In 2004, the Lilly Endowment funded a five-year, $5-million grant program intended to encourage innovative interdisciplinary work among Indiana University faculty. This year, IU opted to continue the New Frontiers in the Arts and Humanities program for an additional five years. The grants fund exploratory projects and are designed to assist faculty in obtaining external awards for later research stages; so far, more than 400 grants have resulted in a range of books, symposia, and performances across the IU campuses. And faculty affiliated with American Studies have been consistently impressive in generating successful proposals.

Some of the grants—designated as “New Perspectives” awards—fund events that facilitate inventive, cooperative scholarship in the arts and humanities. In past years, AMST faculty have been granted support for an Americanist Research Colloquium as well as symposia on twenty-first-century Lusophone Studies and extra-national Transatlantic Studies. Our faculty also organized workshops on the history of human rights and the international memorialization of WWII, and they hosted conferences called “Globalizing American Studies,” “Blackness in Latin America and the Caribbean,” and “(Re)examining Archaeological Ethics.” This academic year, Portia Maultsby (FOLK/Archives of African American Music & Culture) used New Perspectives funds to produce “Reclaiming the Right to Rock: Black Experiences in Rock Music,” a two-day event in November that featured workshops, concerts, panel discussions, and film screenings. And on March 24-25, the Black Film Center/Archive will sponsor a symposium called “Cinematic Representations of Racial Conflict in Real Time,” supported by a New Perspectives grant awarded to Michael Martin (AAADS).

New Frontiers grants, on the other hand, support individual research projects; in the past, American Studies faculty who have successfully applied for these awards include Matthew Pratt Guterl (AAADS), Susan Seizer (CMCL), Richard Bauman (FOLK), John Nieto-Phillips (LAT), Laura Scheiber (ANTH), David Shorter (FOLK), Candy Gunther Brown (REL), and Denise Cruz (ENG). And four additional faculty were recently announced as winners in the 2010-2011 competition. Jason McGraw (History) was awarded a New Frontiers grant and a CAHI Residential Fellowship to pursue re-
In January, the American Studies Program welcomed Professor Robert (Bob) Ivie (CMCL) as Acting Director. Ivie, who earned his PhD in Rhetoric & Communication Studies from Washington State University in 1972, has long-term connections with American Studies. He describes the field as “a dynamic project with a rich history,” an evaluation that could also be applied to his own interdisciplinary scholarship.

Ivie’s scholarship and teaching reveal his sustained engagement with issues and approaches central to the discipline. The author of Dissent from War (2007) and Democracy and America’s War on Terror (2005), he has also written a number of articles that examine the rhetoric of war-oriented speech within a democratic social context. Publications in Presidential Studies Quarterly, Rhetoric & Public Affairs, College Literature, and Third World Quarterly have been joined most recently by “Breaking the Spell of War: Peace Journalism’s Democratic Prospect,” which Ivie published in the December 2009 issue of Javnost—The Public, and work co-authored with Oscar Giner that analyzed the tropes of change, exceptionalism, national (in)security, and moral superiority in the 2008 presidential campaign (Communication Studies, September 2009; Rhetoric & Public Affairs, Summer 2009).

Ivie also regularly teaches a set of graduate courses on the critique of political rhetoric, the articulation of democratic culture, and the problem of war, all of which are jointly listed with American Studies.

Currently, Professor Ivie is continuing his collaboration with Oscar Giner, a professor of performance and theatre at Arizona State University. Giner’s interest in Native American myth and ritual and Ivie’s focus on the rhetoric of enemy-making have led the two to trace the image of Satan in American political culture. “‘Hunt the Devil,’” Ivie explains, is a project that begins by “examining how the dark image of the devil became the face of the American Indian in the crucible of the Salem witch trials, and how it developed from there in the ensuing Indian wars into an enduring image of evil savagery and a formative logic of the last stand that extended beyond the American frontier into a righteous quest for empire and the global hegemony of an exceptional people.” Ivie and Giner contend that this compelling projection of Evil has undercut democratic impulses, relegating ‘democracy’ to a “legitimizing symbol of American exceptionalism and a rationale for militarism.”

