In Charles Johnson’s National Book Award-winning novel *Middle Passage*, Rutherford Calhoun, a newly-freed slave and first-class rogue, flees creditors and impending marriage by stowing away on the first ship he can find out of New Orleans, the *Republic*. Although he doesn’t know it at the time, the *Republic* is a creaking slave ship, and Calhoun experiences it from the vantage point of a crew member:

“...the *Republic* was physically unstable. She was perpetually flying apart and re-forming during the voyage, falling to pieces beneath us, the great sails ripping to rags in high winds, the rot, cracks, and parasites in old wood so cancerously swift, springing up where least expected that Captain Falcon’s crew spent most of its time literally rebuilding the *Republic* as we crawled upon the waves. In a word, she was, from stem to stern, a process.”

While I suspect that some of you may find in this passage a thinly-veiled appeal for improvements in the physical plant of the American Studies Department (and that’s not such a bad idea), I am much more interested in its metaphorical possibilities. The notion that the American (Studies) project is a process of continuous self-invention and renewal seems to aptly capture the energies of the American Studies enterprise here at GWU—at least as I have encountered it this year. As we have adapted to the challenges of administering the department, our new Executive Assistant, Maureen Kentoff, and I have been extremely busy, yet constantly rewarded as we reap the benefits of the Department’s hard work over the past several years.

The 2006-07 academic year began with our past Chair, Phyllis Palmer, flying in from San Antonio, Texas (where she now lives and works during the Fall semester) to conduct a day-long retreat for the American Studies faculty. We spent the day at the University Club orienting our new faculty and re-orienting ourselves, reflecting upon our visions of American Studies, and establishing the foundations for ongoing enhancements to our undergraduate and graduate curriculum—a project that has been ongoing since before I arrived at GWU and continues to this day. As we look back on this academic year, we can see that the Department’s hard work has paid off in ways that we could not have predicted.

Each search committee consisted of one chair, and three faculty members. I chaired the Latino/a Studies search committee, joined by Terry Murphy, Tom Guglielmo, and our colleague Alex Dent in Anthropology. Melani McAlister chaired the Media Studies/Visual Cultures search committee, consisting of Chad Heap, Kip Kosek, and Bob Entman from the School of Media and Public Affairs. Starting in early November, we began reading and winnowing countless applications, which resulted in interviews with more than two dozen candidates. At the end of this process, three candidates for the Latino/a Studies position and four for the Media Studies/Visual Cultures position were brought to campus for interviews and job talks in January and February. We are delighted to announce that these efforts have brought two outstanding young scholars to our department: Elaine Pena and Elizabeth (Libby) Anker (see “Welcome New AMST Professors” on p. 8). We are deeply grateful to the members of the search committees, the students who joined us for meals and job talks, and everyone who contributed to the efforts of these exhaustive searches.

This year, we had the pleasure of hosting Chinese scholar Xiaoli Li of the School of Languages, Beijing University of Posts and Telecommunications. Xiaoli teaches American culture through film, and spent the year studying American social and cultural history and media studies. In the coming year, we will welcome Sonia Kammoun, a Tunisian student and Fulbright scholar who will conduct research for her doctoral dissertation on the politics and poetics of history and memory in the fiction of Ishmael Reed and Alice Walker.

Notes from the Chair continued

continued on page 8
By Laurel Clark

With another year behind us, the American Studies partnership with the Gilder Lehrman Institute and the School Without Walls continues to thrive (SWW is an alternative public high school just a few doors down from us on G Street). In September, James Horton, Prof. of American Studies, gave a lecture to the SWW on race, slavery, and public history. He focused on the history of race and slavery at Colonial Williamsburg, where the 10th grade students planned to take a field trip in October. Dr. Horton discussed the changes in the presentation of slavery at this historic site during the 1980s-90s, when it added the "Other Half Tour" and a "Slave Auction" presentation. Prof. Horton generously shared his expertise, based on interviews conducted with Williamsburg historians, about the challenges of including slavery in their presentations.

In November, Tom Guglielmo, Asst. Prof. of American Studies, gave an enlightening talk to the Junior class on race and immigration in the 20th century. To prepare the students for an upcoming trip to the New York City Tenement Museum, Dr. Guglielmo presented examples of citizenship applications and other primary documents. He then reviewed significant legal cases in immigration history, in which immigrants found themselves subject to changing definitions of race and fitness for citizenship. Prof. Guglielmo was generous with his time and knowledge as the students asked excellent questions.

