MAST Faculty/Student Accomplishments

LeeAnn Land’s new book released in November 2009
The Culture of Property: Race, Class, and Housing Landscapes in Atlanta, 1880-1950
(Politics and Culture in the Twentieth-Century South)
LeeAnn was also named as a finalist for the CHSS Foundation Prize which will be announced in Aug.

Linda Niemann’s new book was released in April 2010
Railroad Noir: The American West at the End of the Twentieth Century

Rian Satterwhite wrote a chapter in this book:

CHSS Faculty Scholarship Program Winners - 2010 - 2011
Beth Giddens - This project explores the uses and consequences of metaphors of growth in the context of the rhetoric surrounding the establishment, development, and maintenance of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park since the beginning of the twentieth century. The proposal includes support for travel to archives in libraries in North Carolina and Tennessee, travel to an important international conference on the relationship between environmental and cultural change, and a course release for fall 2010 to allow for sufficient time to research and write two articles and/or book chapters and a book proposal, and to explore subsequent external support for the project.

Ken Maffitt - This project will fund travel to Mexico in July 2010 and student assistance during fall 2010 for research related to my book manuscript, Metropolitan Workers: Popular Identity and Citizenship in Mexico City’s Industrial Suburbs 1945-1985. The summer research will enable me to complete portions of the manuscript which will be submitted to academic presses. Findings will also serve as the basis for an article length study of one neighborhood where conflict over urban problems was particularly intense. This would also enable fieldwork to be completed on a long-term project that integrates the theoretical concerns and methodological goals of my two fields: History and American Studies.

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The MA in American Studies Program
Crossing boundaries, Building community, Engaging culture

The MAST Program Announces the New Director of the MAST Program
Welcome Rebecca Hill!

Rebecca Hill has a PhD in American Studies from the University of Minnesota with a Graduate minor in Feminist Studies. Her B.A. was in history from Wesleyan University (CT). Her work on the history and culture of the American left has been published in The New Left Review, Radical Teacher, and the Journal of the History of American Communism. Her book, Men, Mobs and Law: Defense Campaigns and U.S. Radical History was issued by Duke University Press (2008). She has been an active member of the American Studies Association (ASA) since 1993.

Rebecca joins us at KSU after eight years at the Borough of Manhattan Community College, a part of the City University of New York, where she was also the chair of the campus chapter of the faculty union from 2008-2010.

Despite her fondness for Brooklyn and occasional use of Yiddish phrases, Dr. Hill is not actually a Yankee by birth, and although she is a fan of John Brown, she did not bring her carpet-bag on the trip to Kennesaw. She is originally from Austin, Texas, lived for a year in Athens, and spent six important teen-aged years in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, before leaving for college in the North East.

Dr. Hill first became interested in the field of American Studies while looking for ways to explain the women’s page of the Communist Party’s newspaper, The Daily Worker, and read more in the field during the big semiotics wave of the 1980s. As a graduate student, she continued to study theoretical and philosophical literature while doing archival research on the history of the American left. As a graduate student, she maintained an interest in theoretical and philosophical literature while doing archival research on the history of the American left. In her book, Men, Mobs and Law, which was influenced by her participation in the Critical Resistance movement, she continued to study American communism and socialism, but expanded her lens to include abolitionism, anarchism, and Black nationalism.

She is currently finishing work on a paper on the history of New York City police and New York State prison guards during the economic downturn and political shift to the right of the 1970s and beginning a new project on the NAACP’s death penalty defense campaigns of 1919-1941 with the working title “Under the Shadow of Scottsboro.”
Welcome to the New MAST Students

Ann Burkly graduated from KSU with a B.A. in History which is when she also interned with the Atlanta History Center and the Marietta Cobb Museum of Art. Ann also has a strong interest in library information systems and was studying Library Information Systems on a graduate level at the University of Southern Mississippi before applying to MAST.

Richard Essenburg graduated in spring from KSU with a B.A. in English with a Professional Writing minor. He currently serves on the editorial board of the Taron Magazine and has taken advantage of several study abroad opportunities, including the Center for the Study of the Americas at the University of Graz, Austria. Richie said, “This experience in particular proved to be especially constructive in forming my goals for the future and my academic focus in American Studies.”

Pamela Needham graduated from Georgia College and State University with a B.A. in History with a minor in Political Science. Pamela said, “It is my major goal to earn my PhD and to write an interesting and groundbreaking dissertation on some aspect of the American legal system. Not only do I want to write about both history and political science, but I also hope to one day teach others to find a love of history and political science.”

Judith Obiufoma graduated from Ohio State University with a B.A. in African American Studies. While in college, she interned as a group worker at a settlement house in the midst of Columbus’ disadvantaged neighborhoods. Judith said, “My dream job is to work in the school system and ultimately work for the Dept. of Education. ... It is my goal to use my experience and background in African American Studies to research and focus on how high school teachers and administrators can better prepare students for post secondary education.”

