by Chad Heap

Academic year 2011-12 marked another productive year for the Department of American Studies. Our students, faculty, alumni and staff each contributed markedly to sustaining the department’s reputation as a welcoming and increasingly cutting-edge place to study the history and culture of the United States in a global context.

The faculty was especially active this year. Elaine Peña published her first book, Performing Piety (University of California Press, 2011), and Libby Anker and Jen Nash each had articles appear in highly respected journals, including Theory and Event, Contemporary Political Theory, and the Yale Journal of Law and Feminism. Suleiman Osman received tenure and promotion to associate professor, while also winning the New York Society Library’s 2012 Hornblower Award for the best book by a first-time author for The Invention of Brownstone Brooklyn (Oxford University Press, 2011). In addition, the department welcomed Calvin Warren as a new assistant professor of American and African American studies and successfully completed a faculty search in science, technology, and American culture, hiring Jamie Cohen-Cole to join our faculty this fall.

Our graduate students continued to garner academic acclaim. Katie Brian won the best student paper award at the 2012 annual meeting of the

(continued on p. 2)
Chesapeake American Studies Association, and Scott Larson was named one of three university-wide recipients of the 2012 Philip Amsterdam Graduate Teaching Assistant Award, in honor of his “outstanding contribution to GW teaching.” Joe Malherek received the Henry Belin du Pont Dissertation Fellowship from the Hagley Museum and Library for the coming year; Carol Lautier Woodley was inducted into the Edward A. Bouchet Graduate Honor Society; and Megan Black, Pat Nugent, and Rahima Schwenbeck were awarded grants and scholarships for summer study and research at the Harry S. Truman Library Institute, the Clinton Institute for American Studies’ Summer School, and the Center for Communal Studies, respectively. In addition, five of our current or recent PhD students—Julie Passanante Elman, Laurie Lahey, John O’Keefe, Brian Santana, and Joan Fragaszy Troyano—landed impressive academic appointments.

The department’s undergraduates also furthered their record of impressive achievements. Recent graduate Becky Reeves won the $5,000 first prize in the Justice-Columbia 3 Lodge—GW Writing in the Disciplines Student Essay Prize. And current major Kevin Kelly was awarded the prestigious Luther Rice Collaborative Fellowship to work with Elaine Peña on an independent research project this coming year.

As always, the department’s staff proved invaluable in supporting our activities. Our work-study assistants Olivia Peirantonio and Shayda Shahbazi provided crucial office support, especially by maintaining the voluminous application files for our faculty search. We are also grateful to recent MA alumna Erin Andrews for her assistance in producing this newsletter and are pleased to welcome the department’s new operations supervisor, Heather Olsen.

Alas, in welcoming Heather, we must also say goodbye to Samantha White, who has been an indispensable member of the department for nearly two years. Without Sam’s cheerful and conscientious oversight and organization, the department simply would not have functioned these past two years, and certainly it would have been a less pleasant place to work and study. We will miss Sam as she leaves us to work full-time on the completion of her master’s degree this fall, but we trust that our loss will prove a remarkable gain for the field of public health.

Finally, we were delighted to hear from so many of our alumni this year and to welcome them back to campus for several special events. We noted with pleasure the appearance of at least three major alumni books, including revisions of recent department dissertations by Stephanie Batiste and Denise Meringolo. We are always happy to learn of our former students’ successes and look forward to receiving even more alumni updates over the coming months at amst@gwu.edu.

My thanks to all of you—alumni, undergraduates, graduate students and colleagues—for making my job as department chair as pleasant as possible. As I move into the final year of my term, I look forward to working with you to bring even greater success to the department.

AMST Major Kevin Kelly Receives Luther Rice Fellowship

American Studies major Kevin Kelly was selected as a recipient of the Luther Rice Collaborative Fellowship for the 2012-2013 academic year. Sponsored by GW’s Columbian College of Arts and Sciences, this award is designed to support research collaboration between undergraduates and faculty, enabling recipients to undertake significant, focused investigation of a chosen topic.

Kevin’s research project, to be completed under the direction of Professor Elaine Peña, is entitled, “Problematics of Representation: An Analysis of Constructed and Represented Latino Cultural Identity in the Museumscape of Los Angeles.” Prompted by a perceived “disconnect between the cultural realities of ethnic groups and [their] institutional representations,” Kevin will spend the Fall 2012 semester examining the various ways that Latino cultural identity has been represented in Los Angeles museums as well as the effects of those representations. Over winter break, he will interview the curators who designed these exhibitions and will devote the Spring 2013 semester to a careful analysis of his research findings.

Kevin’s project will culminate in the preparation of a recommendation paper to the commission of the planned National Museum of the American Latino in Washington, DC, outlining how the new museum’s organizers might build upon the successes and improve upon the shortcomings of their Los Angeles colleagues.

The department applauds Kevin’s initiative and looks forward to the completion of his endeavor—the latest in a series of compelling senior research projects undertaken by American Studies majors.
American Studies Lecture Series

This year the department welcomed an exciting array of scholars to campus as part of our ongoing American Studies lecture series. As usual, the talks were widely attended by GW faculty and students, but we were especially pleased to note the presence of a growing number of alumni and other DC-area scholars who joined the thoughtful discussions these events fostered.

In October, we hosted Rick Baldoz, Assistant Professor of Sociology at Oberlin College, who presented a portion of his newly published book, *Third Asiatic Invasion: Empire and Migration in Filipino America, 1898-1946* (NYU Press, 2011). Exploring how American practices of domestic racial exclusion repeatedly collided with the geo-political imperatives of U.S. imperial expansion, Baldoz argued that the anomalous socio-legal status of Filipinos played a significant role in re-shaping the boundaries of race and nation during the first half of the twentieth century.