In February, ten Seniors from SWW visited the Washingtoniana Division of the DC Public Library during a research trip arranged by GLI Fellow Laurel Clark. Librarian Jerry McCoy gave the students plenty of great information and assistance. These Seniors have been working with the White House Historical Society on a walking tour of President’s Park, focusing on the history of protest in neighboring Lafayette Square. The students found some useful images and information in the vertical files, microfilm, and print collections at the Washingtoniana Division. (Note: This project is part of a Save Our History grant. For more information contact Mrs. O’Neill at SWW.)

Also in February, SWW held the second annual Harlem Renaissance Symposium, “The Harlem Renaissance: A Humanistic Perspective,” for the Junior class at HR57 in Washington, DC. Once again, we were honored to contribute to this event, and congratulate Ms. Schulz for coordinating such a stellar day. Dr. Jim Miller, Prof. of English and our new Chair of American Studies, presented an outstanding overview of the ideological origins of the New Negro Movement. Dr. Paul Gardullo, a recent GW American Studies graduate and Gilder Lehrman Fellow at the Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition at Yale, spoke about the cultural memory of slavery during the 1930s. And two of our current PhD candidates, Kevin Strait and Bernard Demszuk, gave informative talks about music and the DC renaissance, respectively.

In addition, Denise Hart, Asst. Prof. of Acting at Howard University, gave a dynamic presentation on the experiences of African American women during the Great Migration using scenes from an August Wilson play. Prof. Gwen Everett, of the Corcoran College of Art + Design, returned with an excellent overview of the visual artists of the Harlem Renaissance and their influence on the Black Arts movement into the 1970s and beyond. Music educator Dr. Luvenia George presented the students with examples of the most significant African American music of the 1930s, and discussed the origins of the blues and jazz. At the end of the day students exhibited their talents, sitting in with the HR57 house band on piano, guitar, and vocals. Once again, SWW students proved to be some of the best and brightest in the District, as their insightful questions, discussion contributions, and enthusiasm for these important topics helped contribute to the outstanding success of this year’s events.

Alumni News

Robin Bernstein (MA, 1999) just completed her first year as an Asst. Prof. at Harvard University, where she holds a joint appointment in the Program in History and Literature and the Program of Studies of Women, Gender, and Sexuality. In 2006, the University of Michigan Press published her edited anthology, Cast Out: Queer Lives in Theater. She is currently completing a book manuscript titled Racial Innocence: The Uses of Childhood in American Racial Formation.

Denise D. Meringolo (BA, 1990; PhD, 2005) is in a tenure track position as Asst. Prof. of History at U. Maryland, Baltimore, where she teaches courses in American and public history. This fall, Denise will serve as coordinator of the department’s public history track, offered to students pursuing an MA in historical studies. As a member of the National Council on Public History, she is developing a formal list of qualified individuals who can assist with program, tenure, and promotion review, as well as public history program development. Denise and her husband, GW alum Kevin Tucker, are currently renovating their home in Alexandria, VA – and their son, Shane, turns five on the 4th of July!

Paige Roberts (PhD, 2000) is a College Archivist at Springfield College in Springfield, Mass. The college is famous for its collections on community/youth work, including the YMCA, physical education, rehabilitation, health, camping, exercise physiology, dance, sport and recreation. Special collections include rare books, faculty publications, and journals. Manuscript collections include papers related to Springfield College. For more info, visit www.spfldcol.edu/archives. A resident of Portsmouth, NH, Paige has served on the Planning Board since 1999.

Jeanne Schinto (BA, 1973) writes for Maine Antique Digest, covering auctions and antiques shows in Boston and beyond. Recently, she began a study of early female antique dealers (1900-1950), with a research grant from the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Studies. As these women, or “ladies,” are sometimes disparagingly referred to as merely interior decorators, Jeanne is interested in learning more about this rarely studied field. She would appreciate hearing from anyone with access to papers, diaries, and other written records - perhaps a relative was an early female entrepreneur? Contact Jeanne via e-mail at poorstreet@comcast.net.
Senior Research Colloquium

The senior research colloquium, held April 27-28, featured presentations from the graduating majors’ original research projects, a requirement that distinguishes American Studies from any other undergraduate major. Many of the students began these projects in a fall-semester research course that pointed them towards the immense primary resources in DC. By the end of the year, the seniors reflected that the research experience pushed them beyond the usual undergraduate posture of being information receivers and gave them confidence that they could become part of the community of knowledge creators.