Describing himself as generally “skeptical, but hopeful,” Ivie maintains a cheerful aspect in the face of all manner of rhetoric. He appreciates, for instance, how American Studies’ comparative, interdisciplinary, and increasingly transnational perspective on history, expressive culture, and social institutions is opening “a rich dialogue about the broader meaning of America” and the complexities of citizenship. And he’s enthusiastic about his current role in American Studies at IU. “It’s a privilege to work with such a talented faculty and dedicated staff who are developing a first-rate American Studies program,” he says. “Our challenge is to build on the program’s present momentum even in this period of budget reductions. We share a clear sense of direction and a continuing commitment to expand the undergraduate major, bolster the PhD program, and diversify the faculty.”
search on how social movements, environmental conditions, and violence have shaped black identity and inclusion in modern Colombia. His work aims to fill scholarly gaps in the history of Afro-Colombians after slavery, with special attention to the relationships between contemporary environmental developments and Afro-Colombians’ 150-year struggle for citizenship status. McGraw conceptualizes his most recent project as “The Problem of Black Identity and Inclusion in 20th-Century Colombia”; work conducted during the grant period will reveal the changing terrain over which citizenship and race have been constructed and also illuminate how black citizens have negotiated these political and cultural vicissitudes.

Khalil Gibran Muhammad (History) will use his New Frontiers and CAHI funding to continue research on the criminalization of African Americans in the urban North. His recent book, The Condemnation of Blackness (Harvard, 2010), explores how Progressive-era social scientists, reformers, and government officials used crime statistics to position black people as a threat to northern cities after 1890. His next project, “DisappearingActs: The End of White Criminality in the Age of Jim Crow,” looks at the rise and fall of tough-on-crime laws in the 1920s and 1930s. Examining “whites only” rehabilitation policies followed by discriminatory New Deal social welfare programs, Muhammad will suggest how increasingly sympathetic perceptions of native-born white and European immigrant criminality served to heighten public anxieties about black men in northern cities. His research at archives in New York state will help him determine who was arrested, convicted, and pardoned under the Baumes Law—a piece of “four-strikes” legislation enacted in response to anxiety about organized crime—and why. Drawing on prisoner records, state crime commission reports, mayoral and gubernatorial papers, press accounts, and the correspondence of civil and prisoner rights activists, Muhammad hopes to explain “how racial privilege has been as important as racial discrimination to understanding how, who, and why we punish.”

Micol Seigel (AAADS) has been awarded a New Frontiers grant to pursue a project titled “Foreign Police Assistance and the U.S. Criminal Justice System: Cold War Connections.” The grant will allow her to conduct research in municipal police archives in five U.S. cities. She’ll focus on correspondence between U.S. law enforcement officials and agents for the Office of Public Safety, a USAID body that provided police assistance to foreign countries from 1962-74. By consulting material records and conducting interviews with former officers, Seigel hopes to trace the effects of OPS foreign police assistance on policing and criminal justice policy and practice in the United States. This work will supplement research already completed at the National Archives, and it is part of a book-length project detailing the connections between foreign police assistance and the domestic criminal justice system during the Cold War.

Finally, Ellen Wu (History) earned New Frontiers funding for research on how debates about Hawai‘i statehood helped to create lasting public perceptions of Asian Americans. “Hawai‘i as Racial Paradise: Statehood, Asian Americans, and the Invention of the Model Minority” explores how and why Americans came to celebrate the social environment of the Islands as both a valuable meeting ground between East and West and as a model for race relations during the statehood debate of the 1940s and 1950s. Considering these developments in the context of the Cold War and the Civil Rights movement, Wu intends to assess their implications for the United States’ racial order and parameters of citizenship. She argues that the Hawai‘i statehood debate and the racial paradise myth played integral roles in the creation of the “model minority” stereotype of Asian Americans. “Hawai‘i as Racial Paradise” will be the final chapter of her forthcoming monograph, The Origins of the Model Minority: Race and Asian American Citizenship in the Mid-Twentieth Century.
In November 2009, Professor Candy Gunther Brown (Religious Studies) was interviewed by WTIU for a televised segment on “Faith” as part of the station’s In Focus offering.

