

HMU: Dialogues

Harrison Middleton University

11/16/2016

Volume 3, Edition 2

Letter from the Editor:

I am truly excited about today's newsletter. Our students have made a mark with both publishing and presentations. Also check out the variety of staff activities around the country. As usual, we also have some excellent articles to offer. Take a look at our film review by alumnus Peter Ponzio. In addition, HMU Tutor and Dean, Marcus Conley, compiled a list of recent changes to MLA guidelines. This necessary guide will be helpful for all end of course essays. Ann Wagner, HMU doctoral student, gave us permission to place an entire research paper on our blog. Her social and historical critique of the Great Idea of Man contains an important discussion for anyone studying the Great Ideas in general. Check out the summary (pages 2 and 3) and read her full paper on HMU's blog.

Harrison Middleton University is also running an excellent film course. See page 6 for that and other continuing education opportunities. Sign up for one or all of the classes in the film series. The BBC's production of Shakespeare's *Henriad* is not to be missed!

Finally, it is that time of year again to celebrate friends and family. We hope that you enjoy a wonderful holiday, a break from work, and have some time to dedicate to yourself as well. We appreciate your high achievements, your ability for success and your animated spirit of scholarship.

Thanks! *Alissa*

Reviews and More:



Thanks to **Peter Ponzio**, Doctor of Arts, Harrison Middleton University, for the following film review.

2008 BBC production of *Little Dorrit*.

Charles Dickens was a prolific author, penning some fifteen novels, hundreds of articles, editing two periodicals (*Household Words* and *All the Year Round*) as well as editing two newspapers, *Bentley's Miscellany* and *The Daily News*. In addition to his authorial and editing duties, Dickens gave numerous speeches and spent the last several years of his life touring Great Britain and North America giving readings of his most popular works.

The sheer complexity of his novels, their length (an average of some 800 pages), as well as the profusion of characters makes the transition from novel to screen a difficult undertaking. A number of adaptations have been attempted with varying degrees of success. Three of his mature novels, *Bleak House*, *Little Dorrit* and *Great Expectations*, have been adapted by the BBC to critical and commercial success. The current review will focus on the BBC production of *Little Dorrit* in 2008, which was originally released for television in fourteen episodes.

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Presentation and Publication Highlights:

~ **David Seng**, current doctoral student, published a review of David Skrbina's *Metaphysics of Technology* in the October edition of *Philosophy in Review*. Access the full article at: <https://journals.uvic.ca/index.php/pir/issue/view/899>. David Seng also received his Masters degree from Harrison Middleton University.

~ *The Journal of Humanities and Cultural Studies R&D* has published "Thomas Aquinas: Christian Conscience and Human Actions", by **Thomas Wells**, current doctoral student. The paper may be accessed at this link in Volume 1/Issue 5/Paper 5: <http://jrdsjournal.wixsite.com/humanities-cultural/humanities-cultural>.

~ **Dr. Phillip M. Perry**, (nom de plume, Dr. Walter Idlewild, DA Humanities 2014) attended a conference titled "Commemorating Henry James: Commemoration in Henry James," June 9-11, 2016. Sponsored by The Henry James Society in recognition of the centenary of the English author's death, the event was held at Brandeis University, Waltham, Mass. Dr. Idlewild has posted his essay about James, "The Condition of Music," at his website, <http://languageandphilosophy.com/>.

~ **Ellin Iselin**, current doctoral student, has recently been invited to teach philosophy classes at Florida State College. She writes, "I credit Harrison Middleton University for helping me to reach this significant milestone."

