



# OBERLIN CLASSICS

## DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICS

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*Editor: Kirk Ormand*

Masthead image: *Kylix with Palmette-Eye Motif, 520-510 BC, earthenware, 4 15/16 x 12 5/16 in., Allen Memorial Art Museum, General Acquisitions Fund, 1967*

## FROM THE EDITOR'S ZIP-PHONE

By Kirk Ormand

**W**elcome to another newsletter from the Department of Classics at Oberlin College. As you know, this newsletter is produced every year without fail, which is why the last one appeared in 2016. As usual, the last couple of years have flown by.

These past two years have seen unusual activity abroad: in the spring of 2017, Drew Wilburn was one of the professors-in-charge of the Oberlin in London Program (along with his spouse, Maureen Peters of biology), the first time that a classicist has led the London program. They had an enthusiastic group of classicists and biology majors with them, and they studied, among other things, the history of medicine in Great Britain (see story below). In January 2017, Naomi Campa and I led another intrepid group of students on a winter term trip to Greece, where we braved rare snow in Athens in order to study ancient Greek art in its religious context. We had a record 23 student with us, majors and non-majors alike.

For the past two years, we've been joined by Naomi Campa and Elizabeth Wueste; in 2017-18, Naomi replaced Chris Trinacty while he was on sabbatical, and Elizabeth held the first Thomas F. Cooper post-doc in classics (generously funded by alumnus Tom Cooper). Naomi has brought her passion for Plato and Athenian citizenship to our students, and Elizabeth has led a boisterous and enthusiastic class on portraiture and self-presentation in the ancient world this spring. Sadly, we are losing both of these fine colleagues this fall: Elizabeth is taking a tenure-track job at the American University in Rome, and Naomi is moving on to a visiting position at Kenyon College. We offer them both our thanks and congratulations for the past several years of outstanding teaching in the department.

Last December, we also lost a mainstay of the department; Karen Barnes, our AA, who retired after 34 years of outstanding service to the college. Though we dreaded the chaos that we were sure would descend when Karen left, Linda Pardee has moved ably into the post and has kept things running smoothly.

Though the number of majors in the department has dropped off a bit since we hit an all-time high about eight years ago, our enrollments remain solid, and demand is particularly strong in the civilization sequence. Our graduates continue to astound us with successful careers in and out of academia. As Oberlin moves into the next phase of college education in the U.S. under a new college president, you all remain the best evidence available for the myriad ways that an education in classics can lead to brilliant careers in medicine, law, education, publishing, museum studies, project management, library studies, entrepreneurship, public service, and many other professions. We look forward to hearing your news and encourage you to stop by. We're still here in the King building; come find us, and we'll take you out for coffee.

# FACULTY NOTES

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**DREW WILBURN:** Since the last update, I have been working and doing some travel and travel-research, most notably as one of the faculty members in charge of the London program in spring 2017. I continue to serve as chair, with a brief abdication to Kirk Ormand while in London. My work on the digital reconstruction of the ancient site of Karanis ([karanishousingproject.org](http://karanishousingproject.org)) continued, this past year with Susanna

Faas Bush '18 and Christian Bolles '18 from archaeological studies. Last fall I gave a paper at the Symposium Campanum, a conference on Pompeii held at the Villa Vergiliana in Italy. But, to the main news: teaching a small number of classics majors (and majors in biology, creative writing, and archaeological studies, among others) was an amazing experience. I taught a new course on the history of medicine with Maureen Peters (in biology), my spouse, and an expanded version of my magic course which stretched from Stonehenge and the Druids to Harry Potter. Patrick (now 8) and Claire (now 5) were enrolled in the local schools and tagged along on many of the trips. We visited many museums and sites in London, such as the Wellcome Collection, the British Museum (at least five times), the Petrie Museum, the Old Operating Theatre...I could easily go on. We witnessed a Druid celebration of the Spring Equinox, conversed with a practicing Wiccan, took the Muggle Tour of London, and, thanks to Oberlin alumna Tracy Chevalier, had a sneak peek at the Harry Potter show at the British Library. I had never visited Hadrian's Wall, so that was an amazing treat, as was our trip to Bath and Stonehenge. My summer research through the Cooper Fund for Faculty Research took me to a number of great sites as I started work in earnest on a new project about the role of magic in home security. I am investigating the ways magical elements are built into homes and business to provide protection for families against a variety of threats, such as intruders, the evil eye, ghosts, or malicious witchcraft. In addition to Pompeii and Herculaneum, I was also able to research material at Spoleto, Empúries, and Conimbriga.



**BEN LEE:** This semester I enjoyed teaching Greek and Roman Epic, Apuleius and Petronius, and Latin 101. I have been researching a manuscript of essays written in 18th-century France for the Royal Academy of Bordeaux on the subject, "On the causes of blackness among the Ethiopians." This project is for the Dubois Institute at Harvard. It is a real challenge because of the bizarre vocabulary and the fact that the end of many lines are lost in

the binding, requiring me to supply the endings of many words and some phrases. The job is a challenge but has been quite enjoyable. I would love to hear from any of our alumni! Please send me an email me at [blee@oberlin.edu](mailto:blee@oberlin.edu) and tell me how you are doing.