Siobhan Carter-David (History) is curating “Strong Shoulder: Revisiting the Women’s Power Suit,” an exhibit that will be on display in the Fine Arts Library atrium March 9-26, 2010. Using items on loan from the Elizabeth Sage Historical Costume Collection (Department of Apparel Merchandising and Interior Design), this exhibit will build on the resurgence of the “strong shoulder” in contemporary fashion to explore the meanings of “power dressing” in its 1980s heyday, including connections to sexism, third-wave feminism, and corporate culture.

A number of American Studies faculty are providing service to the discipline at the national level. Professors Denise Cruz (English) and Karen Inouye (American Studies) have signed on to three-year terms for the American Studies Association: Cruz is a member of the Minority Scholars Committee, and Inouye serves on the Ethnic Studies Committee. Professor Matthew Pratt Guterl (African American & African Diaspora Studies) is chairing the ASA John Hope Franklin Publication Prize Committee, a group charged with choosing the best book published in American Studies in 2009.

The American Council of Learned Societies has awarded the Charles Homer Haskins Prize to Professor Henry Glassie (Folklore & Ethnomusicology, emeritus). The honor recognizes the depth and influence of Glassie’s lifetime of ethnographic work with artists and communities in Virginia, Ireland, Bangladesh, Turkey, Nigeria, and many other parts of the world. Glassie’s work situates vernacular expressive practices within larger cultural milieu, always taking into account the specific words, philosophies, histories, and aesthetic choices of individuals; his most recent book documents the life and work of Yoruba artist Prince Twins Seven-Seven (Indiana, 2010). Previous recipients of the ACLS Haskins Prize include John Hope Franklin, Gerda Lerner, Helen Vendler, Peter Brown, Clifford Geertz, William Labov, and Nancy Siraisi. Glassie will address the American Council of Learned Societies in May 2011.


In October, Standing Bear (Brad) Kroupa (Anthropology) received the Native American student award at the annual Plains Anthropological Society meetings in Oklahoma City.
Professor Christoph Irmscher (English), in collaboration with art historian Alan Braddock (Temple University), has edited A Keener Perception (Alabama, 2009), a collection of essays by art historians and literary critics that seeks to bring the study of American art into the expanding discourse of ecocriticism. The book resituates canonical figures—including Thomas Eakins, Aaron Douglas, and Thomas Cole—through a series of case studies on topics that range from John White’s watercolors of the Carolina landscape in 1585 to photographs by environmental activist Eliot Porter.

Professor Michael T. Martin (AAADS) published a number of articles in 2009. “Podium for the Truth? Reading Slavery and the Neocolonial Project in the Historical Film: Queimada! and Sankofa in Counterpoint” appeared in Third Text (23/6), while his article “Joseph Gai Ramaka: ‘I am not a filmmaker engagé. I am an ordinary citizen engagé,’” was published in the Fall 2009 issue of Research in African Literatures. He is also editor of Black Camera: An International Film Journal, produced in partnership with Indiana University Press and the Black Film Center/Archive. Martin’s interview with African American filmmaker Charles Burnett is available in the journal’s Winter 2009 issue. Last year Martin also served as a reviewer for programs sponsored by the NEH and the Council of Editors of Learned Journals.

