



IN COMMON

FALL/WINTER 2005

A NEWSLETTER FOR ALUMNI & FRIENDS OF THE NELSON INSTITUTE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES, UW-MADISON

Health and Security Linked to Environmental Change

The Darling mosquito is not the benign insect its name might suggest. *Anopheles darlingi*, as it's known in scientific terms, is the leading vector of New World malaria, which has reemerged as a major public health threat in much of South America. The mosquito is thriving in parts of the Amazon where the forest has been cut down.

"*Anopheles darlingi* likes open, sunlit pools, and we found that biting rates increased in deforested areas, even accounting for differences in human population density. So here's a link between land use change, deforestation, and the emergence of malaria in the Amazon," says **Jonathan Patz**, an associate professor in the Nelson Institute and the Department of Population Health Sciences.

Patz is a co-principal investigator on a study that's exploring these links, with a paper appearing in an upcoming issue of the *American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene*.

It's just one of many new initiatives undertaken by Nelson Institute researchers looking at connections between environmental change, human health and security.

Jon Foley is working with Patz on another Amazon study, and he's been spearheading the effort to put UW-Madison and the Nelson Institute at the forefront of environmental health research, education and training. Foley, a climatologist and ecologist, directs the institute's Center for Sustainability and the Global Environment (SAGE).



Jonathan Patz

"We're trying to assemble the team that will make us one of the world's leading places for research and graduate education and training," he explains.

"We're taking scientific views of the changing environment — climate change, land use, loss of biodiversity, changes in agricultural technology and so on — and reframing those to address human concerns, connecting them directly to health and human welfare and ultimately to notions of security," says Foley. "I don't mean just military security with guns, though that's tied into it, but the broader notions of well being — kids having enough to eat, having access to clean water, being free from disease, basically having enough to go around."

Strategic Hires

Experts from a wide range of fields are working together to explore these issues under the Nelson Institute umbrella, aided by the Madison Initiative, a university-wide effort to foster transdisciplinarity through

"cluster hires" of faculty members to work together on broad subjects of inquiry.

Patz, for example, was hired last year through the "International Environmental Affairs and Global Security" cluster proposal put together by Foley and supported by faculty members from more than a dozen departments and programs.

Two additional Nelson Institute faculty members were hired as part of that cluster. **Samer Alatout**, a rural sociologist, is an expert on natural resources and water in the Middle East, globalization, and identity politics; and geographer **Leila Harris** focuses on water resources, environmental and developmental change, and environmental institutions, particularly in Turkey.

Alatout, Harris and Patz are working together on a new program, coordinated by SAGE, called the "Global Environmental Change, Human Health and International Security Initiative." **Clark Miller** (public affairs/science studies/environmental studies), a policy specialist who was hired as part of the "International Public Affairs" cluster, led the development of the concept, which has spawned a series of research projects, lectures and special courses. Twelve Nelson Institute faculty members from the social and physical sciences are involved.

"We began to pull together a group of faculty members who had common interests in global environ-

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Environmental change

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Jon Foley

mental change and security issues and how they intertwine — issues of food security, access to clean water, and questions of land use change and emerging health risks,” Miller

explains. “We felt there was a need to focus on the relationships between global environmental change and insecurities and vulnerabilities of one sort or another for various populations around the planet.”



Clark Miller

The project consists of three major activities: an ongoing graduate seminar in global

environmental studies, which has so far looked at water scarcity in the Middle East, disease emergence, and

the political and policy challenges posed by global environmental degradation; a distinguished visitor program; and a final conference to bring



Tracey Holloway

Nelson Institute atmospheric chemist who studies atmospheric modeling, public health, and international environmental treaties. She was hired as a new assistant professor as part of the “Energy Sources and Policy” cluster, and she’s found plenty of opportunities to collaborate with researchers in other fields beyond her group.

“Synergies can pop up on a case-by-case basis, between two people, three people,” Holloway says. “For example, Jonathan Patz and Jon Foley and I are looking at how atmospheric modeling tools are appropriate for public health assessments related to air



Samer Alatout

issue of the journal *Nature*.

together international experts in environment, health and security at the end of the three-year term.

Another key participant is **Tracey Holloway**, a

Nelson Institute atmospheric chemist who studies atmospheric modeling, public health, and international environmental treaties. She was hired as a new assistant professor as part of the “Energy Sources and Policy” cluster, and she’s found plenty of opportunities to collaborate with researchers in other fields beyond her group.