**CHRIS TRINACTY:** I was awarded tenure in the spring of 2017 and have been busy working on my next book, a commentary on Seneca's *Naturales Quaestiones III*. In the last year I've given papers in Cincinnati, London, and Thessaloniki and will give papers in Pompeii and Honolulu this fall. I am currently a guest editor of the journal *Ramus*; this year's issue will be a collection of essays on Senecan poetics, a subject near

and dear to my heart. I won a Loeb Classical Library fellowship for 2017-18 to pursue research on the *Naturales Quaestiones*. During my leave I hope to catch up on the various comic book series that I have neglected over the last 10 years and perfect my pizza dough recipe (and finish my book, of course).



**ELIZABETH WUESTE:** As this newsletter goes to press, I've come to an end of my time at Oberlin. During the last two years, I taught all levels of Latin and Greek, as well as the introductory course in Roman history. Within the last year, I was excited to participate in several events with the newly reconstituted Oberlin Archaeological Society, including its Object Handling and Writing workshops.

I also delivered a paper on the materiality of late antique epigraphy at the annual conference of the American Schools of Oriental Research, and also published an article on the costumes of late antique honorific sculpture in an edited volume by the Archaeological Institute of America. During the summer, I resumed my yearly fieldwork research at the American Excavations of Morgantina: Contrada Agnese Project, where we completed our fifth year of excavating a Hellenistic city-block in central Sicily. I returned to Oberlin restored, reenergized, and thrilled to begin my second year—this time as the Thomas F. Cooper Postdoctoral Fellow in Classics. In the 2017-18 year, I taught intermediate Latin, Roman history, and a new upper division classical civilization seminar on self representation in the ancient world. This California girl was also excited to experience "real winter," since the mild snowfall and cold of 2016-17 did not really count.

**NAOMI CAMPA:** This year I get to teach so much Greek. It is my dream of academia come true: making a career out of reading Plato (romantically under a tree for now, huddled by a space heater shortly) and sharing that with students. Teaching at Oberlin is always such a great pleasure. In January, I got to enjoy a bit of that on the road. I was lucky enough to accompany Kirk and 23 intrepid students to Greece for the winter term trip. On-site instruction even on dreariest of days carries with it a tinge of magic. We saw snow in Athens; a first for me. This summer I enjoyed the seasonal wonders of Ohio, including all the lovely fresh produce, orchestra concerts



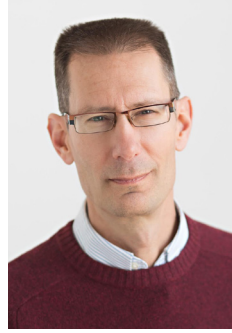
## FACULTY NOTES, CONT.



at Blossom, and perfect bike-riding weather. Summer was also productive on the research and writing front. I am looking forward to sharing some of my work at a political science conference in November and seeing an article in print. For a couple of weeks in August, my research took me to the American School for Classical Studies at Athens. During my summer travel in Greece, I also had small

part in the production of *Thucydides Dramaticus* in the ancient theatre of Messene (read Tara's account below). It was my acting debut and farewell performance in one, an experience like no other I can recall.

**KIRK ORMAND:** Last year was busy for me, mainly in good ways. As Naomi mentions, we put together another winter term trip to



Greece and had a fantastic time despite some truly difficult weather and the usual adventures with various Greek hotels. In the spring I got to team-teach Ovid in the Middle Ages with Jen Bryan (of English) again—always a good time and always fascinating to see the way that medieval writers and thinkers were using the classical past. On the research front, much of my energy for the past year has

been devoted to revising *Controlling Desires*, my book about ancient sexuality; the new version has two new chapters, more vitamins, minerals, and fiber, and is available in paperback—now out from University of Texas Press. This past summer, I traveled to France where I got to see the Bayeux tapestry—unbelievably cool—and then to Greece where, like Naomi, I enjoyed the start and finish of my acting career with the *Thucydides Dramaticus* program.

## SUMMER EXCAVATION IN MORGANTINA

**T**he Department of Classics was pleased to volunteer Oberlin's labor and expertise to the 2017 season of the American Excavations at Morgantina: Contrada Agnese Project, an archaeological excavation project in central Sicily, Italy. Professor Elizabeth Wueste and graduating senior (and soon to be University of Cincinnati graduate student) Shelby Raynor spent the six-week season in June and July excavating a suburban Hellenistic city-block at the site of Morgantina. Professor Wueste has been associated with the dig for several years and was happy to be able to continue her fieldwork and research with Oberlin's assistance and Shelby's participation.

