



INTRODUCTION

Fifty years ago a man walked on the moon and what it meant to be human changed. It was the first time we set foot on land that was not land from which we had arisen. It was a momentous achievement not just for that man, or even for the nation that put him there, but for the entire species, perhaps for all life on Earth. But the journey to the moon began long before President Kennedy pledged the resources of the U.S. to this cause, long before Sputnik, long before pioneers of cinema projected their lunar imaginings on the screen, long before science fiction writers crafted stories of living on her surface, long before astronomers such as Kepler dreamed of what it would be like to step foot on this body they had so long studied. No, the journey began the first time a human being looked up and saw the moon, one of God's two great lights, as animating the night sky, named it Luna or Selene or Chang'e and wove stories that connected the lives of humans with the bright orb that lit the darkness.

What took us to the moon? Human ingenuity and courage, yes. A great deal of those. But also human aspiration and perhaps most of all human imagination. That imagination fuels scientific theory and inquiry, as well as creates the art and story in which we imagine and aspire to achieve. These are some of the topics, then, that we will be investigating and celebrating in this year's symposium, "Mankind and the Moon: Inspiration, Aspiration, and Imagination."

All too often, especially in the academy, we divide the arts and the sciences, the humanities and technology. But as E. O. Wilson reminded us, we are "The Poetic Species," and the same brain that produces scientific theory produces art and music and literature. While the inspiration for this year's symposium topic was indeed that momentous "small step," over the course of the week our speakers and panelists will explore with us the inner space of how such an achievement redefined humanity, the interplay of science and creativity in culture and art, the long history of moon gazing with telescope and with naked eye, and behind it all, the moon itself, which since first glance has inspired our curiosity, our dreams, and our imagination.

Dr. Maggie Monteverde, English

2019 Humanities Symposium Planning Committee: Dr. Marcia McDonald and Dr. Eric Hobson, English, Co-Chairs; Dr. Noel Boyle, Philosophy; Dr. Wyeth Burgess, English; Dr. Jason Lovvorn, English; Dr. Maggie Monteverde; Dr. Regine Schwarzmeier, Foreign Languages

Sunday, September 15

Guided Lunar Observation

For millennia across many cultures, people have gathered to observe and to celebrate the moon, especially the September moons. Guests from the Barnard-Seyfert Astronomical Society will bring a telescope for close-up lunar viewing.

8:00-9:30 P.M. • BELL TOWER PATIO
(RAIN LOCATION: JANET AYERS ACADEMIC CENTER 4094)

Monday, September 16

FEATURED SPEAKER

Neil Armstrong—The Astronaut as Icon: Myth-Busting the Life of The First Man on the Moon

James R. Hansen, author of the two-time New York Times Bestseller *First Man: The Life of Neil A. Armstrong* (2005, 2012, 2018). Professor Emeritus of History, Auburn University

As the world celebrates the 50th anniversary of the first moon landing made by American spacecraft Apollo 11, on July 20, 1969, the man who took those historic first steps, Neil Armstrong, has become the subject of renewed fascination. In this talk historian James R. Hansen, author of the only authorized biography of Armstrong, explores the many ways that the iconic Apollo 11 commander has been misunderstood. Hansen, who has spent 20 years studying, thinking, writing, and lecturing about Armstrong will explain how Armstrong, because he was such a private and introspective man who was so hard to know, turned out in later years to be myth personified, an enigma prime to be filled with meaning by others. Armstrong died in 2012, but his legend—as well as the myths—live on.

SAS • 10-10:50 A.M. • JANET AYERS ACADEMIC CENTER 4094

MONTEVERDE PLENARY ADDRESS

Science as One of the Humanities: The Moon Landing as Case Study

Dr. Noel Boyle, Philosophy, Director of General Education

Dr. Boyle will use the historical event of the Moon landing as a backdrop for exploring the relationship between science and the humanities. He will explore the nature of science and humanities, arguing that the two are better understood as overlapping parts of an integrated endeavor than as distinct intellectual discourses.

