

# The University of Iowa American Studies Newsletter

July 2006



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## *"The Year in Review"*

It has been an emotional year.

As many newsletter readers know, Iowa City was struck by a tornado on April 13. American Studies faculty and students suffered property damages, including some students who lost their entire apartments. For those reading from afar, the neighborhood immediately to the east and northeast of College Green was hardest hit. In a most quixotic fashion, the tornado destroyed some dwellings in its path while leaving others relatively untouched. Additional extensive damage occurred to businesses along Riverside Drive and to downtown Iowa City on Burlington Street, including buildings both to the north and south. Although untouched, the Jefferson Building (home to American Studies) was mere yards away from Ped Mall buildings that experienced heavy damage. Most amazing, however, is that despite the trauma of riding out a tornado in a closet or under a bed while the walls of one's apartment were being sucked away, no one was seriously injured or killed. We are all thankful for that small miracle.

In February, Ken Cmiel, Professor of History and American Studies, died suddenly and unexpectedly (see "In Memoriam" in this newsletter issue). Our loss is immeasurable. In the days and weeks that followed, I heard from many of you who expressed the same shock that we felt locally and who voiced your sadness, sympathy, and memories of Ken as one of the true good guys. Ken's advice, influence, and teaching as well as his big heart and smile lifted up many of us both near and far.

In the middle of so much trauma, it seems almost trivial to relay important steps of growth we have taken this year (although Ken would be the first to say, "stay focused on work that really matters"). Elsewhere in this newsletter, I announce the establishment of the Center for Ethnic Studies and the Arts in the Department of American Studies. Defined by two of the most contentious or at least vaguely-conceived terms imaginable ("ethnic studies" and "arts"), the Center's mission is to foster research about ethnic identities, ethnicity and race in relationship to both creative expression and community experience of the arts broadly conceived (including all the fine arts, performance areas, and popular culture). The Center will be featuring speaker series, symposia, proseminars, and workshops that expand upon the Department's prior undertakings and dovetail with highly topical concerns nationally and internationally in American studies – although our emphasis on the arts is original and plays to Iowa's unique strength.

The chief work we carried out as a department during 2005-06 were two job searches for new assistant professors with specialties in African American studies and Latina/o studies. Although we hosted five candidates for on-campus interviews, we were ultimately unsuccessful in hiring our top choices. We are hopeful that we will be successful as we continue these searches in 2006-07.

Of course, faculty and students alike continued to shine. The pages of this newsletter are filled with the details. Associate Professor Rob Latham has made permanent his American studies joint appointment, and Associate Professor Bluford Adams has extended his American studies joint appointment for another three years. I agreed to a third term (yes, it's true that I could be insane) as chair of the department.

I am also happy to report that contributions to the American Studies Fund, the Albert E. Stone Fund, and the Alexander Kern Graduate Student Fellowships Fund reached record highs [see page 4 in this newsletter for more information]. Our heartfelt gratitude to all those who gave: Sally Lindgren, Thomas Ellbogen, Dr. Daniel Boylan, Dr. Stephanie Bennett-Smith, Dorothy

Paul, Dr. Valerie Halverson Pace & Mr. David Pace, Paul Deaton, Dr. Franklin Lloyd, Dr. Bradley Williams, Mr. Paul Kleiman, Michael Maves, MD & Elizabeth Maves, Dr. Susan Coultrap-McQuin, Mr. Michael Lang & Ms. Kelley Brandt-Lang, Dr. Eric Sandeen & Susan Sandeen, Dr. James Connor & Mrs. Zoe Connor. Your gifts helped to fund graduate student fellowships for dissertation research and paper presentations at conferences, as well as student lunch seminars with such distinguished American studies scholars as Alan Trachtenberg and Wanda Corn. Your contributions have made important imprimaturs on the careers of a number of students.

*Lauren Rabinovitz*

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## *In Memoriam, Ken Cmiel, Professor of History and American Studies (1954-2006)*

As many colleagues, students, and alums know by now, Professor Ken Cmiel died suddenly in February at the age of 51 of an undetected brain tumor. Our loss is immeasurable. Eulogies outlining his important intellectual contributions to American cultural history, to the study of human rights in an international context, and to academic life are at: <http://www.historians.org/Perspectives/issues/2006/0603/0603mem4.cfm>; <http://www.uiowa.edu/~history/People/cmiel.html>; <http://intl-programs.uiowa.edu/accents/2006/spring/Cmiel.html>. There is little I can add to the evaluation of Ken's record and achievements cut short when he was in the middle of the most important scholarly work of his career.

