The United States Supreme Court: A Round-Up of the Current Term

Jilda Aliotta
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University of Hartford

Monday, Wednesday, Friday, May 21, 23, 25.
Wilde Auditorium 5:00-6:30 pm
See page 7 for details
The daily round in the Presidents’ College is nothing if not action-packed. Certainly the month of April has been full of activity. We have heard rave reviews about three of our April courses: Maria Frank on Machiavelli, Stephen Pier on Dance, and Kate Steinway and Walter Woodward on Connecticut history. Two others whose courses extended across March and April, Catherine Stevenson and Jane Barstow, have recently completed their exploration of the novelists George Eliot and Edith Wharton respectively, again to much praise. We are proud of our success in bringing the best of teachers to our offerings — and equally proud of the fact that we are able to gather interesting and interested participants. Our faculty enjoy teaching in the program, and our members enjoy learning. You can’t ask for more than that.

This month has seen a continuation of Timothy Reagan’s course on the history of Latin, with several people electing to continue their studies by working on Latin texts. Before the month is out, our course on Downton Abbey Revisited will begin, and I will give the first two of four lectures on plays of Shakespeare that will be in production in the area in coming months, first The Taming of the Shrew at The Hartt School, then The Tempest at Hartford Stage. We hope that these introductions to the plays will enlighten participants and build audiences for the productions.

One of the biggest events of the month was the April 20 Patricia Cremins Lecture. The luncheon and lecture attracted a full house (the 1877 Club could accommodate 70 people, and that was exactly the number who sat down to lunch), and Peter Sokolowski excelled as speaker. His lecture was preceded by tributes to Pat Cremins, who died just a year ago, and who for a decade and a half directed the Presidents’ College and by her persistence secured its success. The fundraiser will allow us to add rather more than $2000 to the Patricia Cremins Fund.

We hope that this newsletter will be out a few days ahead of the end of April, so that people will still have time to participate in Community Day on April 28. We still need readers. Reading from Edward Lear should be fun. We also expect to have some original limericks to add to the program from our limerick competition — and we have also found some foreign-language versions of Lear’s works, which we will plan to read along the way, “Le Hibou et la Poussiquette” among others.

Among upcoming events, the Downton Abbey course has generated a lot of interest — not least because of the line-up of speakers. I’m certainly looking forward to the course myself. I’ll be serving as a kind of master of ceremonies to help maintain continuity from session to session.

Given the quality of the instructor and the issues currently before the court, it’s not surprising that Jilda Aliotta’s course on the US Supreme Court, to come later in May is attracting a lot of interest.

Pianist Watson Morrison has generously agreed to repeat his lecture-recital on Franz Liszt on May 22. Although it took place as planned, many of those originally registered could not attend because of the devastating October storm — and others expressed regret at not being able even to sign up.

The biggest news this month is the announcement of our Paris trip in October, led by Michele Troy, whose recent course on books and reading in the Third Reich attracted a great deal of attention. Michele and her on-the-spot collaborator Virginie Fontaine have designed a program that will take participants behind the scenes in literary and artistic Paris — a great introduction to the city, but also a perfect program for those who know the place well. Sign up early to reserve a spot!

In May, Willie Anthony Waters and I will be collaborating in a course on Verdi and Shakespeare. As for me, I’m hard at work brushing up my Verdi. Must run. Got a date with Domingo and Fleming....

Humphrey Tonkin
Upcoming Programs

Friday, April 27, & Tuesday, May 31
Four for Shakespeare

Get ready for a summer of Shakespeare in the Hartford area! Several Shakespeare productions of interest to Presidents’ College members are coming up in the next few weeks. The Hartt School’s production of *The Taming of the Shrew* opens Thursday, May 3. Then, on May 10, *The Tempest* opens at Hartford Stage.

This summer, Shakespeare & Company (Lenox, MA) will perform *King Lear* (opening on June 16) and *The Tempest* (opening on July 19) on their main stage, and Capital Classics will bring *Twelfth Night* to St. Joseph College for an open-air production in July (directed by David Watson, of The Hartt School).

Humphrey Tonkin (see his bio on page 6) will introduce *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Tempest* in two lectures on the morning of Friday, April 27 (*Shrew* 9:45-10:45; *The Tempest* 11:00-12:00) and *Twelfth Night* and *King Lear* in two lectures on the morning of Thursday, May 31 (*Twelfth Night* 9:45-10:45; *King Lear* 11:00-12:00).

