. I'd like to see more professional relationships forged between scientists and writers. That's how outreach happens, and the relationship between our disciplines can be very deep. By working together, we can understand each in ways that we just couldn't do otherwise.



## Conference Deadlines

**April 15:** Deadline for presenters to register for conference and become ASLE members.

**April 30:** Draft conference program available on conference website.

**May 1:** Deadline for all conference payments, including conference rate at the Marriott and purchasing conference t-shirts and caps. Deadline to sign up for airport shuttle service.

## Conference Assistance for Graduate Students

Again this year, ASLE will provide a limited number of small grants to assist financially needy graduate students with expenses related to attending the ASLE 2007 conference. Each grant will total approximately \$100, and the number of grants available will depend upon the total amount of donations received to cover this assistance (see the conference website for more information, <http://www.wofford.edu/asle/>). ASLE members who can help us build this fund are strongly encouraged to do so, either by sending a check directly to Managing Director Amy McIntyre (address on page 2) or by including a donation when registering for the conference online (see the designated box at <http://www.woffordstore.com>).

Students wishing to apply for one of these grants should send a one-page e-mail to Rochelle Johnson ([rjohnson@albertson.edu](mailto:rjohnson@albertson.edu)) by 5pm EST on April 15. The email should include: the applicant's name; contact information; institutional affiliation; whether they have a paper accepted for presentation in Spartanburg and the title of said paper; where they are in their studies (e.g., ABD, 1st year Ph.D., M.A. student, etc.); their estimated travel expenses (airfare or car expenses only, please); if they expect to receive funding from other sources for their travel; and a statement of whether they have received travel assistance from ASLE in the past.

A special task force of ASLE Executive Council members will review applications and make awards by May 1.

# ASLE Mentoring Program News

## Professional Mentoring Conferences at ASLE 2007

The Mentoring Program and the Graduate Student Caucus will co-sponsor one-on-one professional mentoring conferences with experienced faculty and/or department chairs at the Seventh Biennial ASLE Conference at Wofford College. These informal conversations, designed to supplement the support graduate students receive in their home departments, will involve one faculty volunteer who will meet with an interested student for one hour to answer specific questions about preparing for jobs, the job market, working conditions at small and large institutions, the relationship between scholarship and teaching, and non-academic work options.

Conversations will be focused by the needs of the student. Beginning graduate students can benefit from hearing about work in the field as they begin to imagine a professional horizon beyond graduate school. Graduate students nearing completion of their programs, or those who are seeking academic positions, will find an opportunity to ask questions or talk about preparing a job portfolio.

The one-hour conferences will take place throughout the week, mostly during concurrent session slots that do not conflict with community events, including plenary talks and dinners. If you are interested in signing up for a conference, please watch for more information on the ASLE listserv once the conference program is available (April 30).

If you would like to volunteer as a faculty mentor, or you have any questions about the conferences, please contact the coordinator of the ASLE Mentoring Program, Mark C. Long, at [mlong@keene.edu](mailto:mlong@keene.edu).



*Herring Gull (Larus argentatus), Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, Michigan. Photo by Lewis Ulman.*

## Place Matters in the Academic Job Search

By I. Moriah McCracken

As writers and researchers interested in the environment, we recognize that human life is encapsulated and affected by the ecological systems surrounding us. We spend countless hours and semesters introducing students to the environment, so they too might appreciate how the “outer” world affects them and how they are responsible for the sustainability of the planet. But our talk of the environment often stops just short of place. That is, we don’t tell our students, or admit to ourselves, that in the academy, place—geographic and material locations—is not supposed to matter.

A myth in the academy suggests that place does not matter for weary PhD candidates embarking on their first job searches. After years of coursework and shoestring budgets, graduate students want a job, *any* job, regardless of location. But this statement did not reconcile with the experiences of my colleagues, and when I claimed in my dissertation prospectus that place does not matter in academia, the members of my dissertation committee protested. So, I set out to test the assumption that place does *not* matter in the academic job search.

In October 2006, I distributed the first of two online surveys, which provided empirical data with predictive validity about my research population. 62 doctoral candidates in Rhetoric and Composition participated in my pre-job search survey, which asked a variety of questions about the role of place in their on-going job searches. The responses I gathered suggest that graduate students are not quite as rootless as institutional myths might have us believe. When asked to indicate their attachment to a home site, a majority of respondents (76%) said they are attached to where they are from. In fact, 34% of respondents selected “very attached,” and 42% selected “somewhat attached.” The respondents’ answers point to an investment in their home sites, and these answers challenge the notion that academics are attached to ideas and books, not geographical locations.

Moreover, their attachment to place appears to affect the candidates’ job market searches. When asked “How important will the geographic location of a university be when you decide to *apply* for a job?” 58% of respondents selected “very important,” while 6% selected “not at all important.” These numbers become even more significant when we consider that 5% of respondents indicated they are willing to live anywhere for the right job, while 71% of the respondents said there are certain places they are unwilling to live.

**See PLACE on page 16**



## ASLE and ALA in Beantown

ASLE will sponsor a panel at the upcoming American Literature Association meeting, which will take place in Boston from May 24-27<sup>th</sup> this year. The panel, organized by Annie Merrill Ingram, is entitled “Ecocriticism on the Edge: The Marginalization of Race,” and it features an appealing array of perspectives and critical approaches. Panel papers include:

“Where are the Indigenous Voices?,” Dorothy S. Nelson, University of Massachusetts, Boston.