Ken became a Professor of American Studies in 2004, shortly after he completed his term as Chair of the Department of History. When I asked him to become part of the Department, Ken responded in his typically modest fashion. He was happy and eager to be affiliated with American Studies, felt at home with our community, but expressed some concern that we would not regard his credentials as good enough! I had to remind Ken that—aside from his obvious sterling credentials—he had served on more American Studies PhD examination and thesis committees than anyone else, including all other faculty members in American Studies. Over the last 10 years, he mentored more than 25 PhD students in American Studies! In addition, he regularly taught American Popular Music, a large lecture course that historically contextualized the broad sweep of vernacular and popular musical styles of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Ken possessed one of the biggest, most generous spirits of anyone I have ever known. He was unpretentious, compassionate, and absolutely brilliant. In the time since we have lost him, a number of his friends have commented on his "Cheshire cat" grin as a kind of trademark of his that they will miss. In my mind's eye, I too see him smiling from his table at "126" (yes, Ken was the only person I have ever known who had his own table at a restaurant as well as a running bar tab there – very Hollywood, very celeb, very chic!) beckoning me to join him for a drink and conversation that would put most things weighing on me in perspective, and open up new ideas that Ken would introduce but make me feel like they were my own. Mostly, I just enjoyed basking in his stories, wit, savvy comments, and laughter. Plus, I'd rather "dish" about the academy with Ken than with anyone else. It all made sense that we were trashing the institution, its denizens, and its idiosyncrasies because we loved it.

Ken was many things to many people – mentor, teacher, colleague, internationally recognized scholar, pal, son and brother, (and his favorite roles of) husband and father. I am proud that he was my friend.

*Lauren Rabinovitz*

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## *New Center for Ethnic Studies and the Arts*

Iowa has a new Center for Ethnic Studies and the Arts, housed in the Department of American Studies and directed by Lauren Rabinovitz, professor and chair of American studies. The center will focus on the roles that ethnic identification have played in the history of American arts. The research center will be the first to focus solely on the arts, popular culture, and creative expression as a specific important cultural component of U.S. ethnic communities and their heritage.

Prof. Rabinovitz said the Center's goal is to support faculty and student research about traditions and practices of diverse ethnic and racial minority communities through lectures, symposia, and seminars. She also hopes the Center's activities will encourage faculty and students to develop these threads in their research and teaching even when they have not previously done so. The Center's initial advisory board includes: Associate Professor Isabel Barbuza (Art and Art History), Associate Professor Brian Gollnick (Spanish and Portuguese), Associate Professor Kevin Mumford (History, African American Studies, and Sexuality Studies), Professor Horace Porter (English, American Studies, and African American Studies), Associate Professor Laura Rigal (English and American Studies), and Assistant Professor Bridget Tsemo-Harris (Rhetoric and African American Studies). Karen Smith, PhD student in American Studies, will be the Center's Program Assistant for 2006-07.

For 2006-07, both a speaker series and a proseminar are planned. The speaker series, "*Thinking Outside the Box: Ethnic Identities and the Arts*," will feature the following lecturers:

- September 22—Dr. Frances Aparicio, Director of Latin American and US Latino Studies at University of Illinois Chicago
- October 20—Dr. Leslie Bow, Director of Asian American Studies, University of Wisconsin at Madison
- November 3—Dr. Bluford Adams, Associate Professor of English and American Studies, The University of Iowa
- November 10—Dr. Bridget Tsemo-Harris, Assistant Professor of Rhetoric and African American Studies, The University of Iowa

March and April 2007—Dr. E. Patrick Johnson, Director of Performance Studies, Northwestern University, and Dr. Noliwe Rooks, Associate Director of African American Studies, Princeton University. Dr. Rooks will also be the 2007 Albert E. Stone American Studies Distinguished Alumnus Speaker.

