

UCLA Department of Classics

Greetings from the Chair



Dear Friends of Classics,

Sitting in my office during the quiet times of an academic summer encourages me to take a step back and look at the Classics Department from a greater distance than is possible during the frenetic activities of the year. I like what I see when I do so: graduating PhDs heading off to new jobs or post-doctoral fellowships, a group of exciting junior faculty energetically pursuing new research opportunities, senior colleagues pursuing established projects, and graduate students who are teaching in our summer courses or developing their research skills with funded summer

mentorships on diverse topics such as kinship and friendship in Euripidean tragedy, or the complexities of the concept of freedom in Thucydides. Dissertations in progress explore issues of truth and time in Cicero's philosophical works, and recognition and tragedy in Roman epic (to cite only two current examples). This is a theoretically eclectic department, one that encourages students at both graduate and undergraduate levels to read broadly and bring together well-known (and lesser known!) materials in new and exciting ways.

The result is not just insights into the ancient world, but a renewed impulse to examine the way intersecting cultures and concepts work in our own society. What is at stake when we claim a text to be "authentic," when we curate the artwork in our homes to make a statement about our identity and ambition, when we deploy the authority of canonical texts from Mediterranean antiquity in the new contexts of North and South America? In our daily lives we often take the cultural apparatus of our society for granted, but one of the real advantages of studying Classics is that it allows us to bring to bear perspectives from the worlds of Greece and Rome that are both close to and estranged from our own, and to watch the way these perspectives shift over centuries.

(Continued on pg. 2)



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Inside this issue

Department News.....	2-4
Graduate News.....	5
Undergraduate News.....	6-10
Alumni Spotlight.....	11
Alumni News.....	12-13
Upcoming Events.....	14

Department News

Greetings from the Chair (continued)

In the work I am doing with a student on “freedom” in Thucydides we recently looked at a book by a scholar that talked about Thucydides’ commitment to freedom. But whose freedom, and what sort of commitment? Freedom in the ancient world was a value much discussed and applauded, but it was constructed in societies with vast numbers of unfree and subjugated peoples. The freedom of the ancient Athenian male to do what he wanted did not extend to his wife, his slaves, or to the subject allies of the Athenian empire. Perhaps pondering this problem can make us more aware of what we are doing when we or our politicians talk about our own commitments to political or economic freedom.

As we look to the next academic year there are more exciting times to anticipate. The department will be conducting a hire for a new specialist in Greek, looking forward to the launching of the UCLA Stavros Niarchos Foundation Center for the Study of Hellenic Culture, and welcoming four new graduate students. We are working on the creation of a new course in Medical Vocabulary that will draw upon the department’s proven expertise in teaching language and etymology, as well as upon our success in helping students contextualize culturally their linguistic knowledge. The beginning of October will see an exciting conference on “Metamorphosis and the Environmental Imagination from Ovid to Shakespeare” organized in the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies by our own Professors Giulia Sissa and Francesca Martelli (see p. 13). Do follow us on Facebook and Twitter for more announcements, but in the meantime, enjoy the “dog days” of summer and follow Hesiod’s recommendation (*Works and Days* 592-3) to sit in the shade and drink bright wine, after having satisfied your heart with food.

The Joan Palevsky Lecture in Classics, 2019

Angelos Chaniotis, Professor of the School of Historical Studies at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, presented the 2019 Palevsky Lecture and reflects here on his experience.

The invitation to give the 2019 Palevsky lecture was impossible to resist. How could I decline an invitation that added to the honor of seeing my name added to an impressive list of previous speakers the pleasure of spending a few days in one of the most beautiful and welcoming campuses, seeing old friends, and talking to graduate students with research interests close to mine (e.g. the study of emotions)? Pleasure and honor usually come at a price, and this price was the challenge to find a subject appealing to a non-specialized audience and paradigmatic for the possibilities of Classical Studies to be engaged in a dialogue with the modern world.