A pleasant way to pass a couple of mornings – with a coffee break; and then, if you care to stay on, you can also lunch at the 1877 Club following the lectures.

If you sign up for both sessions (April 27 and June 5), you will receive a complimentary ticket to the Hartt School production of *The Taming of the Shrew*.

Full program (April 27 and May 31): $60 (Fellows $50)
April 27 only: $35 (Fellows $30)
May 31 only: $35 (Fellows $30)
Downton Abbey Revisited
Angus Trumble, Edward Gutierrez & Robert McLaughlin

The TV series *Downton Abbey* has taken America by storm. But what was really going on during the tumultuous years that it describes? The opulent pre-war years of the reign of Edward VII were succeeded by the disastrous carnage of the Great War - a war whose futility was only matched by the sheer courage of those who fought it and the ruined lives of those who survived. The war produced some of the greatest poetry of the century, but it also gave momentum to massive social change: Irish independence and civil war, the rise of the labor movement, the rise of the popular press - life was never the same again. Angus Trumble will explore the glamour and conspicuous consumption of the pre-war period (April 30); Edward Gutierrez will discuss the war itself (May 3); Robert McLaughlin will examine the social change accompanying it (May 10). On May 7, we will present a reading of the remarkable poetry and prose of the period. Humphrey Tonkin will provide continuity for the series.

**Angus Trumble** is Senior Curator of Paintings and Sculpture at the Yale Center for British Art, where he is currently preparing an exhibition on the Edwardians. A native of Melbourne, he was formerly Curator of European Art at the Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide. He is the author of *A Brief History of the Smile* and, most recently, *The Finger: A Handbook* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2010).

**Edward Gutierrez**, winner of the Ramsey Award for Creative Excellence from the University of Hartford, worked in France as a postdoctoral fellow at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique and is currently on a Guggenheim Fellowship, writing a book tentatively titled “Sherman was Right”: The Experience of AEF Soldiers in the Great War. The book studies how combat affected ordinary men and women, and the psychological changes it produced.

**Robert McLaughlin**'s new book *Irish Canadian Conflict and the Struggle for Irish Independence 1912-1925* will be published by the University of Toronto Press this April. He teaches 20th-century history at the University of Hartford in both the College of Arts and Sciences and Hillyer College.

**Apr. 30, May 3, 7, 10. 10:30-12:00. $90 (Fellows $70).**
Shakespeare at The Hartt School
William Shakespeare’s rambunctious and controversial play The Taming of the Shrew, directed by Robert H. Davis, is the final Hartt theater production of the academic year. The play runs Thursday, May 3, Friday, May 4, and Saturday, May 5, at 7:30 pm, and Sunday, May 6, at 3:00 pm, in the Roberts Foundation Theater at the Handel Performing Arts Center.
Visit harttweb.hartford.edu for tickets and information, or call 860.768.4228.

Good Morning Good Music
is a chamber music series hosted by the Duncaster Retirement Community, Loeffler Rd., Bloomfield. Concerts are free and open to the public, and Presidents’ College members are particularly welcome. The concerts consist of ensembles from the Hartford University.

Did you know that the limerick was invented by the 19th-century poet and painter Edward Lear? He himself wrote dozens of limericks, along with numerous pieces of light verse (like “The Owl and the Pussycat” and “The Jumblies”) and nonsense stories. The Presidents’ College plans to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Edward Lear’s birth with a reading of his work at Community Day on Saturday, April 28.

We are also sponsoring a LIMERICK CONTEST with prizes for the best original limericks. To enter the contest, send us up to five original limericks before the deadline, Wednesday, April 18. All limericks received will be placed anonymously in competition and a panel of judges will select the best. Send them as Word attachments, with your name and e-mail address on the attachment, to pcollege@hartford.edu. The competition is open to all. No University of Hartford affiliation is required.

Winners will be asked to read their limericks at Community Day.

We are looking for READERS for our program, which will run from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in front of Gengras Student Union. You can read your own or someone else’s (including Edward Lear’s!) limericks (at least five and no more than ten), or any of Lear’s works. Maximum duration: five minutes. To sign up to read, e-mail Nancy Mather at mather@hartford.edu, or just turn up on the day (we will have texts on hand).