In conjunction with the "*Thinking Outside the Box*" fall series, American Studies and the Center will co-sponsor a graduate proseminar on the state of the field of ethnic studies. The proseminar will meet for lunchtime discussions with each of the speakers to explore definitions of ethnicity, "ethnicity's" relationships to "race" and "whiteness," and directions in the field of ethnic studies. For further information on the proseminar, contact: Center Director and Chair of American Studies Lauren Rabinovitz.

The Center is being supported by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the Graduate College, the Office of the Provost, and the Office of the Vice President for Research. Its address is: 715 Jefferson Bldg, Department of American Studies. A website, e-mail address, and phone number will be available shortly.

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## Late-Breaking News

**HORACE PORTER** has been named an F. Wendell Miller Distinguished Professor of English and American Studies. Professor Porter has been at Iowa since 1999, after an extraordinary career as an Associate Dean and Department Chair at Dartmouth College (1979-1990) and Director of African and Afro-American Studies at Stanford University (1990-1999). He came here as one of the most important leaders in African American studies in the U.S., and he has added considerably to his reputation since then.

Professor Porter's scholarship places him among the best in African American literature. He is the leading authority on Ralph Ellison, one of America's most important African American writers. In addition, he has published an authoritative book on James Baldwin, another leading African American writer of the postwar period. He has been invited to lecture on these two figures at numerous universities, including Stanford, New York University, and the Sorbonne. The range of Professor Porter's scholarship also extends to other significant mid-century African American writers, including articles on Richard Wright and James MacPherson. He has been invited to participate in numerous anthologies on topics in 20<sup>th</sup> century African American literature.

Professor Porter also published an autobiography in 2003 that was a study of the U.S. educational system in the years following *Brown v. the Board of Education of Topeka* (1954) as witnessed through his personal experiences. He has two books in progress, one an anthology of prison literature by important African American intellectuals that has been submitted to Pal-

grave Press for review and one that is a study of contemporary black public intellectuals. In recent years, he has thus extended and deepened his authority from postwar African American fiction to encompass the writings of African American public intellectuals so as to establish the depth of political as well as cultural contributions of African American literature.

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## Enhancements to Alexander Kern Dissertation Research and Travel Fellowships

Thanks to a generous donation made by Dr. James Connor & Mrs. Zoe Connor in order to honor the memory of former Professor and Chair of American Studies Alexander Kern, we will be able to increase the amount of these fellowships beginning in fall 2006. Given rising travel costs, the Connors' gift is especially timely and important for keeping these awards a meaningful contribution to PhD students' careers.

Alexander Kern Travel Fellowships are awarded each semester to two PhD students presenting their research at a national or international professional conference. Previously, these awards were \$250 per trip. A Kern Travel Fellowship will now be \$500.

The Alexander Kern Dissertation Research Fellowship is awarded to one American Studies PhD student annually. This fellowship will now be a \$1000 award.

Alexander Kern was on the faculty of American Studies from 1947 until his retirement in 1976. He was a longtime director of American Studies and mentor to many students, both graduate and undergraduate. The Alexander Kern Fellowships are based on a bequest from Dr. Kern and his wife Jean, both ardent supporters of American studies.

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## CONGRATULATIONS!

### *Graduate Students news:*

Kristin Solli married her sweetheart Jason on Saturday, July 1.

Jennifer Ambrose, Wayne Anderson, Richard Landon, Elizabeth Loyd, Cinda Nofziger, Matt Thomas, Gyorgy Toth, and Lauren Whitehead were admitted to PhD candidacy; Brian Hallstoos, Erica Hannickel, Patrick Oray and Danielle Rich completed their comprehensive exams; Charlie Williams, Sharon Lake, Erica Hannickel and Brian Hallstoos held successful prospectus meetings; Katie Dunham and Levi Fox received the Masters in American Studies; and Bill Bryant defended his dissertation.

Erica Hannickel was selected to receive an Honorable Mention Award for the 2006 Outstanding Graduate Student as Mentor Award. She was formally recognized at the awards ceremony on March 25, 2006.

### *Undergraduate news:*

McKinze Cook was invited to accept membership in Phi Beta Kappa; Tyler Bleau, a junior in American Studies and

History, has been awarded the David W. Koehser Scholarship in Economics, Political Science, or History by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

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## MEET OUR NEW GRADUATE STUDENTS!

American Studies is pleased to welcome three new graduate students for the 2006-07 academic year.

