

CLA Newsletter

September 2022

Issue 12



Editor's Comments:

by Erin Schwartz

Hello colleagues,

Welcome (or welcome back) to the College of Liberal Arts at WKU!

In this issue of the CLA newsletter, you'll find a call for submissions for your pandemic stories and some professional updates! Please consider submitting to next month's issue to keep your colleagues informed about what's happening in your corner of the CLA.

Call for Submissions:

Submitted by [Garry Gray](#)

Since Covid 19 began, we at WKU have faced challenges and situations never heard of before. Some of us had \$10,000 one-way tickets; a half dozen canceled flights, quarantines that were surreal, lack of clarity on getting here, getting stuck somewhere and hundreds of other uncommon setbacks and troubles.

In merely one afternoon last week, I had four firsts in my life;

1. The airline booked 12 seats only for me at the back of the aircraft, designated one of the two washrooms only for me and locked it. The plane was almost full. I never used the bathroom.
2. I was the only passenger in the airplane terminal at Wenzhou (Terminal 2 – I exited within minutes). I had upwards of 20 workers guiding/monitoring me. They delivered my suitcase in a trolley.
3. I had my own chauffeured bus both in Guangzhou and Wenzhou. Only me, the driver, and a guide.
4. I rode in an ambulance from the airport to my apartment.

The above is merely one afternoon.

There are two types of stories. One would be the personal side of life that isn't necessarily connected to WKU, and the other is the trials of getting here (or not!). The only request for content is to keep opinions of official Chinese policy grumblings to a minimum.

Penning our stories while they're relatively fresh in our heads and creating an anthology from our own incredible and often unique tales of getting to Wenzhou is the immediate aim.

For submissions, send a working title by September 30th so we know what we have to work with. An abstract of proof of content by October 15th and a final deadline of November 15th, 2022.

Depending on what is received, the goal is to compile the stories and then seek a publisher. There will be an acknowledgment page of contributors.

Send to: ggray@kean.edu

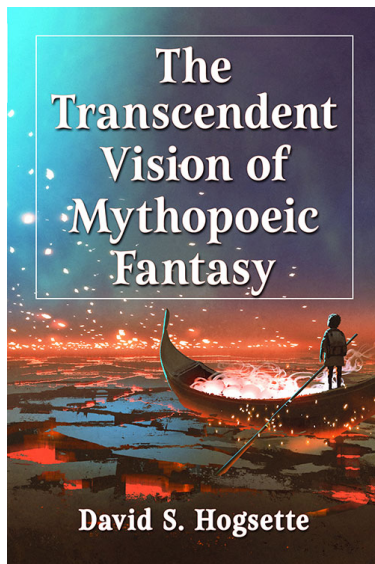
Book Announcement!

Submitted by [David Scott Hogsette](#)

At the end of July, David Hogsette published his next book titled [The Transcendent Vision of Mythopoeic Fantasy](https://mcfarlandbooks.com/product/the-transcendent-vision-of-mythopoeic-fantasy/).

Publisher Link:

<https://mcfarlandbooks.com/product/the-transcendent-vision-of-mythopoeic-fantasy/>



Book Description:

An ever-expanding critical library on fantasy fiction requires an analysis of why the genre is so ubiquitous, enduring and beloved. This work analyzes the mythic elements in foundational fantasy texts, arguing that mythopoeic fantasy reveals timeless truths that link human cultures past and present. Through close readings of works like *Phantastes*, *The King of Elfland's Daughter*, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, *A Wizard of Earthsea*, *The Neverending Story*, *A Wrinkle in Time* and *Out of the Silent Planet*, this book explores how mythopoeic fantasy speaks to the deepest concerns of the human heart. It investigates the genre's use of an imagination that is sometimes atrophied by the demands of contemporary life, and explores how fantasy provides restoration, consolation and hope within a

cultural context that too often decries such ideas.

Each chapter focuses on a representative text, providing author background and engaging relevant scholarship on a variety of relevant thematic issues. Offering new insights on these classic texts by drawing upon post-secular critical approaches, this work is suitable for both new and seasoned students of fantasy.

Reviews/Endorsements:

"The interpretation of fantasy as an 'anti-reductionist' form of literature is insightful and important, and its application to the chosen examples is convincing and often elucidates them in ways that seem to me to get at the heart of what they truly are and why they are valuable."

—Donald T. Williams, professor emeritus, Toccoa Falls College

"This thought-provoking book offers a full course of study in well-chosen works of Mythopoeia, including those of MacDonald, Tolkien, and Lewis, but also of writers with surprising affinities like Le Guin, L'Engle, Ende, and Dunsany, whose works certainly benefit from Hogsette's analysis through a lens of faith. With a wealth of keen insights, Hogsette argues for the serious study of Fantasy Literature based on its longevity, diversity, and power to remind readers of intangible

truths. He also explores how these writers ingeniously handle themes of sacrificial love, moral choice, or the role of the supernatural within the natural cosmos. Reading this book has blessed me with startling new spiritual connections not only within fantasy classics like *Phantastes*, but also between it and much newer works.”

—Jonathan B. Himes, Ph.D., professor of English, John Brown University

In July David Hogsette was commissioned by *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism* to create a new entry for Margaret Atwood’s *The Handmaid’s Tale*, including author biography, annotated bibliography, and overview of critical trends. The volume and entry will be available in early 2023.



