

The Newsletter of the

2022

GRATEFUL DEAD STUDIES ASSOCIATION

President's Column

As fall begins, one is inclined to hum with "US Blues", "Summertime / Done come and gone / My, oh, my", in homage to a season coming to an end. But this hardly seems to be the case with Dead studies. Each year, there are more articles and books, many of them mainstream publications, about the Grateful Dead phenomenon. Dead-family jam bands, many of extraordinary talent, can be seen at inexpensive local venues across the country. And the remaining band members have had impressive third acts, such as Phil Lesh and Friends but especially Dead and Company. This summer's Dead and Company tour was extremely well received, and noteworthy for a large and apparently growing cohort of younger fans. They bring their own energy and creativity: about twenty such touring fans even started a new tradition of naked dancing during "Drums/Space," starting at the St. Louis show and continuing as the tour moved east, showing that Dead culture is alive and well, and still weird.

With the worst waves of the COVID crisis hopefully past, 2022 finds the Grateful Dead Studies Association looking forward to a bright future. After serious debate this spring, the Popular Culture Association (PCA) decided to commit to a face-to-face conference at San Antonio, April 5-8, 2023, as planned. This opportunity is an exciting moment for GDSA where we can meet to discuss ideas and socialize. The Dead often played well in Texas, and in San Antonio in particular, and we hope to build on that tradition.

Despite the abrupt change to an online conference for this year's PCA meeting, the GDSA presence at PCA is growing and built on the past year's strong foundation. The Association fielded thirteen pan-

els, one more than the previous year, featuring interdisciplinary work about the Dead on textual studies and literature, social history, psychology, urban architecture, philosophy, as well as musicology. One unexpected yield of two last-minute cancellations on one panel was Chadwick Jenkins's paper on the transition jams in "China Cat Sunflower" > "I Know You Rider" 1969-1973, which turned into a delightful, full-length keynote lecture augmented by his excellent guitar playing.

It bodes well for our next meeting (p.2), which will be first with our new Executive Council in place. That also offers an opportunity to reflect on all that we have accomplished. As incoming president of GDSA, I am profoundly grateful to Nick Meriwether's work as past President and co-founder of the GDSA. For those of us who know him from his publications or his work as area chair for the Dead Caucus of the Southwest PCA, Nick has been a guiding patron of the work we do. He not only shouldered the administrative labor of chartering our conference area, working with our PCA hosts, and organizing panels, but he has nurtured and sustained the visionary impulse to make a lasting place for Dead studies in the academy. GDSA now has a website; it publishes the journal *Grateful Dead Studies*, as well as our *Proceedings*, Annual Report, and this Newsletter; and it serves as the official sponsor of the Duke University Press series, *Studies in the Grateful Dead*. Nick has been, and continues to be instrumental in all these endeavors. He has set a very high bar for the Presidency of our organization and we on the Executive Council are profoundly grateful for his past and ongoing support.

Granville Ganter



In This Issue

President's Column

Third Annual Grateful Dead Studies Association Meeting Set

GDSA Working Papers Series Launched

New and Noteworthy: Recent Highlights in Grateful Dead Studies



Downtown San Antonio

San Antonio 2023!

Third Annual Meeting Set for April 5–8

The Executive Council is delighted to announce our third annual meeting, slated to be held in conjunction with the Popular Culture Association in San Antonio, April 5–8. Our panels comprise the Grateful Dead area of the PCA conference, and we'll have our own events in the evenings as well. Building on the strong showings we had for our first two meetings, we are looking forward to sessions devoted to

all aspects of the Dead's work and impact, from composition to reception to legacy.

In addition to presentations and panels deepening well-established themes, we are especially pleased to have received a number of proposals featuring new topics and theoretical approaches. Although the pandemic has cut travel budgets and increased the demands on everyone's time, we are delighted with the rigor and creativity of the abstracts and we are looking forward to a strong slate of sessions to mark our first in-person meeting.

Information on abstracts and acceptance criteria may be found on the Association's website (<https://deadstudies.org/conference-abstracts-checklist/>).

Proposals are due **December 20** and should be between 200 and 250 words. Registration information and submission details can be found at the PCA website (www.pcaaca.org), which is where abstracts should be submitted. Hotel rooms fill quickly, so once your abstract has been approved, book your room early; participants receive a discount which can be accessed at the PCA website when

you register. All presenters and attendees must register as members of the PCA to participate.

For the Association, the conference setting has particular resonance. At the PCA's 2011 meeting, in San Antonio, PCA cofounder Ray Browne was so impressed with the Dead sessions that he urged the establishment of a Dead area.

The Dead have their own history in the city as well, playing San Antonio three times, in 1970, 1971, and 1972; the 1972 show is especially revered, the culmination of a five-show run through the Lone Star State that JGB drummer Pete Lavezzoli calls legendary. Texas challenged the band, with zealous police and grueling drives, but the state also epitomized the Western ethos that was a linchpin of the band's identity, providing settings and allusions in covers like "El Paso" to original efforts such as "Jack Straw." It makes San Antonio a welcome locale for our first in-person meeting, which the Executive Council plans to commemorate with a memorable slate of activities. We hope you will join us for what will be a remarkable and historic conference!