Reading Media

**Amanda Herrick**, Buzz Words: The Modernist Aesthetic in Busby Berkeley’s *Gold Diggers of 1933 & 1935*

**Caroline Pavloff**, *I Want to Hold Your Hand*: How the Beatles’ Media Coverage Transformed Rock and Roll from Dangerous Influence to Innocent Indulgence

**David Katz**, Image, Appearance, and Celebrity: Social Networking in the Digital Age

**Brian Rideout**, Music in Chains or Protected from Pirates? The Debate Between Music Producers and Consumers Over DRM

Washington As Urban Laboratory

**Kim Painter**, From Urban Renewal to Hope VI: Resident Relocation, Community Activism, and the Arthur Capper and Carrollsburg Public Housing Dwellings

**Hayley Richardson**, From Meridian Hill to Malcolm X: The Power of Naming Place

**Renessa Noel Baptiste**, The District’s Disadvantaged: Media Images of D.C. Schools

War Stories


**Erin Mavian**, Passing the Peace Pipe: Drugs as a Device of Social and Cinematic Neutrality in *Apocalypse Now*

**Molly Gannon**, Not Many “Several-sides”: Eric Severeid’s Acceptance of the U.S. Government’s Vietnam Initiative

**Susie Sherman**, How American Newspapers Perceived the Outcomes of the Camp David Negotiations of 2000: The Failure

Contemporary Television

**Kym Pitlor**, Diapers and Dads: Late 1980s TV and its Portrayal of Single Male Parenting

**Eric McMurray**, *Passions and not Sex and the City*: Contrasting Balances of Work, Sex, and Family

**Aaron Hahn**, Life or Something Like It: America’s Two-Way Mirror

**Alex Lounsbury**, *Saturday Night Live*: Comedy Becomes Political Commentary

Advertising Culture

**Monica Lee**, Roaring Through the Woods: Railway Ads, Landscape Paintings, and the Commodification of the West

**Julie Pizzitullo**, *Cosmopolitan’s* Women: 1940s and 1950s Normative Images

**Joel Silver**, Life in the Fast Lane: NASCAR and Chevrolet’s Partnership with Diversity

American Identity

**Scott Rudin**, Creating Physical Properties for a Matterless Commodity: The Art of Selling a Lifestyle

**Alexis Baker**, Body Modification and the Art of the Tattoo

**Ginny Hightower**, Race and Cosmetic Surgery: The Voices of *Essence* Magazine

**Simone Garreau**, The American Tourist’s Search for What’s Real: Constructions of Authenticity in African Travel

Carper Prize awarded to Kim Painter for Outstanding Senior Thesis

For her senior thesis, Kim Painter used government reports, oral histories, newspaper articles, and web sites to see how residents responded to two DC urban redevelopment projects 50 years apart. In her final paper, “From Urban Renewal to Hope VI,” Kim illuminates how, despite political and professional advances in urban planning since the 1950s, planners in each era were challenged to find displaced residents sound, up-to-date structures, while residents worried about retaining and rebuilding the communities they relied on in their poor neighborhoods. Kim argues that the residents’ cultural understanding of adequate housing was one that policymakers could not or would not grasp. Congratulations to Kim for her insightful work!

The American Studies Department extends a special thanks to all of our generous donors this academic year:

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If we have accidentally omitted your name, please accept our apologies and our sincere thanks for your generosity.
**Graduate Student News**

**Ramzi Fawaz** just completed his first year in the American Studies doctoral program and was awarded a Social Science Research Council Fellowship in the field of Visual Studies for the summer of 2007. He is currently conducting research under the auspices of the SSRC Fellowship, and is participating in the UCD Clinton Institute's American Studies Summer Workshop in Dublin in July. He will present his paper, "Superman Meets the Apocalypse: The American Superhero in an Age of Infinite Crisis," at the Transnational American Studies Conference.

**Joan Fragaszy** joins **Stephanie Ricker Schulte** on the American Studies Association Students' Committee, where she will be helping to plan portions of the 2007 and 2008 annual meetings. She also will be presenting portions of her research about the visual representation of immigrants at the ASA and the Midwest MLA conferences this fall.