AEM:CAP is a multi-year research and excavation project of well-preserved deposits within an urban grid dating between the third and first centuries B.C.E. The city was a mountain trading post during the Hellenistic period, representing cultural influences from

a number of foreign colonizers. The site is particularly interesting because of its layered mix of multiple cultural and ethnic identities, including indigenous Sicels, Greek colonies, Syracusan tyrants, and finally, Roman armies. Previous seasons have revealed a city block, informally dubbed "the Southeast Building," consisting of several distinct mixed-use rooms, indicating spaces for commercial activity, food preparation and storage, and even industrial activities.

This season, Professor Wueste and Shelby excavated a dramatic collapsed roof and tile fall across the southeast building, representing a well-dated destruction phase attributable to the Roman sack of the town in 211 BCE. They continued to further define and excavate within distinct rooms down to foundation and construction deposits. Smaller finds and discovered features included a number of terracotta altars and figurines, a bread oven, and a grain mill made of pumice stone. Shelby made a particular name for herself with her powerful, but precise destructive ability with a pick-ax.

The project includes as many as 65 specialists, staff, and volunteers and is divided into teams dedicated to excavations, ceramics, conservation, environmental analysis, geospatial mapping, and database administration. It is represented by volunteers from schools all over the United States and abroad, including juniors, seniors, and a number of graduate students. It is a great place to network with other scholars of classical archaeology, and the project is happy to exchange hard work in the Sicilian sun for the cost of room-and-board. The team lived in the small hilltop town of Aidone, where they had the opportunity to practice their Italian while sipping an espresso or eating a gelato in the shadow of Aidone's Archaeological Museum. Besides nightly family dinners, social events included trips to nearby archaeological sites (such as Piazza Armerina), academic lectures by visiting specialists, karaoke nights,



A scene from the dig at Morgantina

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## MORGANTINA, CONT.

and a highly competitive talent show (in which Professor Wueste served as the emcee and Shelby performed card tricks).

Preliminary field reports from this season will be available on FastiOnline.org, with more comprehensive publications to follow. In the meantime, please visit themagazzino.org for the project's goals, introductions to the team, yearly newsletters, volunteer blog posts, and an application for the 2018 season.

Tremendous thanks to the Department of Classics and the Office of Foundation, Government, and Corporate Grants for their generous support of Oberlin's participation in AEM:CAP.



Shelby Raynor (Latin and Archaeology, 2017) at the Morgantina archaeological project.

## SALVE LONDINIUM!

By Katie Maleckar '19 and Rebecca Lawrence '18

As we sat down to write this article, the first 30-45 (okay, 60) minutes were spent scrolling through photos, trying to remember when we did what, and laughing over old times. It's fitting that a little over a year after we first arrived in London we're reliving it through Facebook memories and old computer files. The spring 2017 Danenberg Oberlin-in-London Program featured a classics-biology theme, led by the illustrious power-couple Drew Wilburn and Maureen Peters and aided by dynamic duo Donna Vinter (London program director and professor of The

## GRADUATING SENIORS



The 2018 Bardic Reading crew, round about midnight. We read Emily Wilson's new translation of the *Odyssey*.

### 2017

#### GREEK

Lucas Brown  
Michael Swantek\*

#### LATIN

Shelby Raynor  
Ruby Reilly  
Matthew Russel  
Beatrice Chum

#### CLASSICAL CIVILIZATION

Clara Carlson-Kirigin  
Olivia Fountain  
Isabelle Harari  
James Miller

### 2018

#### GREEK

Maxwell Wamser\*  
Tara Wells\*

#### LATIN

Mengtian Bai  
Susanna Faas-Bush  
Rebecca Lawrence  
Rose Rosenthal  
Blair Swasey

#### CLASSICAL CIVILIZATION

Elliot Greenberg  
Jonathan Karparkin  
Sandra Kibble  
Alana Sheppard

\*double-major in Greek and Latin

London Stage course) and Katy Layton-Jones (History of London). This medical-mystery tour was a whirlwind that still brings a smile to our faces.

The course schedule consisted of the History of Medicine; Magic, Witchcraft, and Religion; The Biology of Cancer; History of London; and The London Stage. Students and professors utilized London to the fullest. Our location in central London, one block from the British Museum, facilitated frequent field trips to world

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# SALVE LONDINIUM, CONT.

renowned museums which brought the history we studied to life. Our personal favorites included, but were not limited to, the Wellcome Collection, the Tate Britain, the British Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum, and the National Portrait Gallery (and the National Gallery, and the Museum of London, and... okay, all of them). Honestly, it was wonderful, the sheer amount of free museums with all of the artworks and artifacts that we have only ever seen in our textbooks, now in front of our eyes!