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That effort produced an article on the “Impact of Regional Climate Change on Human Health” published as the cover story in the Nov. 17

Global Troubles, Midwest Beaches

These collaborations have also spawned an initiative called the “Governing Global Insecurities Collaborative.” Funded by the UW–Madison Center for World Affairs and the Global Economy, it focuses on the insecurities that globalization has created for states and societies, with special emphasis on vio-

lence and ecological risk. It also seeks to offer concrete proposals for institutional and policy reforms to address these concerns.

Miller and Patz are two of the principal investigators, along with more than a dozen participants, including Alatout, Harris and Foley. The project includes a fall graduate seminar series on “Globalization and Human Security,” special lectures and other events, and a spring workshop on infectious diseases.

In addition, Patz and others recently landed a major grant from the U.S.



Leila Harris

Environmental Protection Agency to study the implications of global climate change for Wisconsin.

Researchers will look at factors such as heat morbidity, excessive rainfall and runoff, droughts, and even beach closings due to bacterial contamination and algal blooms.

These efforts could hardly be more timely. Environment-related health threats — from ozone-induced asthma to Lyme disease to avian influenza — have become topics of growing public and institutional concern, alongside national security issues.

Holloway says helping people understand these connections is the key to better environmental policies.

“The real hook between the science and policy of air pollution, for example, is how it affects people. There are other impacts as well, like visibility and climate change, but health is what really puts air pollution on the agenda,” she explains.

Still, these environmental challenges remain largely outside the view of the medical profession.

“There aren’t many people in the medical field directly working on climate change or ecological change,” says Patz, who’s leading a university-

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Hurricanes Hit Home for Nelson Alums

Two Nelson Institute alumni who are residents of New Orleans are professionally and personally dealing with the impacts of hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Linda Baynham, who earned a master's degree in land resources in 1997, is an environmental manager for Entergy Corporation, a Louisiana-based electric utility. She says the one-two punch of the August and September storms shattered the region's power distribution infrastructure.

"For Entergy, both storms had record-breaking amounts of damage and outages," writes Baynham.

Her work will focus on the massive reconstruction efforts, providing information to homeowners, businesses and builders.

"I'm working to get information to customers on how to rebuild energy efficiently — information on the 2006 federal energy efficiency tax credits and rebates, and New Orleans and Louisiana programs," she explains.

Baynham and her husband **Rob Moreau**, who finished a Ph.D. in land resources in 1996, left New Orleans ahead of the storm to stay with friends in Baton Rouge.

"We were coming back from Seattle on Aug. 27, got off the plane, took one look at a computer monitor showing a direct hit on New Orleans, and went straight to Baton Rouge," says Baynham.

But the stay at their friends' house was short.

"We left there at 2 a.m. as the storm was approaching, because our friends were worried about trees around their house. A big old tree did fall from their neighbor's yard, barely missing the room we had been staying in and breaking the windows," she writes.

Baynham and Moreau's own house in New Orleans was just above the flood line, but their neighborhood was



Turtle Cove Environmental Research Station, flooded by Katrina

battered by wind. Shortly after Katrina passed, Moreau managed twice to check on the couple's home and neighborhood.

"Rob got in using his Red Cross pass and carrying a boat," says Baynham. "He helped rescue an elderly couple and brought in water for neighbors. Our neighborhood didn't appear to be looted at all, probably because there were so many trees down."

Both of the couple's workplaces were seriously damaged.

The Entergy headquarters had windows blown out, and the Turtle Cove Environmental Research Station, which Moreau manages, had a great deal of wind damage and was flooded four feet deep. Education and research programs at the station, which sits on the northwestern edge of Lake Ponchartrain, have been suspended during cleanup and repairs.

(Ironically, Moreau expressed concern about the loss of coastal wetlands and the vulnerability of New Orleans to flooding in a profile in *In Common*

two years ago.)

Moreau says damage to Turtle Cove will total at least \$1 million. All of the research station's boardwalks and wharves were destroyed along with its 38-foot pontoon boat. But the center has other boats available for continued research use, and a recently completed boat shed and education complex will serve as an interim facility while the main building and other structures are repaired.