**Laura Cook Kenna** is finishing that dissertation of hers "any... minute... now..." Her work on gangster media in relation to ethnicity and race is taking her to a few final archives this summer so that she can defend in early fall. Laura organized a panel on Las Vegas history for this coming ASA and will be presenting an excerpt of Chapter 2 on Frank Sinatra and gangster glamour. She enjoyed teaching her own upper-level seminar on the history of television this past spring and is looking forward to teaching a film history course and research seminar in spring '08.

**Eid A. Mohamed** just completed his first year as an international AMST doctoral student from the Middle East. Eid holds an MA in English Literature, and has translated books from Arabic into English in the field of Arabic and Islamic studies, including, *Confidence Re-building between the Islamic World and the West*, by Prof. M. H. Zaqzouk, Minister of Endowments in Egypt. The translation was revised by Prof. Hassan Wageih, Assoc. Prof. of Linguistics. As a doctoral candidate, Eid’s fields of study are 20th century American literature with an emphasis on African-American literature, cultural studies, critical theory, and the US in a global context with emphasis on Middle East.

**Amber Wiley** published an article in *Homes of Color* magazine entitled "Behind the Myth: The Relationship of Gentrification and Preservation in African-American Communities." She presented on early 20th century urban photography and the Carson Pirie Scott building at the Mid-Atlantic Popular/American Culture Association Conference. She also presented on Meridian Hill-Malcolm X Park at the Washington, DC Historical Studies annual conference, as well as Gelman Library's Black History Month Celebration. She recently collaborated with GW alum Erica Ginsberg of CineCitizen Media for a documentary film, "Avenue of Aspirations: 16th Street and Washington, DC."

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**Collected Stories: American Studies Spring Conference 2007**

On April 6th & 13th, the American Studies faculty and graduate students gathered for the First Annual GW American Studies Conference. Developed and organized by graduate students Ramzi Fawaz and Aaron Potenza, the event proved to be a great success as GW scholars convened to tell stories of American identity, history, culture, media, and society.

**Prof. Tom Guglielmo** – Civil Rights Internationalisms: World War II and the Globalization of American Freedom Struggles

**Laura Cook Kenna** – Frank Sinatra's Rat Pack and Gangster Glamour on the Strip

**Ramzi Fawaz** – Big Trouble in Smallville: The Rise of the Teenage Superhero in the 20th Century

**Prof. John Vlach** – From Slavery to Tenancy: African-American Housing in D.C., 1790-1890

**Lars Lierow** – Itinerant Black Countercultural Aesthetics: The Voice & Media Practices of Black Beat Artist Ted Joans

**Stephanie Ricker Schulte** – The War Games Scenario: Regulating Teenagers and Teenaged Technology

**David Kieran** – Vietnam's Legacy and the Public Memory of the Alamo in the 1980s

**Prof. Kip Kosek** – Wars of Words: Print Culture and the Making of Modern American Pacifism

**Julie Passanante Elman** – *ABC After School Specials* and Compulsory Able-Bodiedness

**Kimberly Yates** – Violent Silences: Toni Morrison, the Black Arts Movement, Tar Baby, and Son

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**eNewsletters - Go Green**

We are proud to report that that the *GWU Department of American Studies Newsletter* reaches over 1,000 recipients annually – which is a tribute to the strength of our program. The downside, however, is the enormous amount of paper used (and postage paid!) to send the newsletter to so many readers. Won't you help us keep GW green? If you would like to receive an electronic version of our newsletter, please send us your e-mail address at amst@gwu.edu.
**Faculty News**

Jim Deutsch is teaching a summer distance-learning class on American Films of the 1960s, while continuing to work as a program curator at the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage. Recently he has been helping to produce a Folklife Festival program on the Mekong River region, focusing on the traditional cultures of Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Vietnam, and China’s Yunnan province. During the past year he has published articles on the folk culture of Washington, D.C. and Bulgarian communities in the U.S. Jim also presented papers at the American Folklife Society conference and at three institutes for secondary-school teachers in Austria.

Tom Guglielmo had a great first year at GW. He taught an undergraduate lecture course on 20th century immigration history, a dean’s seminar on World War II, and two graduate seminars on US social history. He presented his work at the Eastern Sociological Society’s annual meeting in Philadelphia in March and to the junior class at the School Without Walls in November. In the meantime, Tom continues research on his book, Race War: World War II and the Crisis of American Democracy. He recently signed a book contract with Oxford University Press.