“White Flight: John Muir and the Naturalization of Race,” Paul Outka, University of Maine at Farmington.

“Coming Into Contact: Recent Ecocritical Writings on Race,” Annie Merrill Ingram, Davidson College.



Canada Goose. Olenangy River Wetlands Research Park, Franklin County, Ohio. Photo by Lewis Ulman.

## ASLE-ANZ News

2006 was a non-conference year for ASLE-ANZ, but we spiced up our AGM in October with a well-attended forum on poetry and ecology held at Trinity College at the University of Melbourne. As Andrew Johnson reports in our last newsletter, “the poets featured—Robert Gray, Kevin Hart, Martin Harrison, Peter Boyle, Anne Elvey and Mike Heald—read from published work, and also treated us to work soon to be in print. Following the readings, the assembled poets were invited to consider with the audience a question the German poet, Friedrich Hölderlin asked in his hymn, ‘Bread and Wine’: ‘Wozu Diether in dürftiger Zeit?’ One translation of Hölderlin’s question has it thus: ‘What use are poets in lean years?’ With good humour and humility, the assembled poets seemed to want to make only very modest claims for poets—as Kevin put it, ‘poets are for writing poems (and drinking red wine)’—while maintaining a belief that poetry was essential. That said, it was also clear that all were somewhat uncomfortable with the idea that a poet, or poem might have single or simple objectives—or to put it the other way around, that a poem is the better for being left open to unpredictable and unknowable results. Those who attended will no doubt agree, so long as one result is that the poetry forum becomes a fixture of the ASLE-ANZ calendar!”

Sadly, no members from across the Tasman were able to join us on this occasion, although our NZ Vice-President Charles Dawson participated in part of our AGM discussion via mobile phone: no substitute for embodied co-presence, but better than nothing (and if we jet-setting ecocritics and environmental writers are to do our bit to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, perhaps we had best get used to more such technologically

mediated conversations). In his column in the current ASLE-ANZ newsletter, Charles reports that the “major new online encyclopedia Te Ara ([www.teara.govt.nz](http://www.teara.govt.nz)) is now building its environment section: you may find it of interest for that and its sections on Maori and European settlement.”

After the poetry forum, a toast was drunk to the long awaited special issue of *Colloquy* containing a selection of excellent academic articles based on papers presented at our inaugural conference, which was then still not quite on-line, but is now: <http://arts.monash.edu.au/publications/colloquy/issue012/index.html>. Further articles, essays and poems, many of which similarly derive from the 2005 conference presentations, will hopefully appear before too long in the forthcoming issue of *PAN* (<http://search.informit.com.au/browseJournalTitle;res=E-LIBRARY;issn=1443-6124>). Meanwhile, the September 2006 issue of the Ecological Humanities Corner in *Australian Humanities Review*, edited by ASLE-ANZ members Debbie Rose and Libby Robin, was also devoted to environmental literature and ecocriticism and showcases further work in this area from ‘down under’ (<http://www.lib.latrobe.edu.au/AHR/archive/Issue-September-2006.html>).

Discussions are currently underway for the 2007 ASLE-ANZ conference, which, thanks to Debbie and sundry co-conspirators, looks set to be held at the Australian National University in Canberra in November. Prior to that, the wonderful Watermark Literary Muster will be held in Camden Haven in October, 2007 (<http://www.watermarkliterarysociety.asn.au/Muster.htm>).

—Kate Rigby, President, ASLE-ANZ

# Elections Bring Exciting New Perspectives to EC

by Jennifer Smiechowski

Each year the election serves as a wonderful opportunity for ASLE members to offer a voice to the direction of the organization, either through their vote or by holding office. Over the course of the next few years newly elected officers, Vice President Rochelle Johnson and Executive Council members Jim Warren and Janine DeBaise, will do just that, lending their voices and foresight to ASLE and the members that elected them.

Newly-elected Vice President Rochelle Johnson is eager to fulfill her new leadership role in an organization she describes as “not in need of a lot of rapid change.” Johnson emphasizes the point that ASLE already has a lot going for it, including a membership that is, in her words, “vibrant, effective, and doing great work.”

She does, however, see future growth in one area: environmental sustainability. According to Johnson, ASLE is already working to reduce carbon emissions at the upcoming ASLE conference but she is eager to collaborate with the executive council to discuss more ways to lessen the organization’s environmental impact. “I hope to help the organization continue on its path to environmental sustainability,” Johnson said.

Another change ASLE has made on the road toward environmental sustainability is the transition of *ASLE News* from a paper newsletter to an electronic one. This change also impacted this year’s election process, as ballots used to be included in the fall newsletter. Executive Secretary Kathleen Wallace said that although electronic ballots were considered, they were ultimately rejected due to confidentiality concerns. Instead members received a postcard ballot or could download one from the ASLE website.

According to Wallace these changes did not, however, affect the number of voters that took part in the election. “On average, about 10 percent of our members vote every year, and this year’s results were about the same.”



2007 ASLE Vice-President Rochelle Johnson

## ASLE News Notes

### Proposals Sought for 2009 Conference Site

Interested in hosting the ASLE biennial conference in 2009? ASLE wants to hear from you! Please consult the “Guidelines for Conference Proposals” on the ASLE website ([http://www.asle.umn.edu/conf/asle\\_conf/asle\\_conf.html](http://www.asle.umn.edu/conf/asle_conf/asle_conf.html)). To submit a proposal for the 2009 conference, send an application to Karla Armbruster ([armbruka@webster.edu](mailto:armbruka@webster.edu)) by May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007.

