What is the state of American Studies?

The recent report of the National Research Council – ranking the IU graduate program as high as #3 – is a reflection of the faculty’s hard work. This is a busy time, but we should celebrate.

Last year’s external review of the program offered similar, welcome confirmation. A blue-ribbon committee composed of former ASA President Elaine Tyler May, Joy Kasson of UNC-Chapel Hill, and David Brakke of IU’s Department of Religious Studies met with faculty, students, and staff, along with College administrators, and offered a positive endorsement of the program’s strategic plan, and constructive critique of the near term and long term future. (Faculty members wishing to view the strategic plan and/or the committee report are welcome to do so).

Looking backward, we owe a special debt of gratitude to Bob Ivie, who served as Acting Chair during the critical spring semester, and who managed the program’s response to the reviewers with typical thoughtfulness and inclusiveness. Vivian Halloran, who served as Associate Director in the AY 2009-2010, also deserves praise and thanks for shaping the review process, start to finish.

Still, despite these hard-earned gold stars, not everything is perfect. Two core faculty members and more than a half-dozen affiliates have left Bloomington, straining our capacity to cover core courses. (On this front, fortunately, we have a few new faces – including Joshua Paddison, our ACLS new faculty fellow – to help out). Necessary budget cuts have constrained the program’s ability to support guest speakers and organize symposia. We are increasingly dependant on our foundation accounts to help out, but there are fewer gifts and donations. Even this newsletter – produced in-house by faculty and staff for the first time in over a decade, and no longer by a graduate student “editor” – has been affected. Like many programs and departments here, we face an awkward, disorienting moment where the road to the future is brightly lit, but the material resources to power us along the route are scarce.

We’ll convene as a full faculty in the winter to discuss the future(s) of American Studies at IU. For now, though, let’s celebrate that #3 ranking!

Matt Guterl
Director

**Upcoming Events**

**October 14-17—Hispanic Linguistics Symposium**
Indiana Memorial Union
The conference theme will be variation & linguistics theory. [http://www.indiana.edu/~hls2010/index.shtml](http://www.indiana.edu/~hls2010/index.shtml)

**October 21— Sandra Park Talk**
5pm, Morrison Hall, Room 107
Asia American Studies will sponsor a reading by Novelist Sandra Park of her new novel, *If You Live in a Small House*. She will also participate in a luncheon with students (grad and undergrads) on Oct. 22, from 12-1pm at the Asian Cultural Center.

**November 6-7—Queering the Countryside Workshop**
Indiana Memorial Union
Indiana University will host a two-day, interdisciplinary conference and workshop called “Queering the Countryside: New Directions in Rural Queer Studies.”

**November 12— NAIS Talk**
12:00pm—1:30pm
Folklore & Ethnomusicology Seminar Room (501 N. Park)
Constructing Democracy in America: Tribal Consultation and the Representation of American Indian in Health Policy

**February 18-19—Ethnic Studies Research Workshop**
9am—5pm
College Arts & Humanities Institute (CAHI), 1211 E. Atwater Avenue
Asian American Studies in collaboration with American Studies, NAIS, Latino Studies and Cultural Studies will host a 2 day graduate workshop on ethnic studies research work in progress.
American Indian Studies

Saint Louis University is seeking applicants for a tenure-track appointment at the assistant professor level in the Department of American Studies beginning in August 2011. We are seeking a scholar of African American culture. Further specialization in U. S. literary studies, critical race theory, and/or gender and sexuality are preferred. Candidates will possess the PhD in American Studies or closely related field (American Studies strongly preferred) by the time of appointment, an established record of research, and the ability to offer courses at the undergraduate and graduate level. Ideally candidates will also have a record of professional, creative, or community engagement. Application deadline is November 1. All applications must be submitted online at http://jobs.slu.edu; online applications must include curriculum vitae, cover letter, and sample syllabus. In addition, send three letters of recommendation by post to: Matthew Mancini, Chair, Department of American Studies, Saint Louis University, 3800 Lindell Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63108.

American Studies

Aichi University

The Department of Comparative Culture in the Faculty of International Communication, Aichi University, Toyohashi, Japan, invites applications for the position of Professor of American Studies. Candidates should possess a PhD in the field of American Studies (major) / Cultural Studies or a comparable field minor required. Additional ESL / EFL training / experience desirable. Deadline of Application: November 20, 2010. Applications must include curriculum vitae, two letters of recommendation, a letter of application explaining both your research interests and your pedagogy, interests and your pedagogy, copies of all graduate transcripts (official), copies/reprints of three representative works and a digital video (approx. 15 minutes) representative of your teaching. Please address your application to the office of KYOGAKUKA, Prof. Norio Suzuki (Dean), Faculty of International Communication, Aichi University 1-1 Machihata-machi, Toyohashi-shi, Aichi-ken, 441-8522 Japan. Please write on the outer envelop in capital letters “APPLICATION MATERIALS” in red ink.