Chad Heap enjoyed another exciting year at GW. Last fall, he offered a new Dean’s seminar on "Washington Sex Scandals" for first-year students in the Columbian College – a course that turned out to be rather timely when the Foley/congressional page story broke. He reworked class assignments to incorporate this new scandal, and the course proved so successful that he’s offering it again this fall. In the spring, for the first time, Chad taught the department’s graduate seminar on cultural theory and American studies, and also offered his undergraduate lecture course on sexuality in U.S. history. He completed his book, Slumming: Sexual and Racial Encounters in American Nightlife, 1885-1940, which will be published by the University of Chicago Press in early 2008. We also congratulate Chad for his tenure and promotion to Associate Professor this spring. In the 2007-08 academic year, he has agreed to assume the post of Director of Graduate Studies and looks forward to working with the department’s graduate students in this new capacity.

Jim Horton has had another busy and exciting year. In October he was honored with the George Washington University President’s Medal. At the awards ceremony President Stephen Trachtenberg recognized Jim’s teaching, his scholarship, and his work as a public historian. “Professor Horton’s seminal efforts in African-American studies,” he said, “have enlightened audiences globally, while placing GW in the forefront of scholarship in a critical area.” This distinction came on the heels of the early October opening of an exhibit at the New York Historical Society, “New York Divided.” Jim was chief historian for this, the Historical Society’s second exhibit focusing on slavery and issues of race in New York before the Civil War. It followed Jim’s 2005 award winning exhibit, “Slavery in New York,” which was the Historical Society’s most popular exhibit in its 200 year history. In conjunction with his work with the new exhibit, Jim was quoted in the New York Times and several other US and European newspapers. He also appeared as a guest on the PBS Nightly Newsbeur, where he was interviewed by Gwen Ifill.

Jim’s other media appearances this year included History Channel specials on the American assault on the Atlantic slave trade, and on Martin Luther King’s Memphis Civil Rights campaign. C-Span also televised a panel and Chicago community discussion on Abraham Lincoln and Race that he hosted in February. Jim served as an advisor for the PBS series on the Supreme Court and wrote the Web article, “Race and the Supreme Court.” The History Channel series, “Ten Days That Unexpectedly Changed America," for which he was an historical advisor, won an Emmy for best nonfiction TV series in 2006.

Jim’s year was also filled with scholarly writing on the abolition movement and the Underground Railroad, the Lincoln presidency, slavery, and the Civil War. He gave public lectures at many universities, museums, and historical societies around the nation; including the University of Arkansas, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Pace University in New York City, the University of Connecticut, Gettysburg College, the Lincoln Museum in Fort Wayne, Indiana, The African Meeting House on Nantucket, and the African American Museum of Boston.

Jim is currently working on a number of new books, including The Documents of African American History to the Civil War for Oxford University Press and William P. Woodlin: The Diary of a Black Civil War Soldier for Yale University Press, both with Lois Horton. For a book on race in World War II Hawaii, Jim has conducted a number of interviews with American veterans stationed at Pearl Harbor at the time of the 1941 Japanese raid and a Japanese pilot who participated in the attack.

During the 2007 spring semester Jim was in residence at the University of Hawaii doing research for his study and working on several public history projects, including work with Hawaii public school teachers and museum professionals on issues of race in American history.

Melinda Knight has just finished her third year at GW, which was as busy as ever. She presented her papers "Evaluating Outcomes and Results of a New Writing Program” at the Council of Writing Program Administrators annual meeting in Chattanooga in July and “Collision Narrowly Avoided: A Successful University and Government Partnership on Technical Writing Training” at the Association of Teachers of Technical Writing in New York in March. In May she presented her paper “The Dilemma of Image, Identity, and Reputation: Case Studies in Crisis and Political Communication” at the ABC Europe conference in Istanbul. Her article “Understand the Gap between continued on page 6
Faculty News

Faculty News – continued from page 5

High School and College Writing (co-authored with Cheryl Beil, GW’s Executive Director of Academic Planning and Assessment) is forthcoming in Assessment Update.

Melinda has received a sponsored research grant from the National Transportation Safety Board for a three-year program focusing on professional communication, including media relations. She has also received an award from the Department of Transportation (National Highway Transportation Safety Administration) to develop a mentoring program in technical writing, as part of a major long-term grant and cooperative agreement between GW’s National Crash Analysis Center, the NHTSA, and the Federal Highway Administration.