### Executive Council Nominations Sought

Nominations are currently being sought for the ASLE Executive Council and vice presidency. Executive Council members serve three-year terms. The ASLE vice president also serves a three-year term: one year as vice president, one as president, and one as immediate past president. If you would like to nominate yourself or another active ASLE member for these positions, please contact Karla Armbruster ([armbruka@webster.edu](mailto:armbruka@webster.edu)). All nominations are due by June 1, 2007.

### ASLE Emeritus

ASLE News honors those ASLE members retired or retiring from teaching. If you would like to acknowledge someone in this way—or if you yourself will be retiring during the coming academic year—please contact Kathryn Miles ([kmiles@unity.edu](mailto:kmiles@unity.edu)). We will include a brief account of scholarly interests, the institutions of employment and years taught in the next newsletter.

## ASLE-Korea News

ASLE-Korea hosted two conferences in 2006: the spring “Ecocriticism and Literature” conference and the fall “Swamp, River, Ocean” conference. About a week before the spring conference, it also hosted a visit from Dr. Scott Slovic. At the fall conference a small contingent of ASLE-Japan members made their second visit to Korea to help organize the nuts and bolts of the 2007 Joint Symposium being put on collaboratively by ASLE-Korea and ASLE-Japan (see article below for more details). Responses to the call for papers have been strong.

At the end of the ASLE-K fall conference, the leadership of the organization underwent some changes. Dr. Lee Soong-won (Seoul Women’s University, [topos@swu.ac.kr](mailto:topos@swu.ac.kr)) replaced Dr. Shin Moonsu (Seoul National University, [mshin@snu.ac.kr](mailto:mshin@snu.ac.kr)) as President of ASLE-Korea. Dr. Kim Won-chung (Sungkyunkwan University, [ecopia@skku.edu](mailto:ecopia@skku.edu)) became the Vice-President, and Dr. Kim Yoo-chung (Hankuk Aviation University, [kyj@hau.ac.kr](mailto:kyj@hau.ac.kr)) took on the position of General Secretary.

Member news: ASLE-Korea President Lee Soong-won recently had the singular honor of winning the Korean Buddhism Writers Association Award (an annual award carrying a ten million won grant); Secretary General Kim Yoo-chung had a book entitled *Korean Modernist Literature and Its Outskirts* (in Korean) in December 2006; and Simon Estok was hired as an associate professor at Sungkyunkwan University in Seoul.

For further information about ASLE-Korea and its activities (including the Joint Symposium), please contact Dr. Simon C. Estok (Sungkyunkwan University, [estok@skku.edu](mailto:estok@skku.edu)) or Dr. Shin Dooho (Kangwon University, [shindh@kangwon.ac.kr](mailto:shindh@kangwon.ac.kr)). For more information about the ASLE-Japan and Joint Symposium, please contact Dr. Masami Raker Yuki (Kanazawa University, [yuki@ge.kanazawa-u.ac.jp](mailto:yuki@ge.kanazawa-u.ac.jp)).

– *Simon Estok, ASLE-Korea*

## ASLE-J and ASLE-K to Host Joint Conference

The ASLE Japan-Korea Joint Symposium will be the first opportunity for an East-Asian conference of ASLE members. The symposium will be held at Kanazawa University, Kanazawa, Japan, from August 19 - 21, 2007, with the theme of “Place, Nature, and Language: Thinking about ‘Now’ in Japanese and Korean Environmental Literature.” Guest speakers will include Morisaki Kazue (Japan), Ko Un (Korea), and Gary Snyder (US). As well as a number of presentations examining Japanese and/or Korean environmental literature and criticism, there will be a joint poetry reading by Ko Un and Gary Snyder at a historic Zen Buddhist temple in Kanazawa.

One of the biggest issues in planning an international event is language. In order to make this event inclusive and accessible to as many ecocritics and interested individuals as possible, we have been planning to make a multilingual environment available, in which Japanese, Korean, and English will be simultaneously interpreted. In this way, we hope to facilitate communication and discussion among participants at their native language level. Also, we are preparing to compile a multilingual collection of papers to be distributed to each symposium participant in advance so as to encourage lively discussions during the three days of the symposium.

We are very fortunate to have the support of the Rolex Institute and the Toyota Foundation, as well as the prefectural government of Ishikawa and the city government of Kanazawa.

We welcome anyone interested in participating in what promises to be a great summer event. Symposium updates including program and registration will be available online at <http://blog.asle-japan.org/>.

– *Masami R. Yuki, ASLE-Japan*



*Prairie Oak. Prairie Oaks Metro Park, Franklin and Madison Counties, Ohio. Photo by Lewis Ulman.*



# Calls for Papers, Manuscripts, and Conferences

If you would like to announce a call for papers or a conference of interest in an upcoming issue of *ASLE News*, please contact Rochelle Johnson, Project and Professional Liaison Coordinator, at [rjohnson@albertson.edu](mailto:rjohnson@albertson.edu) or 208-459-5894.

## Calls for Papers

**April 1, 2007.** *The 21st Annual Conference of the SLSA (Society for Literature, Science, and the Arts)*. November 1-4, 2007, Portland, Maine. We welcome paper and panel submissions that explore any type/aspect/nature/culture of code in any period of history. Also welcome are submissions on any aspect of science's relationship with literature and the arts, including ones presented in nontraditional formats (such as film/video, performance, music, or visual art). Plenary Speakers: N. Katherine Hayles, UCLA; Brian Massumi, Université de Montréal. For more information, please see: <http://www.slsao7.com/>.