San Antonio 2023

- 4 days, April 5–8, 2023
- All sessions held at the San Antonio Marriott Rivercenter
- Full schedule of panels, speakers and events
- Proposals due *December 20*
- Early (reduced fee) Registration closes *January 2*
- Registration closes *February 1*

Right: San Antonio's famed Riverwalk



Building the Discourse: GDSA Launches Working Papers Series

This summer, the Association completed the work on the third component of our publications plan with the launch of our Working Papers series. Designed to complement the journal *Grateful Dead Studies* and the *Proceedings of the Grateful Dead Studies Association*, the Working Papers series offers scholars a peer-reviewed forum for papers that do not fit the parameters of our other publications.

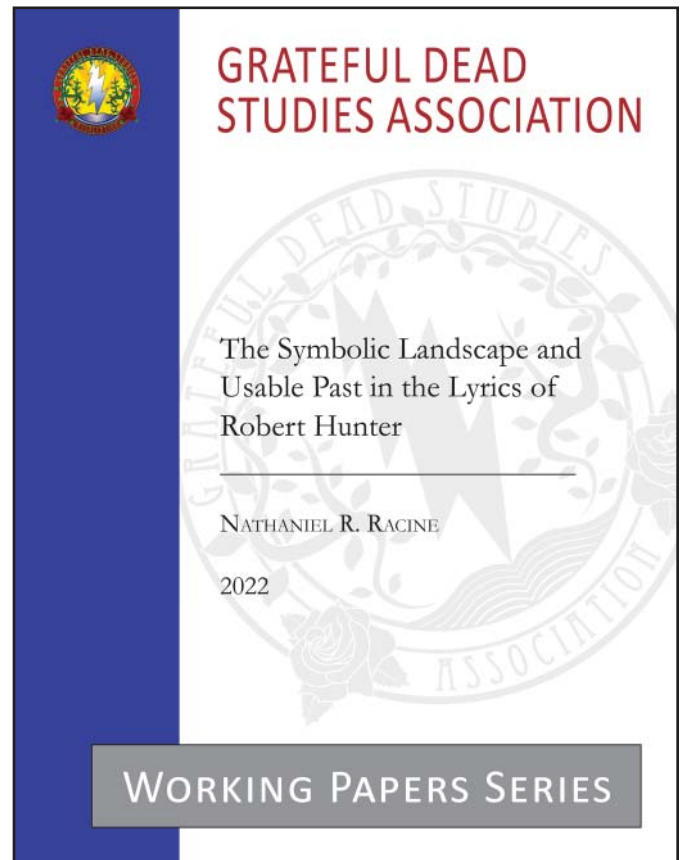
“The idea for the Association’s Working Papers series is similar to those of any scientific, government, or other working paper,” Deepak Sarma, Association Vice President explained. “While Dead studies as a discourse has a long track record, a great deal of good work that is presented at conferences struggles to find exposure, and this series will help fill that gap.” That accessibility is increasingly important as the scholarly work on the Dead continues to expand, with more scholars producing cutting-edge research that they want input on and would benefit from wider discussion before more definitive publication.

“The Working Papers series is a project we have been working on since the inception of our Publications Plan,” Association President G. Ganter commented. Spearheaded by Executive Director Nicholas Meriwether, the series was developed for scholars who wanted a way to publish peer-reviewed papers first given at other conferences, or to circulate preliminary work in order to elicit feedback before final publication. “With the launch of the Working Papers, the Association now has a complete suite of publishing mechanisms for scholars to publish their work,” Susan Balter-Reitz, Association President-Elect noted.

Thanks to the generosity of Charter members Rick Wallach and Rhoney Stanley, whose support was instrumental in the launch of the series, the Association is able to offer authors complimentary print copies of their work, with digital copies available for free download at the Association website, www.deadstudies.org.



Band manager Jon McIntire, author of one of the Dead’s internal working papers, in the mid-1970s



The cover of the first Working Paper, by literary scholar Nathaniel Racine

The first title in the series is Nathaniel Racine’s “The Symbolic Landscape and Usable Past in the Lyrics of Robert Hunter.” Presented at the Southwest Popular Culture Association conference in 2020, Racine’s essay is part of a larger project that also includes groundbreaking work on poet and band lyricist Robert M. Petersen. His paper is the first of two slated for publication this year; the series plans to add one to two papers per year, published occasionally. The first paper for 2023 has completed its peer review and is undergoing revision now.

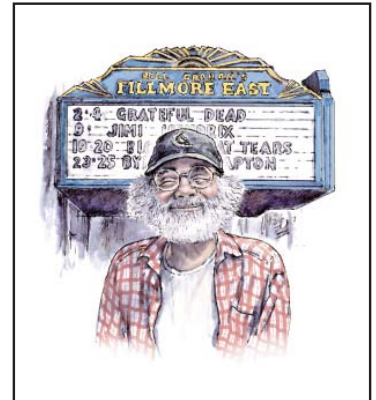
Interestingly, the Dead published their own working papers, although they did not use that term. Longtime Ice Nine manager Alan Trist wrote the best known of these, a 1981 report called “A Balanced Objective,” which was the subject of a fine conference paper by business scholar Barry Barnes. There were other band reports that fit the definition of working paper, such as Jon McIntire’s wonderfully titled “With Future Events Having An Increasingly Less Predictable Nature.” That precedent makes the successful launch of this component of the Association’s publications plan even more fitting, as well as the culmination of a major aspect of our mission.