Essay on the Great Idea "Man"

Ann Wagner, current doctoral student at Harrison Middleton University, recently wrote a contemporary critique of a subtopic under the Great Idea of "Man". She views this subtopic, "the distinctive characteristics between men and women and their differences," through a historical lens which attempts to understand the lack of the female voice in the Great Books (even after Adler updated the list to include 20th century authors). Wagner writes, "Interestingly, he [Adler] makes no mention of the revolution in the 20th century that addressed women's issues, the feminist movement, nor any mention of the changes that were needed within the idea of Man

and the subtopics that were related specifically to women. And yet with the update, for the first time, women were included in the list of authors with the Great Books set; for the first time woman's voice was added to the conversation. The feminist movement significantly changed women's place and voice in the world in the 20th century. It leaves one with questions – Why was there no comment from Adler on the impact of this movement as part of his discussion in *The Great Conversation* concerning the break in continuity that he discovered with the addition of the new authors?

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Was the break in the continuity of the conversation regarding the subtopics related to women not so easy to address?" Did Adler recognize with the update to the Great Books set that, for a subtopic that focused on the characteristics and differences between men and women, the importance of social context would need to be brought to the imaginary table where

historically the ideas of the authors across time were discussed without reference to time or place? Read this essay in its entirety on Harrison Middleton University's blog at :

<http://www.hmu.edu/hmu-blog/2016/11/11/essay-on-the-great-idea-of-man> .

Reviews (continued):

A listing of the primary characters and the actors who portray them, will provide a feel for the complexity of the novel and the profusion of Dickensian characters:

| Actor | Character |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Claire Foy | Little Dorrit |
| Matthew Macfadyen | Arthur Clenham |
| Tom Courtenay | William Dorrit |
| James Fleet | Frederick Dorrit |
| Emma Pierson | Fanny Dorrit |
| Judy Parfitt | Mrs. Clenham |
| Andy Serkis | Rigaud/Lagnier/Blandois |
| Alun Armstrong | Flintwinch |
| Eddie Marsan | Pancks |
| Amanda Redman | Mrs. Merdle |
| Anton Lesser | Mr. Merdle |
| Sebastian Armesto | Edmund Sparkler |
| Russell Tovey | John Chivery |
| Ron Cook | Chivery |
| Georgia King | Pet Gowan |
| Alex Wyndham | Henry Gowan |
| Bill Paterson | Mr. Meagles |
| Janine Duvitsky | Mrs. Meagles |
| Maxine Peake | Miss Wade |
| Freema Agyeman | Tattycoram |
| Zubin Varla | Daniel Doyce |

"The union of the mathematician with the poet, fervor with measure, passion with correctness, this surely is the ideal."

~ William James

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Reviews (continued):

The novel explores a number of themes that recur throughout Dickens novels, and indeed, in a number of other Victorian novels. These themes include the lack of proper parenting, the class distinctions that permeate Victorian society, the deplorable conditions of the debtors' prisons, the almost slavish worship of money as a panacea for society's ills, the uselessness of charitable societies and organized religion to ameliorate the conditions of the poor, and the nepotism masquerading as an effective political structure in Victorian England.

Given the number of characters and themes present in the novel, it would seem that the BBC production would have a difficult time capturing the complexity and tone of the novel. Yet despite its relatively modest run time of approximately eight hours, the BBC production manages to convey the atmosphere of early Victorian London while adhering to Dickens's sometimes labyrinthine plotline.

The pacing of the movie is aided by the cinematography which conveys the bustle and squalor of the seamier sections of London, such as Bleeding Heart Yard and the House of Clenham. The tight shots of the rooms in the Marshalsea help to convey an atmosphere of claustrophobia, reinforcing Dickens's vision of the city as a prison. Likewise, the opulence of the Merdle household and the scenes in Venice depict a society that is riven by class distinction. It is clear from these scenes of London and Italian social life that there is a sharp divide between the rich and the poor, at least when it comes to material comfort.

As the movie nears its conclusion, the scenes in Venice take on a more constricted look, emphasized by the tight shots of the crowd at Mrs. Merdle's Venetian banquet and William Dorrit's confinement to his room before he dies. Similarly, when Mr. Merdle ventures to a public bath which is inhabited by denizens of the poorer areas of London, and with his subsequent death, the viewer is reminded that the apparent differences between the rich and poor in London are somewhat tenuous. Mr. Merdle, in particular, seems to be a man who is in the public eye but is uncomfortable with his station in society; he inhabits a no-man's land between the rich and poor, the affluent and destitute. Several other characters inhabit the same no-man's land as Mr. Merdle, traveling back and forth between riches and penury. The list of such characters includes Arthur Clenham, Pancks, Daniel Doyce, Mrs. Clenham, and of course Mr. William Dorrit.

