Past Present Future

FALL 2016

Celebrating 80 Years

LSA AMERICAN CULTURE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Arab and Muslim American Studies | Asian/Pacific Islander American Studies
Digital Studies | Latina/o Studies | Native American Studies

Dear Alumni, Students, Faculty, and Friends of the Department of American Culture,

The past academic year, 2015-16, was the 80th year since courses in the Development of American Culture were first offered to LSA undergraduates. It was the 64th year since the Program in American Culture granted its first Ph.D., and the fourth year since we became a Department. From my point of view as Chair, it was both an ordinary year—in which we taught, did our research, participated in the business of running the unit and the University—and an extraordinary year.

The 80th anniversary conference we held in March was definitely extraordinary. For me, during those two days, a very familiar place—the Art Deco palace that is the Rackham Building, built around the time the Program was founded, and the location of my office for years while I was an Associate Dean in the Graduate School—turned into a somewhat overwhelming whirlpool of memories and new ideas. I had the privilege of talking with scholars who earned Ph.D.s in the program before I arrived in Ann Arbor, who told me much that I had not known about our history. I heard excellent papers by young scholars who were not connected to the University of Michigan except by the fact that that our selection chose them to present. That was true until they arrived, at least—many of them came by to thank me at the final dinner, and not only had a vivid sense of who we are but said they felt a sense of affiliation. I had wonderful conversations with scholars I first met when they were graduate students, and felt so much happiness and pride seeing what a powerhouse group has fanned out into the field. Everyone was delighted that Linda Eggert, the quite extraordinary administrator of the program from 1970 to 2003, was able to attend. It probably won't surprise anyone to hear that she hasn't changed a bit since she retired—but it did contribute to the "time warp" sensation that I was experiencing!

There were events marking our anniversary all during the year, which you'll read about in these pages. And there were lots of other talks and activities as well, of course. One of the privileges that goes with the hard work of being in the office of the Chair is a having a good view of how very much we do! I'll mention just a few examples that were especially personally rewarding for me.

One was a visit from four professors from Jilin University, in Changchun in Northeast China. Some years ago, Mingli Sun, who is now Chair of the English Department at Jilin and led the group, came to Ann Arbor to study and work with me for a year while she was writing her dissertation. The group (pictured on the opposite page) was in Ann Arbor for five weeks, talking about interdisciplinary scholarship and curriculum with members of our community, visiting classes, and using the wonderful Michigan library.

Another highlight was working with Women's Studies, for the second year in a row, on a successful search (you'll meet Ava Purkiss in the pages that follow). And some of the best moments of the year were ones when I learned that an American Culture faculty member or student had won an award or a grant.

Readers of past Chair's letters will be happy to hear that a nomination made jointly with the Department of History succeeded: Gregory Dowd has been honored with a Collegiate Professorship. His title will be the Helen Hornbeck Tanner Collegiate Professor of American Culture and History.

Matthew Countryman won the John D'Arms Faculty Award for Distinguished Graduate Mentoring in the Humanities—that makes two years in a row for the American Culture faculty, because Kristin Hass won it last year.

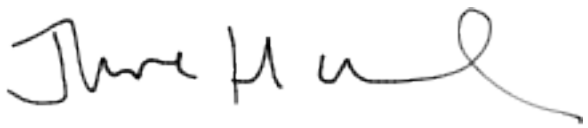
Stephen Berrey won the 2016 Matthews Underclass Teaching Award, which recognizes instructors who inspire wonder and excitement for first and second year students. Colin Gunckel likewise won the Class of 1912 Memorial Teaching Award for 2016. Both Colin and Stephen show how serious and dynamic our colleagues are when they enter the classroom.

Congratulations also should go to Alexandra Stern, who was awarded a grant from NEH for her research, and Lisa Nakamura, who will be establishing the "Precarity Lab" with a grant from the new Humanities Collaboratory. Other AC faculty and students will be involved in those research projects as well, and you can expect to hear more about them in future newsletters.

Finally, Tammy Zill, our Undergraduate Program Coordinator, was recognized by the LSA Staff Spotlight Committee for her excellent work with students and faculty.

If you follow the news from Ann Arbor, you know already that all across campus there is a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion. The phrase is fairly new, but the issue of social justice it points to are central for us in American Culture every year. Our faculty and students have been involved in this effort in many ways, at every level. The energy going into DEI (yes, it's already an acronym) was the most extraordinary thing about 2015-16. It will be just as important next year. Stay tuned.

And please, stay connected! We always love to hear from you.



June Howard
Arthur F. Thurnau Professor and Chair
of the Department of American Culture

On opposite page (L-R): Dr. Ping Wang, Instructor in English literature, Jilin University; Jie Zhao, doctoral candidate in applied linguistics and culture study, Jilin University; Dr. June Howard, Chair and Arthur F. Thurnau Professor in American culture, English literature, and women's studies, University of Michigan; Dr. Mingli Sun, Chair and Instructor in English literature, American literature, and American culture, Jilin University, and former visiting graduate student scholar to the University of Michigan; and Jinglan Xu, doctoral candidate in linguistics and applied linguistics, Jilin University. Photo courtesy of Mingli Sun.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments

PHOTOS & ART
Cover photo of Dept. of American Culture graduate students Michael Pascual and Meryem Kamil and photo above of (L-R) American Culture Ph.D. alumna Dolores Inés Casillas and Dept. of History graduate student ToniAnn Treviño by Michigan Photography

All illustrations by Hannah Yung

EDITING
Executive Editors: Anthony Mora
Managing Editors: Shannon Davis and Judy Gray
Creative Director: Hannah Yung


SELFIE

DIGITAL STUDIES

2015-16 was an exciting year for Digital Studies at UM. In March, we invited Digital Studies minors to complete a simple a task: Take a "selfie" with a handwritten sign featuring a short message about their experience studying digital culture at the University of Michigan. Each photo was prompted by one of the following questions:

- How would you describe digital studies at UM?
- What's an example of a question that your digital studies classes have made you think about?
- What's your favorite thing about digital studies classes?
- Why should other students do the Digital Studies minor?
- Why is digital studies important today?

Almost 70 submissions came in, capturing a range of perspectives:

"Digital Studies is not only relevant to every career… it is relevant to everyday LIFE." Digital Studies also "teaches you to think critically about cultural issues that surround the technological age." And "Digital Studies courses have made me think critically about things that I used to accept as normal." Or even more honestly:

"MY FAVORITE THING ABOUT [DIGITAL STUDIES] IS THAT WE STUDY PROBLEMS AND THINGS THAT I SEE EVERY DAY, NOT JUST MEMORIZE RANDOM FORMULAS."

The Digital Studies minor was created in 2014 to provide students critical tools for analyzing the technologies and practices that are vital to our day-to-day, digital lives. The challenge is how to study phenomena that seem so "normal" that we barely take notice of their larger social and cultural implications.

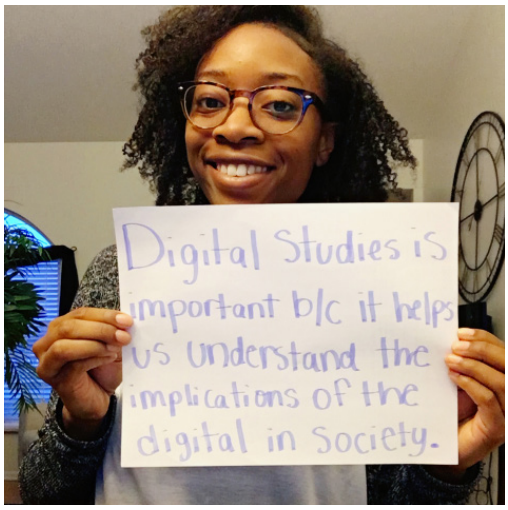
Through Digital Studies' growing course catalog, expanding faculty, and wide variety of talks, presentations, exhibits, and even parties over the past semesters, we have sought to promote a diversity of views, topics, and ideas about how the digital world changes us—and how we can change the digital world. We invited Richard Grusin to campus to speak about Wikileaks and the documentary Citizenfour. Simone Browne presented on her groundbreaking book, Dark Matters, on surveillance of black populations throughout U.S. history. Patrick Keilty delivered a paper exploring the idea of "flow" around user web design of pornography sites.

For our "What Is Digital Studies at UM?" conference in April, Wendy Hui Kyong Chun gave a keynote from her new book Updating to Remain the Same, a critique of how we use new media (and how new media use us). The conference, which was livestreamed, brought together panelists working on digital studies across campus from a range of critical methods.

