

# ERIC VOEGELIN INSTITUTE

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY

[www.lsu.edu/voegelin](http://www.lsu.edu/voegelin)

NEWSLETTER

Summer 2021

## From the Director:

Living as I do in Louisiana, in a climate subject to natural disasters, I had grown used to the annoying practice of referring to faculty as “non-essential employees” when a crisis comes. While I happily acknowledge the contributions of those who maintain our buildings and computers, who see to security of the campus and disbursal of the funds, their work is *necessary* to the university, but not *essential* in the proper sense of the term. That identity belongs precisely to faculty and students, those engaged in higher learning, the distinctive activity of the university as such.

What troubled me most over the past year was how easily society considered education at every level “inessential.” Wisely, LSU opened last fall, and the Institute made adjustments: buying a HEPA-quality air filter for the Voegelin Room; moving workshops, seminars, and guest lectures to Zoom; and taking a leading role in returning live events to campus in the late spring. Some of what we learned should help provide richer programming in the future, as we acquired the technology and the know-how to make many of our activities available to a world-wide online audience. Still, we remain committed to conversation face-to-face, as critical to the encounter of mind with mind that is constitutive of our humanity. May it resume and endure.



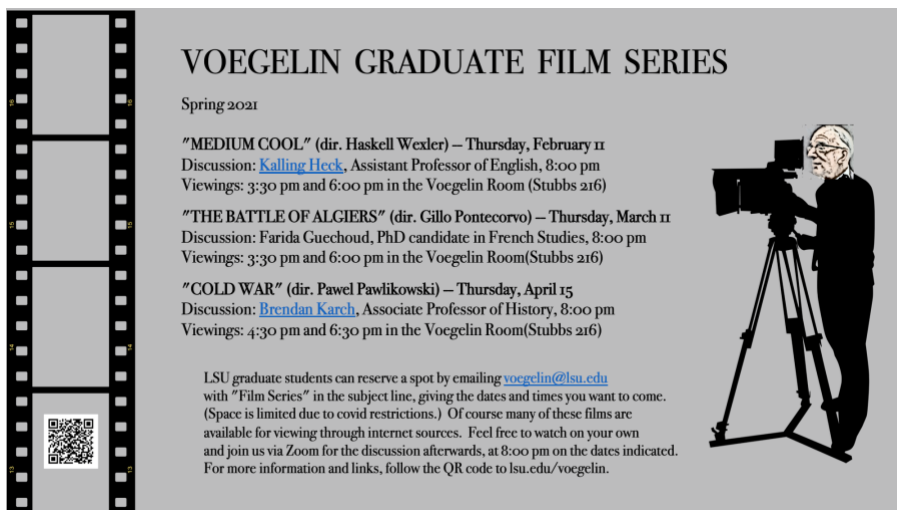
**James Stoner**  
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## Hybrid Spring Conference, “Reason & Revolution”

Cancelled last year due to the pandemic, the Voegelin Institute’s spring conference proceeded more or less normally on April 9-10—with a keynote lecture Friday afternoon, four speakers in several sessions Saturday morning, a concluding session led by the keynoter, even the “crawfish reception” Friday evening after the lecture. But as you can see from the photograph above, the telltale signs of the 2020-21 covid-year are evident: masks and spacing were still required, and simultaneous “hybrid” broadcast on Zoom was made available.

Bryan-Paul Frost, the Elias “Bo” Ackal, Jr./BORSF Endowed Professor of Political Science at the University of Louisiana Lafayette, gave the keynote lecture, on Tocqueville’s account of revolution in both *Democracy in America* and *The Ancien Regime*. Saturday’s talks included Tulane Philosophy PhD candidate Gabrielle Stanton Ray, on Locke’s “appeal to heaven”; Albert Samuels of Southern University on Reconstruction as America’s second, failed revolution; Jeremy Mhire of Louisiana Tech on Hannah Arendt; and Andrea Conque, also of ULL, on Martin Heidegger. The hybrid format allowed attendance by the newly formed PPE Alumni Reading Group, who, having grown accustomed to grad school Zoom classes, re-established their conversations online, on the theme they chose the year before.



## VOEGELIN GRADUATE FILM SERIES

Spring 2021

"MEDIUM COOL" (dir. Haskell Wexler) – Thursday, February 11  
 Discussion: [Kalling Heck](#), Assistant Professor of English, 8:00 pm  
 Viewings: 3:30 pm and 6:00 pm in the Voegelin Room (Stubbs 216)

"THE BATTLE OF ALGIERS" (dir. Gillo Pontecorvo) – Thursday, March 11  
 Discussion: Farida Guechoud, PhD candidate in French Studies, 8:00 pm  
 Viewings: 3:30 pm and 6:00 pm in the Voegelin Room (Stubbs 216)

"COLD WAR" (dir. Pawel Pawlikowski) – Thursday, April 15  
 Discussion: [Brendan Karch](#), Associate Professor of History, 8:00 pm  
 Viewings: 4:30 pm and 6:30 pm in the Voegelin Room (Stubbs 216)

LSU graduate students can reserve a spot by emailing [voegelin@lsu.edu](mailto:voegelin@lsu.edu) with "Film Series" in the subject line, giving the dates and times you want to come. (Space is limited due to covid restrictions.) Of course many of these films are available for viewing through internet sources. Feel free to watch on your own and join us via Zoom for the discussion afterwards, at 8:00 pm on the dates indicated. For more information and links, follow the QR code to [lsu.edu/voegelin](http://lsu.edu/voegelin).