Lear’s works are widely available on the web. We recommend http://www.nonsenselit.org/Lear/learwork.html.
Mon. May 14, Wed. May 16, Fri. May 18
Verdi and Shakespeare: Macbeth, Othello, Falstaff
Willie Anthony Waters & Humphrey Tonkin

Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901) counted among his major accomplishments three operas on Shakespearean themes. His first encounter with Shakespeare came early in his career in the first version of Macbeth (1847; revised 1865), revealing an interest in dramatic intensity rather than vocal technique. Late in his life, aided by the sensitive librettist Arrigo Boito, he returned to Shakespeare for his last two operas – the grandly tragic Otello (1887) and the comic Falstaff (1893), this last based on Shakespeare’s Merry Wives of Windsor and his two Henry IV plays. Particularly in Otello, Verdi and Boito reinterpret Shakespeare in terms at once operatic and nineteenth-century, thereby exemplifying Shakespeare’s extraordinary adaptability to changing times and newer media. Verdi’s dream of composing a King Lear, however, remained unfulfilled. In this course, Maestro Waters and Professor Tonkin will each present a lecture on each of the three operas, over three days, and discuss their analyses with one another and with course participants.

Willie Anthony Waters is former General and Artistic Director of Connecticut Opera, and Artistic Director of Florida Grand Opera. He has been a guest conductor for numerous American and European opera companies and symphony orchestras, and various opera companies and orchestras in South Africa. In 2002, Maestro Waters debuted at New York City Opera, and in 2008 he made his debut at the Deutsche Oper, Berlin. Maestro Waters also serves as Artistic Director/Opera of the Houston Ebony Opera Guild. In 2005 he was awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Hartford. He is Music Director of Prelude to Performance, a summer training program for young singers in New York sponsored by the Martina Arroyo Foundation, and an adjunct instructor in opera at the University of Connecticut. He is a regular guest panelist on the Metropolitan Opera Quiz and is a widely sought-after lecturer and master class clinician.

Humphrey Tonkin is Professor of the Humanities and President Emeritus at the University. A scholar of 16th and 17th-century literature, including Shakespeare, he is particularly interested in the afterlife of Shakespeare – ways in which the playwright’s works have been used over the years as inspiration for the works of other authors and artists (and musicians). He teaches Shakespeare and theatre history in the Theatre Division of The Hartt School and in the English Department. He is Director of the Presidents’ College.

May 14, 16, 18. 9:30-12:00. $90 (Fellows $70).
Tuesday, May 22
Liszt at 200: Commentary & Recital

Franz Liszt was born in 1811. When he died in 1886, an era died with him. A child prodigy on the piano, he left Hungary to study in Vienna, went on to Paris, and at 13 years of age had a brilliant reception in London. He was in touch with many of the great Romantics, among them George Sand, Victor Hugo, and Eugene Delacroix. In 1849 he settled in Weimar, where he conducted the first performance of Wagner’s Lohengrin. His daughter Cosima later became Wagner’s wife. A devotee of the Romantic style, he made, in addition to his original compositions, no less than 900 transcriptions of other composers’ works for the piano. These will be a particular feature of this guided tour through Liszt’s piano music.

[This program is a repeat of one given last November 3, when many of those who would like to have attended were unable to do so because of the snowstorm.]

Watson Morrison has taught piano at the Hartt School for half a century. He began his career as a jazz trumpeter, taking up piano at age 18 and going on to receive his doctorate from Boston University. In addition to teaching, he has performed under many noted orchestral conductors and on radio and television, and has served four terms on the Fulbright National Screening Committee for pianists.

Tuesday, May 22. Berkman Recital Hall, The Hartt School, 10:15-11:45am. $25 (Fellows $20)

Mon., Wed., Fri., May 21, 23, 25
A Round-up of the US Supreme Court’s 2011 Term
Jilda Aliotta

Health care, affirmative action in college admissions, immigration law.... These are heady days for Supreme Court watchers (and most of the rest of us too). As the 2011-2012 session of the US Supreme Court comes to an end, will the result be a bang or a whimper?

Professor Aliotta looks at some of the major issues surfacing during the current session, both those resolved and those still awaiting resolution.

