

The EGSA Digest

Frequenter Plerumque Verum

January 31, 2019

Inside this issue: Knowledge, Truth, Reality, and the Facts

Well, at this point, we're past the early stages of the semester and things are, probably, starting to get somewhat serious, unless of course you are [past coursework](#) in which case your own [deadlines](#) probably propel you on your own rhythm of calm and frenzy. Whatever the case, good luck to the lot of you! I once again have relatively little to say, but, apropos of nothing, have this [incredibly virtuous penguin](#).

Sort of sincerely,

Clayton McReynolds

EGSA Secretary (a.k.a. Mister Secretary Sir, a.k.a. Minister of Misinformation)

Event Schedule

For a more conveniently condensed recounting of the events below, visit the [EGSA Website!](#) In addition to providing a clear calendar of upcoming events and important dates, the website works as a great guide for navigating your graduate school career with resources including the EGSA Handbook and the kinds of vital forms that the Department likes to cunningly conceal.

- ◆ **Tuesday, February 5. Coffee Hours with British Modernism Candidate. 10:15-11:45.**
Dr. Amanda Sigler, the final candidate for the British Modernism position, will be meeting with faculty and graduate students on campus (presumably in the 4th Floor Lounge), and it would certainly be good to consider dropping by during that time to make her feel welcome and to give her a chance to get to know us a bit. Please drop by the office and **sign up for a specific time**. I know that making [commitments](#) is hard with our schedules (and also just the worst), but the faculty get super antsy when they don't know whether the candidates will have any grad students to chat with, so it would be an excellent thing to do if you are interested in going.
- ◆ **Tuesday, February 12. IFL Teaching Workshop. White Room and Beckham Room, Bill Daniel Student Center. 12:30-3:00.**
To see the deets on this and other upcoming teaching workshops follow this here [link](#). These are a great way to get a fresh perspective on the rewards and challenges of teaching, so if you feel a bit stuck in a teaching rut this might be a nice way to [sharpen your classroom skills](#) and rejuvenate that teacherly enthusiasm!
- ◆ **Association for Literary Scholars, Critics, and Writers Fellowships. Deadline February 15.**
See below for the low-down on an opportunity some of your dissertating folks may want to consider:
“This annual fellowship is designed to support an individual whose doctoral dissertation involves literary history and/or aesthetics (broadly defined) by providing a three week residency at a cabin nestled on nine acres in the mountains of West Virginia. Preference is given to candidates whose dissertation is at an advanced stage. The cabin is fully equipped and has Internet service. The dates of the residency are flexible and to be determined by the fellowship recipient in consultation with the ALSCW. Applicants must submit a C.V., a chapter of their dissertation, a two page description of the entire dissertation, and two letters of recommendation. Materials should be submitted online to alscw@cua.org with the heading ALSCW Fellowship on the subject line of the email. Additional references and an occupancy agreement may be required. All applicants must be members of the ALSCW or sponsored by a member of the ALSCW. The deadline for submission is February 15th. The recipient of the fellowship will be notified by mid-March. Membership information is available on our website (alscw.org) by following the “Opportunities” link.”
- ◆ **Johns Hopkins CTY Summer Writing Employment Opportunities.**
CTY (Center for Talented Youth) is looking for qualified candidates to teaching Writing Workshops this summer, and we are probably all qualified candidates, so this might be a great way to get valuable experience and make money this summer! The first session is from June 23-July 12 and the second is from July 14– August 2. As an instructor, you could make [\\$2,400-\\$3,000](#) per session, and there are positions for teaching assistants and program assistants as well. If you think you might be interested, shoot me an email and I will forward you an email with lots more juicy details about what CTY is looking for in candidates and what this program looks like.

◆ **Neat Conference to Consider! June 6-8. Revenants: Christ, Time, and the Twenty-First Century. Lee University, Cleveland, TN.**

This conference sounds quite pertinent to the kinds of things a good number of you like to do (and it sounds pretty dang cool!), so it might be a good one to consider applying to!