### Voegelin Institute Inaugurates Graduate Student Film Series

Despite Pandemic restrictions, EVI successfully launched a new series of "Politics on Film" to enrich the life of graduate students across the university. Three films were presented in two showings each to small groups in the Voegelin Room, with others choosing recourse to the internet to view the films on their own. At 8:00 pm on the designated day, a discussion was held in hybrid format, with an introductory presentation on each film.

Presenting on "Medium Cool," a 1969 film about the growing influence of television news on politics, was Assistant Professor of English and Screen Arts Kalling Heck; Farida Guechoud, a native Algerian and PhD candidate in French Studies, introduced Pontecorvo's classic "Battle of Algiers"; and Associate Professor of History Brendan Karch guided us through the new film by Polish director Pawel Pawlikowski, "Cold War." Hot pizza was served to those who came in person, and lively conversations ensued. The series is slated to continue in 2021-22.

### Retiring Dr Cecil Eubanks Honored by Festschrift, Conference

Longtime faculty member Cecil Eubanks, who taught political theory at LSU since 1968, retired during the 2020-21 academic year. At a conference co-sponsored by the Voegelin Institute on April 30-May 1, many of his former PhD students gathered to present him with a book of essays they had written, edited by N. Susan Laehn and Thomas Laehn, published in February by Lexington Books. Adelaide Russo of French Studies delivered a keynote talk, appreciative students gave testimonials, and a folk music reception followed presentation of the festschrift. Next morning, old students shared their new research.



## WELCOMING THE OTHER

### A CONFERENCE IN HONOR OF CECIL EUBANKS

Friday, April 30, 5:00 pm French House

\* Keynote: ADELAIDE RUSSO, Phyllis M. Taylor Professor of French Studies

\* Presentation: *WELCOMING THE OTHER: STUDENT, STRANGER, AND DIVINE*, ed. N Susan Laehn & Thomas R. Laehn (Lexington, 2021)

Saturday, May 1, 10:00 am French House

\* Panel Discussion: Peter Petrakis (PhD '98), David Corey (PhD '02), Glenn Moots (PhD '07), John Boersma (PhD '19), Alex Cole (PhD '20)

sponsored by LSU Department of Political Science and the Eric Voegelin Institute



### Workshop, Seminar Get Zoomed

The Apgar Workshop on Teaching European Civilization, sponsored by EVI for faculty teaching in the Ogden Honors College great books course sequence, continued in 2020-21 with expanded membership, meeting on Zoom. Sessions included a discussion of the challenges of teaching on Zoom; guests sessions led by Stanford's Joshua Landy on "The Pragmatics of Fiction" and UPenn economist Jesús Fernández-Villaverde on "Teaching Economists to Think Humanistically—and Humanists to Think Economically"; and faculty-led readings of DuBois's *Souls of Black Folk* and Lestov's "Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk"—together with viewing scenes from the Shostakovich opera based on the latter.

The Aristotle Research Seminar, begun last year, continued on Zoom under sponsorship of LSU's Center for Collaborative Knowledge, expanding seminar membership to include an ichthyologist, a psychologist, and an intellectual historian, reading Aristotle's *De Anima* in the fall and Darwin's *Origin of Species* in the spring.

### Interdisciplinary Humanities VI

EVI's Interdisciplinary Humanities Faculty Seminar completed its sixth year—you guessed it, on Zoom. Albert Watanabe, Classics, spoke about modern Stoicism; Will Mari of the Manship School discussed 20<sup>th</sup> century newsroom poetry; Alexander Orwin of Political Science parsed Islamic interpretations of Plato's *Republic*; and Andreas Giger of Music shared his discoveries of lost music from Pietro Mascagni's opera, *Cavalleria rusticana*.

### Lecture Series Morphs to Zoom Conversations with Scholars

Taking advantage of the capabilities of Zoom and the familiarity developed by faculty everywhere with its use, EVI moved its lecture series for 2020-21 online, adopting a format that usually involved exchange between speakers and hosts as well as questions from viewers. Guests included Randall Kennedy (Harvard Law), Jason Riley (*Wall Street Journal*), Harvey Mansfield (Harvard), William B. Allen (Michigan State), and Caroline Winterer (Stanford). Video recordings of most of the talks are online at [www.lsu.edu/voegelin/events](http://www.lsu.edu/voegelin/events)