"I'm expecting that, as the new year begins, our education and outreach programs can resume with a new pontoon boat (courtesy of FEMA) and the use of our education complex for teacher workshops and lectures," he writes. "All of our staff members are available to continue work. So the future is bright, especially if our buildings and facilities can be repaired to be better than before, so we're not worried every time a small storm crops up."

Moreau and Baynham are back in their house with son Robbie and back

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Alumni News

Let us know what's new in your careers and lives. Drop us a line at *In Common*, 10 Science Hall, 550 N. Park St., Madison, WI 53706-1491; fax us at 608/262-2273; or email incommon@mailplus.wisc.edu.

Ann Bloss (B.A., English/Environmental Studies '92) took a job last March with the Office of Executive Inspector General for the Agencies of the Illinois Governor.

"I investigate allegations of fraud, misfeasance, malfeasance, ghost pay-rolling, etc., in Illinois state agencies and, if the allegations are founded, make recommendations to the agency and the Governor's Office on how to fix the problem (anything from disciplinary action, termination, or policy changes)," she writes.

Bloss earned a law degree from the Chicago-Kent College of Law in 1995 with a specialty in environment and energy law. She then went to work as a prosecutor, including three years handling environmental offenses in criminal and civil court.

"I am still very active in environmental issues and I am a member of the Chicago Bar Association's environmental group," she says. Bloss is working with a south-side Chicago group, the Fuller Park Community Development Corporation, which runs a community garden and is trying to restore a prairie.

Bloss lives in Roselle, Ill., and can be reached by email at abloss87@yahoo.com.

Josh Blumenfeld (M.S., LR '92) recently became an on-air meteorologist for WKBT, a television station in La Crosse, Wis.

After earning a master's degree at the University of Colorado in journalism specializing in environmental and science reporting, Blumenfeld had previously been a weather anchor in Wichita Falls, Texas, and a meteorology intern for a station in Denver.

He's also worked as the managing editor and plant ecologist for the LBJ Wildflower Center in Austin, and as a general assignment reporter for the

Durango Herald newspaper in Durango, Colorado.

In addition, Blumenfeld spent four years as a professional actor in New York City, with appearances in *Spin City*, *Sex and the City*, and *Between the Lions*.

Blumenfeld's email address is jblumenfeld@wkbt.com.

Steve Brick (M.S., LR/EAP '89) has joined the Joyce Foundation as manager of their Environmental Grant Program.

Brick previously served as an associate director of the Energy Center of Wisconsin, a Madison-based non-profit organization dedicated to improving energy sustainability, including energy efficiency, renewable energy, and environmental protection.

His email address at the Joyce Foundation is sbrick@joycefdn.org.

Kim Cahill (M.S., LR '03) is working toward a doctorate at Stanford University in the new Interdisciplinary Program in Environment and Resources. She's studying the effects of climate change on California's \$33 billion agricultural sector, focusing on one of the state's most temperature-sensitive and culturally iconic crops: wine grapes.

"Last summer, my husband and I moved to my grandparents' old turkey ranch in Sonoma to be close to the Pinot noir vineyards I'm studying and the growers I'm interviewing to understand the interactions between local social and natural systems in the face of global changes," she writes.

Cahill has also been involved with state policy on climate change, including the new governor's initiative to reduce greenhouse gases statewide.

She's also been training to cycle 111 miles on November 19 in El Tour de Tucson to raise awareness and at

least \$3,500 for leukemia and other blood cancer patients, and to help find treatments for these diseases. All donations are much appreciated to support this important cause.

Cahill can be reached by email at kncahill@stanford.edu.

Lola Dvorak (M.S., WRM '03; B.A., BAC/Environmental Studies '99) recently joined the staff of The Regeneration Project, a national non-profit group based in San Francisco that works to mobilize a religious response to global warming.

"I coordinate the efforts of people of different faith perspectives across the country to steward Creation," she writes. "It's been a phenomenal experience for me to support grassroots efforts from nontraditional environmental actors and to learn more about the ethical motivation for this activist and justice work. Though I miss my Midwestern roots, San Francisco is a great city for exploration and adventure."

Dvorak lives in San Francisco. Her email is lola@theregenerationproject.org, and the organization's Web site is www.theregenerationproject.org.

Kara (McGurk) Homan (B.S., Geography/Environmental Studies '05) began pursuing a graduate degree this fall in urban and regional planning, with an emphasis in land use and environment, at the University of Iowa.

Homan recently married and changed her name, and she can be emailed at kara-mcgurk@uiowa.edu.