**Ashley Brewer** comes to the program from Arkansas, where she graduated with a B.A. in English from the University of Central Arkansas in 2005. Her research interests include the history of rural culture in the U.S., food and farming, and the growing influence of environmental/ social movements, such as New Urbanism and New Agrarianism, on American culture. She enjoys reading and gardening, and watermelon is her favorite food (by far).

**Ashley Ladlie** "My name is Ashley Ladlie and I hail from Iowa and Minnesota. I like to think that I have dual citizenship in both states. My undergrad degree is from Luther

College in English and Political Science. The University of Iowa is one of the few in the nation that not only has an American Studies Ph.D. program, but also offers the ability to study film, popular culture, and sexuality— three areas of research that I am interested in. I am also interested in the history and influence of rock and roll, and how dissent from the status quo is represented in various forms of popular culture. I have a big and crazy non-traditional family that takes up much of my time and also a boyfriend and a dog in Minneapolis. I read with a sense of urgency and enjoy working crossword puzzles. My favorite thing to do is go to rock concerts, especially Pearl Jam. I am so excited to start life as a grad student that I can barely stand it!"

**Luke Stacks** has a BA in American Studies from the University of Virginia, where he also wrote for a student magazine and organized happenings for a residential college. He wishes to research the strange currents of big ideas in public, the arts and their industries, and the reality of an inherited democracy. Luke is a sucker for serialized tv, pizza . . . basically every kind of junk.



## STUDENT NEWS

**Ulli Adelt** "My third article, entitled "Black, White and Blue: Racial Politics in B.B. King's Music from the 1960s," will be published by the Journal of Popular Culture. I also have another book review forthcoming in Popular Music and Society.

I will present a paper on two German blues promoters at the ASA conference. Uschi and I are expecting a third child in October. I'm enjoying my Ada Louise Ballard dissertation fellowship and I'm going on the job market for '07. Will I get a job? God only knows."

**Sharon Lake** gave a paper at the Women's and Gender Historians of the Midwest Conference held June 2-3, 2006 at Maryville University in St. Louis, MO. Her paper was titled: "'I Became a Feminist Inch by Inch': Minnette Doderer, Liberal Politics, and the Women's Movement in Iowa."

**Elizabeth (Betsy) Loyd** is spending the summer in Middlebury, Vermont at the Bread Loaf School of English. She was recently appointed secretary for the National Society for the Preservation of Tent, Folk, and Repertoire Americana, headquartered at the Theatre Museum, in Mt. Pleasant, IA.

## Faculty News



**Susan Birrell** was awarded the Seward Staley Award as an outstanding scholar whose work has promoted and influenced the field of sport history. Susan gave the Staley Address at the North American Society for Sport History meetings in Glenwood Springs, Colorado in May. The title was "Approaching Mt. Everest."

**Jane Desmond** "I learned a tremendous amount this year as a CIC Academic Leadership Fellow, attending training seminars at Michigan, Illinois, and Michigan State. Seeing more of the "big picture" of how whole institutions operate is great, and is really helping me in the half of my job this year that is Associate Dean of International Programs. Especially during times of financial constriction for state institutions, it was encouraging to see people thinking creatively about ways that our nation's leading public research institutions like Iowa can move forward.

Travel has been a big theme for me this semester, with a recent trip to the University of Birmingham (where we will soon be instituting an exchange agreement with their American Studies Program), where I delivered a plenary address "Doing Ethnography and Doing American Studies" at their conference: Engaging the New American Studies...Nick Yablon (revisiting his old haunts) and Charlie Williams were also on the program and it was fun to see them "out of situ."

Following that I gave a talk in Paris at the International College of Philosophy (where I clearly felt the ghost of Jean Paul Sartre haunting the halls) on the ethics and aesthetics of transferring popular dance forms to the concert stage (think hip hop for example) and practiced my nearly dormant French which surprisingly had not totally deserted me. This June I'll be in Israel for my first trip to the Middle East, giving a talk at the University of Haifa's Center for the Study of the U.S., and hopefully as well meeting with Israeli and Palestinian colleagues at a variety of universities.