Little Dorrit understands the thin veil that separates the upper and lower classes. While in Venice, she muses that there is little difference between the Marshalsea Prison and the self-erected prisons of polite society as well as the prisons erected by Mrs. Clenham, Miss Wade and Mr. Rigaud.

As for the attempts of religion to ameliorate society's ills, the portrayal by Judy Parfitt of Mrs. Clenham makes it quite clear that her rigidity and Old Testament morality leave little room for comfort or spiritual growth for herself as well as for other members of society. Indeed, Mrs. Clenham cannot grow; she is trapped in a prison of her own making and the final scene of the House of Clenham is of Mrs. Clenham's wheelchair poised above a ruined domicile.

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Reviews (continued):

The ability of governmental institutions to help the poor is also limited. The Circumlocution Office is depicted as a series of winding staircases leading to nowhere, flanked on all sides by reams of paper scattered haphazardly over everything. There is no rhyme or reason to the Circumlocution Office; it exists mainly to afford appointment to connected, inept officials who accomplish nothing yet are well paid for their incompetence.

The depiction of Rigaud/Lagnier/Blandois by Andy Serkis is, by any standard, over the top: Dickens would have loved it. Dickens had an eye for the macabre and melodramatic; Serkis certainly delivers in these two departments. The plight of John Chivery, rejected by Amy Dorrit, reads somewhat comically in the novel. Yet, Russel Tovey's performance, while emphasizing the bathetic nature of the character, somehow evokes a feeling of sympathy for this heroic-comic figure. Sebastian Armesto injects the proper degree of innocent incompetence into the character of Edmund Sparkler, while Emma Pierson portrays Fanny Dorrit as a self-satisfied, venal and manipulative social climber who traps the unsuspecting Sparkler into marriage. Amanda Redmand's portrayal of Mrs. Merdle is spot-on, combining equal portions of haughtiness, venality and loathing of those in lower social stations. Dickens attacks her character mercilessly in the novel.

The three primary characters in the novel, William Dorrit, Arthur Clenham and Amy Dorrit are admirably played by Tom Courtenay, Matthew Macfadyen and Claire Foy, respectively. Tom Courtenay's performance as William Dorrit is brilliant, alternating between fawning servility and injured superciliousness often within the same scene. Matthew Macfadyen strikes the right note as the sensitive, emotionally stunted Arthur Clenham who believes that he has lost the ability to love as a result of his repressive upbringing and advancing years. Claire Foy imbues the character of Little Dorrit with a self-effacing, kind, and noble character that Dickens so often attempted to portray in his female characters.

It is difficult to effectively present the idea of goodness existing in an evil world, yet the novel *Little Dorrit* attempts to do just this. The BBC production of *Little Dorrit* helps bring Dickens's creation of a prison world to life; a world inhabited by flawed people, some of whom are truly good. The novel ends with Amy Dorrit and Arthur Clenham married and inhabiting this flawed world. They make their way in life in much the same way as Adam and Eve after their expulsion from the garden; inhabiting a fallen world attempting to bring sweetness and light to their fellow creatures.

"While the flowers, pale and unreal in the moonlight, floated away upon the river; and thus do greater things that once were in our breasts, and near our hearts, flow from us to the eternal sea.." *Little Dorrit*

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Continuing Education Opportunities

Winter Film Series



Our second Shakespeare film series, *The Henriad*, will explore four of Shakespeare's plays paired with the four parts of *The Hollow Crown* Series. Participants will read the play and screen a film in advance of the scheduled discussion. Each two-hour discussion will cover one of the plays. Discussions will be held on Thursday evenings at 5pm PDT: *Richard II* on December 1st, *Henry IV (Part I)* on January 12th, *Henry IV (Part II)* on March 2nd, and *Henry V* on April 6th. Participants may join one, two, three, or all four discussions. Our discussions are open to the public and we invite new voices to listen and participate. To register please contact rfisher@hmu.edu.