**May 30, 2007.** *Faculty Diversity & Environmental Justice Research Symposium*. June 7-9, 2007 (Ann Arbor, Michigan). A gathering that focuses on diversity in academia and domestic or international environmental justice issues. For more information, visit the conference website: [http://sitemaker.umich.edu/diversityresearchsymposium/conference\\_announcement](http://sitemaker.umich.edu/diversityresearchsymposium/conference_announcement).

**May 30, 2007.** *The 4th Literature & Ecology Colloquium*. October 5-7, 2007, University of Zululand. Conference theme examines 'forest,' broadly defined. 300 word abstracts should be submitted to Pat Louw or Catherine Addison in the English Department, University of Zululand. Contact details: [plouw@pan.uzulu.ac.za](mailto:plouw@pan.uzulu.ac.za) and [caddison@pan.uzulu.ac.za](mailto:caddison@pan.uzulu.ac.za).

**June 1, 2007.** *Sixteenth International Conference of the Council for European Studies*. March 5-8, 2008, at the Drake Hotel in Chicago. Visit our website, [www.councilforeuropeanstudies.org/conf/conf.html](http://www.councilforeuropeanstudies.org/conf/conf.html), for more information about the event, including our Call for Papers submission form.

**August 1, 2007.** *The Tenth International Conference of the Forum on Contemporary Theory*. December 16-19, 2007, International Centre (Goa). This conference seeks to bring together social scientists, humanists and thinkers and practitioners in the creative arts to reflect on the symbolic and affective investments in land and country over the millennia in the subcontinent through prose, poetry, and pictures. Abstract or proposals should be 500-words. Complete papers should be limited to 12 pages. A longer version may be submitted for possible publication in the *Journal of Contemporary Thought* or in the conference volume brought out by the Forum. All participants need to be pre-registered. For further information, contact Prafulla C. Kar at: [pck@satyam.net.in](mailto:pck@satyam.net.in).

**August 31, 2007.** *Health, Environment and Well-Being: The Role of the Human Sciences*. February 22-25, 2008, University of Ruhuna (Sri Lanka). The conference is jointly organized by Durham University, UK, and the University of Ruhuna, Sri Lanka. More information can be found at: [www.durham.ac.uk/project.srilanka/ruhunaconference](http://www.durham.ac.uk/project.srilanka/ruhunaconference).

## Job Opportunity

**Visiting Assistant Professor (or Instructor) in American Literature.** *Northland College, Ashland WI*. Northland College, the environmental liberal arts college located on the beautiful south shore of Lake Superior, is accepting applications for a Visiting Assistant Professor (or Instructor) in American Literature to begin in September 2007. The qualifications and the application procedure can be found at: [www.northland.edu/info/jobs/](http://www.northland.edu/info/jobs/). AA/EOE.

## Conferences of Interest

**April 2007.** *From Anthropocentrism to Ecocentrism: Making the Shift*. The EcoRes Forum announces the launch of a series of online e-conferences focusing on the ethical, political and socio-cultural aspects of climate change. For more information or to register, visit the EcoRes Forum website at: <http://www.eco-res.org> or write [forum@eco-res.org](mailto:forum@eco-res.org).

**April 13-14, 2007.** *20th Annual Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Conference*. (Cedar Key, Florida). Conference sponsored by the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Society and the University of Central Florida. For more information: <http://www.english.ufl.edu/rawlings/conference.htm>.

**April 26-28, 2007.** *Walking the Talk and Closing the Gap: Transforming Environmental Values into Sustainable Practices*. University of Florida. The conference will bring interdisciplinary expertise to the challenge of bridging the gap between values and practices in the area of consumption as well as other facets of environmental stewardship. It will be oriented to sharing overviews from different fields of research, and developing an approach that will marry interdisciplinary academic research with on-the-ground projects. If you are interested in participating in the conference, please indicate your background, current projects, and interest in an email message to: [alp@religion.ufl.edu](mailto:alp@religion.ufl.edu).

**May 17-19, 2007.** *North and Nordicity: Representations of the North.* Munk Centre, University of Toronto. This interdisciplinary conference seeks to examine and explore the various issues surrounding image construction, identity making and representations of the North in literature, as well as in the visual and performing arts. The aim is to reveal the multiple aspects of the idea of the North as a discursive system created and shaped by cultures outside the North and from within. Guest speakers: Professor Sherrill Grace, Henry Beissel. Contact Info: Nicole Pissowotzki, Department of Germanic Languages & Literatures: [nicole.pissowotzki@utoronto.ca](mailto:nicole.pissowotzki@utoronto.ca).

**May 17-20, 2007.** *Local Natures, Global Responsibilities.* Annual Conference of the Association for the Study of the New Literatures of English (ASNEL). University Jena. The 2007 ASNEL conference aims at contributing to the global debate on nature and the environment by highlighting how local natures are culturally constructed and how insights into different forms or concepts of nature in literary texts and other (old or new) media can contribute to a greater sense of global responsibility. For more information please refer to the conference website: <http://www.uni-jena.de/fsu/anglistik/gne>.