In addition to unlimited access to art and artifacts, we took advantage of the intellectual community, attending lectures across the city and meeting with curators and librarians whose deep knowledge broadened our own. (We kid you not, we saw Irving Finkel defend the existence of ghosts in a particularly heated Q&A session at the Royal Institution's talk entitled "Spirits in the ether: Oliver Lodge and the physics of the spirit world"—and he wasn't even a panelist!) Professor Wilburn's Magic, Witchcraft, and Religion course was able to get up close and personal with a 15th-century, pocket-sized *Maleus Malificarum* at the Wellcome, John Dee's books—complete with marginalia—at the Royal College of Physicians, and the Ripley Scroll (yes, that alchemy scroll) at the British Library. Yay, librarians and eccentric collectors! We even got a backstage tour of the British Museum to see papyri, defixiones (curse tablets), amulets, and other magical objects. (We'd show you photos, but then we'd have to kill you.) A particular highlight was spending an afternoon in the Petrie Museum where we saw Hawara mummy portraits as well as Amarna pottery (including blue Egyptian sherds). While there we met the an osteoarchaeologist working in the collection.

Our adventures weren't limited to the city. With the London program, we visited Stonehenge, Bath, Gloucester, Cambridge, and Edinburgh, stopping at Hadrian's Wall along the way! Stonehenge, Bath, and Gloucester were all done in one bus ride across the British countryside, stopping at Jenner House, where the vaccine for smallpox was first developed (and where Katie recreated a photo of famous Obie alum D.A. Henderson, who lead the effort to eradicate smallpox). Stonehenge was notable for the high winds and sheep that are underrepresented in textbook photography, as well as one of the earliest religious or "magical" sites in Britain.

In Bath we explored the Roman Bath, for which the city is named, which is one of the best preserved baths of its kind, complete with its own heated natural spring and a ripe location to learn about the ancient world in Britain. It is notable, too, as the location of ancient glove-heist, as evidenced by a curse tablet found there (Katie would also like you to know that is also important in the early modern period, but this is a classics newsletter, and we'd be getting off track).

On our way back to London, we stopped at Gloucester Cathedral and quickly tried to recreate as many hallway scenes from Harry Potter as we could, as well as playing a rousing game of hide-and-go-seek in the garden—now that we think about it, we also played tag at Stonehenge. This might be an opportune moment to mention that Professors Wilburn and Peters brought their



*Drew, Maureen, Claire and Patrick at Stonehenge*



*Drew Wilburn's London Program students on Hadrian's Wall.*

lovely young children Patrick and Claire along with them for the semester. In April, we traveled to Edinburgh where we attended lectures at the Edinburgh Science Festival, including one titled "Fashionable Diseases: Syphilis, Consumption and Gout" about the optics of disease in the 18th- and 19th-centuries. We climbed atop Arthur's Seat and walked through the city on a ghost tour. We detoured to Hadrian's Wall at Housesteads on our journey back, where an ancient hospital once stood and where now stands the archaeological remains of the outpost, a small museum, and more sheep. In Cambridge, we went on a sopping wet History of Science Tour and ate at the The Eagle, the pub where Watson and Crick, DNA discoverers extraordinaire—\*cough\* Rosalind Franklin discovered it first \*cough\*. We stopped in the Cambridge Bookstore to keep warm while brushing up on our ablative absolutes in the Cambridge Latin III course.

Most students took advantage of our proximity to Europe

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# SALVE LONDINIUM, CONT.

during spring break, as well as easy access to the rest of England by rail—be it an afternoon to Oxford or a 24-hour marathon to Penzance! We took our Spring Break in Barcelona, where in true Classics-major fashion, we stumbled accidentally upon a Greek amphitheater (more in style, than in date). And we continued our adventures finding magic and mystery in London. We did our best to leave no stone unturned in our exploration of the city, through theaters and museums, neighborhoods, and bookstores. We made new friends and met some old ones along the way, including a mini Classics Department Reunion with Professor Trinacty, who came

out to visit. London, originally founded in 43 CE, served as a ideal viewpoint from which to explore the ancient world's transition to a modern metropolis. On one of our many afternoons wandering around the city, we stumbled upon a piece of a Roman wall near the Tower of London. Our faces lit up as we ran down the alley with glee. We pulled out our phones, taking turns snapping photos of each other in front of this hidden-away remnant and generally geeking out. Kathy LaTourette '18, a baffled biologist, asked us, "Is this what it's like being a Classics major?" And, of course, we shouted, "YES!"

## MARTIN LECTURES, 2018

By Julian Hirsh '20, Classical Civilization

**W**hat more can be gained from excavating a city that has been nearly continuously excavated since 1748? During his four Martin Lecture talks, Steven Ellis answered this question resoundingly by demonstrating that through the application of modern inquiries and modern archaeological techniques, our knowledge of Pompeii can be significantly expanded.

Steven Ellis is associate professor of classics at the University of Cincinnati. He earned his PhD at the University of Sydney in 2005 and from 2005 to 2013 excavated the Porta Stabia Region at Pompeii. In tandem with his excavations, Ellis published several papers and books focusing on Roman retail spaces, urban waste management, site formation processes, movement in cities, social structures and their hierarchies with regards to 'sub-elite' groups, and the Roman fish salting industry. This year will see the release of his second book, *The Roman Retail Revolution*, with Oxford University Press.