The current political climate, with the rise of populism in the democracies of the Old and the New World alike, made my choice easy. Ten years ago, I had published a book in modern Greek on *Theatricality and Public Life in the Hellenistic World* in which I compared the staged behavior of Hellenistic statesmen and orators with the theatricality of modern statesmen.

Department News

Palevsky Lecture 2019 (continued)

With my talk “The Polis as a Stage: Theatricality and Illusion in the Long Hellenistic Age”, I approached a similar phenomenon. I studied how public figures—e.g. the Athenian statesman Athenion or the Macedonian kings Demetrios the Besieger and Philip V—used costumes, control of the voice, body-language, and facial expressions, in order to control the thoughts and emotions of audiences in the Greek cities from the mid-fourth century BCE to the late second century CE.

Such a theatrical behavior created illusions: the illusion of freedom and autonomy in a period dominated by kings; the illusion that the city was a big family at a time of enormous social inequality; the illusion of the people’s sovereignty in a period of oligarchical rule; the illusion of continuity when everything had changed. The discrepancy between the fiction of a democratic constitution and the reality of the rule of the elite was acceptable, as long as it was concealed under the garment of theatrical behavior. Theatrical behavior constructed the image of the statesman who is at the same time affable—willing to understand the concerns of the people—and distant—representing a higher authority and entitled to rule.

Neither illusion nor theatricality emerged for the first time in the ‘Long Hellenistic Age’; but it is in that period that intellectuals (Theophrastos, Douris, Polybios, Poseidonios, Plutarch, Lucian) reveal their awareness of and interest in these two phenomena. The experience with sophisticated performances in the theater increased among urban populations the desire to experience performances also in the assembly, the court, and the sanctuary.

A similar phenomenon can be observed in the mass democracies of our times, as pointed out by the Greek philosopher Panajotis Kondylis: the discrepancy between the fictions of equality and the rule of the people, and the reality of inequality, discrimination, and manipulation of the people’s will. The asymmetry between reality and expectation forces the elite to adopt a theatrical behavior in order to present itself to the “ordinary people” as affable, caring, and ordinary. The modern media enhance this trend. As the politician enters the house of every citizen through the screen of a TV or a smartphone and sends ‘tweets’, the illusion of direct communication is created. But the communication is one-sided, turning the citizens into passive audiences who expect an element of entertainment. An innovative ‘performance’ creates new tastes, which in their turn generate the desire and continual demand for more elaborate and complex performances. Political life ultimately becomes a show.



Department News

Professor Robert Gurval's Retirement

It scarcely seems possible that Professor Robert Gurval has retired—but it's true. After 30 years in the department, Bob decided to take more time to pursue his many other interests. Colleagues toasted him at a farewell dinner at the end of the quarter and presented him with a Georg Jensen salad bowl and salad servers. As many of you reading this note will know, Bob was a superlatively successful Undergraduate Advisor and Chair. He helped to transform the undergraduate Classics major and has been one of the department's most beloved pedagogues, winning the UCLA Distinguished Teaching Award, the Award for Excellence in Teaching of the Society for Classical Studies (then the APA), and most recently the Eugen Weber Honors Collegium Faculty Award in celebration of his outstanding contribution to teaching in the Honors Collegium at UCLA. We will all miss him terribly, but we can take comfort in the fact that he's not going far; he will be teaching on recall next year (his popular upper-division course on ancient biography and a Latin reading course on Horace), and has occupied the new emeritus office on the second floor of Dodd (see the picture!).



RomeLab

With generous funding from the Mellon Foundation's EPIC initiative (Excellence in Pedagogy and Innovative Classrooms), Diana Librandi and Elliott Piros, two Ph.D. candidates in the Department of Classics, were able to bring four groups of students to UCLA Campus from Santa Monica City College, Long Beach City College, Verdugo Hills High School, and the Valley Academy. Using UCLA's Visualization Portal, these students become more familiar with the wonders of the classical world and the digital technology (virtual



Verdugo Hills High School visiting UCLA for the RomeLab.

models created by the RomeLab team) that makes it possible for us to wander the Roman forum, fly around the Colosseum, and marvel in the variegated marbles of the Basilica of Maxentius, among other places. Diana and Elliott directed the students through two narratives that approached life in the city "from below," viewing Rome through the textually, archaeologically, and digitally reconstructed "eyes" of slaves and working women. The students were eager to learn about parallels between ancient and modern lives, and to better understand the experience of exploited peoples using the rigorous methods of our discipline.