Jilda Aliotta, a popular teacher and an exacting scholar, teaches classes in law, American politics, and women in politics. She has published on decision-making in the Supreme Court, women in law, and related topics. Her current research investigates the impact of women on the judiciary in the United States.

May 21, 23, 25. 5:00-6:30. $70 (Fellows $50).

Wed. May 30; June 1, 4, 6, 8
Song in the Works of James Joyce: Dubliners and Ulysses
Kathleen McGrory

Irish ballads, folk songs, Dublin and London music hall favorites, classical, light and grand opera, bel canto, American cowboy songs, spirituals, children’s songs, nursery rhymes, Verdi, Mozart, Thomas Moore’s melodies, Irish folk songs, hymns, Percy French, Stephen Foster, Elizabethan ballads -- all these, and more, turn up in the works of James
Joyce, Irish tenor. The course will look at how Joyce uses song to enrich his stories, and make ironic, humorous commentary on the people and places of Dublin and the world in two familiar works, Dubliners and Ulysses. In effect, Joyce used music as “hypertext” well before that word became a commonplace of postmodern criticism. The course will include selections from the James Joyce Cassette series, edited by Dr. McGrory.

Kathleen McGrory holds a PhD from Columbia University in comparative literature. A native of New York City, she was a Sister of Divine Compassion in New York, then professor of English and founder of the Irish Studies graduate program at Western Connecticut State University. She was Dean of Arts and Sciences and Academic Vice President at Eastern Connecticut State University (ECSU), President of Hartford College for Women shortly before its merger with the University of Hartford, National Endowment for the Humanities fellow at Stanford University, and senior fellow at the University of Virginia’s Commonwealth Center for Literary and Cultural Change. As Executive Director of the Society for Values in Higher Education at Georgetown University, she also taught medieval literature at Georgetown. She currently teaches part-time at ECSU and is completing a book-length study of the legend of the Holy Grail (see our right-hand column!).

May 30; June 1, 4, 6, 8. 10:30-12:00. $90 (Fellows $70).

TUESDAYS AT DUNCASTER
May 15, 4:45pm

What Is the Holy Grail and Where Can You Find It?

Kathleen McGrory

“What Is the Holy Grail and Where Can You Find It?” is the question Dr. McGrory will ask — following in the steps of many in the past, including Perceval, Lancelot, Galahad and numerous others. Why this legend, and why has it persisted? Why does it still capture the imagination, most recently, for example, in the novels of Dan Brown? In addition to her work on Irish literature, Dr. McGrory has made a thorough study of the legend of the Grail, visiting many locations in Europe associated with the Grail and reading extensively in the literature of medieval and modern Europe. She has plenty to tell us! This lecture will take place at Duncaster Retirement Community, Bloomfield. See overleaf for program details.
Tuesdays at Duncaster is a series of lectures by University of Hartford faculty offered at Duncaster Retirement Community, Bloomfield. Lectures are at 4:45 pm. Each lecture is followed by a reception and dinner with the speaker. The series is free to Duncaster residents who sign up as Fellows of the Presidents’ College, $20 for Duncaster residents who are not Fellows, $25 for all others.

Language and the United Nations is the title of a symposium at 777 United Nations Plaza, New York, on Tuesday, May 1, 10:00-5:00. Speakers include Humphrey Tonkin and Timothy Reagan. Call 212-687-7041. No charge for registration.

Beyond the Extremes: Contemporary Narratives of Exploration

The Hartford Consortium for Higher Education in collaboration with WNPR and Drunken Boat (drunkenboat.com), international online journal of the arts, invites you to a panel on "Beyond the Extremes: Contemporary Narratives of Exploration" moderated by radio personality John Dankosky for "Where We Live," introduced by CCSU poet-in-residence and Drunken Boat Executive Director Ravi Shankar, and featuring snow leopard conservator and Himalayan anthropologist Shafiqat Hussain, visual artist and expeditioner Adriane Coburn, University of Hartford historian Michael Robinson, Director of Trinity’s InterArts Program and poet, Clare Rossini, and Coordinator of Maritime Studies at UConn-Avery Point, Helen Rozwadowski.

Come learn about the history of exploration, see tools of the trade, and discuss what new frontiers exist for us to discover in the new millennium.