Ellis' lectures managed to compress many of these papers and

his excavations into four accessible talks. These talks were framed around questions of Pompeii's micro-context through his investigations of class and the daily lives of the city's 'sub-elites' and macro-context through investigations of Pompeii's interactions within the urban trends affecting the wider empire.

In his first lecture, Ellis introduced his excavations at the Porta Stabia region of Pompeii and discussed a framework that he used for detecting the presence of 'sub-elites' within the Roman material context. This framework provided the basis for Ellis' second lecture, which examined sub-elite construction, retail, and investment. Using the questions of who was building Pompeian retail spaces and why they were financing those spaces, Ellis discussed his view regarding the preeminence of the patron-client system in establishing and maintaining the Roman urban landscape.

The third Martin lecture examined various urban features in Pompeii and how they came into both use and disuse. To illustrate the Roman empire's changing urban trends, Ellis focused on the rise and fall of specific features within the Roman archaeological record, including stone bar counters, brothels, drainage systems, and stepping stones. By comparing the evidence from Pompeii to other cities in the empire, Ellis discussed his view that three separate retail revolutions occurred between the second-century B.C.E. and the second-century C.E. In his view, these 'retail revolutions' changed the landscapes of Roman cities and are therefore essential to understanding Roman urban life in different periods.

The final Martin Lecture took a different approach from the other three by zooming in on the life of a single Pompeian resident, a soldier of Syrian origin named Marcus Surus Garasenus. Ellis used Garasenus' military diploma and the remains from his house to reconstruct what his life might have been like. This lecture gave a powerful impression of Pompeii and its residents as Garasenus provided a useful focal point for imagining life in the city.

In addition to his lectures, Ellis had the opportunity to interact with Oberlin's classics community. Following his second talk, he

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*Martin Lecturer Steven Ellis with Classics students in the seminar room*



# MARTIN LECTURES, CONT.

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joined the a lively classics crowd for dinner at the Mandarin, a Chinese restaurant in town. In a true time tested tradition, Ellis ate at a large round table comprised exclusively of students. This provided a space for students to talk to Ellis in a more casual setting while also being able to bombard him with questions ranging from the serious i.e. “What attracted you specifically to Roman archaeology?” to the silly i.e. “What’s your Chinese zodiac sign?”

Ellis also popped into Professor Wilburn’s Pompeii seminar. Since the course had been framed around Ellis’ Martin lectures, his visit to the class was a special opportunity for students who had been studying Pompeii for an entire semester to interact with current Pompeian research and research questions. In preparation for Ellis’ visit, the class read several of his articles focused on the

Pompeian fish salting industry, the placement of bars in the city, and the material record for threshold superstitions at Pompeii. Reading these articles before Ellis’ visit gave students the opportunity to formulate questions while also preparing the class to more deeply engage with the Martin Lectures themselves.

Throughout his four lectures, Ellis provided a fascinating insight into the micro and macro contexts of Pompeii. His focus on sub-elite groups offered an interesting glimpse into their world, a view that is often glossed over when discussing the ancient past and that will continue to expand our understanding of that past into the future.

It was fantastic having Ellis join us on campus, and we hope to see him again soon!

## THEATER OF WAR

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By Marjolaine Goldsmith '14, Classical Civilization

I work for a company called Theater of War Productions. We present readings of plays, mostly Greek tragedies, but other texts too, to spark dialogue about a variety of social justice and public health issues. A couple of examples: we use scenes from Sophocles’ *Ajax* to address PTSD, suicide, the challenges of returning home from war and the stresses of working in a rigidly hierarchical world. We were recently invited by the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, Gen. Joseph Dunford, to perform *Ajax* for the highest-ranking military commanders in the U.S. I had the honor and privilege of playing Ajax’s battle-bride, Tecmessa. And last month, Professor Chris Trinacty trekked down to the University of Cincinnati to attend a presentation of *Ajax* facilitated by Theater of War Founder Bryan Doerries, at which I had the pleasure of acting alongside David Strathairn. I am incredibly grateful to Professor Trinacty for coming.

I got my job by reading Bryan Doerries’ book, *The Theater of War: What Ancient Greek Tragedies Can Teach Us Today*, and writing him a letter. Before writing to Bryan, I had first written to my professors to express what had resonated with me about his work.

At Theater of War Productions, we also use parts of Sophocles’ *Philoctetes* to address chronic illness, care giving, moral injury, and the ethical questions surrounding military recruitment. We read scenes from Euripides’ *Madness of Hercules* to engage diverse audiences in discussions about gun violence (the invincible bow at the center of the play is the closest analogous counterpart to high-capacity firearms today) and acts of violence in general, and interrogate how citizens and communities respond when acts of violence occur. We use scenes from Aeschylus’ *Eumenides*, the third part of the Oresteia Trilogy, to address the biases and inherent injustices of our legal system. We use “The Drum Major Instinct,” Dr. Martin Luther King’s final sermon, to address racial discrimination, exclusivism, capitalism, and materialism. We have

set the choruses of Sophocles’ *Antigone* to music, written by a local composer from St. Louis named Phil Woodmore. The choruses are sung during a reading of the entire play by a gospel choir composed of police officers, activists, community members, and some of Michael Brown’s teachers, all from Ferguson and St. Louis, to help audiences address police and community relations and the question of allyship.