Shenyang English Seminar ELC

Submitted by [Ian Baecht](#)

July 2, Shenyang – RELO Beijing and the Public Affairs Section of the Shenyang U.S. Consulate hosted a morning English Teaching Seminar and an afternoon English Workshop for children and their parents as part of a children’s Sports Empowerment Summer program. In the morning seminar, former China Fellow (2017-2019) and current English lecturer at Wenzhou-Kean University Ian Baecht led a hybrid training seminar for 47 local primary, secondary, and tertiary teachers of English, as well as over 900 participants who joined from 29 provinces in China and overseas for a live stream of the event. The topics for the morning were the development of multimodal literacies and digital composing for all ages, as well as the use of art and images as stimuli for the development of all skills in ELT classrooms. The afternoon program saw approximately

25 children and 25 parents who were participating in the Summer Sports Empowerment program offered by the consulate enjoy a lesson on winter sports vocabulary offered by Professor Baecht.



The Reconstruction of Chinese Sociology and my Brief Part in it.

Submitted by Rob Burton

Earlier this year, I was approached by an academic from Zhejiang Gongshang University in Hangzhou and asked to proofread a book about the careers of 40 eminent Chinese sociologists. Provisionally entitled "*The Reconstruction of Chinese Sociology: an oral history of 40 years by 40 sociologists. (1979 -2019)*" the projects genesis was the work of Professor Zhou Xiaohong (President of the Chinese Association of Social Psychology and Vice President of the Chinese Association of Sociology and Dean of the Department of Sociology at Nanjing University). 2019,

being the year of the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, was an auspicious enough occasion for the oral histories to start to be recorded.



This oral history project is part of a much wider scheme in which oral histories are to be gathered from people such as volunteer veterans, model workers, female soldiers, iron girls, barefoot doctors, working group members, propaganda team members, educated youths, workers, peasants and soldiers, students, “grade 77”, self-employed households, migrant workers, entrepreneurs, scholars (sociologists), “overseas returnees”, “white-collar” (middle-class) and so on. The aim being to gather the stories and individual life histories from the many ordinary and regular people who created the 70 years’ of contemporary history of China during the two eras of Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping.

The focus on the sociology professors was in three parts. Part one was composed of five professors who directly supported and participated in the “Overseas Corps” of China’s sociological reconstruction. Part two consists of 30 professors who directly participated in the reconstruction of Chinese sociology. Part three includes the five professors who studied abroad, and stayed abroad to engage in sociological research and participated in the reconstruction of Chinese sociology in different ways during the past 40 years.

In March 1979, Deng Xiaoping, the “chief designer” of reform and opening up, pointed out at the party’s theoretical work retreat: “we have neglected the study of politics, law, sociology and world politics for many years, and now we need to make up for it.” Since then, China’s sociology has embarked on the process of recovery and reconstruction that has lasted for 40 years, and

has made unprecedented achievements in the past 40 years in synchronization with the reform and opening up according to Prof Zhou Xiaohong, in the preface to the book.

For me, a sociologist, who started his undergraduate study in 1988 these oral histories were particularly fascinating as many of the aspects of the lives of these eminent professors resonated with my own experiences. All of these academics grew up and were at school during the Revolution, they document how their families suffered for being too rich (one mother was chastised for raising chickens – thus being just too bourgeois) while others suffered such levels of poverty that they had to depend on the goodwill of others just to get to school.

Most, if not all, went to the countryside for many years as youngsters to work the land, often in inhospitable areas of China where the living and work was tough. But most had that spark, that yearning for learning that kept them at their books late at night and early morning before the hard toil of the day began. Then once relieved of their rural exile back in their hometowns they pursued their dream of getting a higher education.

My own experience of becoming a sociologist, saw me leaving school at 15, straight into a factory for 17 years before being admitted to the University of Plymouth as a mature student. Many of these Chinese academics entered the discipline through numerous pathways, in some cases, it was more luck than judgement. Because early on in the redevelopment of sociology only two or three Chinese universities offered PhD pathways, Peking University and Nankai University being the two most notable ones. In another parallel when they were considering their future in academia many had mentors or were given sage advice on which directions they should take. Similarly, I was fortunate enough to receive advice from an industrial psychologist who attended the factory where I worked who convinced me I “had what it takes” to be successful in higher education, and I also have to acknowledge the help and support I received from my friends in the Transport and General Workers Union in the UK.

As an ESL teacher I am happy to report to my new students that even Chinese professors (even those working in prestigious US universities) exhibit the same English grammar mistakes as they do. I even show them some of my annotated pages, in the hope that it gives them some confidence and hope for their future studies. Of course the oral histories have been recorded, then written in Chinese, translated, and checked for accuracy against the transcription, so what I

get to proofread is somewhat third-hand. But, nevertheless it has been an interesting and rewarding experience to get an insight into the discipline of sociology in China and the lives of these eminent professors.

The book will be published in Chinese and English by Routledge (I believe)

Submit to next month's issue!

Submitted by Erin Schwartz

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this month's issue!

Please submit stories, updates, introductions, accomplishments, publication announcements, and whatever else you think would be interesting and helpful for your colleagues to know!

To submit to the October issue, please upload your documents to this google folder with your Kean email account. Please have submissions uploaded by September 30, 2022:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1vhax5GQLI7mVPoij9AW45emLtq5dWNkO?usp=sharing>

Past Issues can be seen here:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Yn8gxX-rTu2G-0XnVaGaPaw3wcYCVhqp?usp=sharing>

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