SAS • 11-11:50 A.M. • JANET AYERS ACADEMIC CENTER 4094

Moonlight, Starlight, Streetlight: Artificial Illumination and the Decline of Natural Darkness

Dr. Dan Schafer, History

Human culture has been shaped by an abiding awareness of the night sky and its cycles. The rising and setting of the sun and moon, the wanderings of the planets, the moon's phases, the unchanging background of the stars, the scattered light of the Milky Way, magnificent eclipses and random comets—all these have been the seat of mythology, astrology, and spirituality, an inspiration for art, poetry, and song, and the ground for modern astronomy and cosmology. But what happens when we illumine our cities and the outdoors with powerful electric lights? When we can no longer see the Milky Way, the constellations, or enjoy a starlit night? When we don't track the motion of planets and can't tell them apart from stars? When we barely even notice whether the moon is in the sky? Are we losing something important?

SAS • 2:00-2:50 P.M. • JANET AYERS ACADEMIC CENTER 4094

“Find out Moonshine”: Shakespeare in the Age of Galileo

Dr. Marcia McDonald, English

Shakespeare is one of our great poets of the moon. In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, he simultaneously depicts the theatrical impossibility of bringing moonshine on stage in a “play within a play” plot, and repeatedly enacts the poetic reality of bringing moonshine on stage in the play's lyric poetry. Shakespeare ponders the theatrical problem of making the orb of the night a part of a daytime stage play in the same decades Galileo is building on the work of Copernicus and Brahe to fully revise the understanding of the moon and solar system, and by implication, the place of the human in that system. Though no specific evidence exists that Shakespeare and Galileo knew of each other's work, do these two great imaginations of the early modern era, the poetic and the scientific, have anything to say to each other, and to us today?

SAS • 3:00-3:50 P.M. • JANET AYERS ACADEMIC CENTER 4094

Film and Commentary: *The Armstrong Tapes*

Never-before-heard audio tapes recorded with Neil Armstrong during the final years of his life reveal an intimate portrait of this iconic—and famously private—man. Illustrated through previously unseen personal photographs and archival footage, this 44 minute documentary from Steve Rotfeld Productions takes viewers on an emotional journey into the thoughts and experience of the first man on the moon. Produced in partnership with the National Geographic Channel.

Following the showing of this film, provided for this symposium event gratis by Steve Rotfeld, co-producer James R. Hansen, author of *First Man*, the only authorized biography of Neil Armstrong, will answer questions about the making of the film as well as the role the tapes themselves played for Hansen in his process of writing the Armstrong biography.

SAS • 7:00-8:30 P.M. • JANET AYERS ACADEMIC CENTER 4094

Tuesday, September 17

FEATURED SPEAKER

Go for Orbit: One of America's First Women Astronauts Finds Her Space

Rhea Seddon, M. D., Space Shuttle Astronaut

Former astronaut and one of the first six women accepted by NASA, Rhea Seddon, M.D., is a veteran of three space shuttle flights, a national speaker, and an award-winning author. She served as a Mission Specialist on Space Shuttle flights in 1985 and 1991 and as Payload Commander in charge of all science activities on her final flight in 1993. After leaving NASA in 1997, Dr. Seddon was the Assistant Chief Medical Officer of the Vanderbilt Medical Group in Nashville for 11 years. She then became a founding partner of LifeWings Partners LLC which teaches teamwork to healthcare. She has also served as the president of a large women's charitable group in Murfreesboro. Her 2016 autobiography, *Go for Orbit*, was awarded the Independent Book Publishers Association Ben Franklin Gold Award for Best Autobiography/Memoir. She will talk about her experiences with the space shuttle program and the inspiration, aspiration, and imagination it takes to be an astronaut.