Quarterly Discussions



Every quarter we hold a group discussion for students, staff, and friends. Our next conversation will be held in January 2017 on the topic of astronomy. The readings and times are yet to be determined, but if you are interested or have questions, please contact Alissa Simon at asimon@hmu.edu. We would love for you to join the conversation. There is no charge, and you are welcome to listen or participate.

Education Opportunities with HMU Partners:

Great Books Chicago 2017 is now open for registration. This year's theme is "Who We Are and Who We Desire To Be". The readings will focus on The Great Books Foundation's newest publication: *Her Own Accord: American Women on Identity, Culture and Community*. For more information, visit: <https://www.greatbooks.org/giving/great-books-chicago/>.

Every summer, Classical Pursuits hosts a weeklong series of discussions in Toronto. This summer, HMU Tutor, Rebecca Fisher, will be leading a seminar titled "Eye of the Beholder: *The Alexandria Quartet*". Also, HMU Tutor, Gary Schoepfel, will lead the seminar "Benefit of the Doubt: Shakespeare, Miller, Stoppard, Mamet". For more information on this and other seminars, check the **Toronto Pursuits** website at <http://www.classicalpursuits.com/toronto-pursuits/>.

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Student Corner:



~ Harrison Middleton University congratulates graduates **James Keller, Dr. Michael Caba, Dr. Adam Hazlett, and Dr. Peter Ponzio** on their induction into the Delta Epsilon Tau Honor Society, the premier national honor society for America's accredited distance learning institutions. The Society encourages and recognizes superior student achievement, character and leadership.

~ Please join HMU tutors and staff in congratulating **Dr. Michael J. Caba** on successfully earning his Doctor of Arts! Dr. Caba submitted the following capstone project in partial fulfillment of his degree requirements: "Modern Philosophy I and Ancient Philosophy I: Two College Courses."

~ Congratulations to **Andrea Kloss**, who successfully completed the Master of Arts in Imaginative Literature program at Harrison Middleton University. In partial fulfillment of the requirements for this degree, Ms. Kloss submitted a thesis titled, "In the Pursuit of Happiness."

~ HMU graduate **Gary Waters** was recognized by the Distance Education Accrediting Commission (DEAC) as an Outstanding Graduate (<http://www.deac.org/Media-and-Events/2016-Outstanding-Graduate-Harrison-Middleton-University.aspx>). Twenty exceptional graduates were recognized by DEAC in 2016. Selection criteria included the graduates' academic records and the level and quality of their contributions to society and to their chosen professions. Congratulations Gary!

~ Congratulations to **Dr. Peter J. Ponzio** who successfully completed the Doctor of Arts program at Harrison Middleton University. Dr. Ponzio submitted the following capstone project in partial fulfillment of his degree requirement: "READING DICKENS: An Exploration of His Works Through the Use of Themes."

~ Congratulations to **Dr. Nathan C. Pettijohn** on successfully earning his Doctor of Arts! Dr. Pettijohn submitted a novel titled "Fief of Bedlam" in partial fulfillment of his degree requirements.

"The direction in which education starts a man will determine his future life." - Plato

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MLA Style Guide Updates

In their coursework, Harrison Middleton University students use the citation style of the Modern Language Association (MLA) to credit sources. Earlier this year, the MLA released the eighth edition of their handbook, and they have made some changes. Because a given text could be packaged in various media forms, the new MLA citation style no longer tries to set out a specific format for each type of source—book, journal article, conference presentation, Netflix video, tweet, and so on. The media of communication are proliferating too quickly for the MLA style manual to keep up. Instead, the new MLA Handbook has adopted what it calls a “universal set of guidelines.” It cites the important stuff first—author and title—then goes on to give information about the “container” in which the source appears.