Nick Houtman (M.S., WRM '89) became the director of research communications and editor of the Research Magazine at Oregon State University in Corvallis last July.

"I'll be developing the mission and

editorial content for a new research magazine to promote the university's research across the board," he says.

Houtman's email address at OSU is nick.houtman@oregonstate.edu.

Nicole Kime (B.S., Zoology/Environmental Studies '92) is chairing the Environmental Studies Council at Edgewood College in Madison for 2005–06.

"The Environmental Studies Council is the new name for a group of faculty and staff from various departments that are committed to environmental issues," she explains. "The council administers the environmental studies minor at Edgewood (an interdisciplinary program that is, in many ways, similar to the Nelson Institute's undergraduate certificate). It also includes faculty and staff who may not teach courses in the minor but are interested in various environmental issues and projects.

"Our focus projects for the next year will include increasing student involvement and enrollment in the minor, updating the curriculum, our ongoing Lake Wingra watershed project, and the development of plans for a "green" Edgewood campus. We also host a successful Earth Week lecture series in the spring."

Kime also teaches a variety of classes in the Natural Science Department at Edgewood, including introductory biology courses and a course in animal behavior, her major field of study in graduate school at the University of Texas-Austin.

She can be reached via email at nkime@edgewood.edu.

Nicolle Zellner (B.S., Astronomy/Physics/Environmental Studies '93) recently became an assistant professor of physics at Albion College in Michigan.

"I teach all things astronomy (planets, stars, and galaxies) and am in charge of setting up the observatory

and developing a public observing program for the new science complex. It's a 'green' building, with motion sensor lights in the offices, classrooms, and bathrooms, occupant-adjusted temperature controls, a grass roof, and a water-reclaiming system, to name a few," she says.

"The entire science complex additions and renovations are being designed under the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) program. We're one of only ten buildings in Michigan to get this certification, and only about 250 in the entire country. It's pretty nice to work in a building that was designed to be environmentally friendly, right down to the paint on the walls!"

After graduating from UW-Madison, Zellner earned a master's degree in 1998 at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in upstate New York. She then received the institute's first-ever Ph.D. in Multidisciplinary Science in 2001.

"I concentrated on topics related to the origin of life and studied samples from the moon (yes, really) to try to understand how many asteroids and comets have hit the Earth and the moon over time and how those impacts may have affected the origin of life on Earth."

Zellner recently finished a post-doctoral appointment at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in Livermore, Calif., where she continued her lunar sample research.

"I also got involved in starting a Girls in Science program, aimed at seventh and eighth grade girls," she writes. "The object of the after-school, girls-only program is to foster interest in science and encourage girls to pursue science, math, and technology courses in high school and beyond."

Zellner can be reached by email at nzellner@albion.edu.

Hurricanes hit home

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at work, unlike many other New Orleans residents. They report that, as of mid-November, the city remains in rough shape.

"We've been devastated here. People have left. Businesses have left. Hospitals and universities, including Tulane, Xavier and the University of New Orleans, have closed," says Moreau, though he notes these universities will likely reopen in the spring.

"Mostly, New Orleans looks deserted," says Baynham. "The streets are full of garbage and refrigerators. People's yards are already overgrown and ragged. It makes you wonder how quickly New Orleans would revert to swamp if left alone for a few years."

Moreau says the levees need to be rebuilt to protect against future category five hurricanes, and the city needs other things it's never had before in order to recover.

"Wetland restoration that will help provide more protection (for every 2.7 miles of marsh, we can reduce a hurricane storm surge by one foot). Good schools (we probably had the worst in the country before the storms). Low crime (we have had one of the highest per-capita murder rates in the country for years). The list goes on," Moreau writes.

"In a way, we're starting off with a clean slate. I think we'll see a smaller New Orleans, but one that may provide a higher quality of life. The eternal optimist in me likes to think that we have an opportunity to rewrite the book on our city — if we can keep our culture, our music, our food, all of the things that have made us one of the most unique and loved cities in the world."

"Overall, we feel really, really lucky," says Baynham. "We have jobs, a house, daycare for Robbie, our health, and our sanity."

Baynham can be reached via email at lbaynha@entergy.com, and Moreau at rmoreau@selu.edu.