SAS • 10-10:45 A.M. • JANET AYERS ACADEMIC CENTER 4094

FEATURED SPEAKERS: PANEL DISCUSSION AND Q&A SESSION

Inspiration, Aspiration, and Imagination: Writing about the Human Experience in Space

James Hansen, Rhea Seddon, Margaret Lazarus Dean

SAS • 11-11:50 AM • JANET AYERS ACADEMIC CENTER 4094

FEATURED SPEAKER

Margaret Lazarus Dean

Professor of English and Director of Creative Writing,
University of Tennessee-Knoxville

Professor Dean will discuss her writing on American spaceflight: *The Time It Takes to Fall* (Simon & Schuster, 2007), a novel set in the aftermath of the Challenger disaster, *Leaving Orbit: Notes from the Last Days of American Spaceflight* (Graywolf Press, 2015) an award-winning nonfiction book documenting the last days of the space shuttle program, and *Endurance* (Knopf, 2017), a memoir she co-wrote with astronaut Scott Kelly. She is the recipient of numerous literary and teaching awards, including an NEA Literature Fellowship.

SAS • 1-1:45 PM • JANET AYERS ACADEMIC CENTER 4094

PANEL PRESENTATION

Food, Film, Fiction, and David Bowie: How the Moon Landing Shaped Popular Culture

Presenters: Lauren Colwell, Lauren Cottle, Emiliya Mailyan, and Michelle Smith
Graduate students, M.A. in English, Belmont University

This graduate student panel will explore how the mysteries of space manifested in American society through food, music, film, and creative writing. Food culture in American reached a contentious point as new quick meals became a staple in American homes and a move for environmental sustainability spread throughout the country. Through the use of space imagery, synthesized sounds, and otherworldly personalities, the popular music of the 1970s and early 1980s reflect the rise of new youth culture and construction of various nonconformist ideologies—all of which speak to themes of unease and alienation that reflect larger problems of the period. Following the moon landing of 1969, sci-fi filmmakers used the new environment of space to retrospectively consider the Earth and the footprint we, as humans, leave on our own planet. And lastly, the novels and short stories of the 1970s and 1980s reflected a movement towards inspirations outside of this world, as sci-fi and fantasy genres grew in popularity all while connecting back to the political and environmental issues here on planet Earth.

SAS • 5-5:50 P.M. • JANET AYERS ACADEMIC CENTER 4094

Wednesday, September 18

PANEL PRESENTATION

The Quest to Know, the Desire to Connect: Math, Music, Astronomy, History, and the Human Condition

Dr. Annette Sisson, English

Dr. Wyman Williams, Chief of the Space Systems Program Office (SSPO) of the
Advanced Concepts Laboratory, Georgia Tech University

Dr. Terry Klefsted, Music

Dr. Mike Pinter, Mathematics, Director of the Teaching Center

John Pipkin's 2016 historical novel, *The Blind Astronomer's Daughter*, chronicles the lives of two eighteenth-century women, both named Caroline, who assist a father and a brother in their quest to develop powerful telescopes and map the galaxy. Set against the backdrop of Ireland's 1798 revolution, the novel dramatizes the desire to be known and understood—to connect—which is shown to animate the pursuit of music, math, astronomy, class struggle, political revolution, and personal relationships. It also focuses on humanity's creativity—that is, the human need to imagine and invent. This multi-disciplinary panel will explore the book's depiction of actual historical events, its representation of various human endeavors, and its ultimate message about human aspiration.

SAS • 10-11:30 A.M., BREAK AT 10:45 AM • JANET AYERS ACADEMIC CENTER 4094

PANEL PRESENTATION

The Moon in Chinese Culture and Context

Alexis DeBoer, Asian Studies and History

Dr. Qingjun (Joan) Li, Chinese and Asian Studies

Dr. Ronnie Littlejohn, Philosophy and Asian Studies

The moon plays a significant role in Chinese culture, and China now plays a significant role in space travel and exploration. This panel will explore both culture and science in China's fascination with the moon.

GCLP • 1-1:50 P.M. • JANET AYERS ACADEMIC CENTER 4094

“Imagined Spaces” in Colson Whitehead’s *The Underground Railroad*

Professor Sue Trout, English

Dr. Peter Kuryla, History

Although the moon landing represented “one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind,” space exploration in America took place alongside the more turbulent Civil Rights Movement in this country. While the moon walk was ostensibly a reflection of the American spirit of exploration, the search for freedom, and the culmination of Manifest Destiny, America was also a place where that journey was more available to some than others. Using postmodern tropes of space exploration (time travel, imagined spaces, and the American Dream), Whitehead interrogates the systems of oppression woven into the fabric of America, the nature of history and time, and what it means to be human in America.