New and Noteworthy

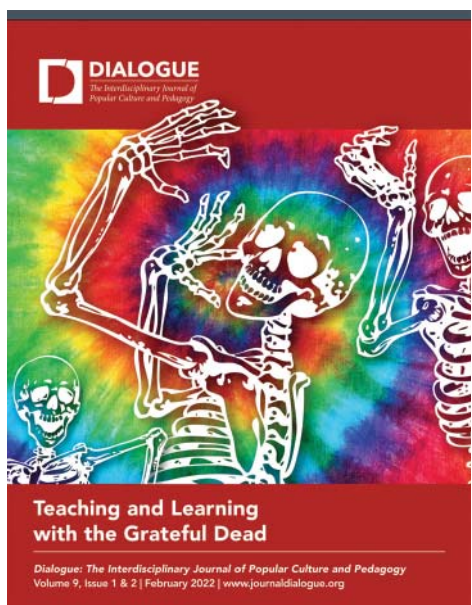
Recent Highlights in Grateful Dead Studies

Scholars who study the Grateful Dead were pleased to see a range of new entries to the academic bibliography and larger bookshelf this past year, from conference papers and journal volumes to podcasts, trade publications, and a wealth of official music releases. Especially notable were works by poets, both professionals and amateurs. Award-winning poet Robert Cooperman, nicknamed the Deadhead poet laureate, has added another volume to his extensive bibliography with *Youth's Joyful Noise*, forthcoming from Kelsay Books. The twenty-six poems cover an array of moods and motifs, with Cooperman's appreciation for and deep insights into the Dead phenomenon a unifying theme throughout.

Cooperman holds a PhD and has a distinguished academic career, but Deadhead poets span the gamut, and *Poetry Is Dead*, an anthology from Albuquerque's Hercules Publishing, gathers a wide range of efforts, introduced by Association member Andrew William Smith. The artistic, almost samizdat presentation of the volume evokes the parking-lot ethos Deadheads prized, which is an explicit theme in Mark A. Rodriguez's *After All is Said and Done: Taping the Grateful Dead, 1965–1995*. Published by Anthology Editions, the book takes an artist's view of Deadhead cassette tape decoration, documenting a fascinating and essential fan activity that the digital era eclipsed, making the book a tribute to an ephemeral folk art marooned by a vanished technology.



The cover art for Robert Cooperman's forthcoming book, *Youth's Joyful Noise*



The cover of *Dialogue's* issue on teaching the Dead

Since their inception, the Grateful Dead appealed to educators who recognized their work and example as useful ways of teaching a wide variety of subjects. That aspect of the band has long been a topic for conference papers and academic essays, and Association member Timothy Ray and Julie DeLong edited a volume of the journal *Dialogue* devoted to teaching the Dead. The special double issue features essays by a number of well-known scholars, including several members of the Association. The editors wisely take a broad view of pedagogy, revealing the complex and fascinating ways that the Dead's music lends itself to the classroom, just as their example is inextricably involved in teaching and learning. The open source publication is available online at the *Dialogue* website (<http://journaldialogue.org/volume-9-issue-1-2/>).

The journal is published by the Southwest Popular Culture Association, which fielded seven papers and two roundtable discussions on the Dead featuring nine Association members at their annual conference in February. That outreach is an essential aspect of the Grateful Dead Studies Association's mission, and this past year, the Association's efforts included several vital initiatives. The most visible of these was our conference. We held our second meeting in April, with twenty-five papers and twelve panels, including three roundtable discussions, along with our business meeting. As in our first two years, we met in conjunction with the Popular Culture Association, which offered the Association an international platform for our work. Due to ongoing COVID-19 concerns, the meeting was moved online, but despite the frustration

of not being able to gather in person, the virtual format allowed us to welcome presenters and participants from as far away as Japan and Israel, as well as Canada and the UK.

Volume Two of our *Proceedings* will document that meeting. Volume One launched the series, detailing our first conference with a comprehensive record of sessions, papers, and abstracts; a selection of papers augments that outline, offering a detailed look at key aspects of the conference discussion. A section devoted to primary texts connects the scholarship on the Dead to the phenomenon, with original or obscure essays, interviews, and other primary documents that illuminate larger themes in the band's history and in the academic discourse of Dead studies. Along with accompanying critical essays, the section's contents will also appeal to fans and casual readers; it is part of the Association's commitment to making our work accessible, ensuring that Dead studies is also a part of the larger Grateful Dead experience. That volume is in final production now, with an anticipated online publication in December. All members will receive their print copies in January, after the crush of holiday mail has abated.

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