

*Note from the Chair:***The Changing Face of IUB American Studies**

by Karen Inouye

AY 2018-2019 was a period of significant change. It was my first year as Chair. Sonia Lee stepped up to assume the position of Director of Undergraduate Studies, and Rasul Mowatt took over as Director of Graduate Studies. Vivian Halloran, Sonia Lee and Shane Vogel also served as Members of AMST's Advisory Committee. Together we led the department through a series of curricular improvements at both the undergraduate and the graduate levels. The core faculty also met for a monthly reading group to discuss current research in the field, including exciting new research being produced by department members (please see page 6).

During the fall, we celebrated the publication of two monographs: Micol Seigel's *Violence Work* and Phoebe Wolfskill's *Archibald Motley Jr. and Racial Reinvention*. In addition, we celebrated both Professors Wolfskill and Seigel's new edited collections.

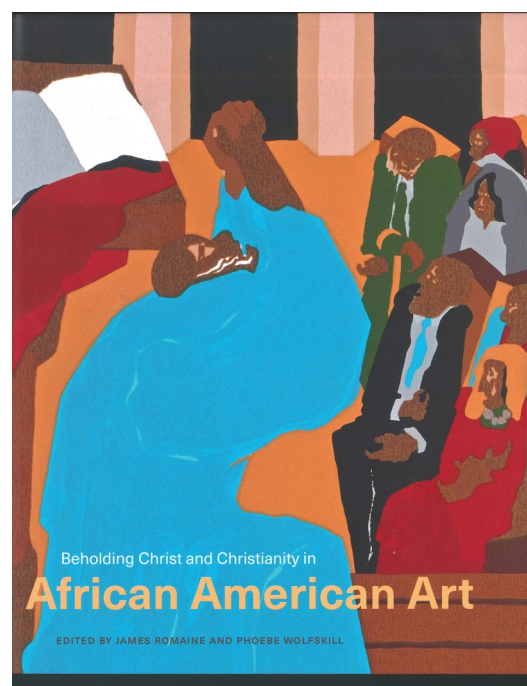
We also cheered on Phoebe Wolfskill for having been awarded the Trustees' Teaching Award. She was recognized in particular for her outstanding use of the Thomas Hart Benton murals (as well as other IU artworks) to teach her course on American visual culture.

As we look to the future, we welcome a new face: Visiting Assistant Professor Richard Henne-Ochoa to the department, and welcome back Susan Lepselter as a core faculty member.

A Closer Look — “Beholding”

Phoebe Wolfskill, the most recent faculty member to join the department, has generously provided comments on her co-edited book, *Beholding Christ and Christianity in African-American Art* (Penn State University Press, 2017).

Beholding is the first collection of scholarly essays to examine biblical and Christian subjects and themes within the oeuvres of individual African American artists working after the Civil War through the Civil Rights era. The essays in the volume demonstrate both the diversity and richness of African American art that evidences Christian themes as well as the multiplicity of art historical methodologies these works compel. The contributors consist of preeminent figures in the field of African American art history, including Richard J. Powell, Kymberly N. Pinder, James Smalls, Kirsten Pai Buick, and Jacqueline Francis, among others, as well as up-and-coming scholars and curators in the field. Alongside co-editing the book, I co-wrote the introduction “Hidden in Plain Sight” which consists of an extensive literature review, overviews the primary issues explored within the volume, addresses the various methodologies em-



(cont'd. on page 2)

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Special points of interest:

- *Halloween Fun*
- *Faculty Colloquia*
- *Accolades and Activities*
- *ASA*
- *Past Events*
- *Moving Soon*