SAS • 2-2:50 P.M. • JANET AYERS ACADEMIC CENTER 4094

PANEL

Bless the Astronauts Who Fly: The Religion of the Apollo Crews

The Science & Religion Club of Belmont

Dr. Scott Hawley, Physics, Panel Moderator

Religious traditions and experiences of the Apollo astronauts became catalysts for public engagement about our place in the cosmos, the separation of church and state, and being “heavenly minded” while on Earth. The realities of religious practice in space continue to pose interesting questions for logistics and physics, as well as for the future of humanity.

CFT • 4-4:50 P.M. • JANET AYERS ACADEMIC CENTER 4094

Thursday, September 19

Howlin' at the Neon Moon: Lunar Topoi in the Rhetoric of Country Music

Dr. Sarah Blomeley, English, Director of Graduate Studies in English

Over the past near-century, a handful of familiar themes—what Aristotle would have called topoi—have defined the genre of country music: love, heartbreak, work, mama, trucks. You know the joke: What do you get when you play a country song backward? You get your job back, you get your truck back, you get your wife back.... These topics are so well-worn that they've become a punchline. In this presentation I explore the moon as a similarly consistent (if less remarked) topos in country music. Why are country songwriters from Hank Williams to Kacey Musgraves so fixated on the moon?

SAS • 10-10:50 A.M. • JANET AYERS ACADEMIC CENTER 4094

The Moon in a Dewdrop

Michael Jackson, MA Alumnus, Belmont University

This paper explores the many ways of looking at the moon in ancient China and Japan, from the moon viewing parties and linked poetry contests of the Chinese intelligentsia, and the poems of China's greatest writers to Japan's classic text "The Manyoshu" to the haiku and painted scrolls of the Zen monks.

SAS • 11-11:50 A.M. • JANET AYERS ACADEMIC CENTER 4094

"Ruling the Night": The Moon in the Hebrew Bible

Dr. Mark McEntire, Professor of Religion

The moon makes an early appearance in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, as an object God makes on the fourth day of the creation story in Genesis 1. Along with the sun, it is a "light thing" in the sky that has specific purposes, though its lack of a name is puzzling. The moon's presence is never more overt than this in the biblical text, but it is always present in the background when the numbering of months and days appears. Persons living in the Iron Age did not possess all of our scientific knowledge of the moon, but they observed it closely and its life played an important role in theirs.

CFT • 1-1:50 P.M. • JANET AYERS ACADEMIC CENTER 4094

The Cloudy Crystal Ball: Does Science Fiction Predict the Future?

Dr. Robert Scherrer, Professor and Chair of the Department of Physics and Astronomy, Vanderbilt University

The Apollo 11 Moon landing 50 years ago fulfilled one of the dreams of science fiction fans: the first step in humanity's exploration of the solar system. But the following decades did not turn out exactly as hoped; we still have not colonized the solar system, contacted alien races, or even built a decent jetpack for personal travel. Dr. Scherrer will draw on his experience as a scientist and science fiction writer to examine the extent to which science fiction has predicted the future: when has it hit the mark, and when has it failed miserably? And what accounts for these hits and misses?

Dr. Robert Scherrer is Professor and Chair of the Department of Physics and Astronomy at Vanderbilt University. His research area is cosmology, encompassing work on dark energy, dark matter, big bang nucleosynthesis, and the large-scale structure of the universe. He is also the author of a quantum mechanics textbook and has published several popular science articles and science fiction short stories. He maintains a blog, Cosmic Yarns, on science and science fiction.