**May 19, 2007.** *Science & the Public Conference.* Imperial College (London). This conference aims to bring together the strands of academia that consider science as it intersects with non-scientific cultures. Topics covered may include: Science and the arts (including science fiction); Innovation studies and science policy research; Popular science; NGOs, science and development; The continuing application of the “deficit model”; Public programmes aiming at “Engagement with Science”; Boundary work; Specific media: films, the internet, museums, radio and others; Science and education: young vs. old, formal vs. informal.

**May 31-June 3, 2007.** *The Fifth Catharine Maria Sedgwick Symposium.* The Red Lion Inn (Stockbridge, MA). Our symposium theme will be: “De-domesticating the Countryside: Texts about Social Innovation, Communal Vision and History in Sedgwick and her Contemporaries.” For more information: <http://www.salestate.edu/imc/sedgwick/>.

**June 7-10, 2007.** *Environmental Studies Summit.* (Syracuse, New York). Hosted by SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry and Syracuse University, the Second Environmental Studies Summit will be a gathering of faculty and future faculty in environmental programs to discuss the direction of the field – and to advance it. For more information: <http://enspire.syr.edu/Summit/>.

**June 8-9, 2007.** *2nd International Conference of Organisation for Studies in Literature and Environment-India (OSLE-India); Towards a Greener Era: Interdisciplinary Approaches.* Acharya

Institute of Management and Sciences (Bangalore). OSLE-India is a forum for promoting ecocriticism, especially in India and also in other Asian countries. For more information: <http://osle-india.tripod.com/id7.html>.

**July 2-5, 2007.** *6th Global Conference on Environmental Justice and Global Citizenship.* July 2-5, 2007, Mansfield College (Oxford). This conference explores the relationships between environments, sustainability and technology, the role of technology in creating possibilities for sustainable resources for the future, and the inherent problems and dangers which accompany that role.

**July 5, 2007.** *Modernism on Sea.* De La Warr Pavilion (Bexhill, Sussex). A one day conference exploring creative responses to the seaside in 20th century Britain. Hosted in collaboration with the Universities of Oxford and Sussex and the AHRC. Speakers include: Professor Laura Marcus, Dr Frances Spalding, Dr Alan Powers, Dr Fred Gray, and Dr Paul Rennie. To register call the De La Warr Pavilion box office on 01424 229111, or for more information please contact Lara Feigel ([L.F.Feigel@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:L.F.Feigel@sussex.ac.uk)) or Alex Harris ([alexandra.harris@christ-church.oxford.ac.uk](mailto:alexandra.harris@christ-church.oxford.ac.uk)).

**July 30- August 9, 2007.** *2nd Annual Environmental Ethics Institute: Environmentalism for the Future.* The University of Montana, Missoula. The institute provides an opportunity for scholars, students, professionals, and interested citizens to gather to discuss and reflect on environmental issues. The courses require 4 to 5 weeks of asynchronous on-line study prior to the 4 to 5 days of face-to-face contact in Missoula. For more information visit the website ([www.umt.edu/ethics](http://www.umt.edu/ethics)) or contact Dane Scott: [dane.scott@mso.umt.edu](mailto:dane.scott@mso.umt.edu).

**August 6-7, 2007.** *Literature, Media, and the Environment.* Sichuan University (Chengdu). The Association of Chinese and Comparative Literature (ACCL) biennial conference aims at fostering dialogue among Chinese Literary Studies and Comparative Literature. This year’s conference welcomes especially papers on the theme “literature, media, and the environment.” Papers may be presented in English or Chinese.

**August 28-31, 2007.** *Reparation, Restoration and Nature.* (London, England). This Royal Geographical Society-Institute of British Geographers Annual International Conference considers both the conceptual problems raised by the contested concept of ‘restoration’ and the practical implications of restoration projects. For more information, visit Royal Geographical Society-IBG website: <http://www.rgs.org/> or contact Emily Brady ([Emily.Brady@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Emily.Brady@ed.ac.uk)) and Clare Palmer ([cpalmer@artsci.wustl.edu](mailto:cpalmer@artsci.wustl.edu)).

**September 27-29, 2007.** *The Prairies in 3-D: Disorientations, Dispersals, Diversities.* St John’s College at the University of Manitoba. The conference will bring together researchers from

see CFPs on page 14

## CFPs continued from page 13

around the world and from many disciplines to discuss issues of importance to the Prairies. We are especially interested in work that reflects upon multiplicity, difference, flux and movement in the Prairies. More information is available at <http://umanitoba.ca/conferences/prairie/>.

**October 12-14, 2007.** *WHEATS 2007 - Workshop for the History of Environment, Agriculture, Technology & Science.* University of Georgia (Athens, Georgia). WHEATS is a workshop designed for graduate students (and, space permitting, very recent Ph.D.s) whose research investigates the intersections between environmental history, agricultural history, the history of technology, and the history of science (in any combination). For further information, contact Paul Sutter ([sutter@uga.edu](mailto:sutter@uga.edu)) or Shane Hamilton ([shamilton@uga.edu](mailto:shamilton@uga.edu)), or visit the WHEATS 2007 website: <http://www.uga.edu/wheats2007/>.

**October 19-21, 2007.** *Melting Boundaries: Carrying Out Effective Research in the Circumpolar World.* University of Saskatchewan (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada). The intent of The 8th ACUNS International Student Conference on Northern Studies will be to showcase student research that has a Northern scope, with special emphasis on interdisciplinary research. The primary mandate of this conference is to provide students with effective ways to facilitate and communicate research objectives between the scientific community and northern residents.

