

## 4Humanities@UCSB

### Meeting 3 - Framing / Strategies for Action (December 12, 2011)

- Sign-up sheet
- New Members: Miriam Wattles, Cindy Baumgarner (Asst. Dean of Summer Sessions), and Miriam Polne-Fuller (Summer Sessions)
- Present: Alan Liu, Anne Taves, Chris Newfield, Kevin Kearney, Harold Marcuse, Miriam Polne-Fuller, Dan Reynolds, Shayne, Anna Brusutti, Linda Adler-Kassner, Cheryl Jaworski, E. Cook, Claudio Fogu (via Skype), Carol Pasternack, Cindy Baumgarner, Zach Horton, Pax Heyermeyer, Eileen Boris

#### NEWS & BUSINESS:

##### 1. NEWS: Local Chapters and the Web Site

###### a. Local Chapters section of site >

###### i. [4Humanities@CSUN](#) >

1. "Members can contribute to the 4Humanities organization by blogging, keeping an online journal, researching and sharing articles, and/or fundraising. Additionally, CSUN's local 4Humanities chapter showcases humanities scholarship using a "backpack documentary" system where the members of CSUN's chapter each learn how to document humanities research/projects by creating mini-documentary films. Students opting to create these documentaries must undergo a mandatory training session on equipment use and basic editing, organizing the project's timeline (including scheduling equipment use), and implementing the project. Mini-documentary projects can range from current student research to the making of the documentary itself."

###### ii. [Possible 4Humanities@UCL](#) > (University College London)

###### iii. [4Humanities@UCSB](#) >

1. Participants (24 faculty & staff; 18 grad students)
2. Private Library (Jasperjohns458!)

##### 2. BUSINESS: Next Meeting

###### a. Meeting 4 (early next quarter?) - "New Media and Humanities Advocacy: A Planning Seminar (leader: Alan Liu)

- i. Discussion of principles for an overall media strategy (inspired from Linda's readings for today)
  1. Preparation: read about or browse a collection of resources, examples, etc. providing a palette of current media options and forms.
- ii. Brainstorming/planning for individual or team projects.
  1. Preparation: drawing on the values, frames, stories/arguments, language, and sense of audience discussed in the prior meeting, draft a post for the "Humanities, Plain & Simple" initiative on the 4Humanities site.
    - a. We'll critique one or two of these together and talk about how to produce and circulate communication/media projects from them.

- b. Then we'll break into teams to come up with other project ideas based on the values, frames, stories/arguments, language, and audiences sketched out in these posts.

## Framing/Strategies for Action (Linda leads discussion) –

### Opening

- **Linda Adler-Kassner:** What we do today should dovetail seamlessly into planning we want to do at the next meeting. We are going to do a lot of thinking and talking together today, in a large and small groups, as we do in Comp.
  - Playoff between strategies/tactics. Tricky tradeoff.
  - Think through how we can gain some ground through compromises with people we wouldn't normally want to compromise with.
  - Today we are going to think about: Concepts we think are important, frames of these concepts, actions that extend from these frames.
    - Ex: I was asked to chair a committee that was charged with changing perception of writers and writing in mainstream media. We started thinking about helping people develop strategies for doing this
    - Ex: U Denver: s'mores party to publicize writing
- Assessment work often plays into ways we make these changes; making connections between assessment work done on campuses
- Frameworks for Success evolved out of many years of doing local, small-scale work until we could identify core practices at center of frames
  - Not Waiting for Superman website: comes out of a project called "Reinventing Schools;" came out after movie; collection of resources of all sorts; teachers advocating for schools and teachers in very creative and interesting ways
  - Occupy Movement (bracket that for now)
- Quick review of readings for today: Interest-based vs. value-based organizing, issue-based organizing (blends)
  - Lots of readings were about K-12 schools; in public's minds, arguments about school are arguments about school at all levels.
  - Frames developing around this issue deal with standardized testing
  - Achieve.org: most powerful group driving agenda of what education should be; behind common core state standards
  - Really drives agenda of what education should be and will be at all levels
  - We have to figure out how to work within this dominant frame while keeping our long-term goals in mind; have to live in a place of optimism (pendulum about education will swing again...we can help it to swing faster)
  - Small-group work: Identify values, stakeholders, activities, and alliances
- Go around group: Things people found interesting, questions, etc
- **Alan Liu:** What is missing from notes from last time are words having to do with fundamental humanities knowledge: create, etc.