It all boils down to this basic template:

Author. Title. Any additional information about the source itself. Title of Container, additional information about the container.

For the average book, the citation style is pretty simple. Here is how you would cite a popular paperback edition of a novel in a works cited page:

Hurston, Zora Neale. *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. Harper Collins, 2006.

At HMU, though, we usually cite books from the *Great Books of the Western World* series, which constitutes a container in itself. So our citations will have at least two parts—information on the text we’re using and information on the series in which it appears:

Plutarch. *The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans: The Dryden Translation*. *Great Books of the Western World*, edited by Mortimer J. Adler et al., vol. 13, Encyclopædia Britannica, 1990.

Sometimes things can be a little more complicated. We could be citing something like Kant’s *The Science of Right*, which is long enough to be its own book, but in the Great Books series is only a small part of a volume. In that case, we would add page numbers at the end of the reference to show where the cited work appears:

Kant, Immanuel. *The Science of Right*. Translated by W. Hastie. *Great Books of the Western World*, edited by Mortimer J. Adler et al., vol. 39, Encyclopædia Britannica, 1990, pp. 397-458.

How do we know that *The Science of Right* should be treated as if it were its own book, with its title in italics? The copyright page of the volume is a good crib sheet. On that page, which lists the publication permissions, you can see that the editors of the Great Books series have put *The Science of Right* in italics. Just follow their lead.

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MLA Updates (continued):

If we're citing a work that could not be a book on its own, like one of Montaigne's short essays, then we are dealing with two containers. The first container is the collection that contains the essay; the second one is the Great Books volume that contains the collection:

Montaigne, Michel Eyquem de. "Of Pedantry." *The Essays*. Translated by Donald M. Frame. *Great Books of the Western World*, edited by Mortimer J. Adler et al., vol. 23, Encyclopædia Britannica, 1990, pp. 110-115.

If we're working with Aristotle, Aquinas, Shakespeare, or Gibbon, we might end up citing only one volume of a two-volume work:

Aristotle. *The Works of Aristotle*, vol. 2. *Great Books of the Western World*, edited by Mortimer J. Adler et al., vol. 8, Encyclopædia Britannica, 1990.

In every case, the intent is the same—cite the work you used and then give the information about where you found it. This holds true for any source you might use. For instance, here is a citation for a two-author poem from the Great Books Foundation's latest anthology:

Morales, Aurora Levins and Rosario Morales. "Ending Poem." *Her Own Accord: American Women on Identity, Culture, and Community*, edited by Denise Ahlquist et al., Great Books Foundation, 2016, pp. 17-18.

What about in-text citations? Most of the time, your reader will know from the context which source you are talking about, so all you need is a page number in parentheses. In cases where your reader might not be sure which author or work you are discussing, add in whatever information they'll need to find the correct reference in your works cited page. Usually, the author's last name is enough. If your reader can easily track down the origin of the information you used in your writing, then you have done your job documenting your sources.

If you ever find yourself uncertain about how to cite a source, you can still count on the Purdue Online Writing Lab, or Purdue OWL, available at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>. They have updated their website to keep in step with the new MLA style. If you like your citation guidance to come straight from the horse's mouth, you can check out the MLA's own style site, found at <http://style.mla.org/>. It has good visual explanations of how to use the style, with several examples. And of course your friendly neighborhood Portfolio Evaluator is happy to offer advice, too.

Feel free to print the MLA Style Guide cheat sheet on page 12.

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Alliance for Liberal Learning Conference Update:

The Alliance for Liberal Learning held its second annual conference, *Making Connections*, on October 28th and 29th, 2016 in downtown Chicago, IL. The conference began with a dynamic networking session. Keynote speeches included St. John's Tutor Peter Pesic on the *Teaching of the Sciences in the Context of the Liberal Arts*. John Agresto addressed the idea of difference among the liberal arts with *Can There Be a Distinctly American Kind of Liberal Arts?* Finally, *Building a Successful Development Program* from Tim Child and Susan Faraone of the Aspen Leadership Group offered helpful ideas for the future.

