

Institute for Regional Studies Faculty, 2008

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2008 Rhodes Institute Faculty



Milton C. Moreland, Associate Professor of Religious Studies and co-director of the Program in Archaeology, is the Director of the Rhodes Institute for Regional Studies. He teaches courses in the Search and Life curricula. An archaeologist and scholar of early Christianity, Prof. Moreland has worked on excavations at ancient archaeological sites in Israel and Cyprus. His publications include articles on Roman period Galilee and Jerusalem and two books on the sayings of Jesus. Prof. Moreland also co-directs the new Rhodes archaeology field school at the Ames Plantation in Fayette County, Tennessee, and his regional research interests focus on

Ames. This site contains the ruins of over thirty separate plantations and share-cropper farms spread across 18,600 acres. Research opportunities in the 2008 Institute include working on the excavated artifacts from a nineteenth-century manor house and slave quarters, studying economic development issues related to slavery and plantation life, and examining the social histories of families who lived on one of the plantations.



Carole Blankenship, Assistant Professor of Music, is heard regularly in recitals, chamber music concerts, and choral works at Rhodes and many venues in the Memphis area. In 2004, Prof. Blankenship received the Graduate Document Award for the most outstanding thesis as judged by the faculty at the Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music at the University of Memphis. Her dissertation examines “The Unpublished Songs of Paul Bowles.” A charter member of the Memphis Vocal Arts Ensemble and the Rhodes MasterSingers Chorale, she has appeared as a soprano soloist with both groups as well as with the University of Memphis Opera Theatre, the

Memphis Symphony Orchestra Baroque Series, the University of Memphis Imagine Festival, and as recitalist for the Memphis Chamber Music Society. In 1999, she was featured in two recitals at Germany’s Bayerische Musickakademie Marktoberdorf. Prof. Blankenship is a member of the Memphis Chapter of the National Association of Teachers of Singing and has served as president since 1995. Research opportunities in the summer of 2008 include the history of The International Blues Challenge of the Blues Foundation in Memphis; a project that will document the work of the Federal Music Project in Tennessee, 1934-1941; and a project that will examine the published musical works of the National Baptist Convention, Nashville, TN, in the early part of the 20th Century.



Kim Gerecke, Assistant Professor of Psychology, teaches courses in the areas of Psychology and Neuroscience. She has authored or co-authored many publications published in peer-reviewed scientific journals, and regularly presents her research at international scientific conferences. Her research concerns the identification of mechanisms of neuroprotection against neuronal death in aging and disease. Research opportunities in the Rhodes Institute involve using animal models to assess how lifestyle components, such

as exercise and an enriched environment, can protect the brain against neurodegenerative diseases or environmental toxins. A second and related opportunity involves the preparation and presentation of a Neuroscience “Road Show” to introduce local elementary children to the concepts of the brain and its functions.



David Jilg, Associate Professor of Theatre and alumnus of the College, has designed sets and/or costumes for nearly one hundred productions in Memphis, New Orleans and elsewhere, half of them for the McCoy Theatre during his teaching career at Rhodes. Award-winning designs include *The Seagull* (1998), *J.B.* (1999), *Gianni Schicchi* (2002), and *Ubu Roi* (2006). In addition to teaching design, his academic interests include Spanish American drama. He has directed several Spanish language productions with student actors, most recently *La noche de los asesinos* (2007). In collaboration with the Rhodes Institute for Regional Studies and Opera Memphis, he and his students will develop a production design concept for Scott Joplin’s opera *Treemonisha*, slated for production by Opera Memphis in their 2008-2009 season.



Robert Saxe, Assistant Professor of History, teaches courses in 20th Century US history, political history, and war and society. His book, “Settling Down”: *World War II Veterans’ Challenge to the Postwar Consensus* (2007) examines the return of World War II veterans and their impact on Cold War American politics and culture. In 2007, he also was named chair of the American Studies program. As part of the Rhodes Institute in 2008, he will direct research projects focusing on recently processed collections at the Clinton Presidential Library in Little Rock.