Graduate News

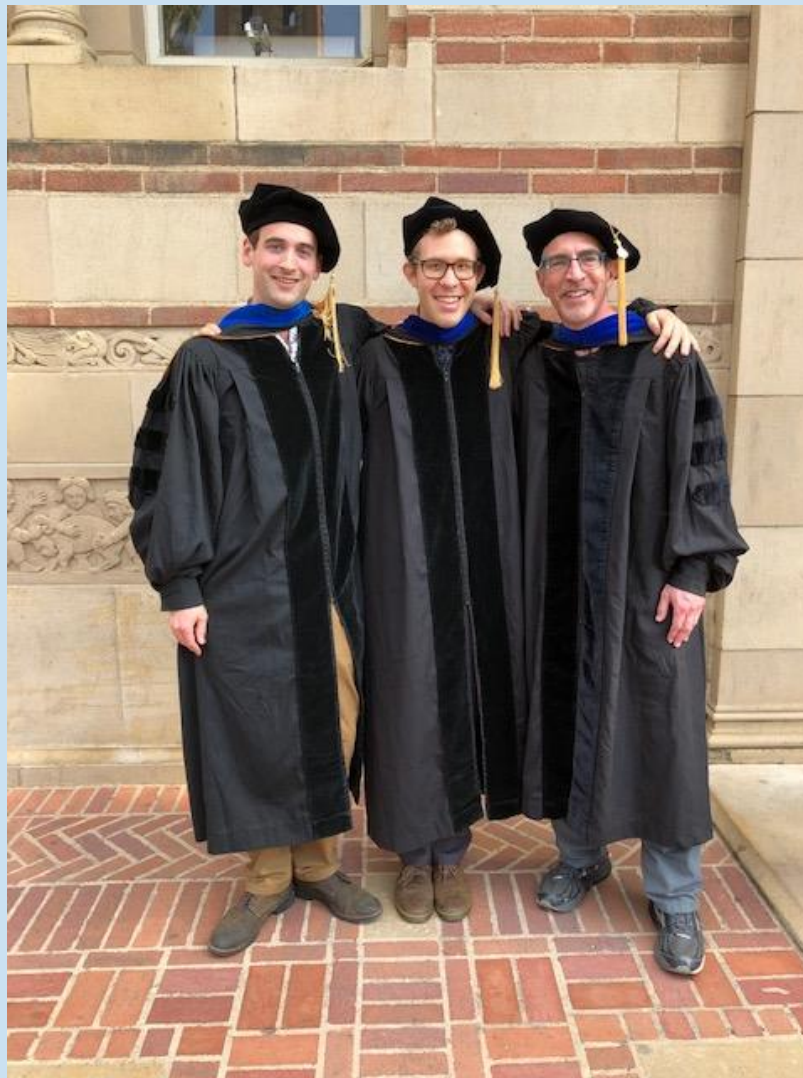
Congratulations!

Three students earned their PhDs in Classics this Spring and each has secured an academic position.

Elliot Piros Lecturer, University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Ben Radcliffe Lecturer, California State University, Long Beach

John Tennant Mellon Fellowship of Scholars in the Humanities,
Stanford University Department of Classics