More information about the Alliance and upcoming events can be found on their website:

<https://allianceforliberallearning.org/>. Please consider taking their survey about the direction of the Alliance at <https://allianceforliberallearning.org/membership/>.



Members of the Alliance for Liberal Learning at the October conference at Pinstripes in Chicago (pinstripes.com).

From left to right, Peter Ponzio (HMU graduate), Marcus Conley, Lauren Guthrie, David Curd, Rebecca Fisher, and Gary Schoepfel (HMU faculty members).

Adjunct Faculty in attendance included Joe Coulson, Louise Galpine, John Riley, Don Whitfield, and William Siegel (Emmy Award Winner for the documentary *Ali*).

Photo credit: Josh Sniegowski.

Faculty Highlights



~ Gary Schoepfel and Rebecca Fisher attended the *Pacific Northwest Great Books Institute* in June.

~ Margaret Metcalf, Gary Schoepfel, and Rebecca Fisher attended *Toronto Pursuits* in July. *(highlights continued on page 11)*

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Faculty Highlights (continued)



~ **Michael MacLean** chaired a panel at Phoenix COMICON 2016 titled: "Screenwriting the Corman Way: Dialog and Structure".

~ **Deborah Deacon:**

-presented two talks at Phoenix COMICON 2016: "The Innovative World of Satoshi Kon" and "The World of Osamu Tezuka".

-attended *Community College Humanities Association Southern Conference*.

-was invited to speak at Arizona State University's School of Art. Her presentation was titled: "The History of Anime". (September 13)

-participated in *Philadelphia Fall Institute Great Books Weekend* and led discussion on Thorstein Veblen's *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (November 4-6).

~ **Sue Durkin** attended the Great Books at Colby College Institute in Maine in July.

~ Harrison Middleton University hosted an Evaluator Workshop training for the Distance Education Accrediting Commission on August 22-23. **Marcus Conley, David Curd, Michael Curd, and Lauren Guthrie** attended. Training participants also watched the AZ Diamondbacks defeat the Atlanta Braves.

~ **David Curd, Rebecca Fisher, and Lauren Guthrie** attended the *2016 Fall Workshop for the Distance Education Accrediting Commission* in Seattle, Washington. (October 16-18)

~ **Alissa Simon** attended *Philosophy Camp*, September 30-October 1, in New York. Read about her experience on HMU's blog at: <http://www.hmu.edu/hmu-blog/2016/10/7/after-the-adirondacks>.

~ **Marcus Conley, David Curd, Rebecca Fisher, Gary Schoepfel, and Lauren Guthrie** attended the *Second Annual Alliance for Liberal Learning Conference* in Chicago, Illinois. (October 28 -29)

~ **Philip Stewart** participated in the Philadelphia Fall Institute Great Books Weekend and led discussion on Thorstein Veblen's *The Theory of the Leisure Class*. (November 4-6)

~ **Marcus Conley and Rebecca Fisher** attended the *Community College Humanities Association Pacific Western Division Conference* in Portland, Oregon. (November 10-12)

~ **Margaret Metcalf** attended the *Community College Humanities Association Southwestern Division Conference* in Fort Worth, Texas. (November 10-12)

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Sample MLA Works Cited:

Works Cited

- Aristotle. *The Works of Aristotle*, vol. 2. *Great Books of the Western World*, edited by Mortimer J. Adler et al., vol. 8, Encyclopædia Britannica, 1990.
- Hurston, Zora Neale. *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. Harper Collins, 2006.
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- Morales, Aurora Levins and Rosario Morales. "Ending Poem." *Her Own Accord: American Women on Identity, Culture, and Community*, edited by Denise Ahlquist et al., Great Books Foundation, 2016, pp. 17-18.
- Plutarch. *The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans: The Dryden Translation*. *Great Books of the Western World*, edited by Mortimer J. Adler et al., vol. 13, Encyclopædia Britannica, 1990.

