



The University of Iowa American Studies Newsletter

February 2001

February Sights



The rhythms of February mean for many people Valentine's Day, Presidents' birthdays, even Groundhog Day and the end of winter in sight. In the Midwest, of course, it's the month when everyone suddenly gets really sick of winter. In the life of a collegiate department, however, February is the most intense month of planning for the future. New graduate student admissions, five-year plans, finalizing the next year's schedule, ideas about future speakers and teaching visitors, graduate student teaching assignments for the next year, nominations for teaching awards and graduate fellowships -- all have February deadlines.

So, in the midst of a busy month, let me share a few thoughts about the long-range sights that have been set by the American Studies Steering Committee:

- A. Our top priority is cooperating with African American World Studies in their searches for new faculty in African American culture.
- B. We want to bring new focus to material studies, especially in the contexts of renewed campus interest in the subject (particularly for pre-19th century American life areas) and in tandem with the College's development of a museum studies certificate and curriculum. We will continue to prepare graduates for careers in museums, historic sites, and historic preservation and to add to our list of distinguished alums in key positions at regional and national sites.
- C. We would like to expand our curriculum to the study of business and industrial cultures, a key area we think for both improving our balance between humanistic and social scientific perspectives and for the further internationalization of American Studies, a project to which we are wholly committed.
- D. We remain concerned about the scarcity of American art and architecture offerings in the college curriculum and will seek opportunities in this subject that fits so importantly into our strengths and coverage of photography, film, dance, theater, literature, and folk cultures.
- E. Lastly, the College appears to be expanding North American ethnic studies across a number of disciplines, and we're going to cooperate and make good use of these developments. In recent years, ethnic studies in particular has come to dominate some American Studies programs and to eclipse other areas. At Iowa, we're pleased to see this area grow within the College while we retain our tradition of a holistic approach to American culture. Our emphasis on inter-disciplinary methods of analysis and practice is what makes us distinctive, and we're committed to maintaining this strength.

It's gratifying that several of our activities are attracting the attention of Iowa news media. Floating Friday lectures have been featured on the University's website and in local and regional newspapers. In December, the Des Moines Register, the Cedar Rapids Gazette, and the Iowa City Press-Citizen all covered Patricia Bryan's and Tom Wolfe's December 2nd Floating Friday lecture on the murder trial of Margaret Hossack. Bryan and Wolfe, University of North Carolina professors and Iowa alums, are writing a book on the 100-year old murder case, probably the most celebrated in Iowa's history. The case was also the basis for Susan Glaspell's famous short story and play, *A Jury of Her Peers*, since Glaspell covered the murder trial for an eastern Iowa newspaper. The most poignant moment during the talk came when a man in the audience rose to say that Margaret was his grandmother and that he and his wife had driven for two hours to come learn about his family's history.

A special topics course this semester on the small town in America, being taught by American Studies grad student Leslie Abadie, will be the subject of a Des Moines Register feature story. That newspaper's reporter has been following the class and will accompany Leslie and her 27 students on their field trip to West Branch, Iowa.

Some final short items worth mentioning: our move to the 7th floor of the Jefferson Building has been postponed until this coming summer. This will allow the University enough time to do the remodeling and updating we requested before we move in. We are also very pleased that we (with Women's Studies) received an Instructional Computing Grant (funded by student computing fees) to outfit a computer lab for American Studies and Women's Studies grad students on the 7th floor.

Congratulations to Associate Professor Laura Rigal, who has been named a University Faculty Scholar for 2001-2004.

An "official welcome" to Associate Professor Kim Marra who has been part of our affiliate program but is now an official part of the American Studies Department.



ALUMNI NEWS

Catherine Bruck (BA '81) "The Archives of Illinois Institute of Technology, where I am University Archivist, has two current exhibits developed from its collections. Yes, I'm responsible for both of them. *Reflection and Revelation: Yearbooks Through the Years* is an electronic version of last year's gallery exhibit. You can view it at <http://archives.iit.edu/exhibits/>. The second exhibit is installed in the exhibit gallery of the Paul V. Galvin Library on IIT's main campus (at 35th and State Sts. in Chicago's historic Bronzeville neighborhood). This exhibit, entitled *Designing the Future: The Institute of Design Collection at IIT*, features the creative artistry of faculty and student of the New Bauhaus, School of Design, and Institute of Design from 1937 - 1955. The school was founded in Chicago by Laszlo Moholy-Nagy and, following a couple name changes and Moholy's death, it merged with IIT, which is why we have the school's earliest records. The exhibit will be up through May 2001 if you're in the Chicago area.