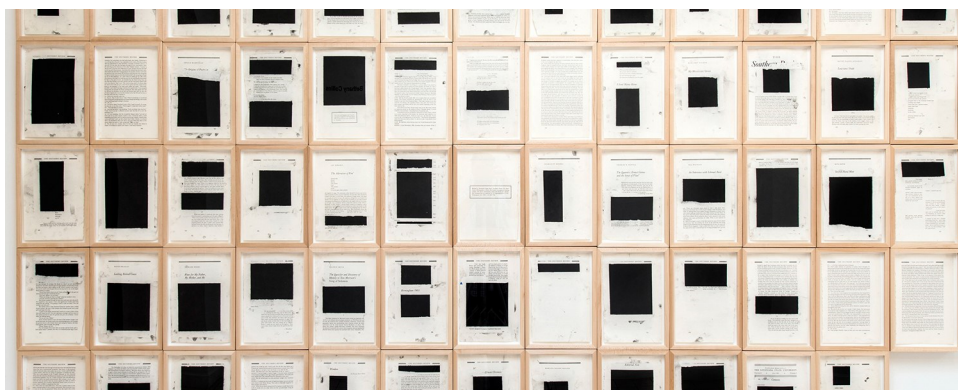
ployed, and foregrounds its originality and relevance to the fields of African American studies, art history, and religious studies. I also contributed chapter five “Catholicism and Class in the Work of Archibald Motley Jr.” as a study of Motley’s methods of self-representation as a middle class Catholic, which I argue he positions at odds with the demonstrative religious temperament of the black masses from the south side of Chicago that he paints. Within the volume, my chapter is unique in its consideration of the relationship between Christian affiliation and socio-economic class and the ways in which these conceptions speak to intra-racial bias and hierarchies in black Chicago.

Beholding not only investigates the important place of religion in modern American art, but also complicates the historicization and interpretation of art created by African Americans. By exploring the unique relationship between specific artists and their engagement with Christian subjects and references, the anthology develops a vital conversation between the place of Christianity in American art and the complexity of African American visual expression, which is inevitably informed not solely by racial identity but by the many factors that shape selfhood and artistic communication. By eschewing essentialist or limited viewpoints on what defines Christianity, African American identity, or even “art,” the book opens up a discussion of the complex and interwoven relationship between artist, faith, identity, and community.

While black studies abounds with important scholarship on Christianity in African American history and culture, this book stands out in its attention to visual articulations of faith in the fine arts and photography. Within the field of art history, the book’s attention to Christianity in African American art and its relationship to patronage, modernist innovation, biblical storytelling, socio-economic class and community, transcendence and visionary practices, sexuality, and modern life will be a welcome addition to this understudied topic.

Vivian Halloran Presenting and Participating

VIVIAN HALLORAN was a participant on the “Abstraction as a Strategy of Refusal Part I: The Circulation of Images” panel at the Out of Easy Reach Symposium and Exhibition hosted by the Grunwald Gallery August 23 & 24. IU participants included Malcolm Mobutu Smith, Faye Gleisser, and Betsy Stirratt. The exhibition focused on two art history courses, a graduate seminar, “Abstraction, Her and Now,” and a AH300-level class, “Curating the Contemporary,” offered by Assistant Professor Faye Gleisser.



Out Of Easy Reach

Professor Halloran presents at the Ethical Dimensions of Children’s Literature—Department of Religious Studies Seminar

“The Island as a Place of Mourning: YA Fiction Maps Diasporic Grief and Healing onto the Caribbean”

Friday, March 29, Colloquium with Vivian Halloran
Institute for Advanced Study, IUB

Maisha Wester — Fulbright in UK

I was a Fulbright scholar to the UK from Fall 2017-Spring of 2018, hosted at the University of Sheffield in the School of English. The experience was amazing, and my work received wonderful reception at my host university as well as various institutions around the UK. I was invited to give guest lectures on race in Gothic literature and Horror films at prestigious universities such as Kings College in London, Stirling University in Glasgow and University of Manchester. I also gave a number of international talks, including lectures at Graz University in Austria, the University of Warsaw in Poland, and even Columbia University in New York.

I accomplished a wonderful amount of research while in the UK, and had the joy of rifling through the archives at the British Library, the Cadbury Library in Birmingham, and the Brixton Archives, to name a few. I also worked with curators at the Liverpool International Slavery Museum. From this, I collected data which traces the long and complicated racial history in Britain, including the original treaties Britain formed with various nations to abolish slavery as well as evidence revealing Britain's support of the US South in the US Civil War. Likewise, I unearthed documentary footage and surveys of the Windrush Era immigrants which revealed the common features between US racial discrimination and UK racial discrimination. Indeed, many of the racist practices experienced in the 1960s US—such as white suburban flight, redlining policies, and neighborhood covenants—were also in practice in the UK, even as the UK claims a history of progressive racial politics. Lastly I located news coverage of various race riots in the UK between 1918 and 2012. This coverage is invaluable as it allows me to chart the changing ways that narratives of race borrow from Gothic and Horror narratives to marginalize minority groups even when they are the victims of riots. Indeed, because of the timing of my arrival, I was witness to much discussion and coverage of the Grenfell Towers collapse; the coverage sadly repeated the same tropings and patterns I discovered in the reports of race riots.