SAS • 2-2:50 P.M. • JANET AYERS ACADEMIC CENTER 4094

FEATURED SPEAKERS: PANEL DISCUSSION AND Q&A SESSION

“Say It’s Only a Paper Moon”: Art, Science, and Representations of Reality

Dr. Robert Scherrer, Physics, Vanderbilt University

Casey McGuire, Associate Professor of Foundations and Sculpture, University of West Georgia

Mark Schoon, Associate Professor of Art, University of West Georgia

Dr. Andrea Stover, English, Panel Moderator

This panel, featuring artists and a physicist and science fiction author, and moderated by Dr. Andrea Stover, a specialist in memoir, will engage with the complex interrelationship between fact and fiction in scientifically and historically inspired creative works, an interrelationship which can both illuminate and blur our understanding of reality.

SAS • 3-3:50 P.M. • JANET AYERS ACADEMIC CENTER 4094

Analogue Landscapes: Beyond the Lunar Vision

Mark Schoon, Photography, and Casey McGuire, Sculpture, University of West Georgia

Inspired by Sir John Herschel's iconic 1842 images depicting a recreation of the moon's surface, "Analogue Landscapes: Beyond the Lunar Vision" is a monochromatic photographic exhibition exploring various aspects of the real, the artificial, and the unattainable. These images were realized through the creation of three-dimensional sculptures for the purposes of making photographic prints. As such, they at times reference lunar models, Apollo era images, and telescopic astrophotography in an attempt to bridge the gap between historic and modern modes of scientific representation while re-contextualizing and bringing them into a contemporary vernacular.

4:30-6 P.M.; GALLERY TALK AT 5 P.M.

LOCATION: GALLERY 121 IN THE LEU CENTER FOR THE VISUAL ARTS

Friday, September 20

Earthrise: The Photograph That Spurred the Environmental Movement

Dr. Darlene Panvini, Dr. Matthew Heard, Dr. Steve Murphree,
Dr. John Niedzwiecki, Biology

On Christmas Eve, 1968, the crew of the Apollo 8 mission took a photograph that forever changed the way we viewed our "blue planet." This initial manned launch was the first to escape Earth's gravity and orbit another celestial body. While the race to explore the moon continued, the iconic photograph called "Earthrise" brought attention to the vulnerability of our planet and sparked a movement that precipitated the first Earth Day. In a time period racked by the Vietnam War, Civil Rights Movement, and growing eco-consciousness, "Earthrise" served as a unifying symbol reminding us that the natural resources on Earth were finite and needed protection from years of industrialization. The ensuing fifty years since this photograph was taken included the implementation of important environmental regulations, but also more environmental disasters. The current weakening of many of these regulations concerns environmentalists. Do we have a similar icon to lead us through the next fifty years of environmental protection? Join faculty from the Department of Biology for a discussion on the impact of moon exploration on environmentalism—then and now.

SAS • 10-10:50 A.M. • JANET AYERS ACADEMIC CENTER 4094

Moonscapes from Oregon

Dr. Joel Overall, English

Dr. Matthew Heard, Environmental Science

Evelyn Antis, English

This past May, seventeen Belmont students and faculty traveled to the Cascade Mountains in Oregon to explore issues of food, faith, and the environment as a part of a short-term study away program. From a remote location at the Oregon Extension just outside of Ashland, OR, the group arrived at the beginning of a new moon cycle with a full moon visible toward the end of the trip. In order to study the impact of moonlight on the natural environment, one student in Dr. Overall's Modern Rhetoric of the Environment course recorded three different soundscapes for three different phases of the moon. In the field of sonic rhetorics, soundscapes are presented as persuasive texts that help audiences to hear the world in distinct and new ways. This presentation seeks to further explore the genre of the soundscape and explain the environmental context of the Oregon Extension before playing the Oregon moonscapes and presenting the findings.

SAS • 11-11:50 A.M. • JANET AYERS ACADEMIC CENTER 4094

Philolgoi: Open Discussion

Moderator: Dr. Mark Anderson, Philosophy

Philolgoi, Belmont's weekly student-led philosophy discussion group, will engage this year's Humanities Symposium theme, and invites all members of the audience to participate actively in the discussion.

