Welcome

Science and the humanities are often treated as separate and distinct disciplines, yet each informs the other and the two are powerfully connected. In this series, we will explore the connections between science and the humanities through the work of scientists, engineers, artists and humanists who strive to better understand our shared natural world and improve the human experience.

*All events are free and open to the public.*
About the University Center for the Humanities

The mission of the Center is to recognize and support the humanities at Western Michigan University. As a gathering place for dialogue, the Center acts as an incubator for the exchange of ideas among faculty, emeriti, alumni, undergraduate and graduate students, and people in the wider community. Through the understanding of diverse cultural, professional, political, and intellectual landscapes, we nurture engaged academic and community life.

wmich.edu/humanities

About Lee Honors College

The mission of the Carl and Winifred Lee Honors College is to provide an exceptional undergraduate experience for high achieving students, to inspire in our graduates a thirst for the lifelong pursuit of creative inquiry and discovery, to provide our students with the skill and passion to address critical challenges, and to foster personal responsibility informed by a global perspective.

wmich.edu/honors
For far too long the dominant narrative in the history of science has been of science progressively stamping out superstition and ignorance in its never-ending quest for truths about nature. The achievements of science and scientists have indeed been impressive, but much of what is thought about how they took place is mythical. This talk draws on a number of historical examples—from antiquity to the present—to help set the record straight.

Ron Numbers is Hilldale Professor Emeritus of the History of Science and Medicine at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he taught for nearly four decades. He has written or edited more than two dozen books, including most recently, *Galileo Goes to Jail and Other Myths about Science and Religion* (Harvard, 2009); *Biology and Ideology from Descartes to Dawkins* (Chicago, 2010), edited with Denis Alexander; *Science and Religion around the World* (Oxford, 2011), edited with John Hedley Brooke; *Wrestling with Nature: From Omens to Science* (Chicago, 2011), edited with Peter Harrison and Michael H. Shank; and *Newton’s Apple and Other Myths about Science* (Harvard, 2015), edited with Kostas Kampourakis. He is a past president the History of Science Society, the American Society of Church History, and the International Union of History and Philosophy of Science.
More has been learned about the nature of the ocean in the past century than during all preceding human history, but at the same time, more has been lost owing to the growing impact that people are having on the sea through what is being put into it, and what is being taken out. Rapid global warming, sea level rise, ocean acidification and other troubling trends require urgent attention. This presentation will consider new technologies and a new era of ocean exploration vital to understanding these phenomena, as well as the changes in ocean chemistry, biodiversity and the composition and structure of marine ecosystems, with special reference to the present and future consequences to humankind.

Sylvia Earle is an oceanographer, explorer, author, lecturer, Explorer in Residence of the National Geographic Society, leader of the NGS Sustainable Seas Expeditions, Council Chair for the Harte Research Institute, Founder of the Deep Search Foundation, and formerly the Chief Scientist of NOAA. Founder of three companies, she serves on various corporate and non-profit boards. A graduate of St. Petersburg College and Florida State University, she holds an M.A. and Ph.D. from Duke University and 19 honorary doctorates. Named as Time Magazine’s first Hero for the Planet and a Living Legend by the Library of Congress, she has authored 175 publications, led more than 100 expeditions, lectured in more than 70 countries, and has more than 100 national and international awards.
Claire Light
January 19, 2017 | 7 p.m. | Lee Honors College Lounge, WMU

“Diversity in Science Fiction”

Claire Light is a Bay Area writer and cultural worker. She has worked since 1997 in nonprofit administration, particularly in the arts in the Asian-American community. She co-founded Hyphen magazine, a national Asian-American news and culture magazine that’s been in print for 13 years; served as executive director for San Francisco-based Asian-Pacific-American arts organization Kearny Street Workshop; and was a board member of diversity-in-speculative-fiction organization the Carl Brandon Society for six years. Her MFA in fiction came from San Francisco State University, and she attended the Clarion West Science Fiction Writers workshop in 2003. Some of her fiction is published in McSweeney’s, Hyphen, Farthing, and The Encyclopedia Project, among others, and a collection of her stories, *Slightly Behind and To The Left*, was published by Aqueduct Press in 2009. She has taught writing to teens, college students, and adults, and occasionally blogs at The Nerds of Color and on her own blog, SeeLight.
Dr. Mae C. Jemison is currently leading 100 Year Starship (100YSS), an initiative seed funded by the Department of Defense, Defense Advanced Research Project Agency (DARPA) to assure the capability for human interstellar space travel to another star is possible within the next 100 years. She also is founder of the technology consulting firm, The Jemison Group, Inc. which integrates the critical impact of socio-cultural issues when designing and implementing technologies, such as their projects on using satellite technology for health care delivery in West Africa and solar dish Stirling engines for electricity generation in developing countries.