We also offered courses on video games, race, gender, privacy, radical (cont)

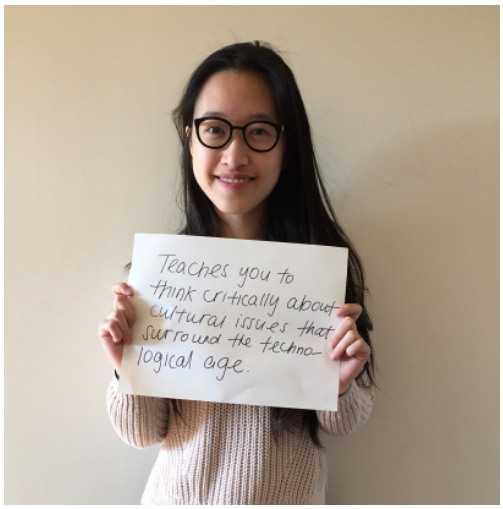
jennifer.hill

erika.bell



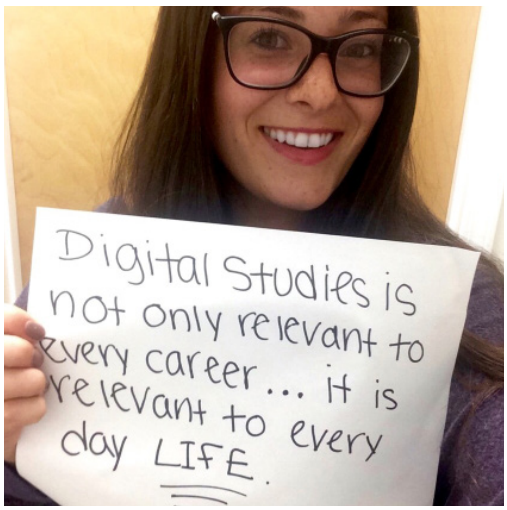
alex.krivan

daphne.jong



hafsa.ghias

arielle.lawlor



media, digital news, history, algorithms, and much more. The course catalogue available to students is both growing, and also being updated. Next year, Digital Studies faculty will also teach on computer code, digital visual culture, queer digital culture and gaming, and digital identity.

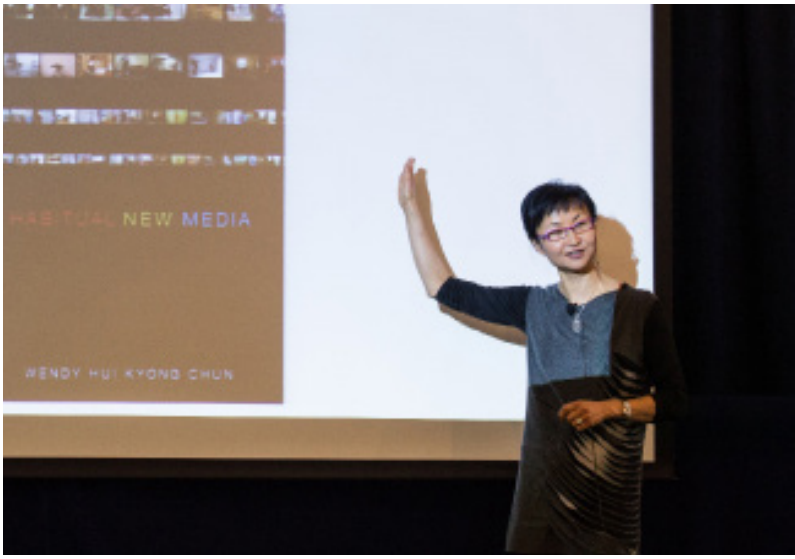
We even instituted an internship program where students are invited to learn, and work, in the digital field—for course credit. As a minor, Digital Studies is dedicated to helping students engage with the critical questions of digital culture, power, and politics, as well as provide the necessary critical thinking tools around digital technology that digital focused job prospects require.

(Above): Wendy Hui Kyong Chun gives the keynote lecture at the"What Is Digital Studies at UM?" conference in April 2016.

(Below): Digital Studies Professor Lisa Nakamura, and Chair June Howard at the "What is Digital Studies at UM" conference.

Photos courtesy of Michigan Photography.

Photos on previous page courtesy of each student.



adventures

- in the -

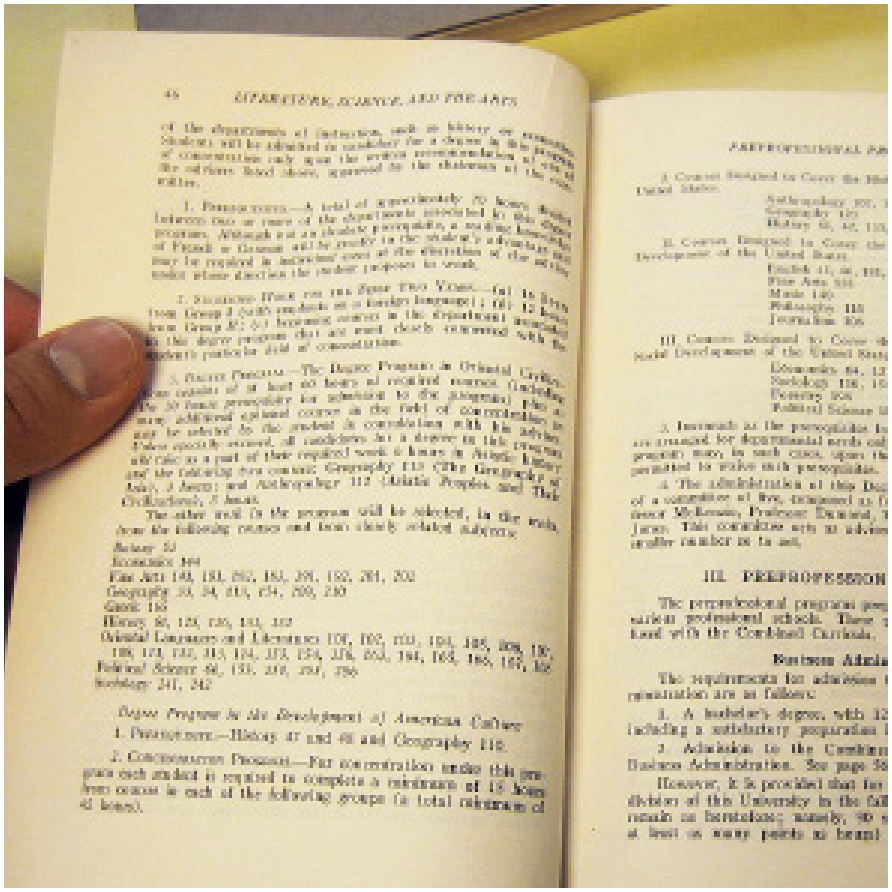
ARCHIVE

Revising the History of the Department of American Culture

by alex olson

In 2012, the Department of American Culture started to plan for its 60th anniversary. In the midst of the planning, however, historian and department chair Gregory Dowd had a hunch that something was amiss.

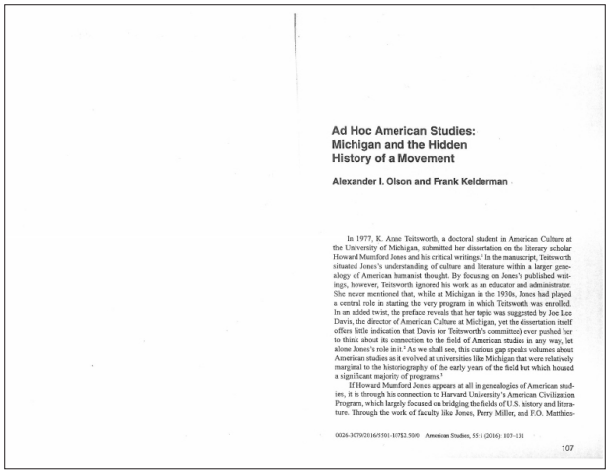
For decades, internal documents had identified 1952 as its founding date and English professor Joe Lee Davis as its founding director. But there did not appear to be any archival foundation for this story. Instead, memos with historical sketches cited other memos with historical sketches, which in turn cited other memos with historical sketches. But where did these sketches come from?



The 1935 Course guide offering courses in American Culture. Photo courtesy of Alex Olson.

The following spring, Greg asked me to check it out in the Bentley Library. It took less than an hour to discover that the conventional narrative was completely wrong. In fact, the undergraduate concentration was first offered in 1935 as part of an interdepartmental degree program, "The Program in the Development of American Culture," with coursework as varied as American literature and forestry. Among its founding directors were Howard Mumford Jones (a literary historian who soon left for Harvard to help launch its American Civilization doctoral program), Max Handman (a heterodox member of the institutional economics movement), and Roderick McKenzie (a Chicago-school sociologist who had arrived at Michigan from the University of Washington in 1930). The degree went on hiatus during World War II, but was revived in 1948. The following year's LS&A Announcement identified one of the program's goals as preparing students "for admission to recently established graduate programs in American civilization." In 1957, Rackham Graduate School approved the American Culture program's proposal for establishing a doctoral program of its own.