Melinda is especially pleased about the Graduate Writing Preceptors initiative she launched last year. The American Studies doctoral candidates currently holding these awards are Ramzi Fawaz, Charity Fox, Matt Kohlstedt, and Clara Lewis, and Emily Dietsch, who joins us this fall. In the meantime, Melinda is spending the summer teaching a distance first-year writing course, with a theme of American Jazz, and she is designing a new course on the American 1890s to be offered in the fall. She is also working on a book about business and professional women in the late 19th century.

Kip Kosek debuted a new course on American religion and politics this year. He also led a graduate research seminar in 20th century US history, and taught a course on cultural theory to undergraduates. In November, he talked about American religion with a State Department delegation from Vietnam, and in March he presented a paper on nonviolence and print culture at the Organization of American Historians meeting in Minneapolis, MN.

Kip is currently working on a book entitled Acts of Conscience: Christian Nonviolence and American Democracy. Spanning the years from World War I to the civil rights movement, his study examines the radical religious avant-garde and its influence on American politics and culture. This spring he signed a contract to publish the book with Columbia University Press. For the 2007-08 academic year, Kip has been awarded a Kluge Fellowship with which he plans to finish his book and conduct on-going research at the Library of Congress.


Richard has joined the editorial boards of the Journal of Planning History and Buildings & Landscapes (formerly Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture). Next spring, the University of Minnesota Press will publish an anthology that he edited, entitled Nature and Culture: Continuity and Change: A Critical Look at Cultural Landscapes and Historic Preservation. Recently he was named to the boards of the Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy and the Fort Ticonderoga Association.

Melani McAlister spent this academic year balancing research on her new book – tentatively titled Our God in the World: The Global Visions of American Evangelicals – with the work of teaching, and serving as director of undergraduate studies. In the fall, she taught a Dean’s Seminar on “US-Middle East Cultural Encounters” to a group of engaged and hard-working freshmen. They attended films and speaking engagements all over DC, and enjoyed sparring with each other (respectfully) in class.

In December 2006, Melani went on a research trip to Southern Sudan. She joined a group from Elmbrook Church (a megachurch outside of Milwaukee) as they visited Sudanese Christians in three small villages and monitored several projects funded by the church. Melani explains that “the goal was to understand better how American Christians see their own relationship to global political and economic issues. And it’s not too often that American Studies professors get to sleep on gazelle skins in African huts and call it research. It was a great experience.” (For the record, Melani also reports that, respectfully, she plans to refrain from eating goat for awhile!)

Jim Miller traveled to Oakland, CA in October 2006 to chair and comment on the session, “The ‘Black Atlantic’ Inside Antebellum America,” at the annual American Studies Association meeting. In November, he was one of the keynote speakers at “International Perspectives: Intersections of Race, Ethnicity, and Religion,” hosted by Bogazici University and the National Association of Ethnic Studies, where he spoke on “Ralph Ellison’s Invisible Man Revisited: Race and the Perils and Promises of American Democracy.” As editor of the Richard Wright Newsletter, he chaired a session on “Richard Wright: Texts and Contexts” at the annual American Literature Association meeting in Cambridge, MA in May 2007. Recently, Jim has been asked to be one of the guest editors of a special issue of the Journal of American Studies of Turkey (JAST) on African American Studies. His reviews of Nick Bryant’s The Bystander: John F. Kennedy and the Struggle for Black Equality and Arnold Rampersad’s Ralph Ellison: A Biography were published in The Boston Globe. His reviews of Amiri Baraka’s Tales of the Out & the Gone and Ravi Howard’s Like Trees, Walking appeared in The Washington Post. Jim was also named GWU Educator of the Year at the First Multicultural Studies Students Awards Ceremony.

Terry Murphy had a very exciting and productive year. She finished work on Women and the Making of American History, co-authored with Mari Jo Buhle (of Brown) and Jane Gerhard (of Mount Holyoke), which is due to be released by the end of 2007. Terry used a manuscript version of the text in teaching her Women’s History course last fall. These
students also participated in trans-Pacific discussions via the Internet, on issues in Women’s History with a class taught by GW alum Noriko Ishii at Sophia University in Japan. Both groups shared readings and posted responses to questions about 19th century dress reform using the online resources of Blackboard. The experiment was quite a success and will be repeated next year.