Our project featuring Sophocles’ *Philoctetes* exemplifies why I love what I do and what my education at Oberlin has led me to pursue. Philoctetes must give up his bow, his only means of survival for the past nine years, to finally get off the island of Lemnos and return to and receive help from the very people abandoned him in the first place. The bow in *Philoctetes* has been interpreted in myriad ways by our audiences. Recently, when we performed at the Tillary Street Women’s Shelter, a 200-bed homeless shelter in Brooklyn, one of our panelists took the bow to symbolize her first-born son, whom she gave to her mother because she couldn’t care for him during her service in the Navy. At the Borden Avenue Veteran’s Residence, a homeless shelter for military veterans in Long Island City, a resident told his long-term housing coordinator that each day he must lay down his bow, his manhood, his ego, his pride, to receive assistance in his housing search. His pride and self-reliance he equated to his survival in the neighborhood in which he grew up and during his time in prison.

These two interpretations not only highlight a gender binary that is pervasive in our country and world, but they also reinforce the power of interpretation. The multiplicity of interpretations of each of the texts we use serve as lenses through which an individual narrative can be expressed and heard by others. When audiences hear these diverse interpretations, we all bear witness to individual truths. Not only do I think this is what Athenians

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# THEATER OF WAR, CONT.

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were after during the fifth century BC, but I also think it is the most productive way forward in our divided country and world.

I felt encouraged to engage with and interpret these texts by my fantastic professors in the classics department at Oberlin. That permission and encouragement opened the door that led me to join a company that provides permission and encouragement for large, diverse audiences across the country and the world. Our goal is to create the conditions in a room that will hold the truths of all present and to stimulate a conversation galvanized by the democratiz-

ing effect of the ancient plays we perform.

I should say, these readings are on steroids, featuring actors ripping pages, spitting, screaming, and crying, in an effort to bring these ancient texts to life for contemporary audiences and to access the truth of trauma. Trauma is the common denominator of all our projects. I was brought on to Theater of War Productions as both an actor and company manager. I studied classics at Oberlin but acted all the while, and was sure, in some part of my gut, that the two were inextricably linked. They are.

## WINTER TERM IN GREECE

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By Frances Purcell '18

**T**he number of times I have pined for gigantes since returning from Greece last January is far too many to count. Gigantes, or giant beans, are dried large white beans prepared in a tomato-based sauce. They are far from the most decadent food found in Greece, but the best of them are rich in flavor and melt in your mouth. As Rachel Vales, a fellow student on the trip, perfectly summarizes, gigantes were “definitely one of the best food surprises I’ve ever had.” Members of our party ate gigantes in all seven cities in which we spent the night, and in speaking with my peers and reflecting on our trip I have found that measurement of gigante deliciousness is a useful organizational scheme for our memories.

Though Kirk had in fact included the phrase “do you have gigantes” on our Greek translations sheet, they were certainly not the first thing on our minds when we arrived in Athens. On our first full day in the city, we awoke to a dusting of snow, preventing us from visiting the Acropolis as we had planned. Instead we went to the National Archeological Museum in the morning and spent the afternoon exploring as we wished. The next morning, we set off for the Acropolis, braving strong winds to reach the apex. As we began to walk by the Propylaea, Temple of Athena Nike,

Erechtheion, and of course the Parthenon, it finally hit us that we were in Greece standing on the Acropolis. No number of classics courses can prepare you for the sense of historical awe you feel while looking out over the city of Athens from the same temples the Ancient Greeks occupied thousands of years ago.

After we were driven from the Acropolis by heavy wind and rain and spent the afternoon at the Acropolis Museum, we split off in groups for dinner. A small group of students accompanied Kirk, and were thus first introduced to gigantes. Emma Marcus, one of the students there that night, says that given Kirk’s persistent talk of gigantes, “I remember thinking I would either love them in a life-changing way, or absolutely hate them. Suffice to say the former occurred.” While none of us thought that we would absolutely hate Greece, I think there is always a concern that such a highly anticipated trip will fall short of expectations. After our first few days in Athens, we could all feel that, as with gigantes, this was going to be a life-changing experience.