In February, the department teamed up with the university’s Office of Alumni Relations to host a public lecture featuring Bethany Moreton, Assistant Professor of History and Women’s Studies at the University of Georgia and author of *To Serve God and Wal-Mart: The Making of Christian Free Enterprise* (Harvard UP, 2009). The winner of the American Studies Association’s 2010 John Hope Franklin Prize, Moreton examined the increasing interaction of religion and the economy in post-WWII America. In particular, she explored how notions of Christian service and prosperity theology have worked to assuage workers’ discontent with the service economy, the globalization of capital, the weakening of the economic safety net, and other financial crises. While on campus, Moreton also met informally with a group of graduate students to discuss her work and visited Melani McAlister’s “Critiquing Culture” seminar to discuss her book with the department’s majors.

Finally, in April the department welcomed Aaron O’Connell, Assistant Professor of History at the U.S Naval Academy and author of *Underdogs: The Making of the Modern Marine Corps* (Harvard UP, forthcoming Fall 2012), who delivered a lecture exploring the role of cultural understanding and misunderstanding in the war in Afghanistan. A lieutenant colonel in the Marine Corps Reserves, O’Connell served five years in active duty before returning to academia, including a year as special advisor to General David Petraeus in Afghanistan. There, he came face to face with the realities of the on-the-ground political and cultural issues that, in his view, attend any attempt at counter-insurgency warfare. Undergraduates in Melani McAlister’s new “U.S. in a Global Context” course, who attended the lecture as part of their class, frequently cited O’Connell’s presentation as one of the highlights of their semester.

As in recent years, these lectures were underwritten with funding from GW’s Signature Program as well as by generous donations from our alumni. The department is grateful for this support and for the scholarly interactions it makes possible.

Recent Alumni Books

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author/Title</th>
<th>Publisher/Publication Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denise Meringolo (BA ‘90, PhD ‘05)</td>
<td>University of Massachusetts Press, 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museums, Monuments, and National Parks</td>
<td>University of Virginia Press, 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carl Lounsbury (MA ‘77, PhD ‘83)</td>
<td>University of Virginia Press, 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essays in Early American Architectural History</td>
<td>University of Virginia Press, 2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Scott Larson Receives Philip Amsterdam GTA Award

American Studies PhD student Scott Larson was named one of three university-wide recipients of the 2012 Philip Amsterdam Graduate Teaching Assistant Award. Established in 2004 to honor Trustee Emeritus Philip S. Amsterdam (BA ’62), this award recognizes the educational work of graduate students, celebrating "individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to GW teaching."

As a GTA, Scott has devoted countless hours to helping students understand complex course material, often taking the creative approach of drawing charts that help students compare the perspectives of different authors and differences in historical conditions. Scott has also shown extraordinary skill at developing student writing. One student noted, “His feedback on graded papers has helped move my writing to the next level of sophistication and clarity.”

Craig Lanier Allen, a first-year PhD student, coordinated the Gelman Library Special Collections Research Center’s acquisition of the Richard T. Gibson papers. Richard Gibson was a journalist and a central figure in the African American expatriate community in Paris made famous by literary luminaries Richard Wright, James Baldwin and Chester Himes. Prior to his arrival in Paris, Gibson studied in Rome where he befriended the eminent postwar Italian intellectuals Curzio Malaparte and Alberto Moravia, as well as the poet Amelia Rosselli. Craig was awarded research funding from the Dean of the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences, the GW Center for the Study of Public History and Public Culture, and the Department of American Studies to conduct oral history interviews of Gibson in London this past March.

Erin Andrews had an exciting year of teaching and study. In addition to completing the coursework for her Master’s degree, she worked for the University Writing program. In the fall, she worked as a teaching assistant for the Writing in the Disciplines program. In the spring, she worked as a tutor in the GWU writing center, where she was privileged to consult on the work of both graduate and undergraduate students from a variety of disciplines.

2012 Master of Arts Degrees Awarded

Erin Andrews  Nicholas Aszling
Daniel Beck  Ashley Brown
Michael Cardinal  Jeff Dagley
Lindsay Davis  Anne Dobberteen
Rachel Firgins  Jaclyn Glover
Paul Goldstein  Christy McDonald
Andy Noel  Pat Nugent
Tara Owens  Adam Rubin
Christina Sin  Mary Stewart
Christopher Hayashida-Knight
Katie Brian entered the doctoral program in 2007. Over the past year, she has continued work on her dissertation project, “Morbid Propensities: American Suicide and the Making of the Eugenic Public,” which illuminates an alternative genealogy of the American eugenics movement by focusing on debates over suicide in the United States during the second half of the nineteenth century. She will present work related to the project at the upcoming annual meetings of the Society for Disability Studies and the American Studies Association. She currently serves as a member of the ASA Students Committee. Katie spent her summer working on the last chapters of her dissertation and developing her original course, “Madness and Psychiatry in America,’ which she is teaching this fall.

Emily Dietsch completed her fourth year in the doctoral program and happily launched into dissertation writing this past spring. Her dissertation, tentatively titled, “American Misfits: The 'Visionary Awkward Tradition' in Postwar Expressive Culture,” will explore the dimensions and consequences of what it is to be a misfit in contemporary America, in

2012 Doctor of Philosophy Degrees Awarded

Ramzi Fawaz, “Heroic Measures: Comic Book Superheroes and the Cultural Politics of Popular Fantasy in Postwar America” – Melani McAlister and Robert McRuer, co-directors


John O'Keefe, “From Legal Rights to Citizens' Rights and Alien Penalties: Migrant Influence – Teresa Murphy, director

Brian Santana, “Slavery and Suffering: William Lloyd Garrison and American Abolitionism in Memory and Literature” – Jennifer James, director


sociopolitical, aesthetic, and affective terms. In April, Emily enjoyed two speaking engagements: first, lecturing at Yale on the valences of madness in outsider art through the university’s Art History-sponsored guest series, and then presenting a paper on hipsterism, McSweeney’s, and late-postmodern irony at McGill University. Over the summer continued her dissertation work while also stretching her legs for travel now and then.