- Basic Research in the Humanities document: Humanities deal with knowledge about 1)History, 2)Culture, 3)Languages, and 4)Other People. What we do has to do with what we do with this knowledge; we think about it creatively, critically, historically, etc.
- **Miriam Wattles:** Very little mention of culture/language in last few meetings; where do “other people” fit in? Something the group needs to think about is who the “we” is of this group.
  - Tradition also seems important; seems like a forbidden word for people in the humanities to talk about. It goes along with Right “family values” people
  - Institutions also seems important. Not clear what the institutional involvement with our group is.
- **E. Cook:** Many issues we are talking about have been talked about for a long time. How do we re-frame them? How would different ways of thinking about these frames change the way we think about them?
- **Eileen Boris:** Short-term vs. long-term is important; we have immediate crises (short-term) and long-term issues that these kinds of assessment strategies are reflective of. This is our chance to be visionary. We can’t forget the utopian moment. We have to think not just about what has been but what could be
- **Anna Brusutti:** Linda’s comment about not putting ourselves in corners; about not engaging in dead-end discussions. Distinguishing between short-term and long-term issues is important. Also multi-disciplinary approaches could be interesting
- **Claudio Fogu:** Two or three different strands/frames/strategies/tactics; I tried to organize material we went over last time with that in mind.
  - There were some comments that were looking inwards towards issues internal to the humanities (inclusion of other cultures, cultural studies, etc)
  - There was another set of comments that related to the issue of advocating for certain core values to the outside, without putting ourselves in a corner. Finding ways to either accept frames that are impossible to ignore *and* to think about other ways to position the humanities.
  - Research and institutional spaces: Chris’s important contribution that reminds us of how under-funded we are, how researching the humanities is made difficult. We need to give ourselves the value we should have.
  - Eileen’s “human-i-ties” slogan: this breaking down of the word speaks to something very fundamental and essential. The word “human” brings us back to something that is essentialist while also denying this essentialism. It does contain the possibility of constructing the humanities in new ways in the public’s eyes (both inward – other cultures, tying together different people – and outwardly for the public)
  - Also connects to ideas I see emerging from the social sciences: there is an interest in historical perspectives on affect, on developments in terms of “ties”. This can be thought in terms of alliances.
- **Chris Newfield:** Topics for small groups? Output as a series of narratives that would go on the webpage? At what level do we want to address this problem?
  - I think we are running together two different things: organizing and reframing. Organizing students and faculty to oppose counter-productive and negative administrative policies; the other issue about the humanities in UCs, the reframing,

could possibly be started as an offensive attack on high-profile discourses that are screwing up people's understandings of issues that should be ours (behavioral economics, political analyses). Maybe we should have one group find a hideous misunderstanding that has an academic basis to it and do an ongoing Freakonomics watch in which we contrast, for example, what behavioral economics does on a set of issues in comparison to what we would do.

- **Linda Adler-Kassner:** Idea behind small groups is to think about what our core values are; what things are that lie at center of our enterprise (historical contexts). Which frames are useful to tap into and which ones to we think we should avoid and why? Working toward the possible is important. Thinking about audiences with whom we want to connect. None of these are mutually exclusive. The idea is to put together a series of actions that are coordinated with each other but yet that are doable on different levels.
- **Alan Liu:** I was impressed by some of the game-board charts from the readings, this is on the same page with what Chris is suggesting, but some of this should take place in the background so that we don't box ourselves into talking about what we don't want.
  - A key activity for this group would be to do an analysis of the kind Chris suggests but then find a way to circumvent, screw up that dominant frame. Is it possible to take both a progressive and a conservative take? In the public's eye, the humanities tend to be seen as conservative, but we have people like Chris who are very progressive. Can we find a way that showcases both sides of the humanities?
  - We have in the 4Humanities framework a way to move out from the local to the international. There is a way that we can move forward from what we are talking about here gradually to linking up with these other groups internationally to get a handle on what the humanities look like in other parts of the world.
- **Linda Adler-Kassner:** Group work: consider these questions:
  - What are critical key terms for thinking about the humanities?
  - What represents the core values?
  - Idea?
  - Frame or what other frames are linked to it?
  - Who are some audiences or allies who are also invested in those things?
  - What kinds of actions might extend from them?

Work in groups for half an hour

Large group debriefing

- **Anne Taves:** We started by drawing ideas from Nausbaum's work: human capabilities, cultivating humanity, human flourishing. Cultivating habits of mind that would help people be creative and flourish through a lifetime of learning. The idea of the liberal arts as integrative – the humanities as part of the liberal arts. The ways in which the humanities can help with solving problems addressed by the whole
  - Audiences: Parents/students, educators, the UN
- **Chris Newfield:** Two levels: organizing people on campus and advocacy writing, doing YouTube videos, etc.