SAS • 12-12:50 P.M. • JANET AYERS ACADEMIC CENTER 4094

To the Moon . . . and Beyond?

Dr. Maggie Monteverde, English

Fifty years ago, the first human being set foot on the moon, and to many, especially a group of people called astro-futurists, it seemed like just the first step in an even more giant leap not just to other planets in our solar system to the great expanses of space beyond. Shortly after the lunar landing, NASA's Office of Manned Space Flight even predicted proposed to have a human presence on Mars by the early 1980's, with Nixon's own Space Task Force shooting for the end of the 20th century. Obviously, neither happened...except in science fiction. As someone who teaches science fiction, I have been increasingly puzzled by this discrepancy. Many answers have been proposed, but none, to me at least, is completely satisfactory. In this talk, I will engage with this question by looking closely not just at those answers but also at another important event that occurred within that same 12 month period: the first orbit of the moon that gave us one of the most famous photographs ever taken, "Earthrise," which not coincidentally is featured on the cover for this symposium. I will also step back a bit to consider what it might say about humanity (in particular Americans) that we did not go beyond at that time, as well as that we now appear to be setting out on that course once more to the moon and beyond.

SAS • 2-2:50 P.M. • JANET AYERS ACADEMIC CENTER 4094

Saturday, September 21

Writing Workshop: Creating Space

Dr. Joel Overall and Dr. Susan Finch, English

Join Belmont faculty for a workshop on writing about the moon and space. During this interactive session, we will discuss contemporary writing about the moon and space. In addition, participants will compose a creative work and experiment with digital modalities to “write space.” This workshop is limited to 25 participants. Please contact Dr. Overall to reserve a spot: joel.overall@belmont.edu

CPA • 3-5 P.M. • JANET AYERS ACADEMIC CENTER 4094

Sunday, September 22

2019 Sandra Hutchins Humanities Symposium Writing Competition Reading and Celebration of Winning Entries

Dr. Susan Finch, English

Join us for a reading of prose and poetry written by winners of the 2019 Symposium Writing Competition. These awards are named in honor of retired Belmont faculty member, Dr. Sandra Hutchins, longtime creative writing professor and advisor to the Belmont Library Journal. A reception follows the reading.

CPA • 4-6 P.M. • JANET AYERS ACADEMIC CENTER 4094

NOTE: For information about submitting to the competition, contact Dr. Susan Finch at susan.finch@belmont.edu. Submissions must be received by Dr. Finch no later than 12 p.m. on Friday, September 6 to be considered for a prize.

Monday, September 23

Symposium Wrap Up: To the Moon and Back

Panel: Members of the 2019 Humanities Symposium Planning Committee

From early cultural fascination with the moon, to predicting our future as inhabitants of space, from the science and experience of space travel to the impact of seeing the earth from the moon, this symposium has considered our history and our present as humans aspire to the moon and space. What is the state of the dialogue between the humanities and sciences on this topic? What have we learned through the symposium? What new questions has this symposium brought forward? Join panelists for a reflection on and discussion of the 2019 Symposium.

SAS • 10-10:50 A.M. • JANET AYERS ACADEMIC CENTER 4094



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NOTE OF THANKS

The members of the 2019 Humanities Symposium Committee would like to extend their heartfelt appreciation to the many Belmont faculty, students, and staff who made the symposium possible. Special thanks go to the Office of the Provost for its financial support; to Karen Bennett in the College of Liberal Arts & Social Sciences and the Office of University Marketing & Public Relations for its assistance in preparing promotional materials; the Office of Events Services for its assistance in reserving and equipping presentation space; and the staff of the School of Humanities, particularly Brenda Hancock and Denise Mabry, for assistance in making travel arrangements for our speakers and managing many of the day-to-day concerns for this event.

CONVOCATION CATEGORIES:

CFT - Christian Faith and Tradition

CPA - Creative and Performing Arts

CSR - Community, Service and Reflection

GCLP - Global Citizenship, Leadership, Diversity, the Professions

SAS - Society and the Arts & Sciences

WSL - Wellness, Safety and College Life