The middle of our trip brought us to Sparta, where unfortunately the quality of the gigantes mirrored our experience of the city: poor. While the drive into the Eurotas Valley was beautiful, the city of modern Sparta itself left much to be desired. The mental image of powerful Ancient Sparta did not match the current city, which featured hotels reeking of cigarettes, closed museums, traffic jams, and constant rain. Strangely enough, the best gyro restaurant we found in Greece was in Sparta, so most of the group (myself included) ate gyros for both lunch and dinner. I have only been able to pin down one member of our party, Nora Newcomb, who ate gigantes in Sparta. This was tragically the first time Nora tried the dish, and was not at all impressed. Luckily the sites we got to visit around Sparta were worth surviving the city itself; the Menelaion provided beautiful views of the Eurotas Valley, and walking up and down the cobblestone paths of Mystras truly transported one back to Byzantine era Greece. The remarkably well-preserved Byzantine frescos in the churches within the citadel were worth the visit in and of themselves. Though Sparta may have been the low point of the trip, some of my most hilarious memories come from navigat-



*Most of the Winter Term in Greece crew on top of Acrocorinth*

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# WINTER TERM, CONT.

ing its strangeness with my friends and professors.

Quite fittingly, my most magical gigantes experience occurred at one of the most historically sacred locations in Greece: Delphi. The modern town sits below the lower slopes of Mount Parnassus, providing breathtaking views of the valleys below, stretching as far as the Gulf of Corinth. We stayed in Delphi for two nights, taking two days to view both the lower and upper archaeological sites. At the end of our first day, having most notably seen the photographically famous Tholos at the sanctuary of Athena Pronaia, the majority of our group set off for dinner with Kirk, Naomi, and our wonderful bus driver, Panagiotis. At the restaurant, we ordered many dishes, but the moment the gigantes touched my tongue I froze, eyes wide in amazement at how much better they were than any I had before. That night I ate more gigantes than I had the entire trip. They were so buttery and perfectly spiced that I finished a whole plate with my friend Mickey. Falling asleep that night with my stomach stuffed full of gigantes and local wine, I couldn't wait to see what our second day in Delphi held.

I was not disappointed, as we spent most of the next day atop the upper archaeological site. We zig-zagged across the site, climbing the mountain and periodically stopping to learn about different

structures such as the Roman agora, the Siphnian and Athenian Treasuries, the omphalos stone, and the Naxian column. Though the history surrounding each aspect of the site was fascinating, the structure I found the most striking, and that I was most excited to see in Greece, was the Temple of Apollo. Though it was rebuilt many times in antiquity, and only the stone foundations and partial restorations of six Doric columns remain, the Temple of Apollo felt truly sacred. Looking out over the valley from the ruins of this religiously monumental structure made me understand why the Ancient Greeks believed Delphi to be the center of the world. As with the previous night's gigantes, I once again froze; this time my eyes were widened by natural beauty, rich religious history, and the sudden, overwhelming feeling of connection to the distant past.

In looking back through my photos of our trip, I realize that there were too many fascinating sites, beautiful views, funny stories, and lasting memories to detail in such a short piece. Be that as it may, I hope I have conveyed two of the most important aspects of our time in Greece; it was a life-changing experience in both the highs and the lows, and the food was really damn good.

*Special thanks to my fellow students for generously sharing their gigantes memories.*



*The Winter Term in Greece crew in front of the Parthenon, on a cold January day*



# ALUMNI NEWS

## KAREN (KAY) ROBERTS '70, CLASSICAL

**CIVILIZATION:** I've been teaching Latin for 20-some years at at Iolani, a private K-12 school in Honolulu. I am one of three Latin teachers at the school. [kroberts@iolani.org](mailto:kroberts@iolani.org)

## SUSAN GELMAN '80, GREEK AND

**PSYCHOLOGY:** I'm a professor of psychology and linguistics at the University of Michigan, where I've been on the faculty since 1984. My husband and I are soon to be empty-nesters, as the youngest of our three children will start college in the fall. [gelman@umich.edu](mailto:gelman@umich.edu)

## ROB HARDY '86, LATIN AND HISTORY:

I'm in my second term as a member of the Northfield (Minn.) School Board and my second year as Northfield's Poet Laureate. My collection of poetry, *Domestication*, was one of the 10 bestselling books of 2017 at our local bookstore. 2017 also saw the release of the commentary on Selections from Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica* I edited for the Dickinson College Commentaries, and publication of my adaptation of the "Oresteia" (Hero Now Theatre). In 2017 I hiked up the highest mountains in Crete (Psiloritis) and Vermont (Mt. Mansfield). Clara '83 (Latin) and I spent a month in Crete in 2017 and are looking forward to spending another month in Crete in June 2018. We've both been studying modern Greek with a tutor from the Paideia Institute, and I've been translating and cooking many Greek recipes. [rbhardy3rd@gmail.com](mailto:rbhardy3rd@gmail.com)

## EMILY EERDMANS '97, LATIN:

So excited to announce the publication of my sixth book, which chronicles the career of Henri Samuel, an important French interior designer who counted everyone from the artist Balthus to Valentino as clients. It will be published by Rizzoli this April. I occasionally teach a class on design history at the New York School of Design, and it is so rewarding to see the students light up as they learn and connect with the lessons of the past. [emilyeerdemans@gmail.com](mailto:emilyeerdemans@gmail.com)