The establishment of the original American Culture program was part of a flurry of similar interdepartmental initiatives around the country. In 1930, for example, Sweet Briar College in Virginia launched a degree program in "American Problems" that brought together history, economics, and sociology to address practical social issues by avoiding the tunnel vision of a single discipline. As Sweet Briar's Bulletin explained: "Many problems facing America today result from the reciprocal play of forces which can be understood only by the study of their interrelations." The "American Problems" approach became the basis of Amherst College's American Studies Program as well, with a required sophomore course that was organized around a specific set of contemporary social issues selected each year by the faculty as a whole. Students were expected to practice dissent, writing essays explicitly disagreeing with the perspectives presented by *(cont)*



Ad Hoc American Studies:
Michigan and the Hidden
History of a Movement

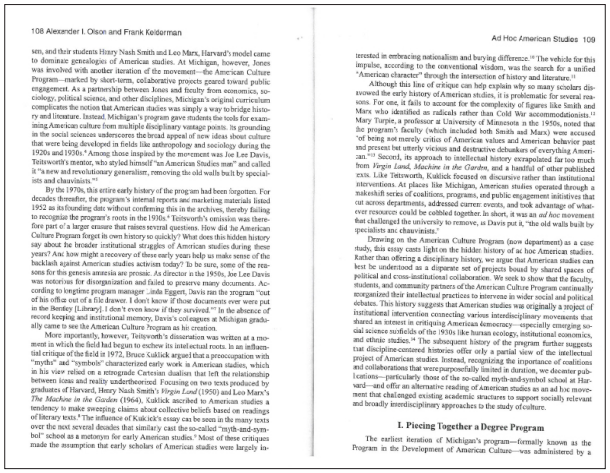
Alexander I. Olson and Frank Kelderman

In 1977, K. Anne Teitsworth, a doctoral student in American Culture at the University of Michigan, submitted her dissertation on the literary scholar Howard Mumford Jones and his critical writings.[1] In the manuscript, Teitsworth situated Jones's understanding of culture and literature within a larger genealogy of American humanist thought. By focusing on Jones's published writings, however, Teitsworth ignored his work as an educator and administrator. She never mentioned that, while at Michigan in the 1930s, Jones had played a central role in starting the very program in which Teitsworth was enrolled. In an added twist, the preface reveals that her topic was suggested by Joe Lee Davis, the director of American Culture at Michigan, yet the dissertation itself offers little indication that Davis or Teitsworth's committee ever pushed her to think about its connection to the field of American studies in any way, let alone Jones's role in it.[2] As we shall see, this curious gap speaks volumes about American studies as it evolved at universities like Michigan that were relatively marginal to the historiography of the early years of the field but which housed a significant majority of programs.[3]

If Howard Mumford Jones appears at all in genealogies of American studies, it is through his connection to Harvard University's American Civilization Program, which largely focused on bridging the fields of U.S. history and literature. Through the work of faculty like Jones, Perry Miller, and F.O. Matthies-

0026-3079/2016/5501-0152.50© American Studies, 55 (2016): 107–131

107



108 Alexander I. Olson and Frank Kelderman

sen, and their students Henry Nash Smith and Leo Marx, Harvard's model came to dominate genealogies of American studies. At Michigan, however, Jones was involved with another iteration of the movement—the American Culture Program—marked by short-term, collaborative projects geared toward public engagement. As a partnership between Jones and faculty from economics, sociology, political science, and other disciplines, Michigan's original curriculum complicates the notion that American studies was simply a way to bridge history and literature. Instead, Michigan's program gave students the tools for examining American culture from multiple disciplinary vantage points. Its grounding in the social sciences underscores the broad appeal of new ideas about culture that were being developed in fields like anthropology and sociology during the 1920s and 1930s.[4] Among those inspired by the movement was Joe Lee Davis, Teitsworth's mentor, who styled himself "an American Studies man" and called it "a new and revolutionary generalism, removing the old walls built by specialists and chauvinists."[5]

By the 1970s, this entire early history of the program had been forgotten. For decades thereafter, the program's internal reports and marketing materials listed 1952 as its founding date without confirming this in the archives, thereby failing to recognize the program's roots in the 1930s.[6] Teitsworth's omission was therefore part of a larger erasure that raises several questions. How did the American Culture Program forget its own history so quickly?[7] What does this hidden history say about the broader institutional struggles of American studies during these years? And how might a recovery of these early years help us make sense of the backlash against American studies activism today? To be sure, some of the reasons for this genesis amnesia are prosaic. As director in the 1950s, Joe Lee Davis was notorious for disorganization and failed to preserve many documents. According to longtime program manager Linda Eggert, Davis ran the program "out of his office out of a file drawer. I don't know if those documents ever were put in the Bentley [Library]. I don't even know if they survived."[8] In the absence of record keeping and institutional memory, Davis's colleagues at Michigan gradually came to see the American Culture Program as his creation.

More importantly, however, Teitsworth's dissertation was written at a moment in which the field had begun to eschew its intellectual roots. In an influential critique of the field in 1972, Bruce Kuklick argued that a preoccupation with "myths" and "symbols" characterized early work in American studies, which in his view relied on a retrograde Cartesian dualism that left the relationship between ideas and reality undertheorized. Focusing on two texts produced by graduates of Harvard, Henry Nash Smith's *Virgin Land* (1950) and Leo Marx's *The Machine in the Garden* (1964), Kuklick ascribed to American studies a tendency to make sweeping claims about collective beliefs based on readings of literary texts.[9] The influence of Kuklick's essay can be seen in the many texts over the next several decades that similarly cast the so-called "myth-and-symbol" school as a metonym for early American studies.[10] Most of these critiques made the assumption that early scholars of American studies were largely in-

Ad Hoc American Studies 109

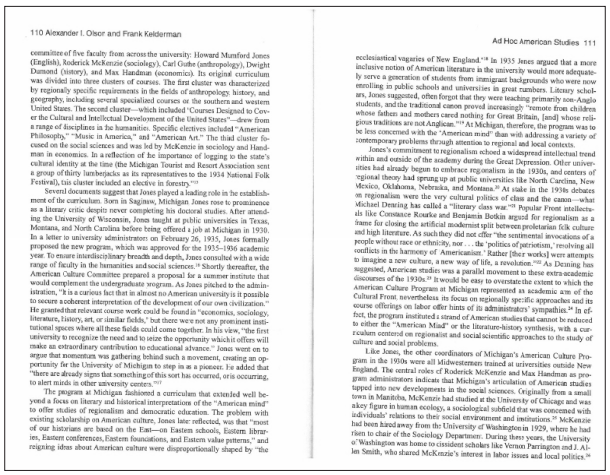
terested in embracing nationalism and burying difference.[11] The vehicle for this impulse, according to the conventional wisdom, was the search for a unified "American character" through the intersection of history and literature.[12]

Although this line of critique can help explain why so many scholars disavowed the early history of American studies, it is problematic for several reasons. For one, it fails to account for the complexity of figures like Smith and Marx who identified as radicals rather than Cold War accommodationists.[13] Mary Turpie, a professor at University of Minnesota in the 1950s, noted that the program's faculty (which included both Smith and Marx) were accused "of being not merely critics of American values and American behavior past and present but utterly vicious and destructive debunkers of everything American."[14] Second, its approach to intellectual history extrapolated far too much from *Virgin Land*, *Machine in the Garden*, and a handful of other published texts. Like Teitsworth, Kuklick focused on discursive rather than institutional interventions. At places like Michigan, American studies operated through a nakedly series of coalitions, programs, and public engagement initiatives that cut across departments, addressed current events, and took advantage of whatever resources could be cobbled together. In short, it was an *ad hoc* movement that challenged the university to remove, as Davis put it, "the old walls built by specialists and chauvinists."

Drawing on the American Culture Program (now department) as a case study, this essay casts light on the hidden history of ad hoc American studies. Rather than offering a disciplinary history, we argue that American studies can best be understood as a disparate set of projects bound by shared spaces of political and cross-institutional collaboration. We seek to show that the faculty, students, and community partners of the American Culture Program continually reorganized their intellectual practices to intervene in wider social and political debates. This history suggests that American studies was originally a project of institutional intervention connecting various interdisciplinary movements that shared an interest in critiquing American democracy—especially emerging social science neofields of the 1930s like human ecology, institutional economics, and ethnic studies.[15] The subsequent history of the program further suggests that discipline-centered histories offer only a partial view of the intellectual project of American studies. Instead, recognizing the importance of coalitions and collaborations that were purposefully limited in duration, we decenter publications—particularly those of the so-called myth-and-symbol school at Harvard—and offer an alternative reading of American studies as an ad hoc movement that challenged existing academic structures to support socially relevant and broadly interdisciplinary approaches to the study of culture.

I. Piecing Together a Degree Program

The earliest iteration of Michigan's program—formally known as the Program in the Development of American Culture—was administered by a



110 Alexander I. Olson and Frank Kelderman

committee of five faculty from across the university: Howard Mumford Jones (English), Roderick McKenzie (sociology), Carl Guthe (anthropology), Dwight Dumond (history), and Max Handman (economics). Its original curriculum was divided into three clusters of courses. The first cluster was characterized by regionally specific requirements in the fields of anthropology history, and geography, including several specialized courses on the southern and western United States. The second cluster—which included "Courses Designed to Cover the Cultural and Intellectual Development of the United States"—drew from a range of disciplines in the humanities. Specific electives included "American Philosophy," "Music in America," and "American Art." The third cluster focused on the social sciences and was led by McKenzie in sociology and Handman in economics. In a reflection of the importance of tapping to the state's cultural identity at the time (the Michigan Tourist and Resort Association sent a group of thirty lumberjacks as its representatives to the 1934 National Folk Festival), tin cluster included an elective in forestry."[17]