Professor Portia Maultsby (Folklore & Ethnomusicology) published “Dayton Street Funk: The Layering of Multiple Identities” in Ashgate Research Companion to Popular Musicology, edited by Derek Scott (Ashgate, 2009). In October 2009, she also gave a plenary address entitled “Soul Power: James Brown, King Records and the Making of Modern African American Music” at the meetings of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History in Cincinnati, Ohio. In November, Maultsby joined Congressman John Lewis and scholars Bernice Johnson Reagon and Tricia Rose to speak about musics central to the Civil Rights and Black Power movements. The discussion—“Music of the Movement: A Sustaining Voice”—was the final event in the year-long series Martin Luther King, Jr., Remembrance and Reconciliation. Her presentation centered on urban protest music during the 1960s and ’70s.

Justin Rawlins (Communication & Culture) published “This is(n’t) John Wayne: The Miscasting and Performance of Whiteness in The Conqueror” in the January 2010 issue of Quarterly Review of Film and Video (27/1).

Professor Laura L. Scheiber (Anthropology) is co-editor of Across a Great Divide: Continuity and Change in Native North American Societies, 1400-1900, which was released in February by the University of Arizona Press. She also received an Honor Award from the United States Forest Service: she’s the Recreation/Heritage Partner of the Year for the Rocky Mountain Region.

In February, Lauren Cordes Tate (Art History) presented her work at the College Art Association (CAA) annual conference, held this year in Chicago. Her paper, entitled “‘The Best-Damned Soldiers’: Frederic Remington’s All-Black Tenth,” was presented as part of “The West As America Revisited” panel.
American Studies notes

Recent PhDs; Upcoming Lectures

Early last fall, Jasmine Trice (Communication & Culture) completed a combined degree in American Studies; she was followed by Rhonda Dass-Wilen (Folklore & Ethnomusicology), who submitted her dissertation on the use of Native American symbols in tattooing to the University Graduate School in November. Dass is Assistant Professor and Director of the American Indian Studies Program at Minnesota State University, Mankato.

Several AMST PhD minors also received their degrees, including Elizabeth Cafer du Plessis (History), whose dissertation is entitled “Meatless Days and Sleepless Nights: Food, Agriculture, and Environment in World War I America.” In December, Danille Christiansen (Folklore & Ethnomusicology) submitted “Constructing Value: Women, Scrapbooking, and the Framing of Daily Experience”; in Bloomington this semester she’s teaching A202: U.S. Arts and Media and F401: Methods and Theories in Folklore & Ethnomusicology. CMCL’s Seth Friedman also graduated in December 2009, after completing “The Truth is Out There: Cultural Paranoia, New Media Technologies, and the Contemporary Hollywood Misdirection Film.” Friedman is currently lecturing in the Department of Communication & Culture; he teaches “Zapping the Zeitgeist,” a section of C306: Writing Media Criticism.

Native American & Indigenous Studies Lectures


• The experiences of nineteenth-century New England Indian whalingmen expose the contingency of race, the multi-faceted meanings of ‘Indian,’ and the ambiguities, contradictions, and ironies inherent in race, nation, and indigeneity as categorizing schemes.

1 April: Julie Chun Kim (Fordham), “Tactics of Taste: Food, Alliance, and Resistance in the Early Caribbean.” 4-6pm, Dogwood Room, IMU.

• Africans and Amerindians in the colonial Caribbean often had to acquiesce to the appropriation not only of their labor, but also of their knowledge of plants, animals, and cuisine. Yet the diverse environments of the region also provided individuals with modes of resistance that suggest new ways of understanding the roles played by non-Europeans in the history of the Caribbean.

22 April: Malinda Maynor Lowery (Harvard), “Indian, Southern, and American: Lumbee Indians in the Jim Crow South.” 5-6:30pm, Maple Room, IMU.

• American and southern identities acquire new layers of meaning when considered in terms of the Lumbee Indian community of North Carolina; the group’s history and culture illuminate the profound ambiguities of race, citizenship, and colonialism.

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Malinda Maynor Lowery

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