Recent Contributions

The Nelson Institute thanks the following people and organizations for their generous contributions:

Diane Adams	Cynthia Harrington	Bruce Keyes	Navin Ramankutty
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New Alumni

Undergraduate certificates: Kristin Aquilino, Jennifer Beissinger, Amy Beringer, Geoffrey Boeder, Christian Bruckner, Kristyn Bunnell, Nicholas Callahan, Molly Carlson, Katherine Childs, Aaron Christensen, Ryan Christoph, Caitlin Cotter, Keith Cronin, Marc Dembinsky, Sarah Eichhorst, Elizabeth Fallon, Lily Farrar, Jennifer Garfield, David Gundlach, Jeffrey Hanlon, Leah Hart, Erika Helgerson, Emily Hill, Jessica Holschbach, Kara Homan, Lindsey Houghton, Zachary Kaiser, Anna Kamitakahara, Rebecca Kuemmel, Rianna LaFave, Rebecca Lamson, Jennifer Lasee, Megan Link, James Locke, Thomas Maczuga, Scott Mahlik, Kristin McConnell, Jeffrey Naumann, Maija Niemisto, Katie Paulin, Rebecca Petzel, Amanda Raster, Bridget Reagan, Julia Riccio, Julie Scanlan, Julianne Smith, Alysa Stafford, Amber Strangstalien, Elizabeth Surfus, Adrienne Tandberg, Alexandria Tannenbaum, Amber Taylor, Rebecca Thorman, Erik Voight, Jennifer Weis, Aaron Wunnicke and Benjamin Yahr.

Conservation Biology & Sustainable Development: Kristina Cawthon, Kerrie Cunningham, Jon Goldstein, Kristin Hall, Vicki Julis, David MacFarland, Aaron Megquier, Kimberlie Rawlings, Julia Solomon, Andrew Thoms and Chad Wilsey, master's degrees.

Environmental Monitoring: Robert Costanza, Allison Day, John Marks, Scott Peckham, Shelley Schmidt, Aaron Stephenson and Nathan Uhlenbrock, master's degrees.

Land Resources: Marc Brody, Maura Camosse, Maria Dahmus, Genya Erling, Alexander Felson, Sarah Keim, Jeanne Merrill, Michelle Peach, Tara Suring, Trisha Wagner and Gina Walejko, master's degrees; Elisabeth Graffy, Jayne Somers and Michelle Steen-Adams, doctorates.

Water Resources Management: Andrea Finch, Katharina Freydank, Benjamin Krams, Jill Leary, Heidi Moltz, and Sheri Young, master's degrees.

Overheard

“Given the massive inertia of the global climate system — with the significant degree of additional warming already ‘in the pipeline,’ even if CO₂ levels were to stabilize today — combined with the difficulty of achieving drastic decreases in greenhouse emissions any time in the near future, one also has to ask: Is the Arctic we know today already lost?”

— SAGE Director
Jonathan Foley,
in the Oct. 28 issue of
Science

Fellowship Recipients Named

Students in the institute's graduate degree and certificate programs received the following awards:

Doris Duke Conservation

Fellowships: Scott Bernstein (LR); and James Burnham, Ellen Hamingson and Rachel Hart (CBSD).

Nelson Distinguished Graduate

Fellowship: Christine Vatovec (LR).

Potter Distinguished Graduate

Fellowship: Katy Warner (CBSD).

Weston Distinguished Graduate

Fellowship: Nic Jelinski (LR).

Advanced Opportunity Fellowships:

Ariana Hauck (LR), Leela Hazzah (CBSD), Crystal Najera (WRM), and Glenda Roman (EM).

University Fellowships:

Bill Sacks and Peter Boger (LR); and Joe Malkovich, (WRM).

National Science Foundation

Fellowships: Cynthia Lin and Bill Sacks (LR).

U.S. DOE Graduate Research

Environmental Fellowship: Holly Gibbs (LR).

U.S. EPA STAR Fellowship:

Dan Jaffee (LR).

Russell E. Train Fellowship:

Somony Thay (LR).

Fulbright Graduate Fellowship:

Genya Erling (LR).

Foreign Language and Area Studies

Award: Molly Young (LR).

Kosciuszko Foundation

Scholarship: Kathy De Master (LR).

Zieve Award: Dawn Burgardt (LR).

Kaplan Family Award: Kara Jensen

(CBSD).

Lawry Travel Award: Leela Hazzah

and Vanessa Lamb (CBSD).

Andrew Muzi Yellow Jersey Award:

Mary Ebling (URPL/TMP).