Several documents suggest that Jones played a leading role in the establishment of the curriculum. Born in Saginaw, Michigan Jones rose to prominence as a literary critic despite never completing his doctoral studies. After attending the University of Wisconsin, Jones taught at public universities in Texas, Montana, and North Carolina before being offered a job at Michigan in 1930. In a letter to university administrators on February 26, 1935, Jones formally proposed the new program, which was approved for the 1935–1936 academic year. To ensure interdisciplinary breadth and depth, Jones consulted with a wide range of faculty in the humanities and social sciences.[18] Shortly thereafter, the American Culture Committee prepared a proposal for a summer institute that would complement the undergraduate program. As Jones pitched to the administration, "It is a curious fact that in almost no American university is it possible to secure a coherent interpretation of the development of our own civilization." He granted that relevant course work could be found in "economics, sociology, literature, history, art, or similar fields,' but there were not any prominent institutional spaces where all these fields could come together. In his view, "the first university to recognize the need and to seize the opportunity which it offers will make an extraordinary contribution to educational advance." Jones went on to argue that momentum was gathering behind such a movement, creating an opportunity for the University of Michigan to step in as a pioneer. He added that "there are already signs that something of this sort has occurred, or is occurring, to alert minds in other university centers."[19]

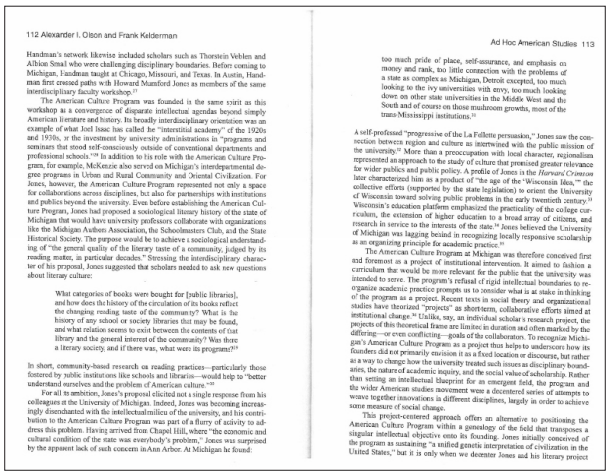
The program at Michigan fashioned a curriculum that extended well beyond a focus on literary and historical interpretations of the "American mind" to offer studies of regionalism and democratic education. The problem with existing scholarship on American culture, Jones later reflected, was that "most of our historians are based on the East—on Eastern schools, Eastern libraries, Eastern conferences, Eastern foundations, and Eastern value patterns," and reigning ideas about American culture were disproportionally shaped by "the

Ad Hoc American Studies 111

ecclesiastical vagaries of New England."[20] In 1935 Jones argued that a more inclusive notion of American literature is the university would more adequately serve a generation of students from immigrant backgrounds who were now enrolling in public schools and universities in great numbers. Literary scholars, Jones suggested, often forgot that they were teaching primarily non-Anglo students, and the traditional canon proved increasingly "remote from children whose fathers and mothers cared nothing for Great Britain, [and] whose religious traditions are not Anglican."[21] At Michigan, therefore, the program was to be less concerned with the "American mind" than with addressing a variety of contemporary problems through attention to regional and local contexts.

Jones's commitment to regionalism echoed a widespread intellectual trend within and outside of the academy during the Great Depression. Other universities had already begun to embrace regionalism in the 1930s, and centers of regional theory had sprung up at public universities like North Carolina, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Nebraska, and Montana.[22] At stake in the 1930s debates on regionalism were the very cultural politics of class and the canon—what Michael Denning has called a "literary class war."[23] Popular Front intellectuals like Constance Rourke and Benjamin Botkin argued for regionalism as a frame for closing the artificial modernist split between proletarian folk culture and high literature. As such they did not offer "the sentimental invocations of a people without race or ethnicity, nor . . . the 'politics of patriotism,' resolving all conflicts in the harmony of Americanism." Rather [their works] were attempts to imagine a new culture, a new way of life, a revolution."[24] As Denning has suggested, American studies was a parallel movement to these extra-academic discourses of the 1930s.[25] It would be easy to overstate the extent to which the American Culture Program at Michigan represented an academic arm of the Cultural Front; nevertheless its focus on regionally specific approaches and its course offerings on labor offer hints of its administrators' sympathies.[26] In effect, the program instituted a strand of American studies that cannot be reduced to either the "American Mind" or the literature-history synthesis, with a curriculum centered on regionalist and social scientific approaches to the study of culture and social problems.

Like Jones, the other coordinators of Michigan's American Culture Program in the 1930s were all Midwesterners trained at universities outside New England. The central roles of Roderick McKenzie and Max Handman as program administrators indicate that Michigan's articulation of American studies tapped into new developments in the social sciences. Originally from a small town in Manitoba, McKenzie had studied at the University of Chicago and was a key figure in human ecology, a sociological subfield that was concerned with individuals' relations to their social environment and institutions.[27] McKenzie had been hired away from the University of Washington in 1929, where he had risen to chair of the Sociology Department. During their years, the University of Washington was home to dissident scholars like Vernon Parrington and J. Allen Smith, who shared McKenzie's interest in labor issues and local politics.[28]



112 Alexander I. Olson and Frank Kelderman

Handman's network likewise included scholars such as Thorstein Veblen and Albion Small who were challenging disciplinary boundaries. Before coming to Michigan, Faulkman taught at Chicago, Missouri, and Texas. In Austin, Handman first crossed paths with Howard Mumford Jones as members of the same interdisciplinary faculty workshop.[29]

The American Culture Program was founded in the same spirit as this workshop as a convergence of disparate intellectual agendas beyond simply American literature and history. Its broadly interdisciplinary orientation was an example of what Joel Isaac has called he "interstitial academy" of the 1920s and 1930s, in the investment by university administrations in "programs and seminars that stood self-consciously outside of conventional departments and professional schools."[30] In addition to his role with the American Culture Program, for example, McKenzie also served on Michigan's interdepartmental degree programs in Urban and Rural Community and Oriental Civilization. For Jones, however, the American Culture Program represented not only a space for collaborations across disciplines, but also for partnerships with institutions and publics beyond the university. Even before establishing the American Culture Program, Jones had proposed a sociological literary history of the state of Michigan that would have university professors collaborate with organizations like the Michigan Authors Association, the Schoolmasters Club, and the State Historical Society. The purpose would be to achieve a sociological understanding of "the general quality of the literary taste of a community, judged by its reading matter, in particular decades." Stressing the interdisciplinary character of his proposal, Jones suggested that scholars needed to ask new questions about literary culture:

> What categories of books were bought for [public libraries], and how does the history of the circulation of its books reflect the changing reading taste of the community? What is the history of any school or society libraries that may be found, and what relation seems to exist between the contents of that library and the general interest of the community? Was there a literary society, and if there was, what were its programs?[31]

In short, community-based research on reading practices—particularly those fostered by public institutions like schools and libraries—would help to "better understand ourselves and the problem of American culture."[32]

For all its ambition, Jones's proposal elicited not a single response from his colleagues at the University of Michigan. Indeed, Jones was becoming increasingly disenchanted with the intellectual milieu of the university, and his contribution to the American Culture Program was part of a flurry of activity to address this problem. Having arrived from Chapel Hill, where "the economic and cultural condition of the state was everybody's problem," Jones was surprised by the apparent lack of such concern in Ann Arbor. At Michigan he found:

Ad Hoc American Studies 113

too much pride of place, self-assurance, and emphasis on money and rank, too little connection with the problems of a state as complex as Michigan, Detroit excepted, too much looking to the ivy universities with envy, too much looking down on other state universities in the Middle West and the South and of course on those mushroom growths, most of the trans-Mississippi institutions.[33]

A self-professed "progressive of the La Follette persuasion," Jones saw the connection between region and culture as intertwined with the public mission of the university.[34] More than a preoccupation with local character, regionalism represented an approach to the study of culture that promised greater relevance for wider publics and public policy. A profile of Jones in the *Harvard Crimson* later characterized him as a product of "the age of the 'Wisconsin Idea,'" the collective efforts (supported by the state legislature) to orient the University of Wisconsin toward solving public problems in the early twentieth century.[35] Wisconsin's education platform emphasized the practicality of the college curriculum, the extension of higher education to a broad array of citizens, and research in service to the interests of the state.[36] Jones believed the University of Michigan was lagging behind in recognizing locally responsive scholarship as an organizing principle for academic practice.[37]

The American Culture Program at Michigan was therefore conceived first and foremost as a project of institutional intervention. It aimed to fashion a curriculum that would be more relevant for the public that the university was intended to serve. The program's refusal of rigid intellectual boundaries to reorganize academic practice prompts us to consider what is at stake in thinking of the program as a project. Recent texts in social theory and organizational studies have theorized "projects" as short-term, collaborative efforts aimed at institutional change.[38] Unlike, say, an individual scholar's research project, the projects of this theoretical frame are limited in duration and often marked by the differing—or even conflicting—goals of the collaborators. To recognize Michigan's American Culture Program as a project thus helps to underscore how its founders did not primarily envision it as a fixed location or discourse, but rather as a way to change how the university treated such issues as disciplinary boundaries, the nature of academic inquiry, and the social value of scholarship. Rather than setting an intellectual blueprint for an emergent field, the program and the wider American studies movement were a decentered series of attempts to weave together innovations in different disciplines, largely in order to achieve some measure of social change.

This project-centered approach offers an alternative to positioning the American Culture Program within a genealogy of the field that transposes a singular intellectual objective onto its founding. Jones initially conceived of the program as sustaining "a unified genetic interpretation of civilization in the United States," but it is only when we decenter Jones and his literary project

faculty members. Amherst's program director George Rogers Taylor, an economist, argued that students should "actually practice the difficult art of analyzing problems, considering alternatives, and choosing a course of action." This became the orientation of Michigan's program as well, particularly in the 1960s, when its faculty and students were integral to the formation of the American Studies Association's Radical Caucus.

