SCHOLARSHIP AND RESEARCH THAT INFORMS THE FUTURE

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The College of Humanities and Social Sciences at George Mason University is committed to providing a challenging education to undergraduate and graduate students, expanding the frontiers of knowledge through research, and contributing intellectual leadership to the community. The College values the rich scholarly traditions of the past while embracing evolving disciplinary and interdisciplinary innovations. It believes that a liberal arts education is the best preparation for a lifetime of careers. Visit chss.gmu.edu to learn more.

CORNERSTONE

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George Mason University is an equal opportunity employer that encourages diversity.
Dear Friends,

“The world is full of magic things, patiently waiting for our senses to grow sharper.” That idea, from poet W. B. Yeats, is at the heart of a university’s existence. Within the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, our students have the opportunity to hone their senses to discover knowledge and gain understanding, “magic things” that they will take with them throughout their lives.

Discoveries are made every day in our university’s corner of Northern Virginia. This 2016 edition of Cornerstone magazine is dedicated to the work that goes into the continuous process of bringing new knowledge to fruition.

In this edition you will read about George Mason University’s recent recognition in the realm of research, denoted a Highest Research Activity Institution by the Carnegie Classification. And you will read how this recognition stands not only on technological research, but upon the solid support of research expenditures in the humanities and social sciences. You will read about an undergraduate student who is taking part in the opportunity to do her own research while still at Mason, building her own foundation for a lifetime of discovery.

You will read about faculty member Eden King, who builds understanding of how people interact in work settings, so that all members of organizations can be treated fairly and thrive. You will meet Steven Barnes, who has traveled to the far reaches of the former Soviet Union to gain insight into the people who were interred in the Soviet Gulag system in the 1930s. And you will read about a college alumnus who uses his understanding and experience with technology and art to introduce the world to the mysteries of William Shakespeare and his time.

In our search for knowledge, we are best served when we comprehend the kind of change we are creating. The human values underlying our efforts are as important as the quest for information itself. We are not the tools of our technology. In the face of technological advancement, humanities and social science research remind us of the ways that we think of being human.

In Patriot Pride,

Deborah A. Boehm-Davis
In Memoriam: Alan Cheuse

By William Miller, Director, Creative Writing Program

Alan Cheuse, who taught in Mason’s Creative Writing Program for more than 25 years, died on July 31, 2015, in San Jose, California, of injuries he sustained two weeks earlier in a car crash.

Cheuse went to California to teach at the Squaw Valley Community of Writers after first teaching a summer course at Mason. He was 75 at the time of his death.

Cheuse always called himself a “late-blooming” writer because he was almost 40 when he published his first fiction. That debut was a short story, “Fishing for Coyotes,” published by The New Yorker.

After graduating from Rutgers University, he worked as a toll taker on the New Jersey Turnpike, as a welfare case worker, as an assistant editor for Women’s Wear Daily, and as a high school teacher. His various early jobs informed his fiction and allowed him to create fully rendered characters and the realistic situations they confronted.

In his first college teaching job, at Bennington College, he became friends with Bernard Malamud, Nicholas Delbanco, and John Gardner. They became long-term friends and in recent years he and Delbanco co-edited a multivolume literary anthology for McGraw-Hill. From their college days, he also maintained a lifelong friendship with poet Robert Pinsky, and twice was instrumental in helping bring Pinsky, a former national Poet Laureate, to the Mason campus.

He published numerous pieces of short fiction, five novels, and two nonfiction books, and he also was well known as a regular book reviewer for National Public Radio.

English Department chair Debra Lattanzi Shutika said at the time of his death, “Alan was the embodiment of our department ideal, a dedicated teacher and mentor, and a prolific writer. Alan was a source of inspiration for his students and in so many ways helped define Mason’s Creative Writing Program. His absence will be felt by all.”
In Memoriam: Raja Parasuraman

George Mason University mourns the loss of University Professor Raja Parasuraman, who died on March 22, 2015. Parasuraman served as the director of the Human Factors and Applied Cognition Program and the director of the Center of Excellence in Neuroergonomics, Technology, and Cognition in Mason’s Department of Psychology. Prior to Mason, he held appointments as professor and associate professor of psychology at the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C., and as a postdoctoral fellow and assistant research professor at the University of California, Los Angeles. He received a BSc (1st Class Honors) in electrical engineering from Imperial College, University of London (1972) and a PhD in psychology from Aston University, Birmingham, UK (1976).

Parasuraman’s areas of scholarship were human factors, which studies the ways in which humans interact with machines, and cognitive neuroscience, which considers how the physiological structure of the brain affects our ability to acquire knowledge and understanding. In particular, Parasuraman looked at how human attention, memory, and vigilance affect performance when people work with automated and robotic systems. He coined the term “neuroergonomics,” which he defined as understanding the mind by studying the brain (neuroscience) and understanding the mind in relation to work and technology (ergonomics). His research included work on automation, aviation, and aging, and it considered how theoretical principles concerning human interaction with mechanical systems could be applied to solving practical problems.

His list of honors is substantial. He served as a member of the National Research Council’s Panel on Human Factors (Board on Human-Systems Integration), including serving as its chair. He was on the editorial board of numerous journals. He was elected a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Psychological Association, the American Psychological Society, the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society, and the International Ergonomics Association, and was a national associate of the National Academy of Sciences.

He was the recipient in both 1997 and 2001 of the Jerome H. Ely Award for best paper in the journal Human Factors. He received the Franklin V. Taylor Award for Lifetime Achievement in Applied Experimental and Engineering Psychology from the American Psychological Association (Division 21). He received the Paul M. Fitts Education Award from the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society for his mentorship of students, and was later awarded the Outstanding Faculty Award from the State Council for Higher Education for the State of Virginia. He received the inaugural Raymond S. Nickerson Award for Best Paper in the Journal of Experimental Psychology: Applied by the American Psychological Association, and the Admiral Kollmorgen Spirit of Innovation Award for Contributions to Neuroergonomics from the Augmented Cognition Technical Group of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society. He was recognized with the Triennial Outstanding Educators Award from the International Ergonomics Association and the Celebration of Scholarship Award from the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at George Mason University.