I also have a book to recommend. *Fox At The Wood's Edge* is a biography of Loren Eiseley by Gale E. Christianson (U. of Nebraska Press, 1990/Bison Books printing 2000). Eiseley's autobiography (*All the Strange Hours: The Excavation of a Life*, Scribner's, 1975) was one of the books I used for a paper in connection with Al Stone's Autobiography and American Culture class. Since reading Christianson's biography, I need to re-think my analysis of Eiseley's autobiography. Were it not for the subject character of both books having the same name, and not for the same photograph appearing on the cover

of both volumes, a reader could wonder if, in fact, both books chronicle the life of the same person. A contrast and comparison of the two books could begin with the cover images -- one in black and white, one in color -- and proceed from there in an attempt to discover the "actual" vs the "imaged" Loren Eiseley.

If, however, you only get to read one autobiography in the next 12 months, it should be *Copland, 1900 Through 1942* (St. Martin's/Marek, 1984) in celebration of the centenary of Aaron Copland's birth. And attend as many Copland concerts as you can."

Paul Gutjahr (PhD '96) has edited two books, which appear this spring — *Illuminating Letters: Essays on Typography and Literary Interpretation*, co-edited with Megan Benton, (University of Massachusetts Press), and *American Popular Literature of the Nineteenth Century*, 1200-page anthology for Oxford University Press. The Anthology should be of particular interest to those in American studies because it contains a wide range of popular culture source material for the 19th century including: biographies, American tracts, temperance fiction, reform novels, etiquette books, self-instructing manuals on phrenology, and dime western novels and romances.

Matt Pustz (PhD '98) "In October, I gave a presentation on "Happiness and the Comic Book Fan" at DePaul University as part of their theme quarter "Pursuits of Happiness." The theme quarter is a group of presentations

and films, all focusing on the main theme, that the American Studies department there sponsors. The presentation was well-attended and the students and faculty there were very interested in what I had to say. I even sold (and signed!) some copies of my book. A group of people from the department there took Jen and I out for a really good dinner of Southern soul food. We had a very nice time, and we got a chance to visit some museums and friends up in the Chicago area. Meanwhile, I'm still teaching American Pluralism and Culture & Technology up at Kirkwood in Cedar Rapids."

Leslie Taylor (PhD '98) presented her paper, "These Three: 'The Children's Hour' with its Sting Extracted" at The Future of the Queer Past at the University of Chicago in September, 2000. Many other Iowa alums were there as well and it was great to see everyone! Brett Beemyn presented, "'It Was Like the Sun Rise': The Coffee House and Development of a Black LGB Community in Washington DC," Gregory Conerly presented, "Traitors to the Race: Same-Sex Sexuality and the Politics of Racial Uplift in Black America," and Jay Satterfield produced the catalog for the exhibit, "Homosexuality in the City: A Century of Research at the University of Chicago" that surveyed the extensive research University faculty and students conducted on gay life in Chicago.



Susan Birrell's book, Reading Sport: Critical Essays on Power and Representation, co-edited with Mary McDonald, has been named an Outstanding Academic Title for 2000. The annual selections are made by Choice: Current Reviews for Academic Libraries, which is a publication of the American Library Association. Mary McDonald is a grad of the HLSS program in sports studies and is an associate professor at Miami University.

Rich Horwitz

A bit of news about my activities:

"Public-sector" *stuff*: Feb 7-8 I am helping out with the "2001 Iowa Language and Cultural Concerns Conference" in Des Moines. The Conference is sponsored by the Iowa Department of Education, the Bureau of Refugee Services, the Heartland Area Education Agency, the Iowa Arts Council, the Midwest Desegregation Assistance Center, and MIDTESOL. It is mainly aimed at public school teachers (especially people who teach to or about diversity) or people associated with arts, history, and

humanities agencies. I am responsible for a session about strings -- presenting instrument makers and players in Iowa who hail from Mexico, Laos, Bosnia/Croatia, and Iraq.

"MAASA" *stuff*: April 20-21 I will be traveling to Madison to participate in the annual meeting. I will be presenting a paper about some of the relations among scientists, policy maker, and the public in American culture -- "Is It Getting Warmer or Is it Me? -- Stakes in Modern Climatology." This paper will be the first public airing of research partially funded by a grant from the Center for Global and Regional Environmental Research.