- **Zach Horton:** We thought about making things other than money: making people, making the human. Reframing cost/benefit as a sort of dichotomy: cost/affect, cost-affective.
  - Navigating two questions: What about funding for the humanities? Thinking about other sorts of costs and benefits than financial or economic. We do need to think about monetary inputs but affective outputs. We talked about love as being something that rarely enters the discussion, but this is something the humanities have a lot to say about.
  - Reading: What do we read? We read a lot of other things besides literary texts: reading cultures, reading communities, reading others.
  - Interdependence; thinking about matrices or webs. The humanities have a particular expertise in this. Allies: scientists, biologists, political scientists, who are also very interested in networks.
- **Harold Marcuse:** Think about it as “interconnectedness” rather than “interdependence” because that sounds better
- **Alan Liu:** We talked a lot about core values: history, language, cultures, institutions, civility...we had too many core values. We tried to shrink that back to four stem values. Conservative or progressive, intrinsic meaning or utility. We thought a neat strategy would be narrow things down to no more than four stem values and to associate those with verbs humanists use: create, judge, etc.
  - Key reframing argument: the humanists are those who integrate all of that together. The output is a citizen who is also a competitive force. Both an intrinsic and a utilitarian value. The humanities fuse all of these things together.
  - Action: Make a big push to have humanities undergrads represented on campus-wide research showcases.
  - Allies: Scientists locally on campus
- **Ann Brusutti:** Liz’s work with computational analyses, discussion of effective meanings in English works of the 19<sup>th</sup> century; individual permutation. She is doing a meta-analysis of scholarly approaches to the interpretation of works. We compared this to some of the work done in media on video games and looking at new manifestations of media. Knee-jerk reaction is to go to the social sciences for learning about these kinds of media. This knee-jerk reaction has to be transformed.
  - We used the word “agency,” both in terms of the individual agencies of the people who work in the humanities. The idea that the humanities should be the first to go to rather than immediately a social sciences filter.
  - Productive value: we should not shy away from bringing back and imposing humanities language to the analysis of emerging phenomena. We need to find allies in people who design new media and who are bringing this kind of sensibility to new media.
  - Video game example: in last 20 years there has been an explosion of video games. Social science tools are completely ineffective for this; player-entity is non-quantifiable. Player’s position in the world has to be taken into consideration. Find connections with people in development of new media.
  - The Lucas enterprise website: trying to use new media to compare humanities vs. social science/quantifiable knowledge. New media is discussed with tools that are very reductive.

- **Linda Adler-Kassner:** We need to balance between messages we want to send and actions we need to take. Identifiable, local, definable goals and actions need to be specified, and then need to go after them.
  - For instance, one goal might be to get rid of AP credits, wherein students do not have to take introductory courses that many faculty feel they need. Or to engage with UCSB reads. Or talk to high school teachers, elementary teachers. What is college level reading and writing?
  - 4 Humanities: four “stem” values (?). Value with what we have now... our students. Making new events and forums for our undergraduates.
- **[Lindsay Thomas – Report on her group not done in meeting because Lindsay had to leave]:** We talked a lot about the popular dominant frame that positions the humanities as “hobbies,” as perhaps fun to learn but ultimately useless today. We talked about ways to restructure/do away with this frame
  - Keywords for the humanities: create, critique, ethics, relate/connect. Methodology for the humanities: defamiliarization; point to “defamiliarization” as one thing humanists do particularly well.
  - Ways to restructure dominant frame: comparison to “Frameworks Institute FAQs” sheet when they talked about the orchestra metaphor, for example. What is another extended metaphor/slogan we can use for combating this dominant frame?
  - “How Do We Imagine Others?” The humanities as the discipline with the expertise/authority on connecting our culture to other global cultures; importance of global studies; global cosmopolitanism in the business world
  - Potential allies: business leaders – “diversity” is an important word; business schools/administrators on campus; parents/students concerned with job preparation
  - Potential actions: outreach to local high schools – reframe debate around quality of teaching? How do we tell high school teachers about what we do?
  - How can we work within this “business school” frame but at the same time push back against it? Important to push back
- **[Jen Hammerschmidt – Comments submitted to Alan before the meeting via email]:** Re: the expression of interests and values, I find this challenging to articulate but there are two ideas of importance to me. The first is that any humanities interventions/outreach not be framed by or serve as reactions to the misguided attacks on the humanities that would paint us as useless/irrelevant/practitioners of hobbies. I feel that this is to play the game on someone else's field, to describe our work defensively in terms that we haven't chosen. For this I thought that Chris Newfield's ideas about resisting trying to fit into existing university structures are apropos - this was expressed in Adler-Kasner's chapter as well. I find this to be a very important notion for allowing us a certain intellectual freedom that will help us to create our own proverbial playing field.
  - Chris Newfield's comments also resonated with me very much re: the infrastructure agenda, because I do not have the material conditions, as he puts it, to do the kind of research that I would like to do. I do my work on a MacBook from 2006 with 512MB of memory and a dead battery. When the cost of a computer is a month's rent, this is what I can afford. It is embarrassing (he says "start with the stuff that is embarrassingly humble", so here it is, sadly) and it is a huge problem for me. It's not even that I can't