Equally important, I had a chance to observe firsthand the mechanics of the UK university, how they teach, what they expect of their students, and what they demand of faculty in areas of governance. I was amazed to discover that undergrads were not subjected to quizzes or written homework but held themselves accountable for their studies. In many cases, their grades depended entirely upon two papers. Likewise, I was intrigued to see that all students had to write a senior thesis which they are supposed to begin work on during the last semester of their junior year. Faculty guide undergrads in writing these theses very much the same way we guide our M.A. students in their theses. In terms of faculty expectations, I was surprised to discover their grading system requires an external reader to review random samples of essays from units at the end of the term. This reader acts to calibrate the grading, ensuring that the standards are as uni-

form as possible between UK institutions. And while unwieldy service loads seem to be a shared experience between US and UK faculty, UK scholars are fortunate enough to earn research sabbaticals every three to four years (opposed to our seven-year cycle).

Additionally, I participated in Sheffield events such as Research Stories (see link below), a public event organized and sponsored by the university. The event is focused on training scholars to engage in public scholarship through the form of folk narrative. Over the course of several seminars, scholars learned how to present their research as an accessible and entertaining narrative. The capstone to the seminar was an evening in which we told our “stories” to an audience made up of people affiliated with the university as well as local residents and visitors.



Lastly, I would've been remiss if I didn't indulge in the range of cultural experiences offered by the UK. Of course I saw a wonderful number of Shakespeare plays, each one reinvented for our current context and performed by mainstream actors such as Ben Whishaw and David Morrissey (of *Walking Dead* fame). I also attended monthly Indie Film screenings hosted at a local pub. This screening was unique in that locations across the UK would screen the same series of film shorts from around the globe at the same time and vote on their favorite films. Thus the Indie Film community across the UK was brought together through this monthly event. Similarly, I got to experience Sheffield DocFest, a massive, alternative documentary festival held every year. Featuring documentary films from around the globe, many of these films are difficult if not impossible to locate outside of their country. Lastly, I also sought out political events and rallies, such as the Stand Up to Racism summit. This event brought together activists, media personalities and officials from around the UK to examine the nation's racial politics and devised schemes to address the injustices experienced throughout the UK.

I cannot speak highly enough of the Fulbright program. As usual, I learned quite a bit during my research, while buried in archives beneath piles of books. It was marvelous to be in an environment where I literally stumbled across cultural events—such as festivals, rallies and musical performances—just by virtue of walking out of my house. But perhaps more wonderfully were the nearly daily exchanges I had with people on the street, folks who were happy to discuss politics and history with me without animosity even where there was disagreement. I could not have predicted how much I would learn just from my encounters with average people. My time in the UK was, indeed, the experience of a lifetime.

Link to Research Stories: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ogs_ZAjV5-A

From the Desk of Sonia Lee (DUS)...



Students at IUB this fall have seen a number of exciting new courses and events hosted by our department. Our Visiting Assistant Professor, Yari Cruz Ríos, is teaching a course titled “International Native American & Indigenous Studies”; Assistant Professor Phoebe Wolfskill, who joined us this fall, is teaching the Introduction to American Studies (AMST-A 100) with a visual approach, looking at how images have constructed a distinct “American” national identity.

At the beginning of the fall semester, Paula Cotner and Sonia Lee helped introduce American Studies to the incoming freshmen at the 2018 College Majors Expo. We were also fortunate to have Grace Branham (BA, 2018) join us and help explain how she decided to major in American Studies and how that has shaped her life. Thanks for your generosity, Grace!

Peter Giordano, our academic advisor, helped organize “Justice for All,” on October 18. Students listened to a panel discussion with our very own Prof. Vivian Halloran, along with faculty from other departments to understand how the #MeToo movement, the Black Lives Matter movement, immigration, health care, and LGBTQ rights debates are defining the meanings of social justice today, and how these discussions can train a student toward a successful career path. Thanks for representing us, Prof. Halloran!