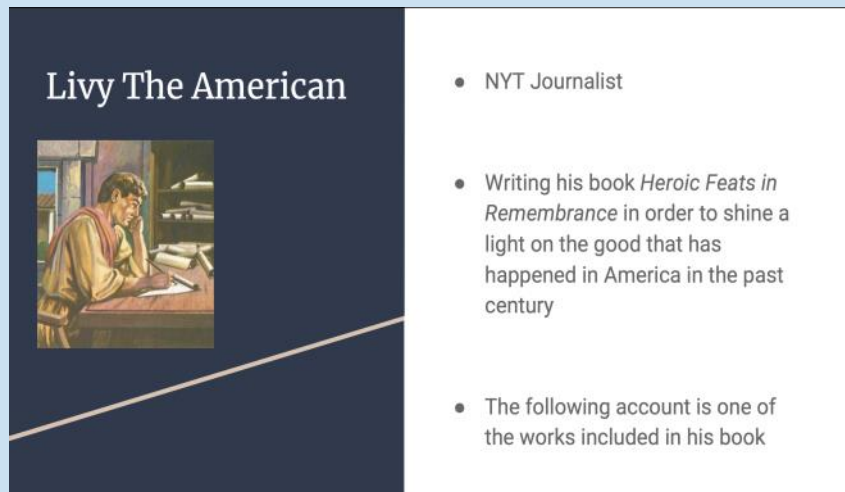
Newly-minted PhDs (left to right): Dr. Ben Radcliffe, Dr. Elliott Piros, Dr. John Tennant

Undergraduate News

The Past Dazzles in the Present Tense

Professor Bryant Kirland

One way of discovering the intellectual habits of ancient historians, it turns out, is to write about what's going on in the present. For their final project, students in Professor Bryant Kirkland's new class "Ancient Historiography: Theory and Practice" were tasked with thinking about issues of more recent and contemporary importance according to the rhetorical practices of ancient historiographers. Adopting (and often creatively adapting) various principles put forth by such lights as Herodotus, Thucydides, and Livy, as well as various ancient critics including Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Plutarch, students of this upper-division lecture course wowed each other this spring with a series of creative projects, each accompanied by a formal written analysis.



Livy The American

- NYT Journalist
- Writing his book *Heroic Feats in Remembrance* in order to shine a light on the good that has happened in America in the past century
- The following account is one of the works included in his book

One group chose to cover the conflicting reports of North Korea's nuclear activities from the perspective of a multi-perspectival Herodotus. Another adopted the same author's lens to report on climate change in the Amazon, including a full-on newscast from the show "Second-Hand News: News As If We Were There," complete



with infographics of initially doubtful relevance – until the audience came to recognize that the apparent digression on the toucan actually is part of the “main story”!

Students heard a dispatch from New York Times journalist Livy the American and his book *Heroic Feats in Remembrance*. Another group ventured a bit further back into history to rewrite the story of the Battle of Valley Forge in accordance

with ancient historiography's tendency to highlight exemplarity – only, in the same project, to deconstruct their own write-up according to certain Hellenistic historians' distaste for melodramatic flashiness.

Undergraduate News

1.4 This is the story such as the South Koreans have reported it, who claim to have heard the account from North Korean sources which they kept secret. Another version of the story claims Kim Yong Chol and Shin Hye Yong were kept alive, but sent to a prison camp where they would be reminded of their ruler's sovereignty.

Such is the state of the North Koreans of the far east, who live under the ruling of a tyrant to rival Hipparchus and Hippias.



Finally, students were treated to an ethnographic account of the city of Boston from the perspective of a man named Herodotus – not the one from Hali-carnassus, but a different one – Herodotus of London!

So in addition to a quarter's heavy dose of reading about various rhetorical practices

that shaped ancient history-writing, these fabulous students took full advantage of the chance to bring to life the distortions, pleasures, dangers, and ultimate manipulability of narrative – all by training the past's eyes on the present day.

Sam Hersch

UCLA Classics Undergraduate Alum

On May 5, I published a book of my own photography. I've been wanting to buy a Leica camera for many years, and I eventually found a camera model of theirs that I liked. In the trade, that specific camera model is known as a "bridge" camera or "superzoom" camera, because it has a lens that can go from wide-angle to telephoto—figuratively bridging the gap between the capability of a compact camera and the capability of an SLR. That's where the title of the book, *The German Bridge*, comes from. The book contains a lot of street photographs, and half of the photos in the book are also of some outdoor spaces that are geographically closer to us than you might think! The book is available for forty-five dollars on Amazon, and I would recommend typing "the german bridge leica" in the search bar so you can very easily find it.