Joseph Malherek, a fifth-year doctoral candidate, taught an undergraduate seminar, “The Postwar American Consumer,” in the spring term. He also presented papers at the annual meeting of the American Studies Association in Baltimore and at the History of Consumer Culture conference in Tokyo. He continues work on his dissertation, “Satisfying the Inner ‘Jones’: Market Segments and Consumer Subjects in Postwar America” and will be in residence at the Hagley Museum and Library in Wilmington, Delaware this fall.

Graduate Student News

Academic Job Placements

Congratulations to the following PhD students and recent graduates on their successes in the academic job market:

Julie Passanante Elman (PhD ’09) accepted a tenure-track assistant professor position in the Department of Women’s and Gender Studies at the University of Missouri in Columbia.

Laurie Lahey (PhD student, slated to graduate Fall 2012) has been renewed as a Teaching Fellow in the Department of History at Rowan University for the 2012-13 academic year.

John O’Keefe (PhD ’12) accepted a one-year lecturer position in the Department of History at the University of Nevada, Reno.

Brian Santana (PhD ’12) accepted a three-year, renewable “teaching-track” position in the Department of Writing and Linguistics at Georgia Southern University.

Joan Fragaszy Troyano (PhD ’11) accepted a three-year, renewable research assistant professor position in the Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media at George Mason University.

Graduate Student Achievements

Nick Aszling (MA ’12) served as a curator of an art exhibit entitled, “Stories from the Other America,” for the Fondo del Sol Visual Arts Center here in Washington, DC.

Megan Black won a $1,200 research grant from the Harry S. Truman Library Institute in Independence, MO.

Katie Brian won the best student paper award at the 2012 Chesapeake American Studies Association annual meeting. Her paper was entitled, “‘Suicide Runs in Families’: Metasomatization in the Life Insurance Industry, 1862-1883.”

Carol Lautier Woodley was inducted into the Edward A. Bouchet Graduate Honor Society at the society’s annual conference at Yale University in March 2012.

Joe Malherek received the Henry Belin du Pont Dissertation Fellowship from the Hagley Museum and Library in Wilmington, DE. This nationally competitive fellowship comes with a $6,500 stipend and free housing on the Hagley’s grounds. Joe also won a $2,500 research grant from the Columbia University Libraries.


Pat Nugent received a full scholarship to attend the Clinton Institute for American Studies’s Summer School at University College Dublin, to participate in a workshop entitled, “On Photography,” moderated by Liam Kennedy and Erika Doss.

Adam Rubin (MA in Historic Preservation, 2012) received a scholarship from the Recent Past Preservation Network to attend the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s National Preservation Conference in Buffalo, NY in October 2011.

Rahima Schwenbeck received a research travel grant of $2,000 from the Center for Communal Studies at the University of Southern Indiana.

Graduate Student Publications


Collected Stories and Twice-Told Tales Symposium

For the sixth consecutive year, American Studies students and faculty gathered together on March 30, 2012, for the department’s annual “Collected Stories and Twice-Told Tales” symposium. Doctoral students Ramzi Fawaz, Emily Dietsch, and Patrick Nugent coordinated the symposium with help from department assistant Samantha White. Over the course of three panels, eight doctoral students and faculty member Elisabeth Anker presented compelling research-in-progress and participated in lively Q&A sessions with conference attendants. As always, this research was diverse yet united by a tendency to engage cultural studies’ most current and animating issues, whether through an examination of prison biopolitics or a reading of queer desire in 1980s’ superhero comics. Additionally, a fourth panel featured top-notch work from three undergraduate American Studies majors, ranging in topic from the identity politics of Civil War reenactors to the economics and inequality at work in DC’s urban “food deserts.”

This year’s keynote was delivered to a packed auditorium by Lauren Berlant, the George M. Pullman Professor of English at the University of Chicago. The author of Cruel Optimism (Duke UP, 2011), The Female Complaint (Duke UP, 2008), and The Queen of America Goes to Washington City (Duke UP, 1997), Berlant has been a major influence on recent scholarship in American Studies. In her presentation, she shared a thumbnail sketch from a forthcoming project that pushes affect theory into exciting new territory. Entitled, “Structures of Unfeeling: Mysterious Skin,” Berlant’s talk set forth a theory of millennial “flat affect” and invited scholars to think about what she called the “overdeterminations of underperformed emotions.” Additionally, Berlant’s generous interaction with our scholarly community throughout the day underscored the symposium’s core purpose to foster conversation and collaboration.

