

# Humanities Newsletter

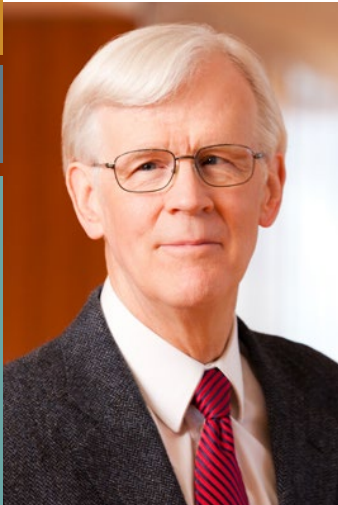
April | 2018

In this issue: Featured Alumni Gerald T. Snow;  
World Languages & Cultures Student Breelyn Everett;  
Communication Professor Tae Kyoung Lee; and  
History Department Receives Grant from the American  
Historical Association

# ALUMNI FEATURE

## Gerald T. Snow

BS | Linguistics



At age 73, Gerald Snow can now claim degrees from five different universities: bachelor's degrees from Stanford (English, 1969) and the University of Utah (Linguistics, 2014); a J.D. from Harvard Law School (1972); and master's degrees from New York University (Taxation, 1976) and Brigham Young University (Linguistics, 2017). "This means," he said, "that five different universities are now after me for alumni contributions every year!"

A true life-long learner, Snow more or less retired from a long career as an attorney at Ray, Quinney & Nebeker in Salt Lake City almost 10 years ago, but had no plans of actually relaxing into a state of retirement.

"When it came time to retire, I went on an LDS mission with my wife to Italy," Snow recalled. "When we came back, I didn't want to be a full time practicing attorney again. I'd always wanted to go back to school. Since I love school and learning in general, I decided I'd like to study language – not *languages*, but the structure of language."

Snow, who already spoke German, Italian and French, decided he would rather learn about language than learn a new one, which is what prompted him to enroll in linguistics classes at the University of Utah. On top of that, he took several classes in creative writing – another subject he holds close to his heart.

Though he began his schooling at Stanford in the '60s with a major in Physics, he finished instead with a degree in English. "I always enjoyed English and literature," Snow said. "I also like to write. I studied creative writing at Stanford and at the U, and I've always loved words and language." Snow added, "And with the law, my stock and trade is words – persuasion and being able to write correctly and articulately. It was no great leap to go from there to the study of linguistics."

After he graduated with his bachelor's in linguistics in 2014, he moved on to his master's degree in the same subject at BYU, where he became the oldest person to graduate with an MA in Linguistics at the school. Today, he works part time for the LDS church in Sacred Materials Translation. He is a member of a team which is currently

responsible for translating sacred texts like scriptures into Turkish, Georgian, and Navajo.

"In addition to work in translation, there are innumerable careers available for linguists," he added. "One growing field is forensic linguistics, the intersection of law and linguistics."

When he isn't practicing law at Ray, Quinney & Nebeker or helping with translation for the LDS church, Snow is volunteering as a Boy Scouts leader, working with his wife, Julie, as volunteers with a refugee family for Catholic Community Services, gardening, traveling with his wife, building a telescope (some day), and reading about theoretical physics. On top of all that, he has an idea for a new career: "Maybe I'll use my linguistics degree and my interest in creative writing to try writing science fiction, something I was fascinated with when I was a boy."

# STUDENT FEATURE

## Breclyn Everett

Undergraduate Student | World Languages & Cultures



Breclyn Everett has always had a lifelong goal to work with orphanages in China. She knew, in order to achieve this goal, she would need to learn to speak Chinese. "Working on my degree has already helped me reach my goal," she said. Everett has been able to work in three different orphanages

in China, including working as a translator through an organization called Love Without Boundaries. Everett and her husband have recently adopted a daughter from China, who is blind, and Everett's ability to speak Chinese has helped her daughter better transition into American life.

As a senior in World Languages & Cultures, Everett speaks Mandarin fluently, but recognizes that she has learned much more than just a dialect. She has been immersed in Chinese culture, which she is certain will help her in the future. "I have had the opportunity to study the works of great poets and philosophers from China and have truly been enriched by studying such great works,"

she explained. Everett is confident that learning more about Chinese culture will help in teaching her daughter more about her birth nation's culture and customs.

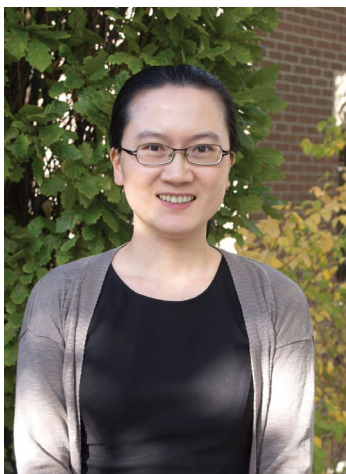
Everett could not have had many of the marvelous experiences in China without some of the "fantastic professors here at the University of Utah, especially in the World Languages & Cultures department," she said. Everett identifies two particularly important lessons that professors have taught her during her time in the College of Humanities: First, they consistently encouraged her to improve her language skills; Second, they helped her to recognize her language skills and to trust that she can learn anything she sets her mind to. Their patience and encouragement has helped Everett build confidence and "opened the door for many wonderful opportunities to use my Chinese language skills in career, volunteer, and social circumstances," she exclaimed.