**October 25-28, 2007.** *Nature Matters: Materiality and the More-than-Human in Cultural Studies of the Environment.* Toronto, Ontario. This conference will provide a multidisciplinary forum for scholars interested in the broad field of "environmental cultural studies" to come together to discuss just how it is that nature matters in their work. Plenary speakers include: Stacy Alaimo, Bruce Braun, Julie Cruikshank, Giovanna Di Chiro, Patrick Murphy, Mick Smith, and Cary Wolfe.

**November 10-12, 2007.** *Eleventh Annual Meeting of The International Association for Environmental Philosophy.* (Chicago, IL). The International Association for Environmental Philosophy offers a forum for the philosophical discussion of our

relation to the natural environment. For information about joining IAEP or subscribing to *Environmental Philosophy*, please visit our website: [www.environmentalphilosophy.org](http://www.environmentalphilosophy.org).

## Calls for Manuscripts

**April 30, 2007.** *Tamkang Review Special Issue: Literary Regionalism.* This special issue examines how regionalism is related to diverse aspects of literary studies: gender, race/ethnicity, class, imperialism/nationalism, and so forth. Suggested topics: regionalism, gender, politics; regionalism and race/ethnicity; regionalism and class/social formations; writing region, writing nation; regionalism vs. realism/naturalism; regionalist studies in the age of globalization/electronic communication; regionalism and environmentalism; regionalism and post colonialism. Tamkang Review only publishes papers in English which are not simultaneously submitted elsewhere. For further questions please contact: Joseph Yu ([josephyu@mail.tku.edu.tw](mailto:josephyu@mail.tku.edu.tw)).

**May 31, 2007.** *Essays and Criticism on Contemporary Great Plains/High Plains Poets.* The editors of this proposed collection seek essays and articles about poetry and poets who live in or write about the Great Plains: the geographical area from the Missouri River to the Rocky Mountains, from Texas to the grasslands of Canada. Send inquiries or electronic copies (in the form of Word or RTF files or in the body of an e-mail) of critical essays or articles, along with a short (100-word max.) biographical note, to Editors Greg Kosmicki (The Backwaters Press) and Angie Kritenbrink at: [greatplainspoetry@gmail.com](mailto:greatplainspoetry@gmail.com).

**July 1, 2007.** *Environmental Philosophy.* Environmental Philosophy, the official journal of the International Association for Environmental Philosophy (IAEP), seeks essays on the topics of Environmental Restoration and Environmental Aesthetics for a special double-issue in fall 2007. Submissions may treat these topics individually or address connections between them. The journal also continues to accept submissions at any time in all areas of environmental philosophy. Please send essays of 6000-7000 words, shorter essays, book reviews of 700 words or less, or brief

see CFPs on page 15

## ASLE in Need of Professional Liaison Coordinator

ASLE is in need of a new Professional Liaison Coordinator. The individual in this post compiles the Calls for Papers section of each issue of ASLE News, coordinates ASLE's formal affiliations with other professional organizations, and arranges for organizing chair persons for the sessions that ASLE hosts at the affiliate organizations' conferences. Ideally, the individual in this position also attends the annual meetings of ASLE's Executive Council, although he/she is not a voting member. There is no set term, the individual will serve until ready to step down. If you are interested in learning more about this position, contact Rochelle Johnson at [rjohnson@albertson.edu](mailto:rjohnson@albertson.edu).



## CFPs continued from page 14

“critical comments” on new books and articles. Submissions should follow the Chicago Manual of Style and be sent by email (in Word or Rich Text format) to journal co-editors Kenneth Maly, [maly.kenn@gmail.com](mailto:maly.kenn@gmail.com) or Ted Toadvine, [toadvine@uoregon.edu](mailto:toadvine@uoregon.edu). For more information about Environmental Philosophy or IAEP, please visit our website: [www.environmentalphilosophy.org](http://www.environmentalphilosophy.org).

**September 15, 2007.** *Rhizomes 15: Deleuze and Guattari's Ecophilosophy*. You are invited to submit essays that examine the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari as it relates to ecology and environment. For more information visit: <http://www.rhizomes.net/>. Send submissions to Dianne Chisholm: [dianne.chisholm@ualberta.ca](mailto:dianne.chisholm@ualberta.ca).

**No deadline given.** *The Natural Soul Journal*. The Natural Soul Journal is a place where writers and photographers, especially those just starting out, interested in presenting and delving deeper into what wilderness is about and means can find a venue for publication and hopefully have their work stand side-by-side with more established writers and photographers. The twist in this story, however, is that each submission sent in for consideration requires a donation/contribution of \$2+. This money will go into a pool that will fund micro-grants (\$100-\$300) to individuals and organizations doing something specific to help protect or explore wilderness. Donations don't guarantee publication; each submission will go through editorial review. For more information visit: [www.naturalsoul.org](http://www.naturalsoul.org).

## Call for Reviewers

*The Journal of Transatlantic Studies*. The Journal of Transatlantic Studies is a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary journal that publishes papers that focus on the transatlantic region. Currently the journal is seeking scholars interested in reading and refereeing articles and/or available to prepare book reviews for the Literature and Culture section of the Journal. As an international publication, the Journal extends this call for broadly accessible papers, and is receptive to scholars from varying disciplines, and from all stages of professional advancement. All correspondence to: JTS Literature and Culture Editor, Prof. Charles E. Gannon, Plassmann F-4, English Dept., St. Bonaventure University, St. Bonaventure NY 14778. E-mail is encouraged and preferred for inquiries: [cgannon@sbu.edu](mailto:cgannon@sbu.edu).