On Halloween, we hosted a super fun trick-or-treat/scavenger hunt. Students learned all kinds of fun facts about our faculty’s research. We packed the 6th floor of Ballantine Hall with lively music and conversations as varied as rap music, Arturo Schomburg, zombies, *The Wire*, prison gangs, Afro Deco art, and George Takei!

The scavenger hunt was followed by a film showing of *Texas Chain Saw Massacre* (1974), a classic American horror film, and a discussion about the film with Prof. Maisha Wester. Many thanks to Prof. Wester and Paula Cotner for organizing this incredibly successful and fun event. Students and faculty had a wonderful time getting to know each other.



New Majors!

Isabella Salerno and **Ann Lewandowski** recently declared an American Studies major. Welcome to the Department, Isabella and Ann! We look forward to working with you and learning more about your passions and interests!

UG Alumni News

Kayla McCarthy (BA, '18) published an article in the *Journal of Popular Culture*, titled “Remember Things: Consumerism, Nostalgia, and Geek Culture in Stranger Things.”

Caro Oates (BA, '18) won a Fulbright fellowship to Brazil, where she will be in São Leopoldo at the Universidade do Vale do Rio dos Sinos Letras (UNISINOS) in southern Brazil. She was also accepted to Vanderbilt University to start a Ph.D. program in Learning, Diversity and Urban Studies program.

Congratulations, Kayla and Caro! We are so proud of you!

Micol Seigel—Fulbright in Brazil

Micol Seigel spent August and September in Brazil as the Fulbright Distinguished Chair in International Relations at the University of São Paulo. While at “USP” (pronounced “oos’-pee” by those in the know), Micol taught an undergraduate course on “Race, Class, and the American Prison System.” Through a contact at the Ministry of Penal Administration, Micol met a group of people on work release from prisons across the Paulista metropolitan region, and began meeting and talking with them. Eventually, following the model of the “Inside-Out” course she has taught in Indiana since 2010, Micol combined the group of people on work

torical treasures, burned to the ground due to neglect of its infrastructure and fire safety measures. For the research leading up to her 2009 *Uneven Encounters: Making Race and Nation in Brazil and the United States*, Micol spent time at the Museum. Its loss is truly incalculable.

Micol will return to São Paulo for two more months to complete the position in 2019, and promises to report back again upon her subsequent return.



release with the group of USP students for a series of discussions about US and Brazilian prison conditions. The group discussed trial and incarceration costs (fines and fees), electronic monitoring, policing, and prison reform and abolition; participants found the encounter profoundly moving, even perhaps transformative.

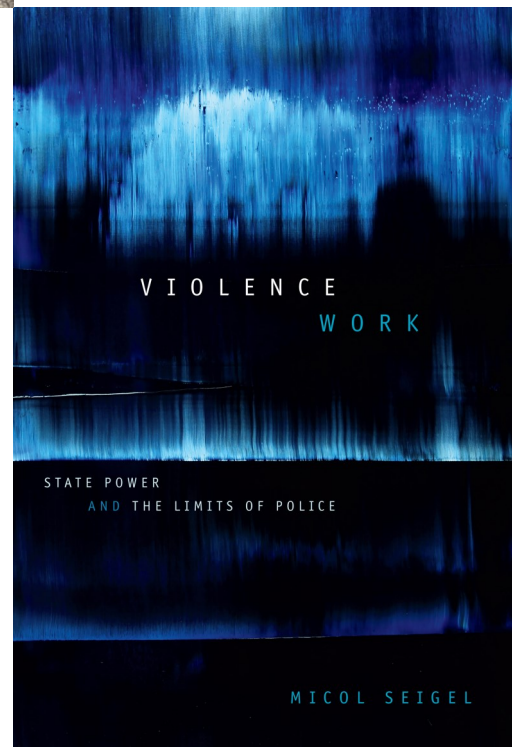
In addition to her teaching, Micol travelled for research and to give talks. She was invited to the University of Bahia in Salvador, the Universidade Federal do Recôncavo da Bahia, the International Conference on Regional Racism at the Universidad Católica del Norte, in Antofagasta, Chile, the bookstore Tapera Taperá in São Paulo, the University of São Paulo, and perhaps most notably, the Rio de Janeiro NGO “Casa das Pretas” (House of Black Women), famous now for being the site of the workshop Councilwoman Marielle Franco led the day of her assassination (a pair of good news articles on Franco are [here](#) and [here](#)). As this convergence suggests, it was a tragic, intense moment to share with Brazilians and others. In addition to the activism around Marielle’s death, people were struggling to bring attention to the military invasion of the *favelas* in Rio de Janeiro, in August heading into its eighth month, and to motivate voters to oppose the fascist candidate for president, who would go on to win the election on October 28. Micol was in Brazil when the [National Museum](#), site of innumerable irreplaceable his-