Deborah Boehm-Davis, dean, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, had the opportunity to work with Parasuraman as a faculty member and later as the chair of the Psychology Department. “Raja was an incredible scholar,” she says. “More importantly, perhaps, he was an incredible mentor, both to students and his colleagues. He led by example, and he set the bar high.”
Forensic psychology is where the science of the mind meets criminal justice. More specifically, it is “anything psychology-related having to do with the criminal justice system and/or the psychology related to homeland security,” says Justin Ramsdell, faculty member in the Department of Psychology. This aptly describes the new forensic psychology minor and concentrations being offered at George Mason University in fall 2016.

Since the passage of the Community Mental Health Act in the 1960s, state mental hospitals have closed and community-based mental health care facilities have taken their place. But resources to care for those affected by this change have not followed the shifts, and individuals diagnosed with mental illness have landed in the criminal justice system. Police officers, as the first point of contact with the system, need an understanding of severe mental illness to perform their jobs effectively. In fact, notes Ramsdell, every local law enforcement agency has instituted mandatory training on issues related to mental health for all officers.

Ramsdell is a licensed clinical psychologist and the architect of the new forensic psychology program. Describing himself as a “forensic generalist,” he brings his considerable experience to the curriculum, drawing on his background as an expert witness consultant and a trainer for government law enforcement agencies and local police crisis intervention teams.

“I try and bring in everything that I’ve done,” he explains. “Luckily, I’ve had maximum security prison, maximum security mental hospital, jail, homeland security, and private-sector [experience]. The content of the minor is drawn from that experience.”

Forensics has become a growing field for psychology majors as well, as it provides knowledge on assessment of mental competency, criminal responsibility, and risk of recidivism, and aids in child custody cases or jury selection consulting.

“If you’re a psych-minded person and you want a job in parole, probation, or in a jail, or you want to go into social work but you like community mental health work, then you need to understand forensic psychology,” he says.

The program requires introduction to psychology and abnormal psychology courses that serve as a base for understanding future concepts. An introduction to forensic psychology and a course on mental illness in the criminal justice system are also requirements. The program rounds out with electives, including an introduction to criminal justice, lab opportunities, a course in the psychology of the victim experience, a course on the use of pseudoscience in forensic psychology, and neurobiology of criminal behavior.

The minor is designed for students to encounter and learn from real-world experience. In the course on mental illness and the criminal justice system, students meet with various participants in the system: a police officer trained in crisis de-escalation, mental health staff from a local jail, a public defender, a prosecutor, a victims’ sentencing advocate, and parole and probation personnel. They comment on the cases discussed in class and exchange views with the students. In the course on the psychology of the victim experience, students hear interviews from survivors of such crimes as child abduction, assault, domestic violence, and murder, and apply psychological theory directly to these cases.

The program is designed for students to understand real-world issues of the court system and how mentally ill people function within it, explains Ramsdell. “I wanted our graduates to solve a problem,” he says. “I want them to be able to go do something useful and change cultures within organizations.”
Digital Public Humanities
Online Graduate Certificate

Last spring, the Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media (RRCHNM) launched—in collaboration with the Smithsonian Associates—a unique online program for a graduate certificate in digital public humanities.

Digital tools and resources are transforming the process of research, interpretation, and communication. This graduate certificate trains students in a wide range of digital tools that are in increasingly high demand in humanities careers. Students learn research and presentation skills, including text mining, topic modeling, data visualization, and mapping. They explore innovative ways to advance teaching and learning while developing skills in digital curation, writing, and content strategy.

The 15-credit program is designed for recent graduates and experienced humanities professionals, giving them the skills and credentials to advance in a variety of careers, including education, museum and archival work, librarianship, journalism, and publishing. As all required courses for the certificate are available entirely online, RRCHNM notes that it can easily be combined with George Mason University’s master’s degree program in history. Students have the ability to create a flexible academic schedule that fits their needs.

Nine of the program’s credits come from classwork: Introduction to Digital Humanities, Digital Public History, and Teaching and Learning History in the Digital Age. The classes are taught by members of the staff of RRCHNM, leading digital humanities scholars at the forefront of presenting and preserving history through digital media and technology.

The final six credits are earned through an internship with the Smithsonian Institution. The internship is designed to allow students to gain experience in applying their newly attained tools and skills to digital projects with the Smithsonian. Internships are coordinated remotely, allowing students to work from any location.

The program combines theory and practice to develop students’ skills in digital curation, writing, and content strategy, enhancing their professional portfolios through digital course work. It offers the opportunity to network with fellow students, historians, and public history professionals from around the world, exploring innovative and effective ways to advance teaching and learning in the humanities through digital tools.
Humanities and Social Sciences: Moving Faster, Farther with George Mason University

By Anne Reynolds

This year, George Mason University announced the public phase of its historic comprehensive campaign, Faster Farther. No longer an up-and-comer, Mason has arrived. The institution that started as a concept and an experiment 45 years ago is now the largest public research university in Virginia with a world-class faculty providing an outstanding education to one of the country’s most diverse student bodies. Mason has moved faster and advanced farther than anyone anticipated. And the university is just getting started. The campaign seeks to celebrate and build on this success, providing resources to support its award-winning faculty, diverse student body, and thriving campus. With a $500 million goal, the campaign has raised $363 million at Cornerstone’s press time.

Conceived as an institution that would add to the intellectual and cultural life of the Northern Virginia region, Mason has grown from an offshoot of the University of Virginia, holding classes in an old elementary school building, to a thriving center of education, an economic engine, and a powerhouse among research universities. Through this growth, the university has maintained its primary mission of serving students and the Northern Virginia community, and has expanded its impact to the nation and the world. This history is a solid foundation, and these achievements are only the beginning.

Mason’s comprehensive campaign puts the university’s students, research, and campuses at its center. For students, the university seeks to expand resources for financial aid, online learning, and career support. For research, the university aims to keep and add to its outstanding faculty, foster their research initiatives in all areas of scholarship, and expand opportunities for faculty-led student research and experiential learning.

Finally, the campaign recognizes that the university’s campuses in Fairfax, Arlington, and Prince William County represent assets to the communities in these areas, and seeks to enhance its physical spaces for the arts, athletics, and cultural life, as well as scholarship.

Running through 2018, the Faster Farther campaign invites the university’s alumni, students, faculty, staff, and friends to support the continued growth of George Mason University, and to come along as it travels faster and farther into its future as a vital, integral part of the Northern Virginia community that it serves for the benefit of our students, our commonwealth, and our world.