Another highlight for me this past semester was the International Forum for U.S. Studies' conference in April: Part II of "America' in the World: Discourses of Americanization and Anti-Americanization." Graduate students Danielle Rich and Gyorgy Toth played a great role in making this a success as did Charlie Williams, Kristin Solli, Amy Spellacy (English), Ulli Adelt, and Brandy Case-Haub (Anthro.), all of whom presented aspects of their work. Horace Porter from AS also added eloquent remarks to the discussions.

With my terrific colleague Teresa Mangum from English, I am heading up an animal studies faculty research group (including our own Kim Marra working on her new book on horses!), and we are involved in a number of public outreach projects funded by our "Year of Public Engagement" grant. Photo and art exhibits on human/animal relations will open in the fall on campus and tour the state. Enormous thanks to the Obermann Center for Advanced Studies for hosting our research seminar last fall!"

**Rob Latham's** essay "The Job of Dissevering Joy from Glop: John Clute's *New Worlds* Criticism" was recently published in *Portals: A Festschrift for John and Judith Clute*, edited by Farah Mendlesohn for Old Earth Press. His article on "Sextrapolation in New Wave Science Fiction" is forthcoming in *Science Fiction Studies* in July 2006 (and will be reprinted in the anthology *Queer Universes: Sexualities in Science Fiction*, edited by Veronica Hollinger, Joan Gordon, and Wendy Pearson for Liverpool University Press), and his "Biotic Invasions: Ecological Imperialism in New Wave Science Fiction" will appear in December in a special issue of *The Yearbook of English Studies* edited by David Seed. He has also finished a 12,000 word essay on "Urban Horror" for the reference volume *Icons of the Supernatural*, edited by S.T. Joshi for Greenwood Press. His review of Priscilla L. Walton's book *Our Cannibals, Ourselves* is forthcoming in *Contemporary Literature*. He is currently completing an entry on "The Sexual Revolution" for *The Encyclopedia of the Culture Wars*, edited by Roger Chapman for M.E. Sharpe Press, as well as an essay entitled "Cyberpunk and the New Wave: Ruptures and Continuities," which has been accepted for publication in *Beyond the Reality Studio: Cyberpunk and the New Millennium*, edited by Graham J. Murphy and Sherryl Vint for Ohio State University Press.

**Kim Marra** was a participant in "Articulating the Animal," the fall 2005 Obermann Interdisciplinary Research Semester, co-directed by Jane Desmond and Teresa Mangum. She launched a new book project, "Between Actresses and Horses in American Culture, 1865-1930." In November 2005, she presented a paper, "Theatre for Women Loving Women: Fan Documents of the Career of Maude Adams," in the Feminist Historiography Working Group at the American Society for Theatre Research Annual Meeting in Toronto. At that meeting, she also began a three-year term as Secretary of ASTR. She looks forward to the publication of her book *Strange Duets: Impresarios and Actresses in the American Theatre, 1865-1914* in the Studies in Theatre History and Culture Series of The University of Iowa Press in November 2006. In Fall 2006, she

will be reviving her course, American Women Playwrights, 1776-Present (45:118/49:118) for American Studies and Theatre Arts students.



## Alumni News

**Brett Genny Beemyn** (Phd 1997) has become the director of the Stonewall Center at the University of Massachusetts,

Amherst and moved to Northampton (which the National Enquirer once dubbed "Lesbianville"). He has had a number of articles published in the last year on the needs of transgender college students and campus transgender policies, many of which are on his office website: <http://www.umass.edu/stonewall/transhand>

**Ken Brown** (PhD 1987) "After 26 years of university teaching both in New Orleans and at Cal Poly University, I was ordained as a Roman Catholic priest on June 17, 2006 at the Old Mission in San Luis Obispo. I was already on the faculty at Xavier in New Orleans at the time that I completed my doctoral work, and remained there for 4 more years after completing the dissertation. I then moved to California where I worked at Cal Poly University for ten years. I was tenured at both Xavier and Cal Poly, but decided that the "call" to ministry was something that it was time for me to respond to.

However, when I decided to make a vocation weekend in January, 2000 at the seminary in Menlo Park, California, I found that what had been so strong in my childhood had not left me. In fact, my best friend from childhood did become a priest and remained one until his death in March 1993. When I came to University of Iowa in the fall, 1971, I also had given some thought to going into the seminary at that time. This is something that has literally "haunted" me throughout my life and my academic career.