I eventually teamed up with Frank Kelderman to co-author an article that examines these findings in the context of the wider history of the field: "Ad Hoc American Studies: Michigan and the Hidden History of a Movement," *American Studies* 55, no. 1 (2016): 107-131. It's available on Project MUSE—check it out if you're interested.

Despite these findings, it is still unclear why the program's internal documents got its early history so wrong. At the Library of Congress, the American Studies Association Records include a questionnaire submitted by Joe Lee Davis that placed the founding date as 1950, which was also inaccurate. The narrative identifying 1952 as the founding date first surfaces in a document appended to the Executive Committee Minutes from November 2, 1971, but does not include any citations. This hastily-prepared document with no named author had a snowball effect through memo after memo—a pre-internet portent of the hazards of simply trusting what you read on the internet!

it is still unclear why the program's internal documents got its early history so wrong.

Excerpts from "Ad Hoc American Studies: Michigan and the Hidden History of a Movement," American Studies *55, no. 1 (2016): 107-131.*

celebrating 80 years of

AMERICAN CULTURE

Article by Alex Stern and Charlotte Albrecht

On previous page: Chair June Howard hugs Linda Eggert, former administrator of American Culture.

This page: (from L-R) Martha Umphrey, American Culture Ph.D. and professor at Amherst College; Michelle Johnson, American Culture Ph.D. and Michigan State Historian; and American Culture Professor and American Culture Ph.D. Kristin Hass.

All photos in this article courtesy of Michigan Photography.

To celebrate our department's 80th anniversary, we organized a series of events throughout the year, culminating in a dynamic one-day conference called Envisioning American Studies.

The goal of this major conference, held on March 18, 2016 on the University of Michigan's campus, was to bring together newly minted Ph.D.s in American studies and allied fields such as African American studies, Arab and Muslim American studies, Asian and Pacific Islander American studies, Latina/o studies, Native American studies, digital studies, and science studies. Our call for papers by emerging scholars resulted in a formidable pool of 149 submissions, from which we chose 14 presenters who are poised to advance American studies scholarship in the coming years. A stellar selection committee comprised of eight American Culture Ph.D. graduates guided us in the challenging

process of selecting our final roster of presenters. The papers represented the cutting-edge of scholarship in American studies, intersecting with history, literature, disability studies, media studies, and queer studies. The presenters shared a range of critical approaches to examining race, sexuality, gender, U.S. empire, biopolitics, and media through interdisciplinary scholarship. The program is available here.

The conference was enriched further by the participation of 16 additional American Culture Ph.D. graduates, from across the decades of the 1970s to the 2010s, who served as chairs and commentators, and took time to reflect on American Culture over the years. An innovative feature of the conference was a publishing panel that featured leading American studies editors from the following presses: Duke University, University of California, University of Illinois, University of Michigan, University of Minnesota, and University of North Carolina. The editors shared insights about publishing in the digital age and about emerging areas of American studies scholarship.

We also celebrated the 80th anniversary with a series of signature events of speakers and performances organized by our ethnic studies programs and digital studies program throughout the year. These events included talks by Latino/a studies scholar Frances Aparicio, Asian American history scholar Erika Lee, legal scholar Khaled Beydoun, novelist and Native American studies scholar N. Scott Momaday, and a digital studies conference with a keynote by Wendy Hui Kyong Chun.

AN EVENING

with Scott Momaday

Native American Studies inaugurated the Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr. Lecture in Native American Studies series on Friday, March 11, 2016 with a presentation by writer *N. Scott Momaday*.

A Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist, Native American scholar, and poet, Momaday has been hailed as "the dean of American Indian writers" by the *New York Times*. He crafts — in language and imagery — majestic landscapes of a sacred culture.

Named a UNESCO Artist for Peace and Oklahoma's poet laureate, Momaday is also a recipient of the 2007 National Medal of Arts, presented by President George W. Bush. Momaday is the first Native American to be awarded the Pulitzer Prize for his novel, *House Made of Dawn*, widely considered to be the start of the Native American Literary Renaissance. His most recent volume, *Again the Far Morning: New and Selected Poems*, was released in 2011.

The event drew about 250 people, a combination of undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, and people from Ann Arbor, Detroit, and Michigan Indian communities. NAS provided bus transportation to people from Detroit with the assistance of American Indian Health and Family Services. The evening began with a welcome given by LSA Associate Dean of Humanities Anne Curzan followed by remarks by NAS Director Scott Lyons and presentation of gifts to Robert Berkhofer III and members of the Carmen and Dan Brenner family (whose gift established the lecture). Literati Bookstore sold books, and Momaday signed many during the reception that followed. Momaday attended another, smaller gathering on the following evening, socializing with some fifty guests including *(cont)*

Left: N. Scott Momaday at the inaugural reading. Above: Native American Studies Faculty (clockwise from left): Amy Stillman, Michael Witgen, Robin Beck, Scott Lyons, Gregory Dowd, Susan Najita, and N. Scott Momaday.

NAS graduate students, faculty, and guests. As well, Momaday conducted an interview with T Hetzel for her WCBN radio program and podcast, Living Writers.

The Berkhofer Lecture was established to address stated concerns in the U-M Native American student community: visibility, inclusion, and relevance. Native American students do not wish to simply study at Michigan; they want to see their histories, accomplishments, and current issues reflected in public intellectual culture. Additionally, the NAS faculty felt that a signature event such as this would go a long way to putting our program on the radars of both Michigan tribes and the national NAS scene. Feedback from students, faculty, community people, and the Brenner Family indicates that this inaugural Berkhofer Lecture very successfully exceeded all expectations.

Momaday has been hailed as "the dean of American Indian writers" by the New York Times.

Undergraduates Jason Searle and Michon Johnson from U-M's Native American Students Association (NASA) present a Pendleton blanket and Leech Lake wild rice from Minnesota to Geri Tomshack and Karen Bullinger, representatives from the family whose gift to NAS estabished the Berkhofer Lecture.


THE FA
MORNING
NEW AND SELECTED POEMS
N. Scott Momaday
RSITY OF NEW MEXICO PRESS

the future of

ETHNI STUDI

CES

by Meryem Kamil

In April 2016, graduate and undergraduate students affiliated with the ethnic studies programs organized The Future of Ethnic Studies. The coalition included students and faculty from Arab and Muslim American Studies, African and Afro American Studies, Asian/Pacific Islander American Studies, Latina/o Studies, and Native American Studies. The goals of the event were to develop interest and investment in ethnic studies across the University and to build structures of collaboration and coalition among graduate students, undergraduates and faculty of color. Organizers also aimed to encourage the growth of ethnic studies programs and demonstrate to the University administration that there is a need for these units to secure more resources, especially in light of the University's diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives.

On the day of the event, the room was packed. With over a hundred students, faculty, staff, and community members in attendance, the investment in the future of ethnic studies was clear. The event opened with a statement from graduate students in Asian/Pacific Islander American Studies that framed the teach-in and highlighted the potential for ethnic studies to grow and transform the institutional frameworks we have operated within. The powerful opening statement was followed by a brief history of the development of ethnic studies and an overview of the field's institutionalization at the University of Michigan provided by faculty members in the Department of American Culture. Attendees then broke out into small groups to discuss their experiences with ethnic studies and their vision for the field's future. There were four breakout groups whose discussions were each facilitated by an undergraduate and graduate student. The event closed with readings of selections from women and queer of color poets. *(cont)*

American Culture graduate student Vivian Truong introduces the event. Photo courtesy of Meryem Kamil.

The event organizers aim for this event to be the beginning of a broad coalition concerned with institutionalizing ethnic studies in order to create a more inclusive campus. At the same time, the event centered the need for ethnic studies to continue to be political in its demands, to aim for a reshifting or dismantling of the university in line with Fred Moten and Stefano Harney's "undercommons of the enlightenment," defined by Jack Halberstam as "where subversive intellectuals engage both the university and fugitivity: 'where the work gets done, where the work gets subverted, where the revolution is still black, still strong.'"

In order for American studies and ethnic studies to be relevant in the age of #BlackLivesMatter, we need to reformulate the fields of study away from a food-group model that aims to be included within the academy. Rather, as scholars of social justice, our praxis should never be satiated by institutionalization. We need to aim for relevance, for change. Ethnic studies is not the end-game, but the spring-board for our activism.

Clockwise from bottom left: Professor Anthony Mora; his partner, Professor John G. McCurdy (Department of History and Philosophy, Eastern Michigan University); Professor Mérida Rúa (Latina/o Studies, Williams College), who received her PhD from our department in 2004; Professor María Cotera; Professor Lawrence La Fountain-Stokes; Professor Frances Aparicio; Professor Alexandra Minna Stern; and Professor Silvia Pedraza, who was the first professor officially hired in American Culture to teach Latina/o Studies in 1986 and who also served as the second director of our program. The photo was taken by Assistant Professor William Calvo-Quirós, who recently completed his first year teaching in Ann Arbor.

Photos in this article courtesy of Lawrence La Fountain-Stokes.