The point of the book is as a conversation starter, so that camera design companies can figure out how to make their camera products more accessible to people with limited functionality. That being said, I'm very proud of this project, and I hope you like the photos!



To get your copy of *The German Bridge*, please feel free to visit this [Amazon link](#)!

Undergraduate News

Third Annual Recitatio!

Sam Beckelhymer

2019's annual *Recitatio* event provided an opportunity for undergraduates and postbaccs, graduate student instructors, and faculty from the Classics Department to enjoy an evening of hearing ancient texts and ancient voices brought to life in a relaxed and convivial setting. We had a great turnout of participants and audience members, and over a dozen students from our undergraduate language and civilization classes prepared recitations in Greek and Latin to give during the course of the night. This year the 1st year Latin students were especially well represented, but students of all levels made meaningful contributions.

The range of texts was broad—from Homeric epic to Roman oratory; from lyric poetry to epigraphic Latin; even some original verse compositions! Our volunteers struck *sua sponte* a good balance of prose and poetry and of Greek and Latin. We were also treated to some documentary (i.e., 'non-literary') Latin, when students from Professor Sarah Beckmann's *Art and Archaeology of Ancient Rome* course shared the text and context of the funerary inscription on the Tomb of Eurysaces the Baker in Rome. Some further highlights were a forceful delivery of Ciceronian invective, several dramatic reenactments of material from the *Odyssey*, a compelling performance from Tacitus' *Annales*, and an engaging description of a parrot from Aulus Gellius (with Professor Lydia Spielberg dressed in matching green!), among many others.

The event was an enormous success, and we're already looking forward to Spring of 2020 for the next *Recitatio*.

Students participate in the third annual "Recitatio!" event



Undergraduate Research Week

Senior Megan Haddad (Classical Civilization) and Senior Cristina Berron (Classical Civilization) participated in Undergraduate Research Week. Megan Haddad shares more about her experience.

I was very excited and honored to be one of the representatives for the Classics Department at undergraduate research week. I presented an abridged form of my paper that I wrote for Professor Richlin's "Writing the History of Sexuality" capstone seminar. Specifically I talked about portrayals of virginity in the plays of Terence and Hrotsvit, to see if Christianity had changed the way in which the virgin character was treated in drama. It was tough to condense my research into a short presentation that was digestible for a general audience, but it really helped me focus on the most important aspects of my findings. I just want to thank Professor Richlin for all of her guidance and support, from helping me to identify a topic, to pointing me in the direction of what to research, all the way up to assisting me in what to focus on for the presentation. This has been a wonderful experience and has given me a solid foundation for learning how to present academic research.

Senior Megan Haddad presents her research at Undergraduate Research Week.



Senior Cristina Berron discusses the problems of pederasty in Ancient Athens.

Aidan Arasasingham, who worked with Prof. Robert Gurval on the centennial campus tours and who also presented his research.



Capstone Seminar

Since 2009, the Department has offered one or two senior seminars in fulfillment of the university requirement of a capstone experience for each major. Faculty instructors and topics change each year. Senior Natalie O'Connor shares her experience in Professor Bryant Kirkland's 2018 seminar, The Erotic Experience in Ancient Greece.

At a large public university, it's sometimes difficult to find opportunities to learn in intimate environments with professors and peers. As a junior, I was eager to advance my engagement with Classics and "The Erotic Experience in Ancient Greece" was a perfect fit. In addition to defining *eros* within Greek antiquity, we tackled topics of philosophy, divinity, love, and mythology that helped shape our understanding of Greek history and culture. I attribute the vast majority of the seminar's success to the