All told, this year’s event was an enormous success. We were pleased to welcome several of the department’s alumni and prospective PhD students to the event, as well as a number of students and faculty from other GW departments and local universities. We hope to match the day’s many rewards in next year’s gathering.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2012 Presentations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Institutionalize This: Minerals, Manacles, and Municipal Landfills</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lindsay Davis: “Citizenship Restrained: Analysis of Childbirth in Prison”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pat Nugent: “The Roots that Clutch: Fresh Kills Nation, Nonhuman Charisma, and the New Right”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Soldiers, Supermen, and Slow Food: Citizenship as Performance, Cultural Product, and Policy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julianne Bardo: “Do you take WIC?” Examining D.C. Food Deserts East of the River”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeremy Merkel: “The Expository Phone Booth: The Influences of Changes in Superman and American Citizenship to the Status of a Popular Icon”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Imaginary Americas: The Genres of National Culture</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shannon Davies Mancus: “The Only Sheriff in Town: Genre as a Performatve Framework in Whale Wars”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramzi Fawaz: “Consumed by Hellfire: Demonic Possession and Queer Desire in the Superhero Comics of the 1980s”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elisabeth Anker: “Orgies of Feeling: Melodrama and the Making of Post-9/11 Politics”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pleasurable Politics: Cultural Performances of Identity and Belonging</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandra R. Heard: “Consuming Melodrama in Black and White”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meghan Drury: “East of Suez: Belly Dance, Exotica, and the American Sonic Imaginary”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katie Rademacher: “Laughing Off Oppression: Lily Tomlin, Sketch Comedy, and Feminist Possibility”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rebecca Reeves Wins University Writing Prize

American Studies major Rebecca Reeves (BA ’11) was named the $5,000 first place winner of the Justice–Columbia 3 Essay Prize for her senior research essay, “Cultivating Christian Identity: Sustainable Food Movement in the American Christian Community.” This award was established by GW’s University Writing Program, through a generous gift from the Justice–Columbia 3 Lodge of the Scottish Rite Freemasons, located in Maryland. Becky’s winning essay was also the recipient of the Department of American Studies’s 2011 Elsie M. Carper Prize for Outstanding Senior Research Essay.

In her paper, Becky examines the emergence of a form of Christian environmentalism that, in Becky’s estimation, “is shaping a new religious identity based in anti-capitalist, anti-mass consumption ideals, and using sustainable foodways as a catalyst for change.” Becky has been admitted to the master’s program in Public Relations and Corporate Communications at Georgetown University, where she will begin her graduate studies this fall.

Congratulations,
Class of 2012
American Studies Majors!

Adam Abuaf
Julianne Barto*
Kelsey Chatlosh*
Robin Crowell
Colleen Fitzsimmons*
Dana Fraser
Ian Frazier
Gabrielle Galdo
David Glassner
Clara Hanson*
Ralph Ogundiran
Lauren Hepler
Rebecca Jay
Kaiser Kabir
Emily Katz
Alisa La
Emily Mejer
Jeremy Merkel
Marina Myers
Brooke O’Connell
Joseph Pratt
Dylan Pyne
Jillian Scheinfeld
Rachel Sommer
Benjamin Wagner
Diana Waldrum
Anne Wernikoff
Katharine Young
Benjamin Zack

*Graduated with Departmental Special Honors

American Studies Majors
Inducted into
Phi Beta Kappa

Kelsey Chatlosh
Clara Hanson

The 2012 Graduating American Studies Majors
Libby Anker is happy to announce the birth of the newest member of the American studies department, Lilah Eve Anker-Scherer, who was born in January. Libby is in final revisions of her book manuscript Orgies of Feeling: Melodramatic Politics and the Pursuit of Freedom, which is under contract with Duke University Press. She published two journal articles this year on research that derives from her book project, one in Theory and Event (March 2012) and a second in Contemporary Political Theory (July 2011). Another article related to her next book project on freedom is forthcoming in Politics and Gender. She presented her work at a variety of locations and was elected to the governing council of the Association for Political Theory. This fall Libby had the pleasure of teaching the department's senior research seminar as well as a Dean's Seminar on 9/11 for first year students, and was very pleased that her first dissertation advisee Ramzi Fawaz just completed the PhD.

After receiving tenure last summer, Kip Kosek enjoyed a sabbatical semester in the fall. During that time he worked on an article about religion and the civil rights movement, a second article on religion and nonviolence, and a book-length project on the history of American secularism.

He also wrote about jazz impresario Norman Granz for the new Washington Independent Review of Books. In the spring, Kip returned to campus to teach Modern American Cultural History, which became the largest American Studies course in recent memory. With 157 students, this survey of the United States since the Civil War succeeded through the diligent effort of four outstanding graduate teaching assistants: Megan Black, Lindsay Davis, Carol Lautier-Woodley, and Pat Nugent. This coming year, Kip looks forward to a busy schedule that includes serving as acting director of the university’s revitalized Peace Studies Program.

Richard Longstreth gave several papers, including “The Postwar Suburb as an Extraordinary, Irreplaceable Resource” at the Fourteenth National Conference on Planning History in Baltimore (November 2011), and “Buildings People Love to Hate,” at “Concrete City: Brutalism and Preservation,” sponsored by the Rutgers British Studies Center (February 2012). He also gave the Cornelius O’Brien Memorial Lecture, “The Enduring Value of Main Street,” at the O’Brien State Historic Preservation Conference in Jeffersonville, Indiana in May. Last fall Richard was elected secretary of the Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy and served on the review panel for the Charles A. Ryskamp and Frederick Burkhardt
Performing Piety:
Making Space Sacred with the Virgin of Guadalupe
(University of California Press, 2011)

by Elaine Peña

Between December 9 and December 12, 1531, la Virgen de Guadalupe appeared to Juan Diego Cuauhtlaotzin on the hill of Tepeyac in Tenochtitlán (present-day Mexico City). She wanted one thing: a temple constructed in her honor. Not only did this colonial figure—the embodiment of Iberian and indigenous beliefs—receive a temple atop the hill of Tepeyac, but also outposts across the United States and as far away as the Philippines, Kenya, and Korea. Certainly, la Virgen de Guadalupe’s sixteenth-century apparition functioned as a catalyst for the Christianization and colonization of Mexico. Performing Piety concerns itself with this history. It privileges, however, the regenerative geo-social effects of this powerful narrative—how devotees produce, maintain, and legitimize Guadalupan sacred spaces between central Mexico and the Midwest.