American History/American Studies

The Department of History, Humanities, Philosophy, and Political Science at Northwest Missouri State University has been authorized to hire a tenure-track Assistant Professor in American History/American Studies to begin in the Fall of 2011. Candidates should possess a Ph.D. in History/American Studies, and experience teaching at the college level. Applicants should submit a letter describing teaching experience and suitability for the position, a current resume, official transcripts and three letters of reference including telephone numbers and e-mail addresses to contact. Applications should be sent to Dr. Michael Steiner, Chair, Department of History, Humanities, Philosophy and Political Science, Northwest Missouri State University, 800 University Drive, Maryville, MO 64468, msteine@nwmissouri.edu.
Accolades

On October 1, Professor Colin Johnson presented a paper entitled “The Little Gay Bar on the Prairie: Film, Fantasy and the Unfinished Business of Queer World Making” at the inaugural meeting of the newly established Gesellschaft für Fantastikforschung which was held on the campus of the University of Hamburg in Germany. On October 8th he gave an invited talk entitled “The Theory of Sexual Dormancy” at the University of Illinois. This talk was part of U of I’s “Queering the Middle” conference—a conference intended to investigate both the state of scholarly knowledge about queer life in the Midwest and the Midwest’s often underappreciated contributions to the study of queer life. Notably, four of the twelve invited speakers were IUB faculty and all of those were faculty affiliates of IUB’s American Studies program.


Professor Candy Gunther Brown (Religious Studies) received the 2010 Trustees’ Teaching Award. She also published, “Study of the therapeutic effects of proximal intercessory prayer (STEPP) on auditory and visual impairments in rural Mozambique,” by Candy Gunther Brown, PhD; Stephen C. Mory, MD; Rebecca Williams, MB BChir, DTM&H; Michael J. McClymond, PhD, Southern Medical Journal 103.9 (September 2010): 864-869; “Proximal Intercessory Prayer,” numerous (over 150 English-language and 50 foreign) interviews and stories on TV, radio, newspaper, and magazines, incl. NBC TV, LA Times (Aug.-Sept. 2010) and “Practice.” In “Part IV Global Reach (1898–present),” in Religion in American History, ed. Amanda Porterfield and John Corrigan, 302-322. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2010.

Professor Vivian Halloran was interviewed by Joe Donahue on WAMC/Northeast Public Radio. Professor Halloran discussed the relationship between food and literature. The interview will be broadcast as part of The Roundtable program on October 11. WAMC was awarded a 2010 New York State Humanities grant for a project entitled: Mixed Ingredients: Food in History, Literature, Art, and Culture in America.

Professor John Lucaites will be giving the keynote address at Imaginaries 23, 010. The title of the keynote presentation is: “The Post-Cold War Nuclear Optic; Or How We Learned to Stop Worrying and See the Bomb”.

His blog (co hosted w/Robert Hariman, Northwestern) “www.nocaptionneeded.com” is being featured in a program at the Chicago Humanities Festival to be held at the Chicago Art Institute on November 7, 2010.

To submit newsletter content, please contact amstnews@indiana.edu

Joshua Paddison—I’m excited to be joining IU’s American Studies Program and Religious Studies Department as an American Council of Learned Societies New Faculty Fellow. My research and teaching focus on comparative race and ethnicity, religion, and the American West during the nineteenth century. I received my Ph.D. in history from UCLA in 2008.

My book "American Heathens: Religion, Race, and Reconstruction in California" will be published in the University of California Press's Western Histories series. Blending social, cultural, and political history, the book examines contestations over the place of Native Americans and Chinese Americans from the Civil War to the 1890s, demonstrating the centrality of religion in racial formation and the importance of the American West in the story of Reconstruction.

I am currently at work on a second book project, "Unholy Sensations: Sex, Religion, and Scandal in the Gilded Age," which explores the relationship between religion and newly public discussions of sexuality in the late nineteenth century. I'm looking at a series of sex scandals in 1880s and 1890s San Francisco that linked "unnatural" sexuality (adultery, free love, prostitution, and rape) with non-normative religious practices.

I grew up in Oregon and lived in both northern and southern California for many years before moving to Bloomington. I am a bicyclist, backpacker, and amateur cartoonist. Although this biography displays no trace of a sense of humor, I do in fact have one.
Ethnic Studies Research Workshop, Spring 2011
Indiana University Bloomington—February 18, 19, 2011

The Asian American Studies Program, in collaboration with the programs in American Studies, Cultural Studies, Latino Studies, and the Committee on Native American and Indigenous Studies, announces the establishment of the first Ethnic Studies Research Workshop for graduate students, which will take place on February 18-19, 2011. This two-day workshop will feature graduate students from a variety of disciplines and departments sharing their work-in-progress with one another and receiving feedback and input from workshop participants, including graduate students and faculty.

Selected participants will pre-circulate their essays two weeks prior to the workshop. Panelists will give a 10-minute presentation summarizing the main points of their essays, which will be followed by comments by a faculty respondent. Audience members in attendance will have ample time to ask questions and engage in discussion about the topics raised by the presenters.