Chris Trinacty with Shelby Raynor

**SAMANTHA GRACE '05, GREEK:** A few months before finishing my PhD in anthropology, our 3-year-old son, Apollo, gained a baby brother, Pacifico. We (Guille Masson '04 and I) bought a house in Oakland, Calif., and hope the Oberlin classics crew will come visit the Bay Area to hang out with us. [samantha.grace@gmail.com](mailto:samantha.grace@gmail.com)

## MAX TEITEL-PAULE '06, LATIN AND

**GREEK:** I am still teaching Ancient and Classical Studies at Earlham College. This summer I head to St. Andrews to give a paper on white supremacist themes in Rick Riordan's *The Lightning Thief*. [paulema@earlham.edu](mailto:paulema@earlham.edu)

## CARLY MACHADO '06, CLASSICAL

**CIVILIZATION:** In January I celebrated four years of happy employment at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where I'm department administrator for the endowment. I was accepted into the Doula Program to Accompany & Comfort last year and now work as a volunteer visiting with folks in NYC who are facing end of life alone. I live in Brooklyn with two cats, a bird, and a big chosen family of fellow Obies. Life is good.

## ANNA LEINBERGER '07, GREEK AND

**LATIN:** I got married—and to a nautical

archaeologist that I originally met at ICCS! I still acquire and edit books at Berrett-Koehler in Oakland, Calif., but now I also occasionally get to go to exciting locations and help excavate shipwrecks. (FYI: shipwrecks are *very* smelly.) I'm always excited to hear from Obies interested in the book publishing industry, and we occasionally have internships, so please reach out if you have questions! [aleinberger@bkpub.com](mailto:aleinberger@bkpub.com)

## SARAH THOMPSON '08, CLASSICAL CIVILIZATION AND ENGLISH WITH CREATIVE WRITING CONCENTRATION:

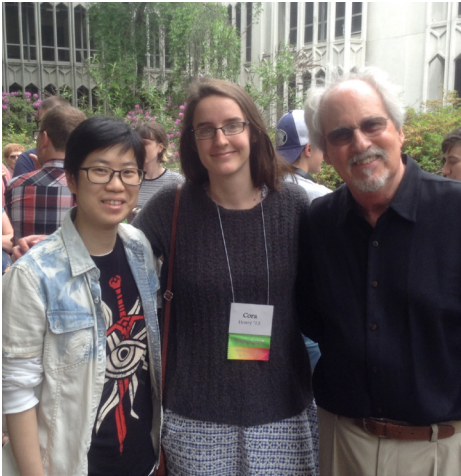
I'm gearing up to finish my PhD in performance studies at UC Davis with designated emphases in classics and classical receptions and feminist theory and research. My dissertation is titled "Unruly Women: Feminist Issues in the Translation and Adaptation of Euripides." It's not a great title, but you get the idea (now accepting alternative title suggestions). Yes, I'm still going on about that stuff! I'm defending this spring. Wish me luck, and we'll see in next year's newsletter how it went!

**GABE BAKER '10, LATIN AND GREEK:** I'm now the global education manager at a virtual reality company in Santa Barbara called Worldviz. [baker@worldviz.com](mailto:baker@worldviz.com)

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# ALUMNI NEWS, CONT.



**NICHOLAS OLSON '15, CLASSICAL CIVILIZATIONS AND POLITICS:** I recently used my classical civilizations knowledge in a job interview where I was required to give a presentation to my potential employer. My general premise was about why studying classical civilizations is still relevant, with the message that we frequently see references to themes and symbols from Greco-Roman Societies in our culture today. I got the job, and I began work in March. My employer has a name that is rooted in masterpiece antiquities literature, Epic. Epic Systems is a software company for Electronic Health Records. We work to chronical and coordinate patients' care across medical providers. This illustrates why the name is related to Greek roots and epic novels like the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*—Epic provides an account of patients medical histories and the health challenges they face throughout their lives. I am enthusiastic about the opportunity to impact patient's health care with technology that provides accessible data on effective treatment trends.



From top, L to R: Photos from 2017 Commencement/Reunion Weekend: Zongdan Wu, Cora Henry, and Tom Van Nortwick; Clara Carlson-Kirigin '17 with her family and Chris Trinacty; Tom Van Nortwick with Audrey Wallace and Emma Chapple; Ben Lee with Leah Grover. Photos from 2018 Commencement/Reunion Weekend: Rebecca Lawrence, Chris, and Drew; Drew, Rob Hardy '86, Clara Shaw Hardy '83, and Kirk.



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## CONGRATS, 2018 GRADS!



*Classics faculty and graduating seniors (2018). Left to right: Drew Wilburn and Claire, Elizabeth Wueste, Ben Lee, Susanna Faas-Bush, Tara Wells, Eric Mikalauskas, Rose Rosenthal, Chris Trinacty, Naomi Campa, Max Wamser, Mengtian Bai, Rebecca Lawrence, and Ada Trinacty.*