FASTER, FARThER WITH HUMANITIES aNd SOCIAL SCIENCES

The Faster Farther Campaign recognizes that each of George Mason’s colleges and schools are important components of its growth so far and are vital to its future success. The College of Humanities and Social Sciences enthusiastically supports the university’s efforts and looks forward to working with the entire Mason community to further its priorities in tandem with Mason’s.
Kevin Augustyn, the college’s new director of development, sees outstanding humanities and social sciences education and research as integral parts of the positive growth of George Mason University (meet Kevin, right). “The humanities and social sciences are not luxuries, but necessities, when it comes to a complete education,” he says. “They are absolutely the best way to develop a student’s skill at thinking critically, communicating clearly, and gaining the intellectual flexibility that is needed to address our society’s national and global problems.”

Along with positioning the college firmly within the university’s course for growth, Augustyn and his development team have outlined specific funding priorities within the college.

THE DEAN’S ENDOWMENT FOR FACULTY EXCELLENCE

The college’s outstanding faculty is at the very heart of the education and experience it offers to its students. We are highly motivated to bring on and keep top-quality scholars in the college—scholars whose experiences, research, and teaching acumen will provide first-rate education to our students. As the largest of Mason’s colleges, the College of Humanities and Social Sciences plays a role in the education of every student of the university. We hope to support our faculty’s teaching and research by funding opportunities for professional development and strategic salary increases for our current faculty, and by extending competitive offers to our future faculty members. Toward this goal, the dean has invested a previously unrestricted gift of $1.5 million in a new endowment, hoping that others will match such generosity.

THE DEAN’S ENDOWMENT FOR GRADUATE STUDIES

The college seeks to attract a strong cadre of the next generation of scholars, making it a nationwide destination for the most promising students. This new endowment, once again seeded with a $1.5 million gift, will offer funding for our master’s and doctoral candidates as they further their education at Mason. We compete with a number of other institutions for our graduate students and we hope to match the efforts of these competitors by offering increased funding for our top PhD candidates and generous scholarship opportunities for our MA students.

THE JAMES BUCHANAN LEGACY CAMPAIGN

James M. Buchanan, distinguished professor emeritus of economics and founder of Mason’s Center for Study of...
Public Choice, was a pioneering economist whose theory of economic and political decision making (widely known as public choice theory) made him the first faculty member of George Mason University to receive the Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences, in 1986. In his honor, the college seeks to renovate and rename Mason Hall to reflect his contributions to the university. This location will house the entire, highly regarded Department of Economics within a central place on Mason’s Fairfax Campus. The fund will also renovate and expand the existing James Buchanan House, on the eastern edge of the Fairfax Campus, as a study and conference center.

THE CENTER FOR HISTORY AND NEW MEDIA
The Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media uses digital media to bring history to life. In its 20-plus years of award-winning work, the center has developed more than 60 projects, including educational resources and courses for all levels of learners; open-source software, online exhibits, and collecting sites; and forums to develop knowledge and build community among those in the humanities working with digital technology.

The center works with educators to excite students about learning about the past. Its aim is to make history accessible to all, not just to experts. And its open source tools serve researchers, educators, and libraries in their efforts to uncover and relate the bottom line of history.

THE CENTER FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WELL-BEING
The Center for the Advancement of Well-Being promotes the science and the practices that can lead to a life of vitality, purpose, and resilience. This interdisciplinary center is housed in the college, but it serves the university and Mason’s broader community through programming that emphasizes the tools to thrive in a world of complexity and uncertainty.

These specific areas for development all interlink with the college’s defining belief: that the insight and intellectual flexibility taught through the study of the humanities and social sciences offers students the best preparation for a lifetime of career success and continued learning.

As this lifetime learning never ends, the college seeks to maintain ties to its vibrant network of alumni, near and far. We ask alumni to share information about themselves in profiles that we can add to the web pages of our programs. We seek involvement with our alumni chapter to connect with the college’s students and fellow alumni. And, by participating in the Faster Farther Campaign, we offer our alumni the opportunity to play a role in the continued growth of the college and its programs.

“As the college’s offerings adapt and expand to meet the challenges and needs of today’s society,” explains Augustyn, “the study of the humanities and social sciences remains grounded in the wisdom of our history and culture. In these rapidly changing and uncertain times, when it’s hard to find common ground, people are hungry for values. These enduring values can be found in the humanities and social sciences, and we look forward to growing along with the university to fully address the challenges that face our students and our community.”
Harmain Rafi, a senior neuroscience major from Alexandria, Virginia, grew up loving science. In high school, she patiently tolerated her father’s gentle nudges toward a career in medicine while she took advantage of summer science classes and a full load of advanced placement courses. It was in one of these classes she discovered a penchant for psychology.

The combination of science and psychology led Rafi to neuroscience. When considering colleges, Rafi’s parents encouraged her to live at home, so she focused her search on local institutions. Mason’s Neuroscience Program attracted her, and she found that the university had a good balance of what she was looking for. “It far exceeded my expectations,” she says.

Rafi dove into research opportunities in her major, beginning in her freshman year. One key opportunity came through an internship with the Inova Health System, working with a neurosurgeon to study a medical device designed to control long-term lower back pain in patients. The aim of their study was to measure the effectiveness of various types of electrodes in the device, and to compare different manufacturers’ products. The experience formed the basis of the presentation Rafi made in the 2015 Celebration of Student Scholarship sponsored by Mason’s Office of Student Scholarship, Creative Activities, and Research.

Rafi’s presentation, “Varying spinal cord stimulators and patient outcomes according to Oswestry Index scores,” involved a poster detailing the findings of her work with Inova and an oral presentation of the research to the judges and visitors at the celebration. In preparing the work, however, she faced a significant hurdle: The data they had collected was inconclusive.

“The data collection agency [was not] getting everything they were supposed to. You’re supposed to have basic information like, what’s the electrode, what’s the company, and how many points of contact [on each device],” Rafi explains. “Very nitty-gritty information that you need to have to evaluate something like this, but unfortunately, continued on next page
whoever was [managing] the database wasn’t taking care of it.”