Using a multi-sited ethnographic focus sensitive to labor migration history and political economic developments, Performing Piety argues that devotees’ ritual performances—pilgrimage, prayer, and festival—develop and sustain transnational sacred spaces. I focus less on how communities are transnational, an extensively studied idea, and more on the transnational spaces they produce with the transposition and circulation of idioms and practices. Further, I propose that the interplay of Catholic devotion and commercial culture generates “devotional capital.” Building on Bourdieu, devotional capital attends to how Guadalupans/os’ ritual acts as well as their everyday image management—how they present themselves within the community, the specificity of their interactions, the ways in which they themselves sort winks from twitches, or differentiate between backstage and frontstage piety—yield social, economic, cultural, and political benefits. Performing Piety also proposes that embodied performances not only contribute to the production, maintenance, and legitimation of sacred space but also act as transfer points for local and regional histories.

Research Fellowships of the American Council of Learned Societies. He is also the principal investigator in a cooperative agreement with the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training of the National Park Service for the establishment and operation of the Center for the Study of Preservation and Sustainability Policy. In April 2012, Richard helped form an ad hoc committee of the Society of Architectural Historians, charged with developing policies and procedures for identifying and transferring important historical slide collections on the built environment to leading architectural archives nationwide. He has also completed two book manuscripts—Looking Beyond the Icons: A Legacy of Architecture and Landscape from the Recent Past, and an edited volume, Additions, Subtractions, Adjacencies: The Challenges of Change to the Work of Frank Lloyd Wright—both of which will be published by the University of Virginia Press. This summer he will begin working on a guide to architecture in the Adirondacks.

Melani McAlister had a busy year of travel, a delightful year of teaching, and a slow-but-steady period of writing. On the travel and teaching front, she was a faculty member at the Clinton Institute for American Studies Summer School at University College Dublin. There, junior faculty and advanced graduate students from around the world participated in her seminar on
“Cultural Responses to 9/11.” She also traveled to Doha, Qatar, as a consultant for the development of a new media museum there. In addition to an exciting trip to Baltimore to present at the annual meeting of the American Studies Association and to Milwaukee for the Organization of American Historians’ annual meeting, Melani also spoke at Carleton College in Minnesota (brilliantly, she scheduled for January; terrifyingly, it was 50 degrees when she was there). In the spring, she was the keynote speaker for the Duke University history department’s graduate students’ annual conference. Teaching was really fun and a lot of work, as this spring she rolled out a new lecture course on the US in a Global Context. Melani also joined the editorial board of the Journal of American History. And she most delighted in continuing work —getting pretty close now—on her book, tentatively titled, Our God in the World: The Global Visions of American Evangelicals.

Jim Miller taught his Dean’s Seminar, D.C. Renaissance: Black Culture in the Nation’s Capital. He also offered a graduate seminar on James Baldwin and developed a new course on 20th-century South African literature. He lectured frequently during the academic year: as speaker and discussion leader on The Other Wes Moore at the West End Branch of the D.C. Public Library; as chair and commentator on a session on “Contested Reparations and Imagined Solutions: African Americans, Japanese Americans, and Palestinians” at the annual meeting of the American Studies Association in Baltimore; as guest speaker at the Cal Poly and San Luis Obispo Community Colloquium: Celebrating Diversity, in honor of his old friend, Photo League Photographer Joe Schwartz; as a speaker/panelist at Gelman Library’s Frantz Fanon Symposium; as a participant in “The New Territory: Ralph Ellison and the 21st Century: A Symposium on the 60th Anniversary of Invisible Man” at the Library of Congress; as chair and commentator for a session, “New Literary Histories I: Archives,” at the 75th anniversary celebration of the College Language Association; and as a lecturer for the Seminar on Global History at UNC-Chapel Hill on “James Baldwin and Istanbul.” In March Jim traveled to University College Dublin to present a paper, “The New Negro: C.V. Briggs, the African Blood Brotherhood and the Easter Rebellion” at the conference “Ireland and African America.” While there he enjoyed an afternoon and drinks with PhD aluma Julie Passanante Elman and her husband, David. In June, he traveled to Japan, where he enjoyed a bounteous meal with PhD alumnus Yusuke Torii and his wife Miyuki in Osaka. During the summer, with UFF support, he continued his research and writing on South African Jazz Exiles.

Returning from sabbatical and a semester as Fulbright Senior Scholar at the State Islamic University in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, Terry Murphy had a remarkably productive year. She completed her second book, Citizenship and the Origins of U.S. Women’s History, which will be published by the University of Pennsylvania Press next spring, and also revised and condensed her co-authored textbook, Women and the Making of America, for a “concise edition” to be published by Penguin Press later this year.

Jennifer Nash enjoyed her second year at GW. She taught two undergraduate courses (“Varieties of Feminist Theory” and “Race, Gender, and Law”) and two graduate courses (“Contemporary Feminist Theory” and “Theory and Emotions”). She also completed work on an article, “Love and the Struggle/Loving the Struggle: Black Feminism, Love Politics, and Post-Intersectionality,” which is forthcoming in Meridians: Feminism, Race, Transnationalism, and finished work on her book manuscript, The Black Body in Ecstasy: Reading Race, Reading Pornography, which is under contract with Duke University Press.