Hilldale Undergraduate Research

Fellowships: Sarah Brown, Amy

Krosch, and Evelyn Rynkiewicz.

Holstrom Environmental

Scholarship: Shaunna Chase.

Morris K. Udall Undergraduate

Scholarship: Julie Curti.

Environmental change

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wide Global Environmental Health Initiative and recently set up a workshop to raise the profile of environmental studies within the UW Medical School.

He and his colleagues see an opportunity for the Nelson Institute to become a world leader in the area, particularly with the institutional advantages found at UW–Madison. Patz, already recognized as a leading researcher on issues of environmental change and health, was drawn away from Johns Hopkins University's Bloomberg School of Public Health, widely recognized as the world's best public health program, by the interdisciplinary potential he saw at UW–Madison, which, he says, has a combination of programs and resources found nowhere else.

"The opportunity to interact with a wide range of scientists, especially in the areas of Earth systems modeling, ecology and health, was a prime motivation," he says. "There are so many things available here — a medical school, veterinary school, the Nelson Institute, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, La Follette School of Public Affairs, the U.S.G.S. National Wildlife Health Center, and a lot more — all in one place."

Foley agrees, seeing "a huge opportunity for Wisconsin to really move ahead of the other great environmental studies programs like Duke, Yale, Stanford, and UC-Santa Barbara. None of them have a veterinary school, none of them have an agriculture school, and we do. So it's a niche we should pursue in earnest."

For more information on Nelson Institute programs related to health and security, visit the SAGE Web site at www.sage.wisc.edu.

Gilbert Named Associate Director

Lewis Gilbert, a geophysicist and interdisciplinary policy specialist, joined the staff of the Nelson Institute in May as associate director. His hiring follows a national search begun in January to fill the new position.

Gilbert's responsibilities include research development, academic and outreach support, planning, budgeting, fundraising, and other administrative tasks.

Since completing his Ph.D. in geophysics at Columbia University's Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory in 1993, Gilbert has helped design, implement, and manage interdisciplinary programs at several universities.

He was a founding member and, from 1999 to 2003, executive director of Columbia's Earth Institute. For six years before that, he led a variety of other strategic initiatives at Columbia. He helped organize research teams of earth, life and social scientists, which, under his guidance, launched more than 10 major local and international projects.

Two years ago, he left the Earth Institute and established his own consulting business but continued to teach a course, Environmental Policy, Politics and Management, for Columbia's School of International and Public Affairs.

Your Gift Makes a Difference

Gifts are an important source of financial support for the Nelson Institute.

Private contributions from alumni, friends, and faculty and staff members enable us to offer unique scholarships, fellowships and travel opportunities for students; named professorships for outstanding faculty members; special lecture series and related public programs; this newsletter; and much more.

Please consider helping the Nelson Institute with a gift of your own. For more information, visit our home page at www.nelson.wisc.edu and click on "Giving to the Institute."

If you've already given to the institute recently, thank you.

Intersecting Beauty *by Mary Mercier (M.S., LR '99)*

Snow swirls around the mourning dove
who sits as in a dome of glass,
who acts as if the snow were nothing more
than bright confetti.

Feathers may be fluffed against the wind,
but it's her wardrobe we admire –
for no other bird is so well-dressed,
all silk and velveteen. And what of those
dark eyes that are not eyes?
They dot the soft brown wings
like the markings on some butterflies.
Can they see the owl before it strikes?
Do those eyes of feather deter anyone
at all, or are they too beautiful for that?
And what about this beauty – pearl-gray,
opal and rose and burnished as if struck by
the dawn – what is this all for?

Perhaps the animals know a beauty deeper
than ours. The owl must eat in spite of it,
or maybe he eats because of it,
I don't know. But see it he must.
As do the other birds. The swallow
will do anything for a feather drifting
slowly through the air and the crow
brings every shine and sparkle home
and maybe they see beauty even in death.
Like the owl's pellet, coughed up,
left beneath the maple tree. It is
upholstered in the softest rabbit's hair
and it frames a small necklace of bone –
a dove in mourning whose morning
intersected with the hunger of an owl.
Is the owl's beauty any less for this
encounter?

Moving?

Please keep us in mind when you fill out those postal change-of-address forms. Better yet, you can email us about recent or upcoming changes in your location. Send information to incommon@mailplus.wisc.edu.



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