But the flawed data held its own lessons. “That’s what I presented at the symposium,” explains Rafi. “Even though I wasn’t able to get conclusive data . . . this is the reality of research. You’re not always going to have nice, clean data, but regardless, you will always learn something from every research [project] you do.”

Rafi presented the data she had, explained its limitations, and made suggestions for obtaining better information in the future. She wound up winning the Dean’s Undergraduate Research Award, which is given in recognition of an outstanding poster presentation.

“It’s confirmation that I’m in the right field,” she says. “If I can be happy about not having the perfect answer, it shows that I’m in the right place.”

In the fall of her junior year, an advisor from the Neuroscience Program told Rafi the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) was searching for a student to help in one of their labs. Rafi credits her research experience at Mason for her success in obtaining the position. What started as a once-a-week role consisting of “basic helping out,” soon evolved into a full-time, paid summer internship. Despite the challenge of a 40-plus mile commute from her home to Silver Spring, Maryland, she has thrived in the federal research environment.

Rafi’s work with the FDA centers on mild traumatic brain injuries. She has been able to participate in a publication on the subject and has presented findings in an FDA symposium. “That was really fun,” she says. “Our deputy director came by my poster and he was rapid-firing questions and I was politely rapid-firing answers and it was pretty exciting to actually know enough to answer all of the questions.”

As convocation nears, Rafi has been offered a full-time position with the FDA for the coming summer. She considers it “a really big honor that they see me as a valuable person enough to want me to return.” But the job is only one of several possible paths for Rafi. At the time of this Cornestone publication, she is waiting to hear from the medical schools to which she has applied.

Rafi credits an event in high school for sparking thoughts of a medical career. During a visit to Pakistan, she became quite ill with pneumonia. Though she was born in Pakistan, Rafi grew up in the United States, and had become accustomed to the medical and insurance system in this country. She found the clinic in Pakistan to be unnerving.

“You couldn’t tell if this person was a real, licensed doctor,” she says, recalling that one man gave her a bag of medicine and simply said, ‘Here, take this.’ There was no label; it was literally a baggie with a zip lock.” The experience motivated her to try to find a way to help people in developing countries or other parts of the world: “People who help out the most have to be doctors.”

Wherever Rafi’s future may lead, she is certain about one thing: She wants to make the way easier for those who follow in her footsteps.

“In my family,” she says, “I will be the first to have a bachelor’s and the first to go [further] into higher education. I don’t have a model to look up to, so I’ve been carving my way the entire time . . . . I really want to be able to make something of myself and come back to Mason. Because I love the idea of being a college student and going off to talk to elementary school students or even other freshmen, and tell them, don’t worry, as long as you can put your mind to it, you can do it.”
Mason Alumnus Makes Shakespeare Available to All

The venerable Folger Shakespeare Library stands squarely in a city of monuments, situated among illustrious neighbors on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. The U.S. Capitol dome dominates the view to the west, and the Library of Congress and Supreme Court building round out the neighborhood.

Even among this eminent company, the Folger shines with its own history and purpose. Dedicated in 1932, it houses books, writings, art, and countless other items that date back to the beginning of printing, through the English Renaissance, and into the early modern period of the late 18th century. Its collection is vast, and at its center is the study of the work and times of William Shakespeare.

The Tudor interior of the building, featuring a Great Hall and two ornate reading rooms, welcomes visitors from around the world and offers a quiet atmosphere that inspires scholarly undertakings. Below ground, vaults and shelves that extend the length of a city block house works that date from the 1400s, including the world’s largest collection of Shakespeare’s First Folios, a volume compiled in 1623 that contains almost all of his plays, half of which had never been printed before.

This monument to antiquity is staffed by a team of professionals whose mission is anything but antique. Among them is Eric Johnson, MA ’05, the Folger’s first director of digital access. Charged with management of the Folger’s diverse digital programs, Johnson weds technology with the humanities to bring the abundance of these collections to new audiences online.

Johnson holds a bachelor’s degree in history and a master’s degree in English—an educational background one might conclude is a direct and expected link to a library career. But as the Folger is no ordinary library, Johnson’s path to it was no conventional journey.

Johnson graduated from James Madison University with a degree in history and put his college media experience and writing skills to work with the Arlington Catholic Herald. It was with the Herald, in the mid-1990s, that he first explored the idea of bringing digital technology and writing together.

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Eric Johnson, MA ‘05, points out details of a Shakespeare folio (top) and quarto publication in the underground vault of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

I’d always messed around with computers because my dad worked with computers,” he says. “I saw that the web was emerging and I thought [the Herald] should have a website.” He proposed the idea to his editor, offered to build the site himself, and soon found that technology had become a significant part of his job.

Johnson continued to build his inventory of technical skills by operating websites for a trade association, and later for the Washington Times and United Press International. He moved to a position with the U.S. Department of State, working on internal and external content-driven websites, and managed project teams for several web development firms. While furthering his career, Johnson was also furthering his education, earning a master’s degree in English from George Mason in 2005.

As part of his master’s thesis project, Johnson developed Open Source Shakespeare, a free, online database that allows users to search digital versions of the author’s complete works. He began work on the site while he was stationed in Kuwait with the U.S. Marine Reserve in summer 2003, after being attached to an infantry unit in Iraq. Back in the United States, he continued to build it while riding the Washington, D.C., Metrorail to and from his work as a web developer. Since its release in 2004, the site has received more than 46 million page views, and remains one of the most popular Shakespeare sites on the web.

Johnson’s extensive web experience and his interest in Shakespeare came together when he learned from a source at the Folger that the library was creating the director of digital access position. During his interview for the job, a library director told Johnson that he’d used Open Source Shakespeare as a resource in writing his most recent book. Johnson has served as the library’s director of digital access since 2013.

He has found it to be a satisfying balance of his web-related, organizational, and intellectual interests. “I was very grateful that I was able to find a job that allows me to use my managerial and leadership skills along with participating in the intellectual life of the organization,” he says. “And now I get to interact with all kinds of people who are interested in Shakespeare and the early modern era.”

Johnson’s work makes the treasures of the Folger accessible to all of the library’s audiences: researchers, Shakespeare enthusiasts, theater-goers, K-12 students and teachers, and university instructors. He enjoys the challenge of creating technical structures that support and frame such important subject matter.