Paul Pritchett graduated from KSU with a BA in History with a minor in Film Studies. Paul said, “From the time I was very young I was uniquely fascinated by the motion picture and other audio visual mediums and that class sent me back to the first time I saw Pinocchio. As the class drew to a close it became evident to me where it was that I wanted my college experience to lead; to study film and teach it at the college level.”

Ashley-Grace Ramocan graduated from Shorter College with a B.A. degree in English. Ashley-Grace combines her love of culture with her skills as a New Media Journalist and Producer for the Rome News-Tribune. She said, “I see myself as a graduate student who is willing to transcend the traditional role of student and become a learner who actively seeks to apply information to better society, whether through telling a good story or lending my hand to communities who seek to resolve and reconcile their cultural identities with the American tradition and ideal. ... I look forward to completing your program to further my goal of becoming an influential storyteller and American scholar.”

Erica Satterfield graduated from KSU with a BBA in Marketing from the Coles College of Business. Erica said, “Professionally I aspire to work in the field of diversity either in the field of academia or in a Human Resource capacity in the private sector. Ensuring that people of various ethnicity, religion, and sexual orientation are treated fairly and with respect in the academic and professional environment will be a top priority no matter the field.”

Margaret Scott graduated from KSU with a BA in History and a minor in Anthropology. Maggie currently works with the Institute for Global Initiatives at KSU and said, “...I interact daily with students from a variety of cultures, education abroad students who are going to study in other countries, and international students studying at KSU.” Maggie has a strong interest in the Native American culture.

Grace Santamaría graduated from KSU with a BA in Spanish. She currently teaches at Chattahoochee Tech in the horticulture program and in the Spanish for Allied Health Program. Grace assists students as a facilitator in the AID TANF program.

Juan Trejo graduated from KSU with a B.A. in History with a concentration in World History. He is actively involved in his community volunteering with MUST Ministries, an animal shelter and at his church. Juan said, “My future goals are to teach high school U.S. History and World History classes. I am also interested in working for the federal government at an embassy abroad or for the U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security. ... I believe with a MA degree I can be better prepared to teach high school and to help students become more motivated in choosing education as their future.”

Rebecca VanDemark has an MPA degree from Regent University (VA) and a certificate from the American University in Women and International Human Rights Law. Rebecca said, “I have practical experience as a teacher, cheerleading coach, volunteer, and as a program coordinator for the Match Grant Program at Lutheran Social Services. This last thing introduced me to working with sex-trafficking victims and refugee torture victims.”

Lindsey Weber is an Accelerated BA/MA student obtaining BA in English from KSU. “I work with a couple of nonprofits, concerning sex trafficking and promoting unity in cities. ... I want to write about my experiences with these nonprofits to raise public awareness and promote their respective causes.”

Nikkeshia Wilson graduated from KSU with a BA in Modern Language and Culture. She has taken advantage of study abroad opportunities in Mexico, Peru, and Argentina. Nikkeshia says she’s “an American culture fanatic.... My ultimate goal in pursuing American Studies is to specialize in the cultures of Spanish-speaking countries, multi-racial studies, and festivals throughout the Americas.”

Learning about Georgia’s Mayan Culture by Mandy McGrew

On April 1, 2010, the Maya Heritage Community Project sponsored a talk given by Juanatano Cano—a Native American Mayan leader from Los Angeles who works with Pastoral Maya, a national organization affiliated with the Catholic Church. Juanatano came to KSU to share his story and the story of the Maya people. Over fifty students and faculty listened as Juanatano described the conditions in Guatemala during the long civil war. From the 1960s to the 1990s, the Guatemalan military and various guerilla groups fought for control of the country and the indigenous Maya were caught in the middle.

Juanatano told the story of the night his uncle was taken from the family’s home by a group of men. The family later found him decapitated in the forest. The fear and desperation Juanatano felt after this experience fueled his desire to escape the horrors around him. But he was also inspired. He remembers that as a child, he looked at the sky and saw a shiny object and asked his mother, “What is that?” She told him that it was an airplane and that “there were people in there.” It was then that he decided—someday he would be one of those people in the sky.

Juanatano Cano’s heartfelt plea for compassion and empathy brought attention to the plight of the Maya in the United States, where they struggle to retain their cultural identity as Native Americans. The Maya Heritage Community Project (MHCP) at KSU was created in 2001 as a service learning project that studies and assists the local Maya community. The MHCP is a small organization that works with the Maya community in Canton, GA, and the organization Pastoral Maya. In the past nine years, director Dr. Alan LeBaron has formed and maintained relationships with the Maya leadership in Canton and around the nation. During Juanatano’s visit, the Maya community in Canton organized and filmed a preliminary documentary showing Maya children in the United States speaking their native indigenous language. As part of my assistantship, I am working to help these children, most of whom are U.S. citizens, succeed in school despite the many challenges they face. They are often misidentified in school as Hispanic and may be taught as ESL students whose first language is Spanish. However, these children often speak only their native Mayan language in the home before beginning school—not Spanish at all. Creating and implementing a program to help teachers and students work through these issues is imperative. Currently, the MHCP, along with Dr. LeBaron, the Peace Corps Fellows, and I, are developing relationships with teachers, KSU education students, and Maya families to begin work on this very important project.