My decision to finally give up the job and enter the seminary was made with a lot of support from friends and family who when I told them that this is what I was planning to do simply said, "It's about time." Upon entering St. John's Seminary in the fall, 2001, it really felt like the right thing to do. My life here has been unfolding at a very steady pace and on June 17, 2006 I took the last step toward becoming a priest in the Roman Catholic Church. My ordination to the priesthood took place at the Old Mission Church in San Luis Obispo, California and my first Mass was the next day in the same place.

I am not joining a religious order (Jesuits, Dominicans,

Franciscans). I will be a diocesan priest for the Diocese of Monterey, California. The difference is that religious ordered priests take the vow of poverty, chastity and obedience. Diocesan priests take the vow of chastity and obedience to the bishop of your diocese (we also make a promise to live a simple life, but this has very broad interpretations--we can own property). It is amazing how these things turn out because 20 years ago, I barely knew where Monterey was on the map. I think that my coming here to take the job in 1991 had more to do with this decision than it had to do with improving my academic career."

**David Marcou** (MA 78) directed and edited the group-book 'Spirit of the World: A Group Photographic Portrayal of Nature, People, Stories, and Miracles' (Speranza, 2006), with an introduction by Mary Eisenhower and technical advice by Steve Kiedrowski. This book focuses on the spiritual connectedness of humankind, and contains more than 300 photographs and 40 essays by 60 leading photographers and writers, including Jon Tarrant; Paul Stewart; Rick Wood; Prof. Roger Grant; Melanie S. Freeman; Jean Chung; Jerry Swope; Leah Nash; Professors David Rees and Angus McDougall; Dmitri Kessel; and Msgr. Bernard McGarty. Everyday and famous are spotlighted -- including a courageous disabled boy in Missouri; a recent, famous UI-UW football game; presidents; popes; a princess; Hollywood stars; troops; workers; families; kids; clerics; gays; married couples, war, disaster, and AIDS victims; young and old of all types. David is a freelance writer, photographer, and book editor, and also works for the People's Food Co-op in La Crosse, Wisconsin. In 2005, he directed and edited 'Spirit of Wisconsin: A Historical Photo-Essay of the Badger State' (Speranza), which all eight then-living governors, plus many other photographers and writers, contributed to; current Gov. Jim Doyle wrote the foreword. David's son, Matthew, also contributes to the group-books. Matt typed the manuscript for 'Spirit of America' (Speranza, 2001) when he was 13 years old, an early group-book directed and co-edited by his dad. David says his own greatest lesson from UI was learning to study and write better, and first learning of his interest in photography, which he's pursued since 1979. His writings and photos are in top libraries, archives, and galleries in America, Britain, and South Korea. From 1991-2002, David taught writing and photography at Western Technical College in La Crosse. He adds that it would be nice to be in touch with a few of his former UI American Studies classmates.

**Megan (Fritschel) Nelson** (PhD 02) "Well, our Lubbock years are drawing to a close. I have accepted a position as Assistant Professor of History (19th century cultural) at

California State University at Fullerton and Dan and I will be moving to Los Angeles (address TBA) in late July. We would be delighted to host visitors--if we find a place to live and if that place is larger than a shed, that is. . . "

**Jen** (PhD 02) **and Matt** (PhD 98) **Pustz** "Matt and I have left Iowa for Massachusetts. I accepted the position of Museum Historian with Historic New England (formerly known as the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, or SPNEA) at the end of April and started my new job on June 26. I will be headquartered in Boston at Charles Bulfinch's first Otis House, on the north edge of Beacon Hill. My job tasks will be many, as Historic New England has thirty-six house museum properties and produces traveling exhibitions based on its very large object and archival collections. We will live in nearby Wakefield, MA. Matt will return to Iowa after the initial move to finish teaching summer school at Kirkwood, and will rejoin me in Massachusetts in August to start looking for employment."

**Jane Simonson** (PhD 01) **and Mike Augspurger** (PhD 01) "We have left the University of Central Arkansas and in the fall we'll be starting new positions at Augustana College in Rock Island, Illinois. I will be in the History and Gender/Women's Studies departments and Mike will be in the English Department. We're living on the Davenport side of the river, so we're once again in Hawkeye country. My book, Making Home Work: Domesticity and Native American Assimilation, 1860-1920 just came out from UNC Press on June 1. Our other big production for the year--baby #2--should be arriving in the next few weeks. I'm planning to attend the ASA in October as the MAASA regional representative."