Violence Work:

State Power and the Limits of Police

Duke Univ. Press 2018

MICOL SEIGEL



Faculty Colloquia



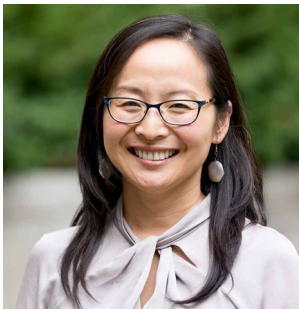
Karen Inouye



Paul Anderson



Micol Seigel



Sonia Lee

Aug 22 **KAREN INOUE** *Indian Given: Racial Geographies across Mexico and the United States*, Josefina Saldaña-Portillo, Duke University Press, 2016 (received the 2017 ASA John Hope Franklin Publication Prize)

Sep 19 **PAUL ANDERSON** “We are Stardust: Joni Mitchell and the Seventies”

Oct 17 **MICOL SEIGEL** *The Resonance of Unseen Things*, Susan Lepselter, University of Michigan Press, 2016

Feb 20 **RASUL MOWATT** *Racecraft: the Soul of Inequity in American Life*, Karen E. Fields & Barbara J. Fields, Verso, 2014

Mar 20 **SONIA LEE** “We Cannot Separate Our Pain from Our Resistance”: Trauma and Political Activism in Black and Brown Freedom Movements.

Rasul Mowatt on the Move!

Professor Mowatt has had a busy travel schedule this academic year accommodating invitations for talks and presenting at refereed conferences in far away places.

- Mowatt, R. A. (2018, October 11). Keynote: *Leisure & Water: The Intersections of Access, Consumption, and Racecraft in the United States*. *Leisure and Recreation Association of South Africa*. University of KwaZulu Natal. Durban, South Africa.
- Mowatt, R. A. (2018, November 3). *Absence in Concept, Absence in Space: The Implications of Park and Public Space Renderings*. 9th International Conference on the Image. Hong Kong Baptist University, Hong Kong.
- Mowatt, R. A. (2018, August 29). *Gendered Histories, Gendered Constraints: The Spirit of Youth and Leisure*. 2018 World Leisure Congress. São Paulo, Brazil.
- Spracklen, K., Kano, S., Nagla, M., & Mowatt, R. A. (2018, July 16). Panel: Power, Violence and Justice: Reflections, Responses and Responsibilities in Leisure and Leisure Studies. Fifth ISA (International Sociological Association) Forum of Sociology, Toronto, CA.
- Mowatt, R.A. (2018, July 11). *Erecting a Definition for a Critical Leisure Studies School of Thought*. 2018 Leisure Studies Association Conference. University of Bath, UK.
- Mowatt, R.A. (2018, July 10). *Tipping Points: The Role of Events and Public Space in Social Change*. 2018 Leisure Studies Association Conference. University of Bath, UK.



GRADUATE STUDENTS

The College of Arts and Sciences Dissertation Completion Fellowship was a great help in wrapping up my final year of the PhD in American Studies. The time off from teaching gave me the opportunity to significantly revise and expand each of the four chapters of my dissertation, *Climate Violence and the Poetics of Refuge*. The process of digging in to each of the chapters, and then articulating, in my introduction and conclusion, the questions that form the throughline of the project, led to a dissertation that felt closer to being a book manuscript than I would have imagined at the beginning of this year. I'm leaving the program energized to bring it out into the world, where I hope it will contribute to conversations about climate change, narrative, and justice, in an environmentally unstable world.