Publishing stuff: The textbook is finally in production and scheduled to be out in August, in time for adoption in Fall 2001. The new title is The American Studies Anthology -- at last, one explicitly for American Studies and (G-d willing) a bargain. It should be about 350 pp and still under \$20.

International stuff: The Council for the International Exchange of Scholars (CIES, which manages the Fulbright Program) has nominated me to serve as peer reviewer for the new Fulbright Senior Specialist Program, 2001-2003.

Teaching stuff: Next spring I will be teaching an undergraduate course on "America as a Foreign Country." I am hoping that it will be especially appropriate for students who are new to the U.S., a chance for them to turn their "foreignness" to advantage in the classroom and to consider ways that it conditions their response to these environs. I would appreciate help or suggestions that would alert international students to this opportunity.

Linda Kerber spoke at the December meeting of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Cambridge, MA. The title of her talk was "Gender and Inequality: Old Questions, New Answers."

Congratulations

Kelly McLaughlin, Ellie McConnell, and Jonathan Hansen were admitted to PhD candidacy; Jillian Duquaine completed her MA; and Sarah Fields, Allison McCracken, Lori Vermaas and Mike Augspurger successfully defended their dissertations.

Porcinalia Silent Auction

By Barb Shubinski

The Department of American Studies' first ever "Porcinalia Silent Auction," held at the annual holiday party on December 2, 2000, was a smashing success. Not only did partygoers get to touch, ogle and marvel at Prof. Rich Horwitz's amazingly extensive collection of pig paraphernalia, some lucky bidders got to take some unique souvenirs home with them. Pig-related items, which Rich collected during research for his last book, Hog Ties, ranged from books to potholders to pin cushions and more. The silent auction of the piggy items yielded \$78, which was contributed to the Domestic Violence Intervention Project (DVIP). According to DVIP, this donation is enough to house a woman and her child for a weekend at the shelter, with some money left over for other expenses for the organization. So not only did the auction add an unusual dimension to our holiday festivities, we as a department have made a positive contribution to a great cause. Thanks to Rich for the idea and to everyone who participated so porkily!

Floating Fridays

February 16 Thomas Riis (Music History, University of Colorado-Boulder) "Not *Babes in Arms*, but 'Babes in Armor': Race and Politics in a Hollywood Musical Hit." (Co-sponsored by the UI Opera Studies Group, Department of Theatre Arts, School of Music, and the Obermann Center for Advanced Studies).

March 2 Shirley Wajda (Visiting Professor, American Studies, Kent State University) "Decoding Domesticity: The Martha Stewart Phenomenon."

March 23 Alison Kibler (Center for Advanced Feminist Studies, University of Minnesota, PhD University of Iowa '94) "Shylock and Paddy: Jewish and Irish American Protests against Mass culture, 1880-1930."

April 6 Lisa Gitelman (Media Studies, Catholic University, Washington DC) "'Print Capitalism' and Recorded Sound."

May 4 Horace Porter (African American World Studies Program) "Ralph Ellison and the Jazz Tradition."

EVENTS OF INTEREST

MAASA April 20-21 in Madison, Wisconsin. Papers will be presented by Rich Horwitz, Kevin Quirk, Michael Augspurger, and Jane Simonsen. A tentative schedule can be viewed at:
<http://slisweb.lis.wisc.edu/~printcul/MAASACON.html>

Irv Garfinkle (Columbia University) and Sara McLanahan (Princeton University), Ida Beam visiting professors, sponsored by Sociology and American Studies. April 12 & 13, 2001. Watch the listserv for details of their visit.

AMERICAN STUDIES HOSTS

VISITORS

The American Studies Department is pleased to be hosting THREE visitors this semester, with a fourth based in International Forum for US Studies (IFUSS).

Shirley Wajda is Assistant Professor of History and American Studies at Kent State University. She is here as a visiting professor, teaching an undergraduate class in material culture, and a graduate seminar. Some of you may remember Shirley from her last stint as a visiting professor in 1995. She will be presenting a Floating Friday lecture on March 2 on the Martha Stewart phenomenon.

Diederik Oostdijk comes to us from Katholieke Universiteit in Nijmegen, the Netherlands, where he is a member of the American Studies faculty. He is in Iowa City as part of a faculty exchange between our two American Studies departments (John Raeburn is spending the semester in Nijmegen). As part of his visit, and as part of his duties as a faculty member at Katholieke Universiteit, Professor Oostdijk is teaching a six-week course on Popular Arts and Entertainment in the US.