**Yuval Taylor** (MA 88) Faking It: The Quest for Authenticity in Popular Music by Hugh Barker and Yubal Taylor will be published by W. W. Norton in February 2007.

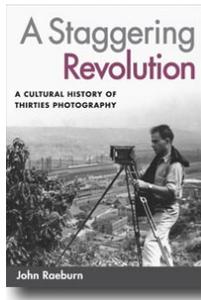
**Nan Wolverton** (PhD 94) "In addition to raising three young children (ages 4, 2 1/2, and 1) I taught a material culture seminar for the American Studies Program at Smith College in the spring of 2006. The seminar was on the material culture of New England, 1650-1860, and most classes were held at Historic Deerfield, Inc. in Deerfield, MA. I am also working on furnishing and exhibit plans for the two homes that comprise the Emily Dickinson Museum in Amherst, MA."

**Sharon Wood** (PhD 94) reports that **Margot Krippner Canaday** (BA 92) won the Lerner-Scott Dissertation prize awarded by the Organization of American Historians. She

*(Continued on page 10)*

A Staggering Revolution:  
A Cultural History of Thirties  
Photography

John Raeburn



"A *Staggering Revolution* tells an extraordinary story of the 'rebirth,' the flowering, and the cultural legitimization of photography in America, both as art and 'popular preoccupation' in the 1930s. Combining superb close reading of pictures, books, and exhibitions with magnificent historical research, John Raeburn weaves a many-layered narrative, beautifully balanced and indescribably rich, regarding the role of galleries and art museums, periodicals and picture books, critics, artists, and impresarios in the establishment of photography as the most potent visual medium of its time." — Alan Trachtenberg, Neil Gray Professor Emeritus of English and American Studies, Yale University

During the 1930s, the world of photography was unsettled, exciting, and boisterous. John Raeburn's *A Staggering Revolution* recreates the energy of the era by surveying photography's rich variety of innovation, exploring the aesthetic and cultural achievements of its leading figures, and mapping the paths their pictures blazed into the public's imagination.

While other studies of thirties photography have concentrated on the documentary work of the Farm Security Administration (FSA), no previous book has considered it alongside so many of the decade's other important photographic projects. *A Staggering Revolution* includes individual chapters on Edward Steichen's celebrity portraiture; Berenice Abbott's Changing New York project; the Photo League's ethnography of Harlem; and Edward Weston's western landscapes, made under the auspices of the first Guggenheim Fellowship awarded to a photographer. It also examines Margaret Bourke-White's industrial and documentary pictures, the collective undertakings by California's Group f.64, and the fashion magazine specialists, as well as the activities of the FSA and the Photo League.

Raeburn's expansive study explains how the democratic atmosphere of thirties photography nourished innovation and encouraged new heights of artistic achievement. It also produced the circumstances that permitted artful photography to become such a thriving public enterprise during the decade. *A Staggering Revolution* offers an illuminating analysis of the sociology of photography's art world and its galleries and exhibitions, but also demonstrates the impor-

tance of the novel venues created by impresarios and others that proved essential to photography's extraordinary dissemination. These new channels, including camera magazines and annuals, volumes of pictures enhanced by text, and omnibus exhibitions in unconventional spaces, greatly expanded photography's cultural visibility. They also made its enthusiastic audience larger and more heterogeneous than ever before--or since.

<http://www.press.uillinois.edu/s06/raeburn.html>



In recent years, scholars such as Kenneth Cmiel have called for historicizing the popular "idiom" of human rights and examination of its emergence as a "political language." For this special issue, the **Radical**

**History Review** invites submissions that elucidate, interrogate, and complicate the relationship between women's liberation and human rights.

Procedures for submission of proposals and articles:

By August 30, 2006 please submit a 1-2 page abstract summarizing your article to [rhr@igc.org](mailto:rhr@igc.org). The due date for solicited, complete articles is February 1, 2007. All articles will then be put through the peer review process. Articles selected for publication after the peer review process will appear in Issue 101 of *Radical History Review*, scheduled to appear in Spring 2008.