Suleiman Osman had another busy and productive year. He continued to give talks about The Invention of Brownstone Brooklyn in a variety of settings, including the New York City Mid-Manhattan Library, the Latrobe Chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians, and the Chautauqua Institution. He also served on a dissertation prize committee for the Society of American City and
Regional Planning History (SACRPH) and chaired a panel on the history of zoning and building codes at SACRPH's bi-annual conference. Suleiman continued his public history work with the Brooklyn Historical Society (BHS). He is on the advisory board of the BHS's "Crossing Borders, Bridging Generations: Mixed-Heritage Families" project; served on the program's opening public panel; and this summer will participate in BHS's "Students and Faculty in the Archives" program, funded by the U.S. Department of Education Fund for the Improvement of Post Secondary Education. Suleiman is already busy developing his second book project. In the fall, he attended a conference at Boston University, entitled, “The Global 70s: A Radical Decade in a Global Perspective,” where he presented new research on what he calls the "global neighborhood movement." In the spring, he was awarded an ACLS/Oscar Handlin Fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies to pursue research on this new project. The ACLS fellowship will coincide with his sabbatical in 2012-2013.

Elaine Peña had a fabulous fifth year at GW. The University of California Press published her first book (see page 10). She also finalized an article from her forthcoming book project—American Ethos: Reveling in Patriotism on the U.S.-Mexico Border. That text will be published this fall in Creating an Archetype: The Influence of the Mexican Revolution in the United States. She shared her work at several universities and conferences, including the American Academy of Religion and the Young Scholars of American Religion meetings. Elaine also offered her insights about Guadalupan devotion on Texas Public Radio. She had a great time presenting new material as the keynote speaker for the joint annual meeting of the Columbian College's National Council for Arts and Sciences and its National Council for Media and Public Affairs in November. In addition to researching and lecturing, Elaine continued her work with the Smithsonian. She particularly enjoys serving on the advisory council for the Americans All initiative, which will inform the 2015 Folklife Festival and an exhibit at the National Museum of American History (2016-2017). She also found teaching two new lecture courses—“Latinos in the U.S.” and “Nation-Building on the U.S.-Mexico Border”—to be extraordinarily rewarding.

Introducing
Professor Jamie Cohen-Cole

This fall the department is pleased to welcome its newest faculty member, Jamie Cohen-Cole, who received his PhD in the History of Science from Princeton University. His dissertation, “Thinking about Thinking in Cold War America,” intervenes in historical accounts of the centrality of cybernetics and computer technology to the development of cognitive psychology, by exploring how the psychology of postwar America affected the development of cognitive models of the person. Jamie’s dissertation won the 2006 Award for Best Doctoral Dissertation of the Previous Three Years from the Forum for the History of Human Science, and his first book, The Open Mind: Cold War Politics and the Sciences of Human Nature, is forthcoming from the University of Chicago Press.

Jamie has received fellowships from a number of prestigious organizations, including the Charles Warren Center for Studies in American History at Harvard University and the Fishbein Center for the History of Science at the University of Chicago. He has also taught courses on the history of science at Harvard, Yale, Wesleyan, and the University of Chicago. This fall at GW, Jamie will offer a new Dean's Seminar for first-year undergraduates, “Human Minds & Artificial Intelligence,” which will examine the history of computers, robots, and artificial intelligence. With his research and teaching interests in computer science, psychology, gender studies, and Cold War American culture, the department looks forward to the many exciting contributions Jamie is sure to make to our academic community over the coming years.

Faculty News
American Studies Film Club

The American Studies Film Club went rogue this year, hosting film noir and American road series in the fall and spring semesters, respectively. “Shades of Night: American Film Noir Then and Now” offered students a look at one of Hollywood’s most infamous and imitated creations: the attitude, aesthetics, intrigue and innuendo of film noir. Moving from classics, such as *Double Indemnity*, *Detour*, and *Sunset Boulevard*, to later adaptations like *Chinatown*, we explored the genre’s characteristic tropes as well as a few of the more unique directions it has taken over the decades. Some may question whether late-1990s films such as *The Game* and *Wild Things* should be considered film noir, but this was just the point; to be or not be film noir (in the words of an early hard-boiled detective prototype), that was the question.

Our spring series, “Take to the Wind: The American Road Movie,” explored the genre-bending cinematic tradition of journeying down the road. Our series presented a number of classic American road movies—everything from *It Happened One Night*, *Sullivan’s Travels*, and *The Wizard of Oz* to *Bonnie and Clyde*, *Thelma and Louise*, and *Kill Bill Volumes 1 & 2* (viewed in one double-feature sitting!). As we followed the road’s twists and turns through the century, we asked ourselves whether the heroic journey had fundamentally changed along with transformations in American technology, landscape, and culture. Where do the roads of Ellie Andrews and Beatrix Kiddo intersect and where do they lead? We also considered how the roads of American cinema merge and diverge with those of American photography, painting, and fiction.

As we move into the fall and winter of 2012, we are excited to be putting together a series of disaster and apocalyptic films sure to fright and incite! We will also continue to add to our newly created Facebook page (“American Studies Film Club”) and hope to bring in evermore graduate students and faculty members to suggest, introduce, and discuss their favorite films. If you’re interested in joining the club, giving a guest lecture, or suggesting a film, please let us know through Facebook or by emailing Pat Nugent (pnugent2007@yahoo.com) or Shannon Davies (shannonedavies@gmail.com).

Alumni News

**Stephanie Leigh Batiste** (MPhil ’99, PhD ’03) published her first book, *Darkening Mirrors: Imperial Representation in Depression Era African American Performance* (Duke UP, 2012). The project examines the complicated ways in which African Americans participated in American ideologies of cultural imperialism. Stephanie is Associate Professor of Black Studies and English at the University of California—Santa Barbara.