Jaap van der Bent, also of Katholieke Universiteit, will teach a six-week course entitled "Beats & Co." beginning March 19. More on his visit in the April newsletter.

Ana Celi is a professor of North American literature and director of the Department of Languages at the Universidad Nacional de Rio Cuarto, Cordoba, Argentina. Dr. Celi is an International Forum for US Studies (IFUSS) fellow this semester. She is currently teaching a six-week course at The University of Iowa entitled "Integrating North and South through Literature." Dr. Celi is a former Fulbright fellow and earned her doctorate in Modern Languages at Universidad Nacional de Cordoba in 1988.



FELLOWSHIPS

T. Anne Cleary International Dissertation Research Fellowship (Deadline: April 1, 2001) Doctoral candidates who will have completed all pre-dissertation requirements by

September 14, 2001, including the comprehensive examination, have an approved dissertation topic, and are preparing to conduct dissertation research in a country or territory outside the U.S. are encouraged to apply for up to \$15,000 of support for travel, subsistence and/or research expenses. Contact the Office for Study Abroad, 120 International Center, 335-0353.

Download applications at
<http://www.uiowa.edu/~uiabroad/financing/stanley_grad.htm>.

JOHN & BARBARA NAU GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP AT THE STONEWALL JACKSON HOUSE (Deadline: March 1, 2001) Three months of residential work-study by a qualified student who is currently enrolled in an MA or PHD program in the fields of American History, American Studies, Museum Studies, or Material Culture. The fellowship is designed to foster research on the life and times of TJ "Stonewall" Jackson and the social history of the community and period in which he lived. For applications write or call:

The Director
Stonewall Jackson House
8 East Washington Street
Lexington, VA 24450
(540) 463-2552
email: sjh1@rockbridge.net

U.S. Capitol Historical Society Fellowship for Research on the Art and Architecture of the US Capitol (Deadline: March 15, 2001) This fellowship was established to encourage and support research and

publication of art and architecture of the US Capitol complex. Information available from the Architect of the Capitol Web site (<http://www.aoc.gov>). Please direct further questions and applications to:

Dr. Barbara Wolanin
Curator
Architect of the Capitol
Washington, DC 20515
(202) 228-1222

CONFERENCES AND CALLS FOR PAPERS

2001 Plains Indian Seminar (Deadline: March 15, 2001) The 2001 Plains Indian Seminar (Sept 28-30) will address the theme *Circles of Knowledge: Plains Indian Education*. Historians, anthropologists, educators, art historians, folklorists, artists, and other interested people are invited to submit a 250-word abstract along with resume. For further information contact:

Lillian Turner
Public Programs Coordinator
Buffalo Bill Historical Center
720 Sheridan Avenue
Cody, WY 82414
programs@bbhc.org

One-Room Schooling (Deadline: April 1, 2001) The Conference for Educational Historians, Museologists, and Local History "Bufs" will be held June 21-23 at Northern Illinois University, DeKalb. You are invited to submit proposals for panels, individual papers, symposia, workshops, and demonstrations to engage the audience in one room schooling in the context of rural education. Proposals will be accepted in the following general areas: Educational histories of one-room schooling; preservation of one-room schools; programs for one-room schools; and memories and artifacts from one-room schools. For more information please contact:

Dr. Lucy Townsend, Curator
Blackwell History of Education Museum
The Learning Center
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, IL 60115
Blackwell@niu.edu

Iowa History Forum (Deadline: March 16, 2001) Saturday, April 7, 2001, Iowa Historical Building, Des Moines, Iowa. This is a gathering of amateur and professional historians with a passion for investigating Iowa's past. The Forum allows participants the opportunity to see old friends, discuss new topics and learn about the latest history research. The Forum schedule is filled with a wide variety of presentations and panel discussions...there's a little something for everyone. Registration questions? Contact Linda Lee, 515-281-6412, or email linda.lee@dca.state.ia.us

The **State Historical Society of Iowa** (SHSI) announces a grant program for the 2001/2002 academic year. Pending securing of the necessary funding, SHSI will award up to four research stipends of \$1,000 each to support original research and interpretive writing related to the history of Iowa or Iowa and the Midwest. Preference will be given to applicants proposing to pursue previously neglected topics or new approaches to or interpretations of previously treated topics. SHSI invites applicants from a variety of backgrounds, including academic and public historians, graduate students, and independent researchers and writers. Applications will be judged on the basis of their potential for producing work appropriate for publication in *The Annals of Iowa*. Grant recipients will be expected to produce an annotated manuscript targeted for *The Annals of Iowa*, SHSI's scholarly journal.