The Fellowship also gave me the opportunity to mentor a few former students of mine in their own explorations of power, politics, and categories of identity, including one of our own American Studies students who was accepted to a Ph.D. program in Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. I was also able to continue my work at Earth Eats, doing stories about food culture and justice, and expanding my audio skills, which I plan to employ in public humanities projects around climate change. The work at Earth Eats has also led to a position teaching Intro to Podcasting this fall at the Media School. In general, it's been a satisfying year, and the COLL Fellowship has been a big part of that.



ALEX CHAMBERS



GISELLE CUNANAN

I received the University Graduate School's President's Diversity Dissertation Fellowship for the 2018-2019 school year and spent the year in California doing participant observation and interviews with students, faculty, and grassroots organizers who work towards institutionalizing Ethnic Studies at the K-12 and university levels. I worked closely with the #EthnicStudiesNow movements in southern California and attended public meetings at the Department of Education in Sacramento, observing the development of the Ethnic Studies Model Core Curriculum for the state. In addition, I assisted in the creation of a new Ethnic Studies minor at her alma mater, Gonzaga University, working as a consultant and serving on the alumni advisory board. I was also the keynote speaker for the 2018 Pacific Northwest Students of Color Conference hosted at Gonzaga in Spokane, Washington.

Cont'd from page 6

The culmination of my dissertation research and praxis resulted in a conference paper that she presented at the California chapter of the American Studies Association in April 2019. This sets me up to present the latest developments of my dissertation project at the larger American Studies Association annual meeting in Honolulu, Hawai'i later this year. She concludes the semester presenting a paper at the Filipinx Studies Research conference at the new Carlos Bulosan Research Center at UC Davis where I continue other work on the afterlives of empire. I received several research grants at the end of this spring semester and will continue my dissertation research and writing with the support of the College of Arts & Sciences Dissertation Research Fellowship for the 2019-2020 school year.

"A Second Skin: Garments and Globalization"

by Oslo Brewster

Virginia LaFollette Gunderson Award

The Department of American Studies is pleased to award Oslo Brewster the Virginia LaFollette Gunderson Award for 2019 based on the dissertation chapter, "A Second Skin: Garments and Globalization". Established in memory of Virginia LaFollette Gunderson, this award recognizes the best dissertation chapter written by a current American Studies doctoral candidate. Award recipients of the prestigious Gunderson Award Competition receive \$4,000 as an acknowledgment of their emerging scholarship. Please join us in our acknowledgement of Oslo and wishing continued success in work that contributes to American Studies as a field.



OSLO BREWSTER

Doctoral candidate, **MORGANE FLAHAULT** (combined PhD student in Comparative Literature and American Studies), received two travel awards this semester for her paper "Generic Blending and Gender Bending in Jeffrey Eugenides' *Middlesex*". The monies from American Studies and the College Graduate Office helped fund her trip to Bellingham, Washington, where she presented at the 116 Annual Pacific Ancient and Modern Language Association (PAMLA), Conference at Western Washington University held November 9-11, 2018. Congratulations!

"ACTING, ROLES, STAGES"



DR. LAILA AMINE joins the English Department at the University of Wisconsin-Madison as a scholar of Global Black Studies beginning fall 2018. Dr. Amine, born and raised in France, wrote *Postcolonial Paris: Fictions of Intimacy in the City of Light* (Africa and the Diaspora: History, Politics, Culture) published by the University of Wisconsin Press (June 2018). She completed her PhD degree (American Studies and Comparative Literature) in 2011.

AMST Graduates 2018-2019

Alex Chambers — Major, American Studies 5/3/2019

Joshua Robinson — Major, Theatre and Drama 4/30/2019

Courtney Foster — Major, English 12/15/2018

Joshua Vasquez — Major, Communication and Culture
12/15/2018

Betsy Pease — Major, History 11/30/2018

Nzingha Kendall — Major, American Studies 7/27/2018

Andrew Monteith — Major, Religious Studies 7/27/2018

Professor Phoebe Wolfskill Honored by IU Trustees



In spring 2019, **PHOEBE WOLFSKILL** was awarded a Trustees Teaching Award through IU's Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs. This award honors outstanding teaching, particularly for undergraduate courses.



Photo by Anna Teeter

Fall 2018 AMST-A 100 "What is America?"

Professor Wolfskill took a visual approach to the question "What is America?" by considering how art and other images have served to construct national identity and visited the Lilly Library with her students.