The challenge is in finding the balance in creating the framework that makes the content easily accessible. “If you focus too much on the grist, the substance,” he explains, “you’re going to end up with something that’s technically weak, probably something that is not very well designed, won’t attract an audience, and will probably collapse over a number of years because it wasn’t well designed. And the world will pass it by.”

Promoting Advancement In and Out of the Classroom

By Laura Powers

George Mason University psychology professor Eden King believes that one of the biggest drivers of social inequality is access to quality employment and career advancement opportunities. While many organizations are dedicated to a positive and opportunity-driven environment for all people irrespective of gender, ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation, intolerance has not disappeared completely. King’s research is focused on identifying what discrimination looks like in today’s workplace, how to dissolve it, what effect discrimination has on employees, and, ultimately, its effect on the success of an organization.

“I’ve always been interested in social equality,” King says, “and I realized that people spend most of their lives at work. I felt it was a particularly meaningful place to study inequality.”

For the past year, King and her students conducted research, funded by a grant from the National Science Foundation, looking at diversity in a team atmosphere. Observing people’s interpersonal dynamics using some of the latest technology, King evaluated more than 80 teams by using wearable sensors to record their conversation and movement patterns. While her research on this subject is not yet complete, she hopes the results will help identify intervention strategies to help overcome the challenges that can occur in a diverse work environment. This type of research, King says, has and will continue to help demonstrate how even small, subtle intolerance affects a person more greatly than an overt discriminatory action.

King’s research and teaching ideology are both rooted in a similar goal—advancing the careers of others. Having experienced the positive effect of a strong mentor herself, King says she always teaches with the intention to provide the best mentoring she can in order to elevate her students’ research and ideas.

This spring, three of the PhD candidates King oversees will graduate pending the presentation of their dissertations on a variety of topics that all have issues of diversity at their core. All three students have obtained jobs in higher education that they will begin after graduation, and they credit King’s support for much of their success, noting her continual guidance, selflessness, and dedication to her students.

King joined Mason’s Department of Psychology in 2006 after earning her PhD in Industrial Organizational Psychology from Rice University. Her dedication to social justice and the advancement of her students has earned her several awards including the Louise Kidder Early Career Award from the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (2010), the Rising Star Award from the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (2011), the Society for IO Psychology’s LGBT Research Award (2013), and the OSCAR Mentor Award from Mason (2013).

In 2011, she published her first book titled How Women Can Make it Work: The Science of Success, and is she is now co-editing the Oxford Handbook in Discrimination at Work. She recently received a grant from the Society for Human Resource Management, for which, in January, she began research on how age diversity impacts mentoring relationships. She was be inducted as a fellow in the Society for Industrial Organizational Psychology in April.
Not Just a Night at the Movies
Film and Media Studies Brings the World to Mason

Since 2007, the Film and Media Studies program has offered the Mason community a wealth of perspectives outside the confines of Fairfax, Virginia. Its Visiting Filmmakers Series has brought a wide diversity of films to campus, exploring themes and images that are challenging, real, and timely.

Program director Cynthia Fuchs has been building and developing the series since its start. She sees it as a way to bring students in touch with artists who are keenly connected to their work.

“It was kind of my idea of what college could be,” she explains. “We find filmmakers from around the country who really have invested time and energy in a documentary... there’s usually a very kind of personal stake in it.”

The subject matter of the films that come to campus reflects issues that are relevant to the community and are often suggested in concert with units throughout the university. Fuchs’s goal is to reach as many as possible.

“There’s a difference in being able to see and converse with somebody and have them share their work with you, and how they created their work, as opposed to looking at it on the internet,” she says.

Film and Media Studies offers an interdisciplinary minor with footings in the Department of Communication and Department of English, with other courses available through the Department of Modern and Classical Languages and the Film and Video Studies Program (a bachelor’s degree program housed within Mason’s College of Visual and Performing Arts).

This academic year, the Visiting Filmmakers Series has presented:

- Cheryl Furjanic with *Back on Board: Greg Louganis* (2014)
- Marcelo Torcida with *Happy Those Who Cry* (2014)
- Benjamin Steger with *Stage Four: A Love Story* (2014)
- Khalik Allah with *Field Niggas* (2015)
1 Olympic diver Greg Louganis; Back on Board: Greg Louganis
2 Filmmaker Cheryl Furjanic; Back on Board: Greg Louganis
3 Photo from Kandahar Journals
4 Photographer and filmmaker Louie Palu, Kandahar Journals
5 Mary Jo and George Steger; Stage Four: A Love Story
6 Stage Four: A Love Story Film Series promotional poster featuring Mary Jo and George Steger
7 Photo from Field Niggas
8 Photo from Field Niggas
9 Photographer and filmmaker Khalik Allah, Field Niggas
10 Photo from (T)Error
11 Photo from (T)Error
The School of Integrative Studies

New Century College Moves Forward with a New Name

By Carrie Drummond

Spring 2016 brings an important change to one of George Mason University’s most vital and forward-looking academic components. With a bold eye to the future, New Century College (NCC) is changing its name. Effective May 2016, New Century College will become the School of Integrative Studies (SIS). For the academic unit that has always been at the forefront in education, a new name is nothing . . . well . . . new.

With extensive survey and interview feedback from faculty, alumni, students, and partners, the unit selected a name that more accurately reflects the core of the school’s mission: the interdisciplinary, experiential research and study undertaken by its faculty and students.

LOOKING BACK

NCC started as an experiment in teaching pedagogy. Responding to a 1988 challenge from the Virginia General Assembly-appointed Commission on the University of the 21st Century, a team of Mason professors developed a curriculum built around integrative, experiential learning that would equip students to meet the changing workforce needs of the new century.

The team called the new unit “New Century College,” and brought together scholars from different disciplines to craft innovative experiences that would foster hands-on learning outside the classroom.

In a 2013 interview, NCC’s founding dean John O’Connor said, “We coalesced around the idea of a more pragmatic liberal arts—a liberal arts education that would get you a job.”

And it worked. Per program requirements, all NCC students graduate with at least 12 credits of experiential learning. The graduating class of 2014 reported that 77 percent had internships, 28 percent held leadership positions in an extracurricular group or club, and 19 percent had studied abroad. Additionally, 92 percent of fall 2013 incoming freshmen remained in the program their second year.