To be considered manuscripts should be submitted electronically, preferably in Microsoft Word or rich text format, with "Issue 101 submission" in the subject line.

Abstract Deadline: August 30, 2006

Email: [rhr@igc.org](mailto:rhr@igc.org)

For more information, please consult our website at

<http://chnm.gmu.edu/rhr/rhr.htm>

**Representing Self and Other: Gender and Sexuality in the Fantastic** International Conference on the Fantastic in the Arts 28  
March 14-18, 2007  
Fort Lauderdale, Florida



The focus of ICFA-28 is on issues of gender and sexuality, long a concern of the fantastic in literature, film, and other

media. Given the oft-marginalized status of science fiction and fantasy in relation to mainstream literature and culture, it's not surprising to see fantastic works considered in the light of queer theory and feminist approaches. The hero doesn't have to be a guy, but it's just as rewarding to examine the construction of the masculine hero in space opera, sword-and-sorcery, and superhero comics. In graphic novels, book cover illustrations, and art, the gendered Other is the BEM, the elf, the alien, the vampire.

Suggested topics include, but are by no means limited to:

- Boyhood and violence
- Revising gender roles in traditional children's literature
- Mothers & Fathers
- the representation of gay men and women in SF/H/F
- Gender blending and bending
- The Other as love/sex object
- Gender stereotypes in the 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s, etc
- Slash fan fiction
- 1st, 2nd, or 3rd wave feminism and sf
- Judith Butler and gender performativity
- Anthropology and gender
- gender cues in anime art

A more complete list of suggested topics, frequently updated, is available on the website.

As always, we also welcome proposals for individual papers and for academic sessions and panels on any aspect of the fantastic in any media, even outside the conference theme.

The deadline for submission of proposals for papers or panels is November 30, 2006.

Submit 500 word abstracts for proposals and panel sessions, including contact information and A/V requests, to the appropriate Division Head, which is available on the website [www.iafa.org](http://www.iafa.org)

**THE ANDREW W. MELLON FOUNDATION/ACLS  
EARLY CAREER  
FELLOWSHIP**



The American Council of Learned Societies (the American Studies Association has been a constituent member of the ACLS since 1958) announces a significant new fellowship program providing support for young scholars to complete their dissertation and, later, to advance their research after being awarded the Ph.D.

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation/ACLS Early Career Fellowship Program will award Dissertation Completion Fellowships supported by a grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

The first competition for Mellon/ACLS Dissertation Completion Fellowships will take place in 2006-07 and be open to graduate students writing dissertations in the humanities and related social sciences. This program aims to encourage timely completion of the Ph.D. Applicants must be prepared to complete their dissertations within the period of their fellowship tenure or shortly thereafter. ACLS will award 65 Fellowships in this competition.

Each Fellowship will carry a stipend and benefits up to a total of \$33,000.

Further information about the competition may be found at <http://www.acls.org/ecfguide.htm>

Deadline: November 15, 2006

*Helpful links*



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American Studies

<http://www.uifoundation.org/Apps/WebObjects/GiveTolowa>

*(Continued from page 7)*

completed her PhD in history at Minnesota and is now a post-doctoral student at Princeton. Her dissertation, titled "The Straight State: Sexuality and American Citizenship, 1900-1969," also won prizes from the Law and Society Association and the University of Minnesota. Her research at Princeton is being devoted to revising her dissertation for publication and beginning a new project on heterosexuality as a legal regime in American history. This past year she joined the Princeton faculty teaching courses on "Gender in America" and "Approaches to Western Culture, From the Renaissance to the Modern Period." <http://www.princeton.edu/pr/pwb/05/1017/3a.shtml>

**Dr. J. Brooke Workman** (PhD 1968) of North Fort Myers, Florida, passed away on May 29, 2006. Dr. Workman was an American Humanities and English teacher at Iowa City West High School.

## Department of American Studies

### Faculty

Lafayette (Bluford) Adams (English)

Susan Birrell (Health & Sports Studies)

Jane Desmond (International Programs)

Rob Latham (English)

Kim Marra (Theatre)

Russell Peterson (Visiting Assistant Professor)

Horace Porter (English)

Lauren Rabinovitz (Cinema & Comparative Literature)

John Raeburn (English)

Laura Rigal (English)

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