Everett is passionate about the value of humanistic inquiry in a university education. "The Humanities offer the learning of skills that connect you to the greater world," she said. "Studying subjects like foreign languages helps to break down any boundaries between us and see ourselves as interconnected. Through my studies, I have learned see the beautiful uniqueness, and the sameness, of myself and others."

## FACULTY FEATURE

### Tae Kyoung Lee

Assistant Professor | Communication



Professor Tae Kyoung Lee teaches in the Department of Communication at the University of Utah, but she did not know that she would end up teaching in the humanities. Lee originally studied advertising and public relations as an undergraduate because she wanted to become an expert in marketing communication.

She worked in a public relations agency on the marketing team at the largest food company in South Korea. She helped to craft messages designed to reach specific demographics and quickly learned that some messages and mediums were much more effective than others. As she gained expertise, she became interested

in practical questions, like, "How do individuals and corporations create effective persuasive messages?" Lee was accepted to study at the University of California, Davis, where her adviser trained her to research, write, and teach more effectively as an academic. Her advisor also inspired her to pursue a PhD, which she earned at Cornell University.

Lee savors the opportunity to teach about "persuasion," the focus of her research. She particularly enjoys teaching about message strategies to persuade people in health communication campaigns. "I like to share some of my research with the class and discuss its implications. It helps me in my research," she said.

Teaching in a Humanities college after being trained as a social scientist has been incredibly rewarding for Lee. She believes that the social sciences and the humanities teach students how to ask and answer questions based upon evidence, and that her courses will help students to take the best of both disciplines.

"When students graduate and develop in their careers after college, they will face many questions that they had not previously considered," she said. "To find answers, they will need to understand the questions and why they need to know the answers." In order to help students learn how to think about problem solving, Lee teaches students to conduct research to find the answers to their questions—inside or outside of the classroom. She also emphasizes the importance of theoretical reasoning, which helps place problems into contexts that often make dilemmas easier to understand. In doing so, she makes learning accessible and connects coursework to student's lives.



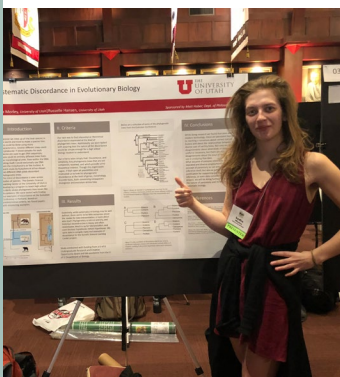
**CAREER DIVERSITY  
FOR HISTORIANS**

## History Department Receives Grant from the American Historical Association

The University of Utah's Department of History has been chosen to receive a Career Diversity Implementation Grant, as part of the Career Diversity for Historians initiative. Funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and administered by the American Historical Association (AHA), the grant will support broad-based professional development in the department's culture and curriculum. The grant will provide funding to support two years of programming as well as a Career Diversity Fellow, a PhD candidate for the department who will collaborate with a faculty team to better prepare history PhDs for careers inside and beyond the academy. The fellows will be announced in late Spring. [Continue Reading](#)

## Philosophy Undergraduate Selected as 2018 Outstanding Undergraduate Research Awardee

Lydia Morley, an undergraduate student in the Philosophy department was selected as one of the 2018 Outstanding Undergraduate Research Awardees by the Office of Undergraduate Research Opportunities. The undergraduate research students were nominated by their faculty mentors in conjunction with their colleges and schools for their commitment to developing research skills, their active participation in research-related activities on campus, and their positive contributions to their department, college, and University as a whole. [Continue Reading](#)



## Michael Mejia Publishes New Book, *TOKYO*

Assistant Professor of English, Michael Mejia, has published *TOKYO* (University of Alabama Press), a novel in three parts, linked by a single narrative of disaster, loss, and longing. *TOKYO* was conceived as a novel that would “investigate, through fiction, the Japan I'd imagined, while also recognizing that every Japan I imagined would always already be a fictional one, a Western one,” said Mejia. [Continue Reading](#)



## Linguistics Department to Host Public Forum on Non-Native Speakers in the Legal System

**On April 20 in Carolyn Tanner Irish Humanities Bldg (CTIHB) Room 109**, world-renowned linguists will meet to discuss the treatment of non-native speakers of English through the lens of new branch of linguistics—forensic linguistics—at the crossroads of language and the law. The purpose of the forum, convened by Chair Scott Jarvis, is to initiate a dialog between linguistics experts and stakeholders, with a focus on three critical real-world concerns: non-native speakers' comprehension of the Miranda rights, the quality of court interpreting, and linguistic discrimination in the workplace. [Find out more.](#)





Our theme for the year reflects a powerful truth: **Humanities Gives You the Edge.** Alumni of Humanities not only lead lives of extraordinary fulfillment, but they also excel at whatever they do. Our thousands of alumni unanimously tell us that **Humanities gave them the edge** that helped them succeed as excellent communicators; multi-lingual and culturally sophisticated global citizens; critical, ethical, and logical thinkers; and outstanding creative partners. And research backs this up! Studies show that Humanities students find careers that provide financial security and job satisfaction that matches those of students in nearly every other major. Employers increasingly seek employees who have strong skills learned in Humanities (writing, problem solving, listening, speaking, critical thinking, etc.). Humanities gives people the edge they need to thrive today. How does Humanities give YOU the edge?

## GIVE TO THE HUMANITIES

Your contributions provide scholarships for students, help develop new programs, and fund innovative research that keeps this college on the cutting edge.

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