A 1999 Washington Post article hailed NCC as a “standout model” and “beacon, leading the charge into the 21st century.”

FAST FORWARD: A NEW ERA

NCC gained recognition as a leader in integrative teaching. Students found success in their careers and the unit carved its niche on the Mason campus.

However, as NCC neared its 20th anniversary, many faculty members and students felt the name “New Century College” did not resonate beyond the year 2000. It didn’t convey the variety of research and learning taking place in the college’s diverse concentrations, which range from childhood studies and applied global conservation, to legal studies and social justice and human rights. NCC needed a name that captured its multifaceted programming.
NCC faculty chair Paul Gorski says, “Before we can address social, environmental, or other problems, we have to equip ourselves with the knowledge and skills we can only cultivate by looking at those problems from a variety of angles, informed by a variety of experiences. With the name change we are doubling down on this commitment through innovative courses and programs.”

Kelly Dunne, interim associate dean of NCC, explains that the name “School of Integrative Studies” describes the way students learn in this unit. “Students use different tools and techniques to tackle contemporary challenges,” she says. “The new name creates a broad foundation for this multiplicity of disciplines and research to collaborate—ultimately benefitting our entire campus community.”

“The original NCC developed a unique and powerful pedagogy, and our new School of Integrative Studies captures that unique student experience. Our name is not just what we teach, but how we teach,” says Greg Unruh, the Arison Professor of Values Leadership.

He continues, “The term ‘integrative studies’ crystallizes our core methodology of experiential, cross-sectoral approaches to learning that will enable our students to address the pressing social and environmental challenges of the 21st century. Our track record demonstrates the model’s success through the students we attract, the research they conduct, and the jobs they secure after graduation.”

Term associate professor Al Fuertes says, “I think the new name is more advantageous to our graduates when conducting their job searches. The term ‘integrative studies’ has more meaning to employers. Our students are well-rounded and prepared to address the complexity of the challenges they will face in the workplace. In employment that’s becoming more situational, an integrative background is very beneficial.”

Following its launch, SIS will remain housed within the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, and continue to offer its hallmark liberal arts-based education, encouraging students to pursue their academic passions. The majors, minors, concentrations, and programs created by NCC will remain the same.
Bachelor of Individualized Studies Program Celebrates 40 Years of Adult Learning Opportunity

By Anne Reynolds

Mason’s diverse student body is a source of pride, something that sets us apart from many other colleges and universities. But did you know how far back that commitment to diversity goes?

In the early 1970s, at about the same time that Mason split from its former parent institution, the University of Virginia, the commonwealth mandated that every region develop a nontraditional adult education program. Mason made its first proposal for such a program in 1973, and after some adjusting, it was approved in May 1975. Mason’s Bachelor of Individualized Study Program was born.

From the start, the program has brought adult learners the opportunity to connect knowledge gained from life’s experiences to more traditional course work, with a commitment to intensive advising all the way from admission to degree completion. The approach has been a real success, with more than 3,000 graduates proudly bearing BIS degrees from George Mason.

Current and former students, faculty, and families gathered on November 7, 2015, to celebrate BIS’s first 40 years. Program director Kenneth Thompson related the history of the program and welcomed alumnus Tuan Nguyen, BIS ’12, who described how the program was a part of his personal success story. Guests enjoyed an evening of music, food, and drinks, and Thompson described new innovations within BIS, such as the Saturday Transfer Transitions classes. These classes bring new students, faculty, and staff together twice a semester and include an alumni panel at the second meeting that gives students an opportunity to learn from BIS graduates’ experiences.

The university’s growth from 478 students in 1950 to more than 33,000 students today is one of the great success stories in the recent history of higher education, says Thompson. “From the beginning,” he adds, “providing educational opportunities for the adult population in the area was a key part of Mason’s mission. With more than 3,000 graduates, the BIS program is rigorous but flexible and prepares students for a world where people draw on the knowledge and skills of specialists from different fields to answer questions and solve problems. We are proud of the myriad contributions our graduates have made to Virginia and the region, and grateful for the students who have made the program what it is today.”

This article originally appeared on the website of the Bachelor of Individualized Study Program and the College of Humanities and Social Sciences.
At George Mason University, 2006 will always be the “Year of the Final Four,” when Mason’s men’s basketball team surprised the nation with its remarkable success in the NCAA basketball tournament. The 2015-16 academic year may be forever celebrated as the “Year of Research.”

With less fanfare than accompanied its wins in the NCAA tournament, this year has seen Mason triumph in the world of research. First, it was named as an R-1 Doctoral University (Highest Research Activity) by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions in Higher Education. This is the highest research status available, shared by only 115 universities nationwide, and its achievement was a significant goal in Mason’s strategic plan.

Second, the Council on Undergraduate Research awarded the university its 2015 Campus-wide Award for Undergraduate Research Accomplishment. This award recognizes institutions that demonstrate their commitment to providing high-quality research programs to undergraduate students.

The College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS) is proud to have contributed to both of these extraordinary achievements.

Carnegie Classification Status
The Carnegie Classification, first published in 1973, uses data from U.S. colleges and universities to categorize them by research activity. These rankings are based upon a number of indicators, including research and development (R&D) expenditures, research staff, doctorates awarded in the humanities, social sciences, STEM and other fields, per-capita R&D expenditures, and per-capita research staff. The rankings have been announced every five years since 2000. Mason’s advancement is based upon Carnegie’s 2015 calculation.

Research activity in CHSS played an important role in Mason’s new classification. Much of Carnegie’s analysis depends on how it actually classifies research expenditures. The classification breaks down R&D expenditures into two categories: Science and Engineering (S&E) and non-Science and Engineering (non-S&E).

In previous determinations, Carnegie categorized R&D expenditures for psychology and the social sciences as non-S&E research. This changed in the 2015 classification where psychology and social science research were now categorized as S&E research.

This shift had a major effect on the figures that Mason reported. The S&E research expenditures reported in 2008 (for use in the 2010 classification) were $42.8 million. The S&E research expenditures reported in 2014 (for use in the 2015 classification) were bolstered by psychology and social sciences, for a total of $85.5 million. An extremely impressive increase!