Where: University of Hartford’s Wilde Auditorium, Harry Jack Gray Center, 200 Bloomfield Avenue (Route 199), West Hartford, CT 06117

When: Thursday, May 3rd from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Contact: Michael Robinson, (microbins@hartford.edu), (860) 768-5951

Refreshments will be served. Free and open to the public.

Join the Presidents’ College in
Literary Paris (with a nod to Art)
October 17-24, 2012

“Paris is always a good idea,” said Audrey Hepburn. University of Hartford professor Michele Troy thinks so, too. She and her Paris liaison, artist Virginie L’Homme Fontaine, have created a new travel experience for the Presidents’ College, based on its fulfilling trips to London in previous years. Join them for a week in Paris, starting Wednesday, October 17th, and let Paris be your home away from home. Live at the elegant but welcoming Hotel Aiglon, on the Boulevard Raspail, where you walk out the door and find yourself in the bustling Paris of your choice: five minutes from reading the morning paper in the Jardin du Luxembourg; ten minutes from sipping coffee or perusing the bookshops near the Sorbonne; twenty minutes from strolling along the Seine and watching the swirl of life near Notre Dame on the islands at the heart of the city; five minutes from shopping in Montparnasse.

Michele and Virginie have planned this trip to carry you across eras of literary Paris, all while giving you immediate access to French scholars, journalists, writers and artists. Take a behind-the-scenes tour of the Bibliothèque Nationale. Trace the steps of Anglo-American expatriate writers on a walking tour that will bring you back to 1920s and 30s Paris. Learn about the collaboration and resistance of French writers and publishers during the German occupation – a still touchy subject – from an expert on the subject. At the headquarters of the newspaper Le Monde, ask your questions about French politics (on the heels of the French presidential election) of two journalists whose recent book on Nicholas Sarkozy had the French government tracing their calls and pressing them to reveal their sources. The trip also includes forays into art and performance: an intimate art opening, a musical evening, and an open studio afternoon giving you an inside view of contemporary French art and artists in the studios where they work. Michele and Virginie expect the trip to culminate in a literary soirée where you can mingle with a featured writer, French scholars, artists – and, if you like, your own friends who live in Paris – over aperitifs and a buffet dinner. They have also left you time to follow your own curiosity: to take in an exhibit at one of Paris’s many great museums? to hunt for treasures at one of Paris’s many flea markets? to hop on a bike for a ride along the Seine Sunday morning when the streets are closed to traffic?

Total cost at the current exchange rates is $2900 per person, double occupancy ($350 supplement for single room for the week; or please ask and we can arrange a lower supplement for you to share a room with twin beds) for Fellows of the Presidents’ College. You must be a Fellow to participate. Price includes accommodation, metro tickets, a morning boat ride on the Seine, full breakfast, all taxes, lectures, readings, performances, art openings, entrance fees, three lunches, and three dinners (including the literary soirée). We require a deposit of $500 to reserve a space (fully refundable up until August 15 if your plans change), and full payment six weeks before the program begins. To preserve the spirit of an “insider” tour, we’ll limit participation to 16 people on a first-come, first-served basis.
Please check relevant items and indicate amount paid at right.

☐ I am currently a Fellow of the Presidents’ College
☐ I’m interested in reading on Community Day (April 28). Please contact me

☐ I wish to become a Fellow of the Presidents’ College Spring 2012. $75
☐ Four for Shakespeare (April 27 & May 31). $60 (Fellows $50)
☐ Four for Shakespeare (April 27 only). $35 (Fellows $30)
☐ Four for Shakespeare (May 31 only). $35 (Fellows $30)
☐ Downton Abbey. $90 (Fellows $70)
☐ Verdi and Shakespeare. $90 (Fellows $70)
☐ Tuesdays at Duncaster: The Holy Grail. (May 15). No charge for Fellows who are Duncaster residents. For other Duncaster residents: $20 per lecture
   For all non-residents of Duncaster, $25 including dinner
☐ Liszt at 200. $25 (Fellows $20)
☐ US Supreme Court. $70 (Fellows $50)
☐ Song in James Joyce. $90 (Fellows $70)
☐ Literary Paris. October 17-24. Deposit $500

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To receive correspondence from course coordinators, please include your email address, if available.
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Fee may be paid by: ☐ Check ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover ☐ American Express

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Signature ___________________________________________ Date ________________