Making Familia, Comunidad, & Conocimiento

Lawrence La Fountain-Stokes

Since its establishment in 1984, the Latina/o Studies Program at the University of Michigan has offered students, faculty, and staff a space for learning and community building, for "making familia from scratch," to quote a well-known phrase from Chicana playwright Cherríe Moraga's play *Giving Up the Ghost*. Here, *familia* (family) is reenvisioned as a set of connections and frameworks that serve to create bonds, whether they are the friendships and solidarities required to survive and thrive as minority subjects in a historically white university or the social networks that are used to advance knowledge production and professional development. These practices occur within and outside the classroom, during special events, meals, gatherings, conferences, and parties. Social interaction is a crucial element of this *intercambio* (exchange) that leads to *comunidad* (community).

The 2015-16 academic year was especially rich in these opportunities, particularly in the context of the 80th anniversary of the Department of American Culture. Latina/o Studies participated in this celebration in diverse ways, including organizing a keynote address by Prof. Frances R. Aparicio (Northwestern University) titled "Passing for Mexican: Relational Identities in Latina/o Chicago" held on October 2 as part of Latinx Heritage Month, and cosponsoring the 80th Anniversary Symposium in the winter. *(cont)*

We were excited to invite Professor Aparicio, as she is one of the leading scholars in the field, taught in our department for ten years (from 1990 to 2000), and served as Director of the Latina/o Studies Program. In her talk, she explored the tensions that intra-Latina/o subjects face between competing Latina/o ethnic identifications, specifically in a Midwestern city where Mexican culture is often perceived to stand in for all Latin American and Caribbean culture and where national differences can be subsumed or erased. Prof. Aparicio used the neologism "intra-Latina/o" to identify Latina/o individuals who are of two or more Latin American national origins, for example Mexi-Ricans or Cuban-Salvadorans or Dominican-Argentineans. She offered three distinct strategies for negotiating these challenges, which form part of a book-length study she is completing.

After a full day that included a lunchtime talk at Hatcher Library and a more informal coffee and cookies hour with graduate and undergraduate students in the afternoon, several faculty gathered at my home for dinner. The informal photo on the previous page served to capture this moment.

A second photo below features Latina/o Studies alumni and faculty at the eightieth anniversary dinner for American Culture, held on Friday, March 18, 2016, at Rackham Assembly Hall. Starting from left to right, we see Prof. Anthony Macías (Associate Professor of Ethnic Studies, UC Riverside), who received his PhD from our department in 2001; Prof. Neil Foley (History, Southern Methodist University), who received his PhD from our department in 1990; Prof. Yeidy Rivero, who recently became the new director of the Latina/o Studies Program; Prof. Dolores Inés Casillas (Chicana/o Studies, UC Santa Barbara), who received her PhD from our department in 2006, Prof. Mora;

familia family

comunidad communit

conocimiento knowled

intercambio exchange

Prof. Wilson Valentín-Escobar (Sociology and American Studies, Hampshire College), who received his PhD from our department in 2011; Prof. Cotera; me; current PhD student Kris Klein Hernández; Prof. William Calvo-Quirós; and Prof. John R. Chávez (History, Southern Methodist University), who received his PhD from our department in 1980 and served as the first director of Latina/o Studies while he was a visiting assistant professor from 1984 to 1986.

Both of these images capture complex connections (far too complex to explain at length in this short essay!), which pertain to the nature of being colleagues in a department or of having studied with each other, or under the supervision of one another. The images capture genealogies of Latina/o studies knowledge and solidarity that have been marked by the Michigan experience. These photos speak in perhaps often-unacknowledged ways about knowledge production and the most basic experiences of everyday shared lives. They crystalize these special events, memorialize and help us remember. For me, these Latina/o studies photos are a way to make sense of history in the making, of unsuspected connections, of details that frequently get lost in the day-to-day shuffle of our busy lives.

A GLASS CEILING

FOR ASIAN AND ASIAN AMERICAN FACULTY IN LSA? YES.

BY AMY STILLMAN

The faculty roundtable discussion convened by A/PIA Studies on "Asian and Asian American Faculty in LSA: A Glass Ceiling?" was one of the highlights for the 2015-2016 academic year. The event, held on March 28, 2016, drew a standing-room only audience to a long overdue dialogue. The event was videotaped, and can be viewed here: http://youtube.com/watch?v=cEDupBcQAOQ

Amy Stillman, American Culture Professor and Director of A/PIA Studies, Chats with Kim Bobby, Director of the Inclusive Excellence Initiative of the American Council on Education, after a lively discussion.

The underrepresentation of Asian Americans at the highest levels of leadership and administration in higher education was the focus of a national report issued in 2013 by the American Council on Education. Titled Raising Voices, Lifting Leaders: Empowering Asian Pacific Islander Leadership in Higher Education, the report contained sobering statistics: whereas Asian and Pacific Islander Americans made up 7% of full-time tenured faculty, they make up only 2.8% of deans, 2.4% of chief academic officers (variously titled provost or chancellor at different campuses) and 1.5% of presidents. In an era when institutions are scrambling to diversify faculties as well as student bodies, the virtual invisibility of Asian/ Pacific Islander Americans in academic leadership positions is problematic, especially given widespread perceptions of Asian/Pacific Islander American over-representation on faculties and student bodies.

After welcome remarks by LSA Dean Andrew Martin, Prof. Amy Stillman (A/PIA Studies Director and organizer of the roundtable) provided a brief overview of Asian and Asian American demographic diversity in the U.S., calling attention to the masking of disparities by the aggregation of diverse cultural communities under the "Asian American" rubric. Then the following question was posed: How can an appreciation for Asian and Asian American diversity be productively linked to equitable opportunity to ensure meaningful inclusion of Asians and Asian Americans in all facets of U-M institutional life and practices?

We were fortunate to be joined by Dr. Kim Bobby, Director of the Inclusive Excellence Initiative of the American Council on Education. Her remarks provided a national framework to contextualize the U-M data, and she briefed us on leadership development programs offered by ACE.

Five LSA faculty then presented research evidence of the situation at Michigan.

- Prof. Fiona Lee and doctoral candidate Amy Westmoreland Ko (Psychology) reported on their analysis of U-M data from the NSF-funded ADVANCE, and concluded that Asian and Asian American faculty were underrepresented as department chairs. (cont)

American Culture Professor and Director of A/PIA Studies Amy Stillman Moderates Questions from the Audience

since 2012, there have been no Asian faculty members elected to the LSA Executive Committee

- Prof. John Kuwada (Dept. of Molecular, Cellular and Developmental Biology), shared his findings that since 2012, there have been no Asian faculty members elected to the LSA Executive Committee, or appointed as Associate Deans, or directors of Programs, Institutes, or Museum. He pointed out that there was "little appreciation by LSA faculty, Dean' s office and U-M Executive Officers" and "no priority to remedy this at UM."
- Prof. San Duanmu (Linguistics) briefed us on the Association of Chinese Professors at UM, a group that fosters a sense of community among international Chinese faculty at UM.
- Evans Young, Assistant Dean of Undergraduate Education in LSA, spoke on campus-wide academic leadership programs, raising questions about the extent to which these opportunities are accessible to Asian and Pacific Islander American faculty.
- Prof. Leela Fernandes (Women' s Studies and Political Science), a member of the LSA Task Force on Faculty Diversity, reported on key findings—including that the open meeting with Asian and Asian American faculty had the highest attendance and most active participation. We were treated to a preliminary version of some of the recommendations that will be submitted in the Task Force' s report.

Following a half hour of spirited discussion, Vice Provost Rob Sellers provided a closing commentary. He began by acknowledging that the underrepresentation of Asian and Asian American faculty in academic leadership at U-M "is not right." Vice Provost Sellers offered suggestions for concrete action, emphasizing especially the development of a formal network with whom the administration can work, and to whom the administration can be responsive.

The event was extremely successful in bringing together ideas and thoughts for further conversation and action!

We are grateful to Marie Ting, Associate Director of the National Center for Institutional Diversity, for invaluable logistical support on this event.

