Astrophysics V. Apple

“Lion,” the new Mac operating system, was released on July 20, 2011. To many, the default desktop wallpaper looked familiar but somehow off. It seemed to show the familiar Andromeda Galaxy (also known as M31), the furthest object that can be seen with the naked eye, but it was different.

Assistant Professor of Physics David Kaplan quickly noticed that some stars had been deleted, some stars had been added, and an entire galaxy, M110, had been removed.

Apple apparently applied some Photoshop magic, as can be readily seen in the composite illustration prepared by David using the wallpaper and a fairly well-known shot by astrophotographer Robert Gendler.

David’s discovery has been a cause for some amusing chatter and blog comments among scientists and Apple devotees. A quick Google search even turns up some “conspiracy theorists” speculating on the motivation for Apple’s photo alteration involving a competitor’s product, the Samsung Galaxy smart phone.

One of the more interesting science blog discussions can be found here: http://boingboing.net/2011/08/11/apple-deleted-a-galaxy.html

Note that David is not an Apple hater, as he made the composite using an Apple product!

Grad Student Takes Science Back to High School

Graduate Student Steven Kopitzke (Chemistry) visited his alma mater, Wisconsin Lutheran High School (WLHS), bringing along some of his colleagues to show the chemistry students how to use a spectrometer. To demonstrate the application of science to real-life problems, Steve immersed the students in an analysis of paint chips; the information gathered subsequently was used to investigate a hypothetical crime scene. A story about Steven’s visit was prominently featured in the WLHS alumni magazine in August.
What is 21st Century Studies?

That is the question that will be explored this academic year through the research of nine Fellows in the Center for 21st Century Studies. The Center is not having an identity crisis, though. Through this year’s research theme, they are exploring the complexity and diversity of viewpoints within their area of study.

Each year faculty from UWM and beyond are selected as Fellows. Lectures, conferences and colloquia are coordinated around the year’s theme. Is 21st century studies a study of the present and very recent past? Is it cutting-edge interdisciplinary work in the humanities, arts, and sciences? Where does the deployment of digital modes of research, analysis, and representation fit? Is 21st century studies a challenge to traditional institutional structures and the development of new scholarly methods? These questions and more will be addressed by the 2011-12 Fellows:

Rachel Ida Buff (History, Comparative Ethnic Studies) will explore the historical context of immigrant rights in her book-in-process, This Way Out: Deportation and Immigrant Rights Discourse. Her project will investigate the emerging multi-ethnic discourse beginning with the Depression and the emergence of power of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), arguing that immigrant rights discourse has gained significant traction despite efforts to subvert it.

Rebecca Dunham (English), an award-winning poet, will research a book-length poetic sequence entitled Black Horizon: A Documentary in Verse in which she explores the intersection of global environmental events, specifically the BP oil spill, and poetry as a documentary form. She will travel to the Gulf region to speak with the affected people and with experts in fields relevant to the disaster, in order to gauge the aesthetic impact of this tragedy.

Charlotte Frost (Art History, Birkbeck College, University of London), one of our Provost Fellows, will investigate the ways the production of art historical knowledge is shifting from book to digital formats. Her work will result in the founding of an experimental art history book series in a hybrid print/digital format, as well as completion of her own book, Art History Online: Mailing Lists, Digital Forums, and the Future of Criticism, also in a hybrid format.

María del Pilar Melgarejo (Spanish & Portuguese) will investigate the work of two writers who have used poetry to challenge oppression. Candelario Obeso, a 19th-century Columbian poet, initiated “Poesía negra” (black poetry), a poetic vernacular used to give voice to the voiceless. Linton Kwesi Johnson, a contemporary Jamaican poet, is recognized as the progenitor of dub poetry that emerged in Jamaica and England in the 1970s.

Michael Newman (Journalism) will work on his book, Play TV: Early Video Game History. Newman’s project is part of the emerging academic field of game studies, treating video gaming as a social and cultural practice with historical significance. Of particular interest is the emergence of gaming within domestic space and the context within which audiences engage with these new technologies and cultural forms.

Rebekah Sheldon (English, CUNY), a Provost Fellow, will examine the formal qualities of fiction that capture and transmit feeling via her book, Affective Futurities: Non-Representational Criticism and the Physics of Reading. Through a lens of recent feminist scholarship on ontology, she will investigate the strategies at play in specific works of Chuck Palahniuk, William Burroughs, Mark Z. Danielewski, and Samuel Delany.