AMST Faculty and Alum at ASA

ASA @ Westin Peachtree Plaza — Atlanta, GA



November 8—11, 2018 States of Emergence

Paper presentations by AMST faculty:

VIVIAN HALLORAN

Devastated Paradise vs Hordes of Climate Migrants: The Rhetoric of Hurricanes and Climate Change in the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico

MICOL SEIGEL

Violent Exchanges between the Police and the Military after World War II

PHOEBE WOLFSKILL

Blackness and Non-Iconicity in FSA Photography



AMST Spring 2018 Graduates...

Presenters @ ASA

November 8 - 11, 2018 Atlanta, GA

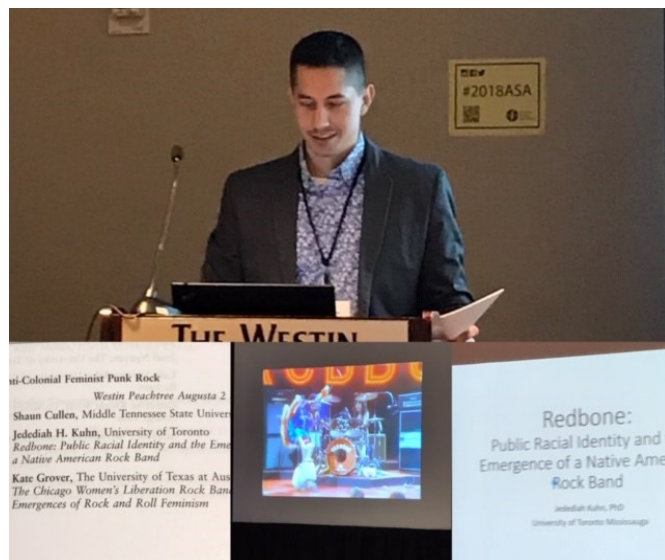
The theme for the 2018 annual meeting emphasizes that our sense of crisis must be thought alongside our commitment to challenging the calamities and producing alternative—indeed better—worlds. How should we analyze the current state of emergency or crisis? And how does conceiving emergence as constitutive to emergency change what the emergency is?

JORDACHE ELLAPEN, University of Toronto

“Towards an Aesthetic of Pleasure: Black Queer Sex and the Politics of Disruption”

JED KUHN, University of Toronto

“Redbone: Public Racial Identity and the Emergence of a Native American Rock Band”



2019 ASA Annual Meeting

Honolulu, Hawaii November 7-10

The theme for the 2019 American Studies Association annual meeting — “Build As We Fight” — seeks to create space for the multiplicity of political critiques, imaginaries, and actions created by Indigenous peoples and communities of color in response to the threats of authoritarianism, genocide, dispossession, and extractive capitalism.

Nationalism. Borders. Personhood.

A Critical Ethnic Studies Symposium

February 6 - 8 IU Bloomington



This February 2019 symposium was a collaboration of the Critical Ethnic Studies working group comprised of scholars in the Departments of American Studies, African-American and African Diaspora Studies, Gender Studies, Geography, Recreation, Park, and Tourism Studies, and Spanish and Portuguese. It explored nationalism, borders, and personhood through an interdisciplinary lens.

Wednesday

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Reception & Opening Keynote



Itza Amanda Varela-Huerta

“Politics in the Feminine:
Participation and Representation
among AfroMexican Women, a
Contemporary Agenda”

Thursday

9:30 AM - 4:00 PM

Research Talks & Second Keynote



Anita Huizar Hernandez

“Forging Borders and Bodies:
Counterfeiting Narratives of Na-
tional Belonging”

Friday

8:45 AM - 3:00 PM

Lightning Talks & Closing Keynote



Daniel Nemser

“The Road to Racial Capitalism:
Logistics and Fugitivity in Colonial
Mexico”

Winter Books Celebration



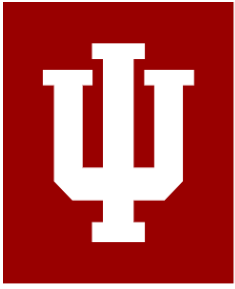
Jason Peifer, Shane Vogel, Paul Anderson, Lessie Frazier



Alex Chambers, Paul Anderson



Phoebe Wolfskill, Micol Seigel



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