And the college’s contribution to Mason’s research mix doesn’t end there. The non-S&E research considered for the Carnegie Classification includes disciplines such as education, law, humanities, visual and performing arts, business and management, communication, journalism, library sciences, and social work. In the period between

continued on next page
the 2010 and 2015 rankings, non-S&E research expenditures at George Mason University increased from $4.3 to $13.2 million. This noteworthy increase also contributed to Mason’s Highest Research Activity University status.

Dean Deborah Boehm-Davis says, “Mason’s classification as a Highest Research Activity university is a success for the whole university. We are glad that our programs’ research initiatives contributed to George Mason’s achievement.”

A COMMITMENT TO UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

Mason has also been lauded for its commitment to undergraduate research.

The Council on Undergraduate Research is a not-for-profit consortium of more than 900 universities that advances undergraduate research opportunities. Mason recognizes and supports this important goal; when the council recognized Mason with its 2015 Achievement in Undergraduate Research Accomplishments Award, President Ángel Cabrera noted: “We encourage our students to pursue research because it is one of the most effective and transformative learning experiences they can have... it is the greatest value a research university can offer a student.”

University-wide undergraduate research is coordinated by Mason’s Office of Student Scholarship, Creative Activities, and Research (OSCAR), which houses the Students as Scholars initiative. Bethany Usher, faculty member in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, is the director of the Students as Scholars initiative, and has been selected to serve as the chair-elect of the undergraduate research directors division for the Council on Undergraduate Research, beginning in June 2016.

She welcomes the recognition of Mason’s efforts: “We are considered a leader for doing this, which is kind of

NEW HUMANITIES RESEARCH FUNDED BY NEH

In March, the National Endowment for the Humanities announced $21.1 million in grants for a wide array of humanities projects. Three of those grants have come to scholars related to the college.

Jesse Kirkpatrick, assistant director of Mason’s Institute for Philosophy and Public Policy, received a grant as part of a new program: Dialogues on the Experience of War. He and a co-project director from the United States Naval Academy will develop discussion groups that will use the humanities to help veterans returning from war work through the moral, psychological, and spiritual impacts of their experience.

Sheila Brennan, Lincoln Mullen, and Rosemarie Zagarri, faculty members with the Department of History and Art History and the Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media, are developing “Mapping Early American Elections.” This project will visually interpret election data from 1787 to 1826, allowing researchers, journalists, educators, and private citizens to understand voting patterns in the earliest days of the American political system.

Garry Sparks, a faculty member in the Department of Religious Studies, received a summer stipend grant to work on the translation of a 16th-century manuscript detailing a priest’s field notes taken among the Maya. The research could shed new light on our understanding of the Mayan civilization.
exciting because we weren't doing this at all five years ago.” She appreciates “that we took a program and actually had the university resources to be able to say it’s a priority and we’re going to do it the best way we can.”

In September 2015, Usher and Stephanie Hazel, acting director of Mason’s Office of Institutional Assessment, addressed a National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine committee dedicated to strengthening research experiences for undergraduates. They presented a study of participants in the Students as Scholars initiative to assist the committee in its goal of making recommendations on the assessment of undergraduate research nationwide.

“What they are trying to get a handle on with this group,” says Usher, “is what are the outcomes we expect for undergraduate research?”

Usher explains that Mason defines three levels of student research activity. Discovery level courses introduce students to the process of scholarship. In inquiry level classes, students learn more about the process of research and the importance of scholarship to society. Courses considered research and scholarship intensive include an original scholarly project in the course.

Mason’s Students as Scholars initiative uses a rubric to measure a variety of outcomes based upon each level of research intensity.

The university tracks students throughout their Mason academic careers and gains a picture of their learning experiences. The data confirm that students working one-on-one and in research-intense environments rate the value of their research very highly in terms of their goals, plans, and attitudes about research, and their experience at Mason.

Usher notes that these results are true for all students involved in research. “And that’s important because there is some idea that the process of science is somehow special when, in fact, we see it’s actually the process of research—asking questions in a systematic way, whether or not it’s specifically termed in hypothesis testing and scientific method, or whether its more empirical, like working in a humanities field. We don’t see any difference in how students perceive that. I really love the idea that the value for the students comes out no matter what the method of the research is.”

The undergraduate research experience at Mason is a selling point for the university, says Usher. “It’s now one of the points that admissions uses or stresses in their work,” she says. “They always walk people by [the OSCAR office] and talk about undergraduate research. And a lot of the students they pick as ambassadors are ones who have done research so they can talk about it.”

RESEARCH IN THE COLLEGE

CHSS celebrates its students’ research each spring with its Undergraduate Research Symposium. The college was the first to hold such an event, says Usher.

“Since I teach in anthropology, I always have a couple students each year who participate,” she says. “So I just get to walk around, talk to students, and be proud of them. It’s really fun.”

The symposium has steadily grown since its start in 2009. In 2015, students presented nearly 100 oral or poster presentations; their research findings mirrored the diversity of the college’s academic departments. For example, the 2015 presentation topics included:

- The Black Student Community, the National Pan-Hellenic Council, and the Role that Knowledge of Family History Plays, Anthropology
- Civil Society and Democratic Consolidation: Cases from Egypt, Yemen, and Tunisia, Global Affairs
- Cocaine & Crime: How the Retail Price of Cocaine Affects Criminal Activity, Economics
- How Facebook Feedback Relates to Social Connectedness, Communication
- Interruptions Can Alter the Perceived Relationship between Certainty and Accuracy, Psychology
- Paradise Revisited: Conceptions of the Divine in Dante and Morrison, English

Many of the presenters at the college’s symposium also participate in the university’s Celebration of Student Scholarship.

The college looks forward to continuing the growth of its research efforts, both among its faculty and its students, and to continuing to contribute to the university’s culture of discovery.

“If our goal is not only to do authentic research at the university, but to also involve undergraduates so they learn better, then everybody wins,” says Usher.
From the 1930s to the 1950s, the Soviet Union operated a system of forced labor camps known as the Gulag. These camps served two roles: as the Soviets’ penal system and, more notoriously, as tools of political repression. Many millions of people—convicted criminals and political prisoners—were relocated to the distant labor camps during this period. Many of these people never left.