Nathaniel Stern (Art and Design), an experimental installation and video artist, printmaker, and writer, combines new and traditional media to challenge the notions of space, vision, and power. In his project, Distill Life (with Jessica Meuninck-Ganger), he seeks to “expand our conception of printmaking and digital image making, while nimbly reminding us that art is always made in the margins of other art” (Nicole Ridgway). He plans to exhibit his work in South Africa as well as at other regional and national shows.

Kristin Sziarto (Geography) will investigate the intersection of sexuality education and the construction of the human body in The Production of Bodies, Spaces and Affects in Sexuality Education. The project challenges the notion of adolescents as dangerous agents to themselves, positing instead that adolescents are modern, healthy, knowing subjects. She will interview key Wisconsinites involved with sexuality education efforts.

Heather Warren-Crow’s (Art and Design) current book project, Girlhood and the Plastic Image, intervenes equally in the fields of girl studies and digital culture studies, arguing that reproduction, dissemination, and consumption of plastic images are understood in connection to feminine adolescence. She will consider the role of youth in the discursive formation of presentness and futurity.
In The Media & Community

Anesh Anesh (Sociology and Global Studies) conducted a radio interview with the Asia Pacific Forum on the topic of “micro-work,” involving social entrepreneurs who connect private companies with skilled workers in developing countries to do basic computer services and data processing jobs. These individuals harness technology to alleviate poverty, combining nonprofit work with the power of corporate investors. http://bit.ly/qfK8An

Reinhold Hutz (Biological Sciences) and his graduate student Jeremy Larson were featured in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel on July 18th discussing their research on whether gold nanoparticles target and disrupt the female reproductive tract. As the article notes, this is the only research of this kind in the United States. http://bit.ly/n6hGvx

Nan Kim (History) presented “Cultural Anthropology, Korean Studies, and Histories of the Present” at the Yeongwol-Yonsei International Forum in Yeongwol, South Korea, on May 23rd. Later in the summer, on August 30th, she participated in the Workshop on Global Korean Studies as an invited discussant. This all-day event was sponsored by the Center for Asian and Pacific Studies at the University of Iowa with a focus on assessing the state of Korean Studies in the United States, with an emphasis on public education.

Yi-Qiang (Eric) Cheng (Biological Sciences) gave an invited talk at The Annual Meeting of the Society for Industrial Microbiology and Biotechnology entitled “Thailandepsins: Bacterial Natural Products with Potent Histone Deacetylase Inhibition Activities and Promising Anticancer Activities.” The meeting was held in New Orleans at the end of July.

Dr. Cheng also presented a poster at The 2011 Era of Hope Conference organized by DOD Breast Cancer Research Program (BCRP). His poster was entitled “Toward Engineering Novel Tumor-Targeting Bio-Agents,” and the conference was in Orlando from August 2nd to 5th. http://bit.ly/qhEnqr (see page 796)

The INGRoup (Interdisciplinary Network for Group Research) conference in Minneapolis had two UWM participants from the Department of Communication. Professor Renee Meyers and Ph.D. student Kim Smith (along with colleagues from other institutions) presented “Examining procedural communication: Social influence in organizational teams.” Renee also presented “Challenges in studying groups.”


Malynnda Johnson (PhD Candidate, Communication) received a $2,000 scholarship to attend the National HIV Prevention Conference in Atlanta where she presented “Which Voice Matters? A Qualitative Examination of College Students Conversations about HIV.”

Margaret Fraiser (Geosciences) co-chaired a technical session and gave a talk on “IGCP572 session: Ecosystem rebuilding from the Permian-Triassic mass extinction” at the XVII International Congress on the Carboniferous and Permian in Perth, Australia, from July 3rd through the 8th. After the meeting, Dr. Fraiser participated in a field excursion along the coast of Western Australia.

Kent Redding (Sociology) was a guest on Wisconsin Publin Radio’s At Issue with Ben Merens on August 10th, participating in a discussion of collective behavior and violence at the Wisconsin State Fair. To listen to the show click http://bit.ly/rdpOYd. Professor Redding was also interviewed by Fox News 6 in July on the violence that occurred during July 4th celebrations in Milwaukee.