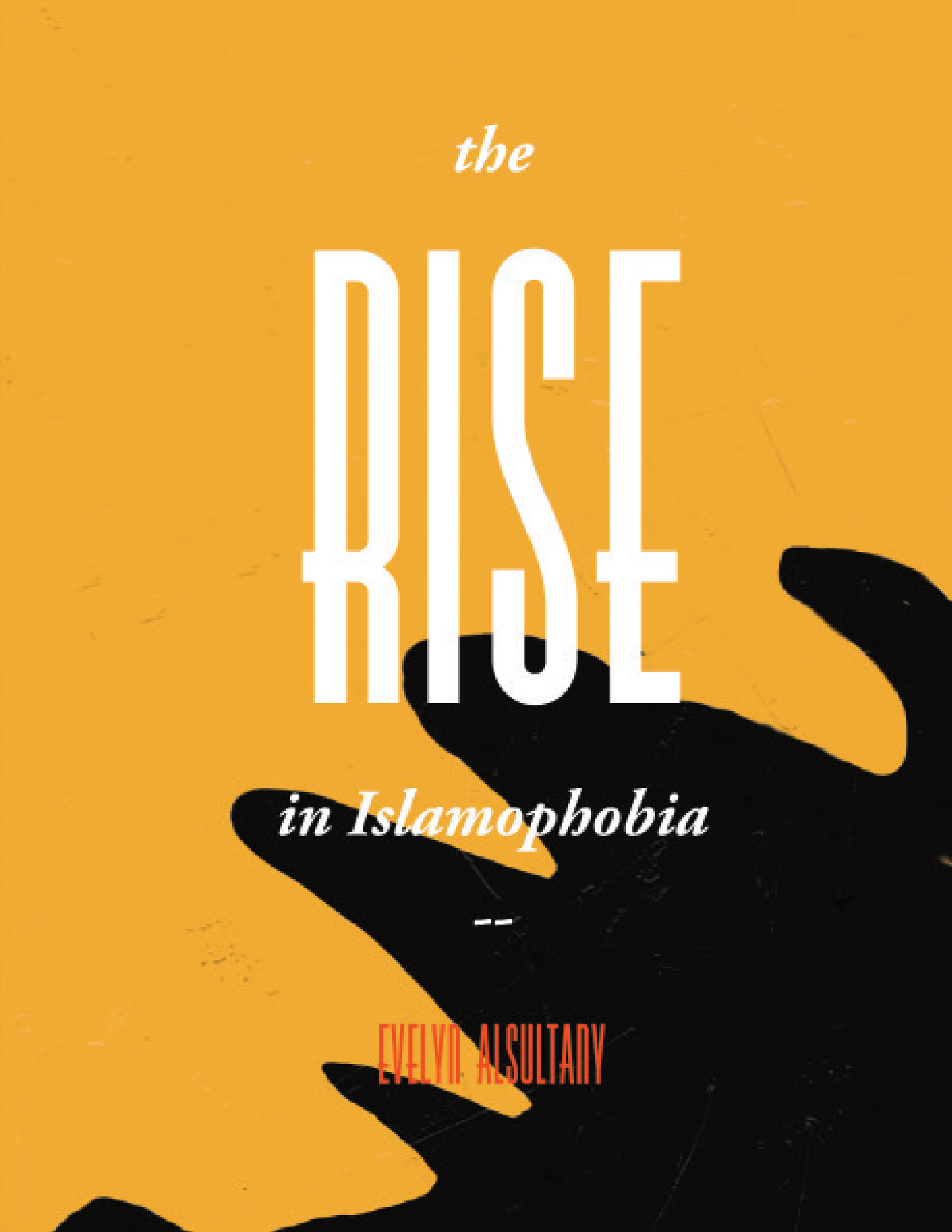
the

RISE

in Islamophobia

--

EVELYN ALSULTANY



EVERY TIME

a Muslim commits an act of violence in the U.S. or Europe, there is a rise in anti-Muslim hate in the United States. The terrorist attacks in Paris in November 2015, the San Bernadino shootings in December 2015, and the mass killing of (mostly Latino) LGBT people in Orlando in June 2016 have all led to greater suspicion and hate towards Muslims. The operating assumption is that these acts of violence can be easily explained through "Islam" and therefore that Islamophobia is not a form of racism or discrimination, but a rational response to these instances of violence. The increase in Islamophobia has been accentuated by anti-Muslim rhetoric, especially by presidential candidates. Republican Presidential Candidate, Ben Carson, stated that a Muslim should not be president because Islam is not compatible with American values and the Constitution. Republican Presidential Candidate Donald Trump stated that all Muslim refugees and immigrants should be banned from entering the U.S. Mosque burnings, hate crimes, workplace and airline discrimination have become commonplace. And murdering Muslims or those who appear to be Muslim is not unusual.

American Culture's Arab and Muslim American Studies Program has been active in addressing the impact of Islamophobia on our campus community. We collaborated with LSA Undergraduate Education on a student-centered event, created an Islamophobia Working Group, offered an undergraduate course on Islamophobia, among other initiatives.

Sharing Stories, Building Allyhood:

Student Voices Against Islamophobia

In the wake of the tragedies in Paris and San Bernadino, the LSA Associate Dean's office partnered with Arab and Muslim American Studies to organize an event: "Sharing Stories, Building Allyhood: Student Voices Against Islamophobia" that took place in January 2016. Among those who collaborated on this event were staff members from the English Language Institute, the Program on Inter-Group Relations, the Center for Engaged Academic Learning and about a dozen undergraduate students. The event was also supported by CAPS (Counseling and Psychological Services) and MESA (Multiethnic Student Affairs).

The objective of the event was to focus on the impact of Islamophobia within our own community at UM. The event was organized in two parts. First, students who have experienced Islamophobia shared first hand accounts. Undergraduate student bravely shared personal experiences that ranged from microaggressions in everyday life to explicit threats and harassment. One example can be read at **https://www.michigandaily.com/section/viewpoints/viewpoint-my-heart-hurts-too.** The second part of the event focused on how to be an ally. Given that racism and discrimination is not unique to Muslims, we hoped that the ally portion of the event would be relevant in thinking about how to challenge Islamophobia, yet be applicable to other forms of racism and discrimination.

The event drew hundreds of people. It was emotional event and successful in building community and solidarity. It was written about in the *Michigan Daily* as an article and as a review. Furthermore, the students involved in organizing the event were recognized with a Michigan Difference Student Leadership Award, specifically the Cross-Cultural Programming Award.

The Islamophobia Working Group

In January 2016, Arab and Muslim American Studies initiated the Islamophobia Working Group. The purpose of this group of faculty, staff, and students is to study the increase in Islamophobia nationally and its impact on Arab, Muslim, and MENA-identified students, faculty, staff and the campus community at large; strategize on how to create a safe and inclusive campus environment for Arab, Muslim, and MENA students and those who are impacted by anti-Arab and anti-Muslim sentiments (i.e. Sikh, etc.); and create a set of resources for community members, students and faculty included. The group consists of over 60 members that includes undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, and staff. In the winter term, we drafted and submitted a report to the administration suggesting ways to include Arab, Muslim, and MENA students in the University of Michigan's strategic plan for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. We also created a resource list for Arab, Muslim, and MENA-identified students who are impacted by Islamophobia. Both can be accessed at **http://lsa.umich.edu/amas/islamophobia-working-group**

Islamophobia Course

In Winter 2016, Arab and Muslim American Studies offered its first course on Islamophobia. The course focused on understanding Islamophobia beyond as a response to violence committed by Muslims. It examined how the media, government policies, and nativist movements shape Islamophobia; the impact of Islamophobia on Muslim American communities; and whether or not Islamophobia is an adequate term to use to capture the phenomenon of seeking to target or exclude Muslims from multicultural nations. The course also examined several case studies of Islamophobia in the U.S. and Europe, including the "Ground Zero mosque" controversy in the U.S. and the Prophet Muhammad cartoons controversy in Denmark to identify the specific forms that Islamophobia takes. The course ended by briefly considering how Muslims have responded to Islamophobia through community organizing and various artistic forms.

The Campus Responds

The broader campus community has also been active in taking a stance against Islamophobia. Central Student Government issued a resolution opposing "anti-immigrant, anti-Muslim and xenophobic harassment, intimidation, and all acts of bigotry against Muslim students" and affirming "the right of all students to participate fully and equally in the academic, social, political and all other aspects of life on campus." The Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs (SACUA) issued a resolution in support of UM's Muslim community. Over 500 faculty members signed a letter to President Schlissel after anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant chalking was found on the Diag, denouncing the chalking and expressing solidarity with Muslim students. President Schlissel responded to the letter affirming the University's commitment to an inclusive campus environment.

AVA PURKISS

Photo courtesy of Ava Purkiss.

My general research interests lie at the intersection of race, gender, and health. My current project examines African American women's exercise and fitness culture in the early twentieth century. Preliminarily titled "'Mind, Soul, Body, and Race': Black Women's Purposeful Exercise in the Age of Physical Culture," my work explores how black women used exercise to shape themselves into healthy, "fit" citizens at a time when physical fitness garnered new socio-political significance. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, physically fit individuals constituted a "right-thinking" citizenry and African American women adapted to this trend by integrating exercise into larger campaigns of racial uplift and assertions of citizenship.

The oft-cited statistic that 50% of black women are obese as well as assumptions about black women's idleness generated my initial research questions about the historical role that exercise played in black women's lives. In examining the barriers to exercise that black women encountered, this project grounds current statistics concerning black women's health in a long tradition of recreational segregation and exclusion from fitness institutions (e.g. gyms, pools, parks, etc.). It adds a vital historical dimension to a host of studies that attempt to understand why African American women and girls are disproportionately overweight, at risk for numerous deadly diseases, and have low rates of physical activity. In addition to health implications, this project has revealed a surprising history of black women's intraracial fat shaming as well as underexamined narratives of black women's "active" leisure pursuits. These revelations have allowed me to think more broadly and counterintuitively about African American aesthetic and recreational values.

I look forward to putting this thinking to practice in two American Culture courses I will teach in the Winter 2017 term: "Skin Deep: Race and Beauty in American Culture" and "Race, Gender, Recreation, and Sport in Twentieth Century America." The former will explore how "beauty" has served as a proxy for race throughout American history and the latter will examine how certain pastimes became gendered and racialized during the "long" twentieth century. A hallmark of both classes will be to show the interconnectedness of the present and the past by framing contemporary debates (e.g. cultural appropriation and doping) as deep-seated historical problems. I am excited about the interdisciplinary freedom I will exercise in these classes and my work as an American Culture faculty member.

STUDENTS AWARDS

The Undergraduate Writing Awards

Each year, the American Cul
recognize the outstanding talents of
through our Undergraduate Writi
This year's contest had an unusually hig
of excellent entries, making the final
almost impossible. Ultimately, two s
garnered this high honor.