Steven Barnes, a faculty member in the Department of History and Art History and in the Program in Russian and Eurasian Studies, is a specialist in the history of the former Soviet Union. His first book, *Death and Redemption: The Gulag and the Shaping of Soviet Society*, published by Princeton University Press in 2011, traces the Gulag system from its beginnings in 1917 through its decline following the death of Joseph Stalin in 1953. *Death and Redemption* places the Gulag within the structure of Soviet society, emphasizing its primary role as a penal institution designed to sort prisoners into those who would be “reeducated” through harsh forced labor and allowed to return to society, and those who would die in the camps and never return.

*Death and Redemption* was awarded the Herbert Baxter Adams Prize from the American Historical Association, and the Baker-Burton Award from the European Section of the Southern Historical Association for best first book in European history. It was also shortlisted for the Central Eurasian Studies Society book prize.

Barnes is now revisiting the Gulag with a new project that examines a particular camp known as Alzhir and the unusual population incarcerated there. The National Endowment for the Humanities has awarded him a fellowship for 2016-17 to complete the book *Gulag Wives: Women, Family, and Survival in Stalin’s Terror*.

*Gulag Wives* describes a group of Soviet political prisoners that was arrested subject to a secret police order that targeted Soviet citizens designated “ChSIR,” or “family members of traitors to the Motherland.” These were family members—usually wives—of people who were targeted, imprisoned, and routinely executed for being enemies of the state during the “Great Terror” from 1937-38, when the Soviet state executed as many as 800,000 people in the course of about 18 months. Barnes explains, “They arrested them not for themselves supposedly being criminals, but just for having been married to this person who was arrested and in almost every case, someone who was arrested and executed.”
“They arrested them not for themselves supposedly being criminals, but just for having been married to this person who was arrested and in almost every case, someone who was arrested and executed.”

The prisoners who were arrested under this decree were a distinct group: They tended to be well educated and part of the Soviet elite. Sentenced to five to eight years, they were held in special camp subdivisions away from the general camp population of thieves and prostitutes, although they faced the same brutal conditions: harsh cold, inadequate food and shelter, forced separation from their children, and forced labor. *Gulag Wives* uses research from formerly top secret Soviet archives along with unpublished letters, memoirs, and interviews of the former prisoners to tell the story of these women’s experiences.

Barnes appreciates the opportunities that the fellowship offers. He completed the majority of his research during a research leave several years ago, when he traveled to Russia and Kazakhstan to locate the archives and memoirs he needed. “This will give me the time to completely finish the manuscript,” he says. “The plan is by the end of that academic year, I’ll have the manuscript done and sent off to a publisher.”

Brian Platt, chair of the Department of History and Art History, was excited to hear the news of Barnes’s fellowship. “Barnes’ first book has already made him a leader in the study of the Gulag,” Platt says. “This fellowship will give him the time to finish the second book, which will establish him as the English-language authority on the subject.”

Platt is also proud of this latest example of his department’s success with earning NEH fellowships. “This particular grant program—year-long fellowships for tenured faculty—is intensely competitive. These fellowships are sought after by senior scholars at every university in the country. We’ve now been awarded eight of these in the last decade—almost twice as many as any other humanities department in the nation during that span.”

Barnes’s work will illuminate an important facet of a difficult chapter of Soviet history, told through the voices of the women who lived through it. Moreover, his research will touch on the ways in which the former Soviet Union faces and represents its own past.
Alumni are listed alphabetically by last name. Gifts, pledges, payments, and matching gifts to the College of Humanities and Social Sciences are credited toward Honor Roll recognition.

**ALUMNI**

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Kathy Albarado ‘87, MAIS ‘91
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Joanne Allen ‘75
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Claire Forman ‘90, MPA ‘14
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Helen Foster ‘69
Thomas Foster ‘69
Megan Fowler Cooke ‘10
Evelyn Fox ‘99
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and Elaine Frank
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What’s New?

➤ Where are you now?
➤ Have you moved?
➤ Gotten married?
➤ Had a baby?
➤ Landed a new job?
➤ Seen former classmates recently?

Submit your class notes to Mason Spirit, the university’s magazine, at spirit@gmu.edu.
Please be sure to include your graduation year and degree.

For more information, please visit chss.gmu.edu/alumni.

Save the Date for Alumni Weekend!
October 13–16 with a special event for CHSS alumni on October 15.

Please visit chss.gmu.edu for updates on all our events.
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For online giving, visit
give.gmu.edu.

Bold—Denotes President’s Circle giving
* Deceased
A n award-winning poet, George Mason University English professor Susan Tichy is the author of five volumes of poetry, and her work has been published widely in the United States and Britain. Tichy teaches in both the Master of Fine Arts and Bachelor of Fine Arts Creative Writing Programs.

Tichy’s latest book, Trafficke (Ahsahta Press, 2015), is a mosaic of verse, lyric prose, historical narrative, and quotation. Obsessively interrogating 300 years of family history in Scotland and Maryland, Trafficke tracks and remixes questions of race and identity, fact and legend in a text where violence, beauty, and the powers of a written word clash and conspire around questions of loyalty and the bitter legacies of slavery. Though Trafficke is published, Tichy continues to gather information about the people and families enslaved by her ancestors, in hopes of providing information to African Americans who are searching for their ancestors in Maryland and beyond.

Three hundred a year made good their escape, but most weren’t running to freedom: they were running home. For even those not parted, were parted: half of all masters owned fewer than three. Marriage possible only to neighbors. Who stayed neighbors. So family was a complicated flaw: pipe airs of love or lamentation, whistled at the window, and an unprecedented network of roads webbing plantations together like spider silk.

I asked where that road leads what road raveled clue of the syllable

I was brave the day we parted but I had an arrow in my side

footpath through a damaged wall
land that rises and rises up

spinners and knitters stockings and gloves
heavy cloth from the mill the washing

(housemaid stood ready with peacock plumes to keep flies off the table)

no stoves, but particular
to have their dresses just touch the ground all round

Ann, a brown girl
Linny, the housemaid
my cook, Jane
Black Margaret

And the laws, the laws our rude language
all inured to the difficulty

if sumtyme be scanned in both lines as it is scanned in line five
(antithesis to clarify abominable night)

It was the loan of you that broke me
child off-center ghost of him
between my legs or all of it

vine-killed sapling in winter woods
sack of corn on a horse small boy on top
straight road, good luck, two miles

limit of and out of hearing

Beating my fists on the ground