



ERIC VOEGELIN INSTITUTE

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY

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NEWSLETTER

Summer 2023

From the Director:

One of the most heartening developments in American higher education in recent years has been the establishment at several state universities—Arizona State, Texas, and Tennessee, among others—of programs focused on civic education. Created by legislative mandate and drawing faculty educated in fields such as political science, history, economics and philosophy, their curricula are designed to prepare students for good citizenship: to think independently, to work together with others, and to have the strength of character to serve the common good.

At the Voegelin Institute, we're proud that several of our alumni are teaching in or helping to administer such programs. Similarly, our alumni are involved with the classical school movement, which promotes K-12 curricula based on "cornerstone" texts and traditional modes of learning that aim to form human beings and citizens for a complete and happy life, not as cogs in a system but as members of a community.

Civic education and liberal education are not always identical, for the first forms the citizen, the second the human being, and any student of Aristotle knows the best of these only coincide in the best regime among those who rule. Still, in a free society, encouraging genuine learning ought to be a path to human improvement and to raising the tone of the polity, too.



James Stoner

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Poet Dana Gioia Reads, Recites, Reflects

Dana Gioia (above), former poet laureate of California and one-time chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, read from his poetry to a large and attentive audience at the Ogden Honors College on Monday, March 27. Many of the poems were published a month earlier in his new collection, *Meet Me at the Lighthouse* (Graywolf).

After graduate study in literature at Harvard, Gioia had gone back to Stanford in his native California to study business, and he worked in advertising while writing and publishing poetry on the side, quitting his business career after achieving literary success. An accomplished critic and essayist as well as a poet, he was tapped by President George W. Bush to head the NEA, winning bipartisan support for the agency by promoting performance of Shakespeare and instituting the "Poetry Out Loud" competition for high school students nationwide, a program that has involved millions of students and thousands of teachers. In fact, Gioia invited Charles Cacciatore, a graduate student in Political Science who had competed in Poetry Out Loud in high school, to recite one of the poems he had presented in the competition years before.

Earlier in the day, Gioia spoke on "Poetry and Education" to Honors College faculty, drawing on his essay, "Poetry as Enchantment," and stressing the importance of the spoken word. While in Louisiana, he also read his poetry at Tulane University and at the University of New Orleans.



Van Crabb Memorial Lecture

Jack Goldsmith, the Learned Hand Professor of Law at Harvard, delivered a lecture in honor of the late LSU political science professor Cecil Van Meter Crabb, on October 10, 2022. Titled “Death of the Treaty Power,” the lecture addressed two themes prominent in Crabb’s scholarship: American foreign policy and the institutional context in which it is made. Crabb’s daughter, Cele Otnes, a recently retired professor of business, joined the program as well. The lecture was a gift from Crabb’s co-author, Kevin Mulcahy.

Honors Workshop Expands

With enhanced funding from the Apgar Foundation, the Voegelin Institute expanded its Honors College workshop on “Teaching European Civilization” to include more members, more sessions, and even non-European texts. Included were guest speakers Dana Gioia and James Hankins, a Harvard University historian who also lectured on “How *Not* to Defend Western Civilization.” Sessions led by participants for one another discussed *The Book of Margery Kempe*, Dante’s *Inferno*, Montaigne’s *Essays*, the *Quran*, Salman Rushdie, and Pérez Galdós.

Voegelin Films Still Rolling

The Voegelin Film Series for graduate students completed its fourth and fifth semesters, with an autumn series on courage and conscience—*On the Waterfront, Man for All Seasons, Romero*—and spring films from postwar European art cinema, including *Bicycle Thieves, Cleo from 5 to 7, and The Lost Honor of Katharina Blum*. As in past terms, faculty guest-experts led discussions after each showing—and pizza was plentifully supplied!



J. Budziszewski Keynotes Spring Conference: Who Gets to Make Law?

J. Budziszewski (top left), Professor of Political Science at the University of Texas and author of distinguished commentaries on Thomas Aquinas and of several other books on natural law, gave the keynote address Friday, April 28, for our spring conference, “Who Gets to Make Law?” He was joined the following day by (left to right on the bottom row above) Mary Keys of the University of Notre Dame, Murray Dry of Middlebury College, Albert Samuels of Southern University, and Nichole Bauer of LSU. Graduate and undergraduate students from several different departments as well as members of the public joined us in the audience Friday and around the table Saturday for a lively conversation. And as you can see, we resumed our traditional “crawfish reception.”

“Eric Voegelin & his Interlocutors”: Zoom Series

Following up on last year’s Zoom series, “Who Was Eric Voegelin & What Did He Think?,” the Institute’s director James Stoner hosted a three-part series on “Eric Voegelin & his Interlocutors,” exploring Voegelin’s engagement with the thought of several of his contemporaries, in conversations with leading scholars. David Walsh of Catholic University addressed Voegelin and Martin Heidegger, Daniel Mahoney of Assumption College spoke on Voegelin and Leo Strauss, and Peter Baehr, recently retired from Lingnan University in Hong Kong, discussed Voegelin and Hannah Arendt. Like last year’s series, this year’s is archived on our website and on *Voegelin View’s* YouTube channel.

Constitution Day Lecture, Faculty Seminars, continue

Daniel Philpott of Notre Dame delivered a Constitution Day lecture, “Giving Justice More than Its Due,” with commentary by the Law School’s Ray Diamond. Faculty seminar speakers were LSU’s Aaron Sheehan-Dean (History), Michelle Zerba (English), Rosemary Peters-Hill (French), and Husain Sarkar (Philosophy). The Aristotle Seminar read his *De Caelo* and Galileo’s *Dialogue*.



Daniel Philpott & Ray Diamond



Jack Goldsmith



Cele Otnes



James Hankins