Applications for the 2001/2002 awards must be postmarked by April 16, 2001. Download application guidelines from our Website (http://www.iowahistory.org/grants/shsi_grants/research_grants.html) or request guidelines or further information from:

Research Grants

State Historical Society of Iowa
 402 Iowa Avenue
 Iowa City, IA 52240-1806
 Phone: 319-335-3931
 e-mail: brgman@blue.weeg.uiowa.edu

American Studies Alumni - We'd love to hear what you're doing and where you're living. Please take a moment to drop us an email!

The Lure of the West: Treasures from the Smithsonian Art Museum
 January 20-March 18, 2001

February 22, 3:30 p.m. "Refocusing the Gaze: An Examination of Contemporary Native American Photographers," Jennifer Vigil, independent scholar, 20th – Century American art and contemporary Native American Art

February 23, 3:30 p.m. "Western American and Native American Literature: 19th Century to the Present," A panel discussion with Lori Muntz, UI PhD candidate, English, and **Jane Simonsen, PhD candidate, American Studies**

February 23, 7:30 p.m. "Western Poetry and Prose," James Galvin, UI professor of creative writing, reads his own original writings

February 28, 3:30 "Taming Actresses on the American Theatrical Frontier," **Kim Marra, UI associate professor of theatre arts and American Studies**

March 2, 7:30 p.m. "Lasso and Lariats," Dustin Smith, UI student and summer cowboy camp instructor, provides a lesson in tying and twirling a lariat. Free lasso provided, Greenhorns welcomes —coordination not required.

March 3, 12-5 p.m. "Explorations," A special event for adults and children. Explore the Hageboeck Hall of Birds at the UI Museum of Natural History with David Brenzel, educational program coordinator. Discover the tales and tails of western expansion. Then blaze a trail to the UIMA where families will be guided through *Lure of the West*.

March 8, 3:30 p.m. "Places Into Paintings: Thomas Moran's Working Methods," Joni Kinsey, UI associate professor of art and art history

March 9, 7:30 p.m. Dean Rathje and Gayle Darke Paul present a musical performance in a variety of acoustic styles with banjo, mandolin, and guitar

March 16, 7:30 p.m. A performance by Chris Ridge and Stampede, a country rock band from Muscatine, Iowa.

All events are free and are held at the University of Iowa Art Museum.

POROI
Project On Rhetoric Of Inquiry
Seminars
Spring 2001

Tuesday, February 20 Bruce Gronbeck, Communication Studies, University of Iowa
The Sentimentalization of American Politics
7:30-9:30 p.m., Brewery Square

Thursday, March 1 Daniel Gross, Rhetoric, University of Iowa
Being-Moved: The Pathos of Heidegger's Rhetorical Ontology
7:30-9:30 p.m., Brewery Square

Thursday, March 22 Thomas Swiss, English, Drake University
Electronic Literature: Discourses, Communities, Traditions—a working paper and presentation on New Media Writing
7:30-9:30 p.m., Brewery Square

Thursday, April 12 Bonnie S. Sunstein, English, University of Iowa
Stepping In and Stepping Out: Position, Voice, and Text
7:30-9:30 p.m., Brewery Square

All events are free and open to the public. Refreshments are served.
Check out their website for updates to the schedule and for copies of papers as they become available
<http://www.uiowa.edu/~poroi>

The Iowa Journal of Cultural Studies is currently accepting submissions for the Spring 2001 issue. Graduate Students are invited to submit work in any of the following categories:

Critical Essays
Interviews
Fiction
Nonfiction
Drama
Photo Essays
Poetry
Book Reviews

Please send two (2) copies of your submission by February 22, 2001, to IJCS, 308 EPB, The University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA 52242. Please note that we do not accept submissions by email. For more information, contact Kevin Quirk, editor, at kevin-quirk@uiowa.edu



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KEEP US POSTED

If you have information that you would like to pass on to The University of Iowa American Studies Program, please consider this your invitation to share the news.

Your Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Have you received any honors, made a presentation, or had an article or book published recently?
2. Have you attended any conferences, or do you know of any that may be of interest to American Studies?
3. Do you have information about possible fellowships, grants, or employment opportunities?
4. Would you write a paragraph or two to review or recommend music, a book, or a film?
5. What research are you currently involved in that you'd like the American Studies community to know about?

Feel free to respond to any or all questions by mail,
e-mail (laura-kastens@uiowa.edu) or fax (319/335-0314).

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