Dr. Jemison, the first woman of color in the world to go into space, served six years as a NASA astronaut. Started after she left NASA, The Jemison Group also explores and develops stand-alone science and technology programs and companies. BioSentient Corporation, a medical technology devices and services company focused on improving health and human performance through physiologic awareness and self-regulation is such a company.

For more information about the Kalamazoo Community Foundation visit: kalfound.org
From the ultramarine mountains of Afghanistan to the sacred ochre mines of Australia, via cochineal bugs in South America, poisoned wallpaper in England, and tracking down a strange Indian watercolour supposedly made “from the urine of cows fed with mango leaves,” the British author of Color and The Brilliant History of Color in Art, Victoria Finlay talks about some of her adventures to discover the secret histories of paint and dyes.

Victoria Finlay is the author of three popular non-fiction books. Color and the Natural History of the Palette involved visiting some of the amazing places historical colors came from, including Afghanistan to find the rocks that were once ground into massively expensive ultramarine paint. Jewels, A Secret History involved other adventures including crawling (alone) down Cleopatra’s almost lost emerald mines and finding a tiny, flawed, but superbly green crystal. The Brilliant History of Color in Art, published by the Getty Museum in November 2014, was named the Huffington Post’s top art book for that year. A journalist, Finlay spent 12 years in Hong Kong during the handover, first as news reporter, then as arts editor of the South China Morning Post. For the past decade she has worked for the Alliance of Religions and Conservation, started by Prince Philip 20 years ago to encourage religions around the world to be leaders in environmental action. She has an M.A. in Social Anthropology from St. Andrews, and more recently an M.A. in Creative Writing from Bath Spa University.
Series Partners:

Air Zoo
Alumni Association
Center for the Study of Ethics in Society
Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Aviation, Fine Arts, and Health & Human Services
Departments of Anthropology, Biological Sciences, Comparative Religion, English, History, Philosophy, Sociology and Theatre
Graduate College
Gwen Frostic School of Art
Haenicke Institute for Global Education
Kalamazoo Community Foundation
Kalamazoo Institute of Arts
Kalamazoo Public Schools
Lee Honors College
Lewis Walker Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnic Relations
Office for Sustainability
Office of the Vice President for Research
Office of Academic Affairs
University Center for the Humanities
WMU Homer J. Stryker School of Medicine
Become a Friend of the Humanities

Who? Friends of the Humanities form a community dedicated to strengthening the humanities in the Kalamazoo community and on the Western Michigan University campus.

How? To become a Friend of the Humanities, individuals, organizations and companies are invited to make an annual gift to the University Center for the Humanities through the WMU Foundation by visiting wmich.edu/humanities/giving.

Why? Given the wide-ranging activities of the Center, private donors can have a real impact. Even smaller amounts go a long way to enhancing the opportunities for citizens, scholars, and students to do research, write books, give lectures, organize discussions and work in the community.

What? Friends of the Humanities will receive invitations to special events, including a fall gathering of people from the community and University who support the humanities and arts. At events you will have reserved seating and opportunities to meet and talk with guest speakers. You will also meet with visiting scholars and receive invitations to receptions.

You will also receive brochures, postcards, emails and an annual report with detailed information about all of our activities so that you will see how your donation enhances the humanities at WMU and in Kalamazoo.
Calendar

2016-2017 Science and the Human Endeavor Speaker Series

September 29, 2016 | 7 p.m. | Ron Numbers | 2452 Knauss Hall, WMU

October 6, 2016 | 7 p.m. | Sylvia Earle | Chenery Auditorium, Kalamazoo

January 19, 2017 | 7 p.m. | Claire Light | Lee Honors College Lounge, WMU

March 23, 2017 | 7 p.m. | Mae Jemison | Miller Auditorium, WMU

March 30, 2017 | 7 p.m. | Victoria Finlay | 1910 Sangren, WMU

All events are free and open to the public.

For more information visit: wmich.edu/humanities/