Peter Paik (French, Italian and Comparative Literature) made a number of presentations over the summer:

• “The Master Who Mistook Himself for a Monster: Oldboy and the Artifice of History” at the Yeongwol Yonsei International Forum on Korean Studies in Yeongwol, South Korea, on May 23.

• “Apocalypse by Subtraction: Late Capitalism and the Trauma of Scarcity,” at the Cultural Studies Colloquium, Kyung Hee University, Yongin, South Korea, on June 1 and at the English Studies Colloquium, Ewha Women’s University, Seoul, South Korea, on June 2.

• “Forgiveness Miscarried: On Lee Chang-dong’s Secret Sunshine,” at Rethinking Korean Religions, Sogang University, Seoul, South Korea, on May 20.

Kathryn M. Olson (Communication) presented her paper “Get Motivated!: How the new prosperity gospel operates” at the biannual Alta Argumentation Conference held in Alta, Utah, in July.
Publications


Margaret Fraiser (Geosciences) co-edited a special volume for the journal *Palaeogeography, Palaeoclimatology, Palaeoecology* on “Recovery of Ecosystems following the Permo-Triassic extinction.” In June, Margaret, geosciences students and other colleagues conducted fieldwork in Utah and Nevada as part of an NSF-funded research project. The research focuses on the biotic recovery from the end-Permian mass extinction. The researchers are creating a chemo- and bio-stratigraphic framework for understanding when life rebounded from the largest mass extinction in Earth’s history.

**Awards & Honors**

Patrick Goldsmith (Sociology) has been asked by the What Works Collaborative, a foundation-supported research collaborative, to serve on an expert panel on “Housing as a Platform for Children and Education.” The project’s goal is to develop a research agenda and help guide foundation and government investment in research.

Evelyn Ang (Communication) has been selected for the first roster for the Mortgage Modification Mediation program of the Eastern District of Wisconsin, Federal Bankruptcy Court. The goal for the program is to assist homeowners, working with their attorneys, to negotiate directly with decision-makers at the financial institutions holding their mortgage.

**Development News**

- The Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation awarded a grant of $25,000 to support the 2011-12 Bradley Graduate and Post Graduate Fellowship Program under the direction of Distinguished Professor Emeritus Leonard Parker in the Department of Physics. The Bradley Fellowship Program seeks to strengthen America’s intellectual infrastructure in higher education. Bradley fellowships make it possible for doctoral candidates and post-doctoral fellows to complete their studies, prepare manuscripts for publication, and conduct research.

- Chairs and Directors, please send your customized information for the Alumni Direct Mail to Christina Makal no later than September 6th. If nothing is received by that date, a general Letters & Science Letter will go out to your alumni. Please include the following information:
  - How you used last year’s fund and success stories based on last year’s donations
  - Funding priorities for the unit, i.e. scholarships, fellowships, program support
  - Department/program/center ranking
  - Faculty publications/activities/awards
  - Undergraduate/graduate student research

Thank you to those who have already sent your information in! This project is crucial to our success in raising funds from our alumni and building the number of alumni donors. Thank you for your partnership.

**Around Campus**

Over 50 people enjoyed Summer Starfest at the Manfred Olson Planetarium on August 16 and 17. Jean Creighton, Director, taught them how to find several constellations such as Cygnus the swan and Hercules. Four people won a private planetarium show by correctly identifying the most constellations during a starmap contest.

The Honors College has moved into their new home in the Northwest Quadrant. Honors House is located on Maryland Ave across from Sandburg Hall.

As of August, Cary Costello (Sociology) is taking over the coordination of the UWM Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Studies Program.

Several members of the Department of Communication helped train the Resident Assistants at UWM. William Keith (Professor), Ruth Beerman (Ph.D. student) and Lindsey Harness (Ph.D. student) presented on the topic, “Starting the Conversation.”

**Research News**

Margaret Fraiser (Geosciences) conducted fieldwork in Utah and Nevada in June with students and colleagues as part of research funded by the National Science Foundation.

John Isbell and Margaret Fraiser (Geosciences) received a supplement from the National Science Foundation for “Collaborative IRES: Integrated Research & Educational Training of Geoscience Students in Deep-Time Paleoclimatology, Western South America”.

Development News