“Flannery O’Connor’s attribution of a “Christ-haunted” South, the metaphysical revenant that haunts Derrida’s “Of Spirit,” George Steiner’s *Real Presences* that “rattle about [language] like old rags or ghosts in the attic,” Richard Harries’s 2018 *Haunted by Christ: Modern Writers and the Struggle for Faith*, the recent currency of postsecular analysis—in these and many more instances a post-Christian literature, critical discourse, and broader culture has long been coming to terms with the terms and continuing claims of its past. This conference seeks to explore and extend that haunting by inviting work that will address a variety of intersections between time, the Christian faith, and the literary enterprise. Please send 250-word abstracts or any other inquiries to Dr. Chad Schrock, cschrock@leeuniversity.edu. The deadline to submit an abstract is Friday, March 29, 2019.”

◆ **Remember Thy Handbook.**

Those of us who have taught are all too familiar with the way that our dear freshman students will so often come to us with questions about basic information for the class, without first remembering that they have an entire document of information about the class designed to answer just such questions on just such occasions (the syllabus). Don’t be like one of those freshmen. We, similarly, have an entire document full of information about how to do all the things in our graduate program! I refer, of course, to the EGSA Handbook, which you can access [here](#) or can access through the EGSA website linked above.

The EGSA Inquirer

After what seems to have been another harrowing Thetanist attack launched last week, it has become clear to us at The EGSA Inquirer that we cannot maintain a merely defensive position in this battle. We must fight back against our Thetan-worshipping adversaries with the most powerful weapon at our disposal: knowledge. We must seek to better understand the Thetanists who conspire amongst us. Who are they really? What organization do they follow? How do they function as a unit?

All we really have to go on right now are three suspected Thetanists: Luke Mitchell, Ben Rawlins, and Caitlin Lawrence; accordingly, we will take these three names as our starting points. What might these names reveal about the cunning Thetanists who bear them?

Let's begin with Luke. Luke, from the Greek Λουκας, can be roughly translated as "light giving." The one bearing this name then would seem to be one who illuminates, makes known what was unknown, in short a spreader of truth. But what we must remember is that the core principle of Thetanism is the precise opposite of illumination. The evil Thetans create false images of identity (engrams) which prevent us from gaining full knowledge of our true self. Thus, we must understand the name Luke to be, in an analogous way, a kind of nominal engram. The true meaning of Luke's name in this case is then an obscurer, a deceiver, a propagator of lies (something we at the EGSA Inquirer know nothing about!). This points us to Luke's function on the Thetanist team. Luke is, we might say, the mouth of Thetanism.

Now, if Luke is the mouth, I think we shall find that Caitlin is the heart of what we can now see emerging as the Thetanist "body." Caitlin's name means "clear" and "pure," and thus should be understood to actually indicate "opacity" and "darkness." But where Luke's name points to an epistemological obscuring, Caitlin's title refers to a deeper, more emotional masking. This makes sense since we know that Caitlin is especially connected to the Enneagram test (a means of implanting Thetanist engrams to overshadow true self-awareness). Caitlin's function then might seem to be less active but is more essentially vital to the Thetanist mission.

Finally then we come to Ben. If we draw from the tradition of the book of Genesis, we will remember that the name Benjamin means "son of my right hand." At first glance, this might seem to accord well with what we suspect thus far. This might seem to indicate that Ben is the "right hand" of the Thetanist body, the chief human enactor of the head's will (the head no doubt corresponding to the Thetans themselves). However, following such an interpretation would be to neglect the principle of Thetan inversion we have developed thus far. Just as we were meant to be deceived by Luke's name into associating him as a giver of truth and by Caitlin's name to believe her to be a provider of emotional clarity, so Ben's name is intended to cause us to believe that he is the leader of the Thetanists, when in fact the true meaning is "son of my *left* hand," indicating that Ben is not the first but the *second* in command in the Thetanist ranks!

In other words, we can infer from the names and corresponding roles of these three alleged Thetanist conspirators that the leader of the English Department Thetanists is still among us and still unknown. We at the EGSA Inquirer will not rest until we have discovered the identity of this shadow-leader, this arch-conspirator, this right hand! We ask that you share with us any pertinent information you might possess. But be careful, EGSA Anti-Thetanists. The Right Hand could be sitting next to you right now. So stay sharp, stay vigilant, and stay off the elevator.