Suleiman Osman has enjoyed a busy first year at GW. Along with the introductory seminar for incoming graduate students, he taught an urban history research seminar, and an undergraduate lecture course on race in US cities. In October, he presented a paper on gentrification and the Chicago School at the Urban History Association conference in Phoenix. In February, he presented a paper at a conference entitled "Imagining Brooklyn: Authentic and Cool" at Brooklyn College. Suleiman also presented a paper on "Romantic Urbanism" at GW’s Global Humanities Center. This summer, he is working on his manuscript on gentrification in Brooklyn.

Phyllis Palmer began half-time affiliation and used the fall semester to complete her manuscript, Living as Equals: How Three White Communities Embraced the Civil Rights Challenge, to be published by Vanderbilt University Press in early 2008. In July 2006, Phyllis spent four days in Boston as one of a team advising the staff of the John F. Kennedy Birthplace, one of the sites aided by the collaboration between the Organization of American Historians and the National Park Service. In October, she enjoyed attending the ASA Annual Meeting in Oakland, CA, where she participated on a panel, “Race and Success,” which included a paper by Paul Gardullo, PhD ’06.

In her spring semester on campus, Phyllis redesigned the introduction to American Studies survey curriculum into a Writing in the Disciplines (WID) course, which stresses student writing and cultural analysis. Phyllis also led the senior AMST majors through the challenging process of writing primary research papers and presenting their work at the annual AMST Senior Research Colloquium. For both the survey course and the senior colloquium, each student benefited from the guidance of the department’s very capable doctoral students who served as Graduate Writing Preceptors. Phyllis will be back on campus in the spring semester of 2008, when she will teach a new Dean’s Seminar on Food in D.C. and reprise the WID survey course.

John Vlach writes: “I want to start with an announcement of an important event for this fall. Back in 2002 I published a book entitled The Planter’s Prospect: Privilege and Slavery in Plantation Paintings. In the intervening years, the book has become the inspiration for a museum exhibition entitled “Landscape of Slavery.” Assembled by the Gibbes Museum of Charleston, SC (a source of much of the book’s illustrations), this exhibition will open at the University of Virginia Art Museum. The exhibition design follows the contours set out in The Planter’s Prospect but also enfolds new contributions by colleagues from the University of Virginia, the University of North Carolina, and the Maryland Institute of Fine Art. I hope you can find time to enjoy a scenic and informative trip to Charlottesville this fall.”

As for the past academic year, John worked with the outreach staff of the National Humanities Center at Research Triangle Park in North Carolina to develop an online curriculum for the improved teaching of African American history. This unit, one of three, will cover the period from 1505 to 1865 and focus on the formation of a distinctive new-world black culture. John is joined in this project by William Andrews of the University of North Carolina, who specializes in the study of black literary narratives, and by historian Colin Palmer of Princeton. His tasks have focused primarily on providing the visual materials that will enliven the textual offerings as well as directing students’ attention to the tangible dimensions of the black experience. They hope to launch the website in the fall.

John’s calendar was also filled with talks around the country from Savannah to Milwaukee, including invitations to speak at Yale, at a conference on studies of slavery; at Hampton (a National Park on the outskirts of Baltimore), where he spoke about the history of the Underground Railroad; and at the United States Capitol History Society, where he gave a lecture on the varieties of African-American housing from 1790 to 1890.

Looming largest on the horizon is the opening of the new Museum of African Art in NYC which will offer, as its first exhibition, a show on African-American baskets from the so-called “low country” of South Carolina and Georgia. Entitled “Grass Roots: Baskets in Africa and the United States,” this show will travel to several venues in the U.S. as well as to Capetown, South Africa. John’s contribution is an essay that surveys the images of baskets and basket-making in works of fine art.

CALL FOR PANELISTS: What do YOU do with an AMST degree?

Every year, our seniors face anxious parents or dubious friends who ask the same question: American Studies – what do you do with that? Luckily, our Senior Practicum offers plenty of answers. Last fall, we invited BA, MA, and PhD grads with AMST degrees to chat with our seniors about work, career paths, and the meaning of life. The reaction to these informal talks was so positive that they are now a regular feature of the academic year.

Whether you are a recent grad or retiree, in law school or the school of hard knocks, holding up the bureaucracy or smashing the state: We need you! You don’t have to be in your dream job; we just want to know more about what it means to follow your dreams.