**Elizabeth R. Cavanaugh** (BA ’08) serves as the associate director of admissions at St. Mark’s School in Massachusetts. Each year, she helps read and process applications, and is involved with recruiting and interviewing prospective students. She finds it extremely rewarding to connect with students and families throughout the admissions process. Elizabeth is also putting her GW rowing experience to work, as head coach of the St. Mark’s varsity crew team.

**Marc Eisenberg** (BA ’94) has been serving as the executive director of the Washington Bach Consort since 2009. He is also the founder and host of the DC Music Salon, a free film and book discussion series about music in Washington, DC. A proud resident of the city’s Shaw neighborhood, Marc is active in a variety of Washington’s arts education advocacy organizations.

**Kelly Fackel** (MA ’92) is currently working as vice president of development at the Grandview
Medical Center in Dayton, OH. Before entering healthcare, she spent about 15 years working in public administration for both local and regional government organizations. Kelly is proud that her 16-year-old daughter is currently considering becoming a Colonial, as well.

Perry Frank (PhD ’91) is working on a long-standing independent project documenting the outdoor murals of Washington, DC. The project’s website is moving toward completion under grant funding from the Humanities Council of Washington, DC. In May, she organized a program consisting of four artists discussing their murals “east of the river” at the Lumen 8 Anacostia Arts Festival.

Cassandra Good (BA ’04, MA ’05) earned her PhD in History this year from the University of Pennsylvania. She has recently started a position as assistant editor of the Papers of James Monroe at the University of Mary Washington. In April 2012, her article, "Friendly Relations: Situating Friendships Between Men and Women in the Early American Republic," was published in Gender & History.

Sandra R. Heard (PhD ’10) recently accepted a position as an upper school history teacher at the Potomac School, a private college preparatory school in McLean, VA. Since 2010, she has served as an adjunct professor and a postdoctoral fellow in GW’s Department of American Studies, and she has worked as the program coordinator for GW’s Center for the Study of Public History and Public Culture. Sandra has also been preparing her dissertation, “The ‘Bad’ Black Consumer,” for publication.


Josh Hiscock (BA ’03) is completing his second year of doctoral study in the College Student Personnel Administration program at the University of Maryland—College Park. At UMCP, he was recently elected to a second term as university senator. Josh is also active with GW’s Alumni Association, serving as a member-at-large on its board of directors and as parliamentarian on its executive committee.

Shira Lazinger Krieger (BA ’06) is presently practicing labor and employment law as an associate with Ogletree Deakins in Morristown, NJ. This national firm provides full-service labor and employment representation for employers throughout the country.

Donald Lief (AA ’49, BA ’52) is the former chair of the Senior Studies Institute in Portland, OR, where he continues to give lectures on a variety of topics. Recent subjects have included Woody Guthrie, aboriginal art, lobbying, polling, and brewing history. Pursuing his interest in beer—both brewing styles and economic importance—he has visited England, Scotland, and Belgium over the past several years.

Carl Lounsberry (MA ’77, PhD ’83) has recently had two book projects published: a collection of his papers entitled, Essays in Early American Architectural History (University of Virginia Press, 2011), and Burton Parish Church: An Architectural History (Burton Parish Publications, 2012), which honors the three-hundred-year anniversary of the present church in Williamsburg. In addition to working in the architectural research department at Colonial Williamsburg, Carl also teaches a summer architectural field school course in the College of William and Mary’s history department.

Susan Mays (MA ’79) is currently Curator of Education for the Macon, GA Museum of Arts and Sciences, which focuses on the arts, natural and earth sciences, and local and regional history and culture. She also serves on the boards of the Georgia Association of Museums and Galleries, the Arthur J. Moore Methodist Museum on St. Simons Island, GA, and the Southeastern Jurisdictional Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church.

Troy Miller (MS ‘97) is the co-creator of a play, entitled The Bad Date Project, that premiered Off-Broadway in New York City in June 2012. He has spent the last several years working on this project, conducting interviews with people about their dating experiences, and coordinating events where New Yorkers gather to share their dating stories. These stories became the basis for the play’s narrative, which focuses on the culture surrounding people who are single and over 30 in NYC.

Peggy Pearlstein (PhD ’93) is editor of the newly published Perspectives on the Hebraic Book: The Myron M. Weinstein Memorial Lectures at the Library of Congress (Library of Congress, 2012). In December 2011, she also presented a paper, "All
About Eve: From the Pages of Eve, an Interwar Journal for American Jewish Women," at the Association for Jewish Studies annual conference in Washington, DC.

This spring, Lindsay Routt (BA ’10) was part of Crystal City, VA's 2012 Artomatic exhibition, which documented stories of visitors' dream jobs and attempted to make fortuitous connections between individuals. She also just wrapped up a show at Flashpoint Gallery in DC, featuring a shadow catalogue that mimics Edison's storeroom archive.

In February 2012, Raymond A. Schroth (MPHIL ’69, PhD ’71) became the literary editor of America Magazine, the Jesuit opinion weekly. Previously, he served as an associate editor of the publication. He is also the author of Bob Drinan (Fordham UP, 2010), a biography of the first priest elected to the U.S. Congress, which was recently released in a paperback edition.

Phillip Seitz (MA ’87) has been deeply involved in resurrecting the African American history of Clivaden, a historic site in Philadelphia, PA. In 2011, his article in Museum, "When Slavery Came to Stay," was awarded the American Association of Museums's Brooking Prize for Creativity. He has also written an article considering the damage done by neglect of African American history, which will be published in the July 2012 issue of Curator: The Museum Journal.

Robert Soloman's (BA '72) book, The Art of Client Service (Kaplan Publishing, 2008), is currently available in its second edition. Based on Robert’s experience in the advertising industry, the book offers guidelines for client service professionals to improve their account management skills. Since 1999, he has also been running the firm Soloman Strategic, which provides consultation and coaching to advertising agencies, client companies, and individual marketing professionals.