These two recipient represent the amazing ta
of all of our undergraduate students. They a
highlight American Culture's ongoing missio
to encourage critically engaged scholarship
among our undergraduates, graduate students,
and faculty.

The Joel S. Siegel Awards

For the past decade, thanks to the ongoing generosity of the Siegel family, the Department of American Culture has been able to award two of our undergraduate students the Joel S. Siegel Scholarship based on outstanding merit and financial need. Although the final decision always proves a difficult one, we were delighted to name Iliria Camaj and Sarah Khan, two truly fantastic students from within American Culture's Arab and Muslim American Studies Program (AMAS), as our 2015-2016 honorees.

Iliria Ca
hallmark
herself aca
experiences
Despite that
of the Albania
international se

Sarah Kahn matches
because she yearned for
intersected with Muslim
in our AMAS program. C
policy, human rights, and th
Urdu through a global health
for Community Service and L
evaluate and compile resources
so that she might become a legal
beyond.

lture's faculty
f our students
ng Awards.
gh number
selection
students

alent
also
on
o

Mena Hermiz, currently an International Studies student and a minor in our Arab and Muslim American Studies program, wrote a memorable essay entitled "Criticism of the 'Clashing Civilizations' Theory." Within her paper, Mena explored how a 1993 essay from Samuel Huntington become a touchstone for media and policy leaders following the events of 9/11. Pundits and politicians sought easy explanations that named 9/11 as an inevitable conflict resulting from two allegedly irreconcilable world views. By so doing, Mena suggests, deeper understandings of globalization and imperialism became lost or obscured. The committee commended Mena on her approach. We imagine that she will continue to build persuasive interventions around erroneous assumptions that have too often guided international affairs.

Taking us further into the past, History major, honors student, and Native American Studies minor Dylan Nelson delivered a notable paper entitled "Relational Resistance: Misunderstanding, Race, and Sacred Power in Mid-Eighteenth Century Delaware Nativist Revival." Dylan explored how eighteenth-century nativist religious revivals emerged out of the changing economic and political situations in the Ohio River Valley. He made visible the way those movements redefined how Delawares imagined their relationships to each other and to Europeans. We applauded Dylan's strong writing, solid research, and engaging analysis. Dylan, we think, has tremendous potential to become a remarkable historian.

amaj represents the idealism and intellectual rigor that we think are the
ks of our department. Now in the middle of her junior year, Iliria has distinguished
ademically as an honors student. She also has assembled an impressive dossier of
s beyond our campus, including an internship with the U.S. Department of State.
busy schedule, Iliria has taken on major leadership roles, like being the President
an American Student Organization. She has a set of interlinking interests in law,
ecurity, and Arab and Muslim populations in the United States.

s Iliria's drive and achievements. Sarah came to our department
r a deeper understanding about the ways that race and religion
identities in the United States. Since that time, she has thrived
Currently she is composing an honors thesis that questions U.S.
he post 9/11 world. Moreover, she received a fellowship to study
n lens. This past year, she worked with the Ginsberg Center
earning to develop tools that will help student organizations
centered on K-12 literacy. Sarah plans on pursuing law school
expert and advocate for those imprisoned in the U.S. and

CONGRATS, GRADUATES!

Bachelor Degrees

American Culture
Tyler Babbitt
Michael Bae Gieske
Stefany Barba
Andrew Fedurek
Olivia Garcia
Mollie Gordier
Kathleen Harrington
Gordon Howey
Lauren Hurst
Renato Jamett
Nancy Lucero-Altamirano
Jacqueline Matyszczyk
Meghan Monaghan
Mia Orlow
Eliana Ungar
Thomas Vanslooten
Jingyi Yang

Latina/o Studies
Lauren Ash
Janay Brandon
Rogelio Castro
Sydney Demo
Marie Dillivan
Desiree Salazar

Minors

American Culture
Daniel Bakst
Casey Baltimore
Joshua Belt
Ilana Beroff
Daisy Bishop
Erin Bozek-Jarvis
Hanna Cervarich
Abigail Choi
Courtney Collins
Ryan Eaton
Cameron Giniel
Logan Hansen
Caitlin Janquart
Matthew Jenuwine
Ian Johnston
Paula Moldovan
David Monticelli
Ashley Ogwo
Michael Peabody
Cara Richard
Lania Robinson
Nicki Sanii
Melissa Singer
Mami Sow

Arab and Muslim American Studies
Noran Alsabahi
Iliria Camaj
Fatima Chowdhury
Catherine Cypert
Emma Gies
Hannah Henkin
Mena Hermiz
Areeba Jibril
Sarah Khan
Fadel Nabilsi
Sarah Raoof
Layla Zarkesh

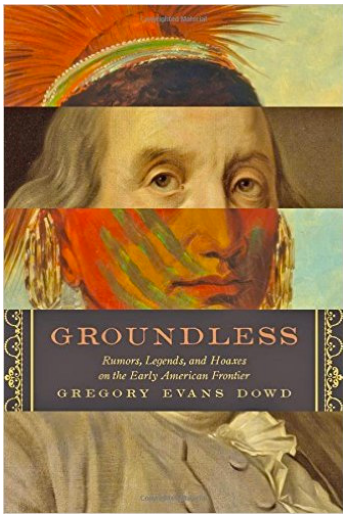
Asian/Pacific Islander American Studies
Michael Bae Gieske
Tosca Le
Kaylee Schonsheck

Digital Studies
Anna Bahorski
Katherine Baral
Erika Bell
Casey Cameron
Olivia Cottrell
Jackson Deloria
Amie Diamond
Sara Estes
Blake Falanga
Madison Hurtubise
Amanda Kaplan
Cal Kevorkian
Abigail Kincer
Chelsea Kubasiak
Margaret Lautenslager
Hannah Levine
Allen McManus
Alison Nolte
JJ Politis
Emily Reitzel
Daniel Rizk
Madeline Salazar
Erin Sant
Maura Seleski
Tyler Sullivan
Jordan Swope
Megan Timko
Rachel Tran
Lauren Uhlian
Carmella Vong
Elizabeth Whitty
Katherine Yamano

Latina/o Studies
Stephanie Betancourt
Jose Davila Jr
Gabriel Leaf
Elizabeth Perez

Ph.Ds.

American Culture
Rabia Belt
Jesse Carr
Sarah Gothie
David Green
Frank Kelderman
Erik Morales

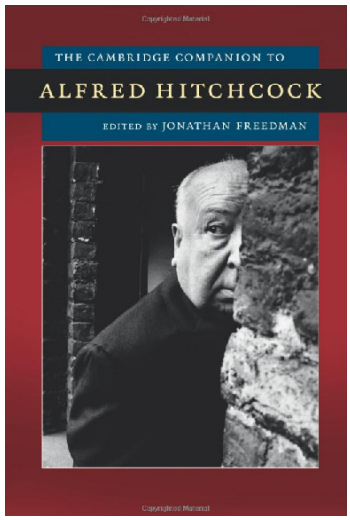


Gregory Dowd

Groundless: Rumors, Legends, and Hoaxes on the EarlyAmerican Frontier

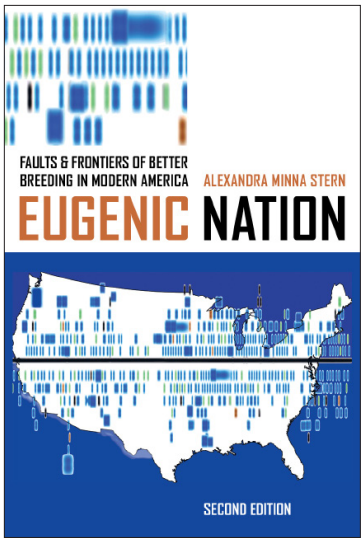
Anna Watkins Fisher & Wendy Hui Kyong Chu

New Media, Old Media A History and TheoryReader, 2nd Edition



Jonathan Freedman

The Cambridge Companion to Alfred Hitchcock



Alexandra Stern

Eugenic Nation Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America, Second Edition

Thank you.

Our alumni and friends' generosity allows us to provide our students and faculty with extraordinary opportunities. Because of your support, this year we were able to:

- Offer a new internship in Digital Studies
- Send students to the Migrant Farmworker Outreach Program in partnership with the English Language Institute
- Bring world renowned artists, scholars, and performers to visit undergraduates in their classes
- Inaugurate a new speaker series in Native American studies
- Develop classes that sent students to Detroit where they met and learned from community leaders
- Award American Culture students scholarships based on merit and need to pursue a humanities education
- Sponsor career events for our students that connected them to some of our successful alumni

Want to make a difference?

Your support is always greatly appreciated.

If you would like to speak to someone directly about your giving options, please feel free to contact the Chair of the Department or the staff of LSA Development. The liaison officer for American Culture in LSA Development is John Ramsburgh. John's contact information is as follows:

John Ramsburgh
Regional Director
Direct: 1-734-615-6761
Email: jramsbur@umich.edu

To give online visit:
http://www.giving.umich.edu/give/lsa-ac

Contact

Dept. of American Culture
University of Michigan
3700 Haven Hall
505 S. State St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1045

http://lsa.umich.edu/ac
(p) 1-734-763-1460 (e) ac.inq@umich.edu
http://facebook.com/UM.American.Culture
http://twitter.com/umichAmCult