The organizers invite submissions of 250-word abstracts from graduate students working on topics that fall under the category of “ethnic studies,” broadly defined in either a global or an American context. Submissions may contrast or connect the process of race-making or the experiences of ethnic communities with similar processes or experiences inside or outside the United States.

Submissions may also focus on the experiences of a specific community; such papers could consider the internal dynamics of the community and the ways in which social hierarchies can challenge group solidarities or the processes through which the ethnic community defines itself in relation to majority cultures. We welcome essays on other topics as well, and only require that they consider the power of race/ethnicity to shape the lives of diverse groups of people.

Abstracts should be sent electronically via e-mail by November 12, 2010 to aasp@indiana.edu.

Paper Submission Deadline for Selected Participants—Friday, February 4, 2011

Borderlands and Meeting Points
The 6th Annual Brown University Graduate Student Conference
Brown University, Providence, RI—April 8-9, 2011

Borderlands and meeting points represent sites of exchange, mediation, cooperation, and conflict. As “in-between” areas, borderlands foster interactions between individuals, communities, and nations. Similarly, meeting points facilitate both ideological and physical contact. Such contact may involve not only political, economic, social and religious dynamics, but also evolving conceptions of self and other. Thus, whether real or imagined, borderlands and meeting points affect the way identities are variously constructed, perceived, negotiated, and performed.

This conference seeks to generate new interdisciplinary perspectives about borderlands and meeting points, putting into conversation fields such as history, literature, anthropology, political science, geography, law, and art. Through these conversations, we will consider the strategies – particularly cultural ones – that are employed at such sites both to pursue particular interests and to engender or resist change. The study of borderlands and meeting points presents us with a methodological and theoretical challenge: to find creative means of giving expression to people and interactions often shaped by charged political and ethnic concerns. Interested graduate students should submit a 250-word abstract by November 15, 2010. Each proposal should clearly state its relevancy to the conference theme. Candidates proposing full panels should also include a 150-word abstract on the organizing theme of the proposed panel. Successful candidates will be notified by early January and should submit final papers by March 14, 2010. Email proposals to: Brown HGSA Conference@gmail.com.
Performing Ethnicities Through Sport
University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA — April 1-3

Sport can be understood as a live performance whose study powerfully engages questions of the body, its identities and capabilities, and its interactions with natural and built environments; sport is also widely broadcast and represented in the media. Critical sport scholars and American studies scholars use a range of theoretical perspectives and draw from many fields to illuminate these and sport’s other manifold historical and contemporary resonances. This symposium aims to bring together scholars engaged in critical and historical studies of American sport in U.S. domestic and transnational contexts to explore the performance of ethnicities through sport.

We invite proposals for standard 20-minute paper presentations and panels, as well as other formats, including roundtables, workshops, and performances on this theme.

Each proposal should contain, name(s), address, telephone number, and e-mail address for each participant, institutional affiliation(s), if any, title(s) of paper, 250-word proposal, and a 100-word biographical note for each participant.

Send proposals via electronic mail by December 1, 2010, to cesa@uiowa.edu. Proposals will be evaluated by the conference program committee, and notification of acceptance will be made by January 15, 2011.

For further questions or information, please contact: Center for Ethnic Studies and the Arts, Department of American Studies, University of Iowa, 210 Jefferson Building, Iowa City, IA 52242; phone (319) 384-3490; e-mail: cesa@uiowa.edu; http://www.uiowa.edu/~cesa.
Support the Stephen J. Stein Undergraduate Research Award

The American Studies Program asks you to support a new annual undergraduate research award to be given in recognition of the most promising research proposals for the American Studies senior seminar: the Stephen J. Stein Undergraduate Research Award.

It can be difficult to get research funding into the hands of students, and yet we want to affirm our commitment to undergraduate scholarly engagement in the fields, studios, and archives beyond the borders of our campus. We need your help – and the help of many – to make this commitment to student research possible. Imagine a student who wants to write about a new production on Broadway, or women’s military participation in the Vietnam War, or baseball in the Dominican Republic. And then imagine that we can make it possible for that student to go to Broadway, or to the National Archives, or to San Pedro de Macoris to conduct on-site research. The Stein Award is intended to do just this, providing competitively-awarded funding for a student enrolled in the program’s capstone Senior Seminar (A450).

Support American Studies

No gift is too small!

Your charitable contributions will help develop resources necessary for a vibrant intellectual community and environment by adding books to our resource library, developing programs to encourage and support student research, creating a student travel grant, and implementing program activities and events.

Please support American Studies by donating to the AMST Foundation account. As a gift to a tax-exempt educational institution, 50% of your contribution can be deducted from the amount of your total state income tax. Note that this is a credit against taxes, not merely a deduction!

Contributions of any amount are appreciated. Please make checks payable to American Studies Foundation Account and send to: IU Foundation, Showalter House, State Road 46 and the Bypass, Bloomington, IN 47405.