So, if you plan to be in Washington area this year, missed the opportunity last year, or would like to reprise your role, please consider sharing your experiences with our new crop of seniors. Although we can’t offer much more than lunch and appreciation, we will provide both in abundance. For more information, contact Professor Paul Gardullo at gardullo@gwu.edu. Thank you for contributing to the success of American Studies and our students!
Welcome New AMST Professors!

Elaine Pena received a PhD in Performance Studies at Northwestern University, with cognate fields in cultural anthropology and Latin American history, and a certificate in gender studies. Her research interests include critical ethnography, performance theory and pedagogy, religious studies, historical political economy, critical race theory, and citizenship/immigration issues. Her dissertation, *Making Space Sacred: Devotional Capitol, Political Economy, and the Transnational Expansion of the Cult of La Virgen de Guadalupe*, examined the production of sacred space among working-class and impoverished transnational subjects between Chicago, Illinois, and Central Mexico through the optic of Guadalupan religious performance. During 2006-07 Elaine was a Postdoctoral Research Associate in the Latina/Latino Studies Program, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where she taught, “Claiming Space: Performance, History, and Ethnography.” In 2007-08 she will be an Ethnicity, Race, and Migration Scholar at the Whitney and Betty MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies at Yale University.

Elizabeth (Libby) Anker has just completed her PhD in Political Science at the University of California, Berkeley with a Designated Emphasis in Film Studies degree. She is a broadly trained political theorist with particular interests in American public life, contemporary critical thought, and visual culture. Her dissertation, *The Venomous Eye: Melodrama and the Making of National Identity and State Power*, analyzes a persistent dilemma in contemporary American politics, in which forces of vengeance and suffering periodically recur alongside governing ideals of freedom, democracy, and autonomy. Libby argues that a distinctive but overlooked form of political discourse contributes to the making of this dilemma: melodrama. Libby analyzes melodrama’s operations in the post-9/11 era through an analysis of news media, popular film, and a range of thinkers from Nietzsche to Foucault. During the 2007-08 academic year, Libby will be a Postdoctoral Fellow of the Pembroke Center for Teaching and Research on Women at Brown University.

We look forward to both Elaine and Libby assuming their responsibilities in our department at the beginning of the 2008-09 academic year.

For the 2007-08 academic year, we congratulate Paul Gardullo who joins us in the fall as a Visiting Assistant Professor. Paul earned his PhD in American Studies at GW in 2006. In the spring, fellow AMST PhD graduates Laura Cook Kenna and Stephanie Ricker Schulte will also join us as Visiting Assistant Professors. We welcome all of our new faculty, and look forward to their intellectual and personal contributions to the department.

Support American Studies On-Line

You can help aid the department in providing support for graduate student conference travel, research expenses, and campus colloquia. Please consider a tax-deductible donation using the form below, or visit the “Give to GW” link at [https://www.gwu.edu/online_giving/](https://www.gwu.edu/online_giving/). Be sure to designate your gift for the American Studies Department. Many thanks for your much needed support!!

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Notes from the Chair – continued from page 1

Our faculty continues to distinguish itself by its high level of research, writing, and public scholarship, as you can easily see in the “Faculty News” section. This energy and commitment is echoed among our graduate students, seven of whom presented papers at academic conferences this year. This level of activity speaks very well of their futures as scholars. We should add a special note of thanks to doctoral student Ramzi Fawaz for seizing the initiative to organize the First Annual GW American Studies Conference, “Collected Stories.” The conference was a spectacular success and, as I told Ramzi afterwards, “The reward for hard work is…more hard work.” We will definitely repeat this conference next spring, with Ramzi once again at the helm. We are equally proud of the quality of work presented by our graduates at the annual Senior Research Colloquium, and we congratulate Kim Painter for earning the Carper Prize for Outstanding Senior Thesis. Her project, “From Urban Renewal to Hope VI,” is a stellar example of the kind of American Studies scholarship that flourishes in our department.

Our regular adjunct faculty remain integral members of the department – such as Frank Goodyear from the National Portrait Gallery; Noralee Frankel of the American Historical Association; Jim Deutsch, independent scholar extraordinaire; and Constance Ramirez, historical planner – who all enrich the life of the department immeasurably. Finally, we take great pride in recognizing the achievements of our alumni, who continue to distinguish themselves and bring honor to our department. Please keep in touch as we continue to work together toward another productive year in American Studies.