*Amphiheatre Falls,  
Clifton Gorge State  
Nature Preserve,  
Greene County, Ohio.  
Photo by Lewis  
Ulman.*

## ASLE Emeritus: Annette Kolodny

This year, a powerful voice in the environmental studies retires from a lauded and well-distinguished career. Since the 1960s, Annette Kolodny's pivotal research in the areas of ecocriticism has established a new frontier for critical study. Her numerous publications examine intersections between multiculturalism and landscape as well as issues of gender and metaphor in the writings of American women.

Kolodny has held faculty positions at Yale University, the University of British Columbia, the University of New Hampshire, the University of Maryland, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, and the University of Arizona, where she also served as the Dean of the College of Humanities from 1988 to 1993. Kolodny currently serves as College of Humanities Professor of American Literature and Culture at the University of Arizona in Tucson.

Throughout her career, Annette Kolodny has received numerous awards and honors, including fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation, and others. In 2002, the ALA Section of the Modern Language Association awarded Kolodny the Jay B. Hubbell Medal for outstanding lifetime scholarly achievement in American literary and cultural studies.

ASLE congratulates Professor Kolodny on her distinguished career and thanks her for her innumerable contributions to environmental writing and ecocriticism.

# ASLE Bookshelf

The following works were recently published by ASLE members. If we've missed your publication, please send bibliographic information to Kathryn Miles at [kmiles@unity.edu](mailto:kmiles@unity.edu).

Albert, Susan Wittig, Susan Hanson, Jan Epton Seale, and Paula Stallings Yost (Eds.). *What Wildness is This: Women Write about the Southwest*. (Introduction by Kathleen Dean Moore). Austin: University of Texas Press, 2007.



Kolodny, Annette (editor and introduction). *The Life and Traditions of the Red Man* (by Joseph Nicolai). Durham: Duke University Press, 2007.

Swan, Alison. *Fresh Water: Women Writing on the Great Lakes*. East Lansing: Michigan State University, 2006.

Twit, Susan J. *The San Luis Valley: Sand Dunes and Sandhill Cranes*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2005.



## PLACE continued from page 8

My initial survey data counters academic myths which suggest that PhD candidates are simply looking for employment. Perhaps this correlation is tied to the availability of jobs in Rhetoric and Composition; I cannot say with certainty at this time. However, I can report that when asked to name their top criteria for selecting jobs, 34 respondents included “geography” and/or “location” in their answers. As a follow-up to the open-ended question, I asked respondents to select the other factors that might affect their job search. From the list of 11 possible choices, 54 of the 62 respondents selected “geographic location of institution.” The location of the institution was followed in popularity by teaching load (43), salary (40), and institution type (37).

Though the specific reasons place matters may still vary widely—for some environmental considerations may be a factor while for others proximity to family members may be more important—the preliminary analysis indicates that place *does* matter for the PhD Candidate conducting a job search in Rhetoric and Composition. The full results of the pre-job search survey will be available through my personal website (<http://www.immccracken.com>) after March 25, 2007.

## Sustaining Members

Michael P. Branch	Ian Marshall
Di Brandt	Allen K. Mears
Katherine R. Chandler	Mary DeJong Obuchowski
Laird Christensen	Deidre Pike
J. Gerard Dollar	Belinda Recio
Linda Dellens	John Sitter
Ann Fisher-Wirth	Lisa & Elizabeth Slappey
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# Wild Times at the MLA: Meeting Notes from Philadelphia

By Sarah McFarland and Ryan Hediger

As an affiliate organization of the Modern Language Association, ASLE arranges two panels for each year's MLA convention. Barbara Cook, the liaison to the MLA for ASLE in 2005-6, organized two panels for the Philadelphia meeting in December.

The first panel, "Feminist Ethics and Systems of Hierarchy," offered four interesting and engaging presentations to an excited audience. Christine Battista, a PhD student at Binghamton U, began with a paper about the eco-ethics of co-inhabitation illustrating how the "technofeminization of the planet" enables the earth's energies to be manipulated in destructive ways. She examined the relationship between ecological imperialism and nature in Kingsolver's *Prodigal Summer* and Irigaray's *Speculum of the Other Woman* in order to argue that a unique, singular access to the earth allows for multitudinous possibilities for non-destructive existence. Joanie Crandall, a PhD candidate at the University of Saskatchewan, deconstructed the hierarchies of readership in the Creenglish poems of Skydancer/Louise Halfe, arguing that her poems marginalize English even as they engage with the language of imperialism. She showed how Halfe's strongly feminist identity subverts the oppression of Aboriginal women and invokes Cree spirituality in answer to the hierarchical impetus of Christianity—particularly and humorously apparent in poems written as letters to the Pope, written "der poop" in Creenglish.

The third panelist, Kathryn Miles, associate professor at Unity College, presented "Living on the Boundaries: Race, Gender, and Animal Ethics in *Solar Storms*," arguing that Hogan's treatment of fur trapping in *Solar Storms* reveals the ethical conflicts between Native lifestyles and European economics, while creating a useful illustration of contemporary ecofeminism. Miles asks, "How do you enter into a commodity culture when you have no value?" suggesting that as the exploitation of animals marks the text, "real" value is symbolic, and that kinship crosses species throughout *Solar Storms*. Finally, Sarah McFarland, assistant professor at Northwestern State University, presented her paper, "In the Box with Schrödinger's Cat," which exposed the troubling ways that other animals are presented in some nature writing as fetishized objects and suggested an approach toward animal subjectivity that might help break down the hierarchies of power that enable objectification in the first place.