Scott Suter (PhD ’94) was appointed chair of the English Department at Bridgewater College in June 2011. He has been teaching literature and cultural courses at the institution since 2002. Scott's essay, “There’s a Sort of Evil Out There”: Emersonian Transcendentalism in Twin Peaks", was published in the recent collection The Philosophy of David Lynch (University of Kentucky Press, 2011).

Center for the Study of Public History and Public Culture

With continued funding from the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History and with the able assistance of Dr. Sandra Heard, the Center for the Study of Public History and Public Culture continued its support of academic programs at DC's School Without Walls for the seventh successive year. In addition, the center worked closely with Dr. Meredith Evans Raiford, Director of Gelman Library's Special Collections Research Center, to acquire two collections of great interest to the center. The first, spearheaded by the efforts of American Studies PhD student Craig Allen, is the papers of Richard T. Gibson, an African American expatriate journalist, international correspondent, and author. The second contains the prints and negatives of pioneering African American photographer, cinematographer, and filmmaker James Hinton, including more than 40,000 negatives and proof sheets, as well as articles, posters and publications from the 1960s and '70s. Both of these collections will considerably expand the possibilities for research at GWU in post-World War II social, political, and cultural movements in the U.S. and the world; both collections will provide the basis for public events in the 2012-2013 academic year.

In April, the center, in cooperation with the African & Middle Eastern Division and the Poetry & Literature Center of the Library of Congress, co-sponsored the appearance at the Library of Congress of South African Poet Laureate Keorapetse Kgotsitsile, as part of the ongoing “Conversations with Poets and Writers” Series.

The center has also been actively involved in “The Spirit of Black D.C.” project, launched by American Studies alumnus, Dr. Bernard Demczuk. In November 2012, it will be one of the co-sponsors of the Annual Conference on DC Historical Studies.
Alumni News

Catherine Tatum (BA ‘10) just finished her second year at the University of Dayton School of Law in Dayton, OH. In November 2011, she won the school’s Walter H. Rice Intra school Moot Court Competition, after presenting oral arguments before a panel of federal judges. She was also named the First Place Overall Oralist at the Federal Bar Association’s Thurgood A. Marshall Memorial Moot Court Competition held in Washington, DC, this March.

Jake Weixler (BA ‘05) works as an associate in the Washington office of Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld, where his practice focuses in part on assisting companies and states to uncover and manage the effects of corruption. Building on his experiences in teaching and charter school advocacy in New Orleans, Jake assists high-performing charter schools in his pro bono practice. Through his firm he also publishes the monthly newsletter, “Red Notice,” which addresses international corruption and cartel issues.

Since graduating, Natalie Zelt (BA ‘08) has been serving as the curatorial assistant for photography at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. Her primary focus has been working on the museum’s forthcoming exhibition, WAR/PHOTOGRAPHY: Images of Armed Conflict and Its Aftermath; she has contributed to both the exhibition and the book based on the project. She is also a founding member of the Houston non-profit group Gift of Gift of (GoGo), which benefits emerging photographers. Over the summer, Natalie married fellow GW alum Kim Shandley in exotic Pittsburgh, PA.

2011-2012 Donors to the Department of American Studies

We wish to extend special thanks to the generous donors who have supported the department this academic year:

- Mr. Bruce J. Adams (BA ’73)
- Mr. Jacob A. Balter (BA ’00)
- Dr. Edward F. Barreese (MPhil ’75, PhD ’80)
- Dr. Donald R. Bear (BA ’74)
- Ms. Jean Brodsky Bernard (BA ’70)
- Miss Patrice Cheryl Brown (MA ’76, Cert ’84)
- Ms. Rebecca L. Byrd (BA ’02)
- Ms. Mary A. Eaddy (MA ’85)
- Dr. Patricia R. Evans (PhD ’87)
- Ms. Colleen Mary Fitzsimmons (BA ’12)
- Mr. John Norman Fugelso (MA ’78)
- Dr. Chad Heap
- Ms. Susan L. Klaus (MA ’88)
- Mrs. Carol L. Kregloh (MA ’97)
- Mr. Michael J. La Place, Jr. (BA ’85, MS ’89)
- Dr. Luna L. Levinson (MPhil ’89, PhD ’80)
- Mr. Ted D. Pelonis
- Ms. Kathryn C. Ray (MPhil ’82)
- Ms. Rebecca L. Riffkin (BA ’11)
- Mrs. Robin S. Roberts (MA ’82)
- Dr. Kevin Conley Ruffner (PhD ’91)
- Mr. Joel Doktorsky Silver (BA ’07)
- Dr. Kathleen Anderson Steeves (PhD ’87)
- Dr. Scott H. Suter (PhD ’94)
- Ms. Elizabeth O. Walker (MA ’95)

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

Support American Studies

Gifts to the Department of American Studies allow us to provide support for faculty and student research and academic travel, graduate student fellowships, and student enrichment activities, including guest speakers, visiting faculty, and symposia. Each gift, no matter how large or small, makes a positive impact on our educational mission and on our standing as one of the nation’s most rigorous and intellectually innovative departments devoted to the study of American culture and society. You can give to the department in several ways:

- Donate securely online at https://my.gwu.edu/mod/onlinegiving/. Just choose “other” under designation and type in American Studies.
- Mail your check, made out to The George Washington University, with “American Studies” written in the memo line, to: The George Washington University, 2100 M Street NW, Suite 310, Washington, DC 20052.
- Call the GW Annual Fund at 1-800-789-2611, and let them know your gift is for American Studies.