wonderful instruction of Professor Bryant Kirkland. Each week Professor Kirkland would pair ancient texts from authors such as Homer, Plato, Sappho, Longus and Euripides with modern scholarship that presented us with a really comprehensive look at the works and their reception. Even beyond the material itself, Professor Kirkland was actively involved with us throughout the entirety of our research process. I had never attempted a research paper of this scale before, so I really appreciated his desire to help all the way from the brainstorming stages to the final edits. My final research paper, "Sappho and the Circularity Between Eros, Death, and Immortality," was a labor of love that allowed me to explore *eros*' relationship to death and highlight how Sappho's physical corpus itself mirrors the very topics that it describes. I was continuously impressed by student analysis at every session and ultimately by the final presentations. This seminar taught me to immerse myself in ancient texts, contribute meaningfully to discussions, and challenge myself to produce unique research that furthered conversations surrounding Greek antiquity. This was the seminar that led me to pursue Classics as a minor and as a recent graduate, I can honestly say it was one of my favorite courses at UCLA.

Alumni Spotlight

Nicky Truong (Classical Civilization BA, 2001)

When I look back at my days at UCLA, I only have the fondest memories. Happiest of times mostly because I decided to study what I love. Believe it or not, I actually started off as a marine biology major. To balance out the heavy science courses, I decided to take “Discovering the Romans” with Professor Robert Gurval. I’ve always felt a connection to Italy and found art history and mythology fascinating. I realized I was more excited to attend that course than any of my science courses. Learning about Romulus and Remus, reading works by Virgil, Plautus and Ovid was wonderful, but Professor Gurval made it even more enthralling. I was completely hooked, and shortly after, I switched my major to Classical Civilization and never looked back.

Like many, my family wanted me to pursue a practical career in medicine or law. So, when I broke the news that I was getting my degree in Classical Civilization, the predictable reaction was “what are you going to do with that?” Still unsure, I said I might teach or go into museum work and thankfully, my parents were appeased. I thoroughly loved studying Classics, and I used those years as a true extension of my desired education rather than just a preparation for a specific career.

During my Junior and Senior years, I was President of the Classical Society. Since gladiatorial games weren’t feasible, one of my best memories was organizing a fun group outing to a Dodgers game for professors, TAs and students to bond. Since I was working for the Dodgers during college, I thought it was a perfect blending of my two loves...Classics and baseball. I graduated cum laude with a BA in Classical Civilization and I credit that transformative time in my life to having such brilliant professors to learn from. I am forever grateful to Professor Lattimore, Professor Morris, Professor Morgan and especially Professor Gurval, whom I still consider a mentor and friend.

My passion in the field led me to becoming a volunteer docent in my free time, giving architecture and garden tours, at the Getty Villa for 5 years. Concurrently after a few stints in the music industry, wedding planning and legal recruiting, I landed in the meeting, event and incentive travel industry for the past 10 years and love what I do. We help create exceptional experiences and lasting memories on incentive trips that inspire people to achieve extraordinary business results. I’ve been fortunate to travel the world on behalf of amazing clients and get to use my Italian, Latin and Classics knowledge on work trips. Highlights include exclusive dinners at Julius Caesar’s former gardens to private viewings of the Sistine Chapel to elaborate ice brunches set on an Icelandic glacier to special pop-up dinners set in the African bush. I’ll always be appreciative of everything I learned in Classics and all the experiences I had at UCLA to get me to where I am today. Classics has truly enriched my life for the better!



Alumni News

Anastasia Baran (Classics MA, 2015) is an Assistant Paralegal for Fragomen, Del Rey, Bernsen & Loewy, LLP, a corporate immigration firm in DTLA. She utilizes the strong writing skills she honed at UCLA to draft L petitions and write responses to Requests for Additional Evidence.

Michael Brumbaugh (Classics PhD, 2011) has been awarded tenure at Tulane University. His first book, "The New Politics of Olympos. Kingship in Kallimachos' Hymns," will be published by Oxford University Press this coming October.

Grace Gillies (Classics PhD, 2018) has just been appointed to a two-year position as Visiting Lecturer in the Department of Classical and Medieval Studies at Bates College.

Chris Hoklotubbe (Classics Post-Bacc, 2006) is an Assistant Professor of Religion at Cornell College. He was previously a Louisville Institute Postdoctoral Fellow and Faculty Fellow in Theological Studies at Loyola Marymount University as well as Visiting Assistant Professor of New Testament and Early Christianity at Andover Newton Theological School. Chris and his family are pictured on the right.