The second panel, "Intersections: Literature, Science, Nature," included two presentations, with a lively discussion following. Kimberly Howey, a PhD candidate at University College London, opened the panel with her paper, "Le Docteur': Ezra Pound and the Rhetoric of Science." Howey emphasized the influence of Pound's interest in scientific objectivity, particularly medicine, on his project of modernizing poetry. She showed that Pound considered his work in poetry to be a form of doctoring to social ills: for instance, he imagined himself as a kind of "male midwife" who helped deliver T.S. Eliot's "Waste Land" with his famous editorial intervention. In "Beating Einstein's Brain," Greg Wright focused on the intertextuality of Michael Paterniti's *Driving Mr. Albert*, which he allies with Kerouac's *On the Road* in style and content. Wright, a PhD candidate at Michigan State University, demonstrated how these texts share concerns over intelligence and nuclear technology. In consultation with Richard Dawkin's "meme" theory on the evolution of thought, Wright theorized this intertextuality according to what he called a synaptic model.

ASLE is also organizing two panels for the 2007 MLA meeting in Chicago. The first panel, "When Nature Strikes Back," seeks presentations that explore how literary texts (including film) depict or personify nature's response to human attempts to control, change, or harm the land. For example, how does the environment create an inhospitable situation for humans that either appears natural (hurricanes, West Nile Virus, Avian Flu, Mad Cow disease) or supernatural (the flood in *Their Eyes Were Watching God*)? How does "nature" have agency in literature and film?

The second panel, "Animals and Agency," seeks presentations that explore literary representations of animality, especially those that deal with the agency and subjectivity of animals. How do representations of animals undermine or complicate the boundary that supposedly differentiates animals from humans? How are animals constructed, and how do they undo those constructions?

300-word proposals should be sent to Sarah McFarland, the 2006-7 ASLE liaison to the MLA, by March 20<sup>th</sup>. Her email address is: [mcfarlands@nsula.edu](mailto:mcfarlands@nsula.edu).



# Voices in The Wilderness: ASLE Honors Achievements of Environmental Writers and Thinkers

At the 2006 ASLE Executive Council Retreat, ASLE officers voted to award honorary memberships to three outstanding contemporary writers and scholars. These three individuals—Wendell Berry, Shoko Itoh, and Barbara Kingsolver—were chosen for this honor because of their contributions to literature and environmental studies, which have significantly enriched those familiar with their work. Their lifetime memberships are a small but sincere token of ASLE’s gratitude to them. Each new inductee will be honored at the upcoming biannual conference in Spartanburg, SC. They will also receive a lifetime subscription to our publications and will be mentioned in ASLE publications when appropriate. Berry, Itoh, and Kingsolver join 14 honorary members who have received this honor in the past. ASLE congratulates them on their exemplary careers as artists, advocates, and environmental role models.

## Wendell Berry

Wendell Berry believes in holism and the importance of lived practices. In 1965, he purchased a farm in Henry County, Kentucky; since that time, he has developed and practiced legendary modes of sustainable agriculture, all the while creating an impressive *oeuvre* of publications about this lived philosophy. He is the author of more than forty books, including *The Unsettling of America: Culture and Agriculture*, *Home Economics*, *A Place on Earth*, and *What Are People For?* The insight and thoughtfulness in each recently led the *New York Times* to deem Berry, “the prophet of rural America.” Berry is a former professor of English at the University of Kentucky and a past fellow of both the Guggenheim Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation. Berry explained his impressive career with eloquence and simplicity: “My work has been motivated by a desire to make myself responsibly at home in this world and in my native and chosen place.”

## Shoko Itoh

“The one thing in the world of value,” writes Shoko Itoh, “is the active soul. This every man is entitled to; this every man contains within him.” A professor at Matsuyama University in Japan, Itoh has dedicated her life’s work to finding peace and inspiration through nature writing. Itoh was six months old when the United States dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, a profoundly affecting moment of global history that she has both endured and transformed through her work. One of the world’s leading Thoreau scholars, Itoh has written extensively on Thoreau’s contributions to ecological vision and society; she has translated several of Thoreau’s works, thus introducing his work to new and exciting audiences around the globe. Itoh is also the author of *Sauntering to the Inner Wilderness: Nature Writing and the American Society* and co-edited *Toward a New Ecocritical Vision*. Currently she sits on the advisory board for *ISLE and ASLE-Japan*.

## Barbara Kingsolver

Barbara Kingsolver’s first book, *The Bean Trees*, was published in 1988. Since then, she has published lauded place-based fiction such as *The Poisonwood Bible* and *Prodigal Summer* as well as incisive nonfiction on subjects ranging from coal mine strikes to the importance of family. In 2002, The National Geographic Society published *Last Stand: America’s Virgin Lands*, a collaboration between Kingsolver and award-winning photographer Annie Griffiths Belt. In an interview with Bill Moyers, Kingsolver emphasized the need for writers to connect with their audience: “What a fiction writer or a poet or an essay writer can do is re-engage people with their own humanity,” she explained. “When you pick up a novel from the bed side table, you put down your own life at the same time and you become another person for the duration. And so you live that person’s life and you understand in a way that you don’t learn from reading a newspaper what it’s like to live a life that’s completely different from yours. And when you put that book down, you’re changed. You have something more expansive in your heart than you began with.”

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