run the image programs that I would like to on my computer: I am not literate in these programs. What I feel should be an important part of my training is instead a lacuna in my skill set. To have access to something like a Humanities Lab at UCSB, not something restricted to any one department but a place for all of us, would be fantastic. Something short of Occupy Transcriptions...

- Lastly, the idea of imagining humanities outreach to children really resonated with me. Here I think the target audience is parents as much as it is children, since parents are making choices for their children's education - I think this is often as true for college students as it is for very young children. Within this framework I imagine a target audience of adults in their very specific role as parents - as the primary shepherds of their children's education - pitching ideas to them in a way that basically argues that we can enhance and improve their children's education. I am living this right now, as an evangelical art historian: Kaja is having her 6th birthday party at the museum of fine arts.
- **Carol Pasternack:** Summer Sessions has money for cultural programming. February the call goes out. Another idea, bring together students and teachers from different courses to discuss the relationships between them.
- **Alan Liu:** What about spokespeople? Our students might be good at this, or scientists. Next time: what are the media strategies? What new media tools might we use? Then, let's move into small groups and begin to brainstorm specific media ideas we may use. Bring in our "plain and simple" blurbs.
- **Claudio Fogu:** did we ever come to what we mean by frame? What are the frames to identify?
- **Ann Taves:** 2 frames: habits of mind is one frame, but need to focus on frames that are outside of specific job/value frames that tend to be so dominant. New frames can be different than just "getting the job." Liberal arts as integrative is another frame.
  - Etymological and Historical context, like habits of mind. What are the concepts associated with habits of mind? So, for instance, "human capabilities" makes us think of that there are multiple ways to reframe, like technological.
- **Claudio Fogu:** Lakoff views the frame in terms of the strong father. So, another way might be testing and knowledge production, relation to hierarchy; so instead the other side maybe needs to be articulated. Is it the liberal artist/creative individual? Figure to speak across the disciplines?
- **Alan Liu:** Civilization is a term that might need to be rethought. What is a humanist? Does it prefigure the stern father/nurturing mother binary? Humanist precedes both since a civilizer does both (except the term has such loaded baggage... can the term be reframed?)
- **Ann Taves:** We need to transcend, find multivalent terms away from this mother/father binary. Culture and cultivation might be a way to think outside of this binary.
- **Harold Marcuse:** The right love civilization, the left loves culture. We need to think of our audience.
- **Claudio Fogu:** hesitant on transcendence. Might be good to divide into groups that come up with alternative frames.
- **Chris Newfield:** Not buy into any of the frames. Or, maybe some of us want to look at it a different way? Should many be pursued?

- **Anna Brusutti:** Stem values, stem cells. Born nondifferentiated but it is the prime thing that differentiates. There is a core value in bio that integrates all of this in the human.

Next time: Message? Frame? Allies? Audience?

- **Alan Liu:** Put out a call for plain and simple, and collect them on the site. Ease people's way by contribution by email to Lindsay, or bring them in informally. At this point, we need to think more free form around the margins, and we'll accept the blurbs in any form. Why not cartoons? Behind the scenes enables us to comment, make suggestions, etc. Easiest thing for now is to send an email to Alan or Lindsay.
- **Ann Taves:** why don't we just use the Brainstorming page to look at? Ideas for Framing the Humanities.
- **Harold Marcuse:** 4 Educating? 4 Learning? 4 Humanities? 4 Research? Boxing ourselves in?
- **Alan Liu:** federation movement. But right now its nicely linked in. Next we need to move bigger. Think maybe about the larger umbrella and how we can do something larger over the summer.
  - Other allies: interfaith initiative, Sage Center (they have money), Carsey-Wolfe Center, Orfalea center.
  - Need to get to parents of school kids. Parents need to learn how to advocate for this. Something like "10 ways of reading and writing with your kids."