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Integrative Biology

Research Theme: The Complexity of Diversity from an Interdisciplinary Perspective

The 2022 –23 cohort is studying “The Complexity of Diversity from an Interdisciplinary Approach” and plans to explore the wider context of “diversity” including the scientific and humanistic study of the environment in which we live and our relationship with it; the effects that a loss of biological diversity has on all life; and the socio-political ramifications.

Darwin Day Lecture: What Doesn't Kill You Makes You Stronger? The Future of Coral Reefs and the Humans They Support

Dr. Harmony Martell | University of British Columbia

Thursday, February 9, 2023 | 12:30 PM | USF Marshall Student Center (MSC 3709)

The Humanities Institute Faculty Fellowship Program is designed to give a group of faculty members from different academic disciplines the time, space, and resources to pursue a shared research concept from an interdisciplinary perspective. This year's cohort is exploring the complexity of diversity including the scientific and humanistic study of the environment in which we live and our relationship with it, the effects that a loss of biological diversity has on all life, and the socio-political ramification of policies that shape the existence of diverse species on Earth in the Anthropocene. Fellows Lorena Madrigal (Anthropology), Adriana Novoa (History), Christina Richards (Integrative Biology) and Alex Levine (Philosophy) stress the importance of overcoming the artificial separation between the sciences and humanities and how integrating the fields will lead to a deeper understanding of the cultural context of genetic diversity and the inaccuracy of any biological concept of race. In the Fall semester, they taught a graduate/undergraduate seminar to analyze the meaning of human diversity over time, and in the Spring they are teaching a Gen Ed class, Science and Society.

In addition to their research and teaching efforts, the Faculty Fellows have continued their tradition of organizing events for "Darwin Day," an international celebration commemorating Charles Darwin's birth on February 12, 1809. Darwin's research into evolution and biodiversity upended nearly every aspect of both the scientific and non-scientific world and is a cornerstone of the Fellows' work.

On February 9, the Fellows welcome Dr. Harmony A. Martell, an Ocean Leaders Postdoctoral Fellow at the Institute for the Oceans and Fisheries at the University of British Columbia. Martell will be discussing "The Future of Coral Reefs and the Humans They Support." Her talk will explore how the loss of biodiversity is not strictly a scientific concern, but one that has far-reaching impacts on public policy, ethics, tourism, and other areas.

Dr. Harmony Martell is a seasoned educator, with two decades of science teaching experience at the high school and university levels. She is passionate about mentorship, particularly for women and underrepresented groups in marine science. She is a marine ecophysiologicalist interested in the effects of temperature on marine plants and invertebrates, particularly in the context of climate change. The sea, conservation, and education are the core tenets of all her endeavors. She is a proud mother of two in academia.

This event is sponsored by ResearchOne, USF Departments of Integrative Biology, Philosophy, Anthropology & the School of Geosciences, Biology and Philosophy Graduate Student Organizations, The Institute for the Advanced Study of Culture and the Environment, Hillsborough County Public Schools, and Tampa Bay Stem Network.

Humanities & Hops: "Diversity and Human Experience"

Tuesday, September 26, 2023 | 7:00 PM | New World Brewery Tampa

"This semester, our Humanities and Hops speakers are Alex Levine, Lorena Madrigal, Adriana Novoa, and Christina Richards, and they will be discussing the outcomes of their research as last year's HI Faculty Fellows.

During the 2022 – 23 academic year, these scholars pooled their knowledge of biology, philosophy, anthropology, and history to explore human diversity through an interdisciplinary lens. The Fellows developed a successful seminar class that studied the emergence of scientific fields and how they impacted the philosophical understanding of what it means to be 'human' as well as how those discoveries inform our current understanding of diversity."