Andrew Lear (Classics PhD, 2004) The Wadsworth Athenaeum in Hartford is about to launch an LGBT trail (i.e. a self-guided audio tour in the museum following LGBT themes through the collection), called "Out on View," that Lear designed for them. There have been several such LGBT trails in European museums (the British Museum, the Prado) but this is the first in the US. The trail can be visited on line at <http://tap.thewadsworth.org/tap-web-app/#archive/tour-934/controller/StopListView>

Liza Long (Classics MA, 1997) is a full time English and Humanities instructor at the College of Western Idaho and was featured in the May 2018 HBO documentary, "A Dangerous Son," where she outlined the urgent need for comprehensive children's mental health services in the U.S. "A Dangerous Son" recently won a Peabody Award.

Dale Parker (Classics PhD, 2018) has enrolled in the Pontificia Università della Santa Croce in Rome, to obtain an ecclesiastical doctorate in theology and consider a vocation to the priesthood.

Kalli Sarkin (Latin BA, 2016) has had a successful first year in law school at UC Davis and is currently engaged in summer internships. She has gained a spot on the board of the Law Students Association as the Wellness Representative.

Bill McCrary (Classics PhD, 2017) continues his training (both coursework and practicum) at The Chicago School of Professional Psychology. He writes that doing therapy is "challenging and very active, but that's part of what makes it fun. You're constantly trying to figure out how best to reach the patient, and there's the sense that you can always do better."

Alumni News / Upcoming Events

Robert D. Skeels (Classical Civilization BA, 2014) was sworn in as an Attorney and Counselor at Law in California on June 3, 2019. He is interning as a law clerk at an education law firm. Giving back, Skeels is a volunteer instructor of 1L Contracts at his former law school—Peoples College of Law. He and his wife still reside in their modest Historic Filipinotown home, and he is looking forward to all the senior citizen discounts he'll qualify for in roughly a year.

Justin Vorhis (Classics PhD, 2018) has accepted a position as Lecturer in Classics at the University of Iowa.

Celsiana Warwick (Classics PhD, 2018) has accepted a position as Assistant Professor in Classics at the University of Iowa.

We want to keep in touch with all our students and friends, so please do send any news of your lives and accomplishments to kmorgan@humnet.ucla.edu!

Upcoming Conference “Metamorphosis and the Environmental Imagination from Ovid to Shakespeare”

October 11-12, 2019

Royce Hall 314

Organized by Francesca Martelli (Associate Professor of Classics, UCLA) and Giulia Sissa (Distinguished Professor of Classics and Political Science, UCLA).

Narratives of metamorphosis, from human into other living forms, have long provided an important site for thinking through the complexities of our relationship with the world around us. From Ovid to David Cronenberg, thinkers and artists have used the trope of physical transformation to figure the ways in which human and non-human agencies have evolved from and adapted to one another in a relationship characterized by fluctuating perceptions of friction and symbiosis, distance and proximity. This conference seeks to locate the theme of metamorphosis in the early history of the western environmental imagination, from Greco-Roman antiquity to the Early Modern period; and to explore the ways in which the various cultural and historical manifestations of metamorphosis from this earlier period resonate with the environmental approaches and concerns of our present day.

<https://classics.ucla.edu/event/metamorphosis-and-the-environmental-imagination-from-ovid-to-shakespeare/>

Upcoming Events

UCLA Alumni Tour—Sketches of Sicily

June 17-26, 2020

Alumni with a yen for travel might consider joining Professor Kathryn Morgan for the UCLA Alumni Tour Sketches of Sicily (Jun. 17-26, 2020). The trip will visit Palermo, Erice, Agrigento, Caltagirone, Taormina, and Syracuse. Professor Morgan intends (at present) to lecture on the myths of Demeter and Persephone, Sicilian tyrants, and Sicily as the crossroads of the Mediterranean. For more details consult the Alumni Travel website at <https://travel.alumni.ucla.edu/tours/sketches-of-sicily/>.



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