

MAST Faculty/Student Accomplishments

Congrats to Mandy McGrew who was recently named the 2010-2011 Outstanding MAST Student.

Dr. Alan LeBaron said "Mandy's academic success with the Maya Project would not be possible without her ability to connect to the Maya, such that they believe her sincerity. Her success with research was exemplary; but more rare was her ability to achieve true dialog with her Maya partners. Some experienced scholars never achieve true dialog, as overcoming the position of the maternal/paternal colonizer takes skills and sincerity beyond the academic. By this dual process of skills, the academic and the personal, she is qualified for her chosen fields to include Applied Anthropology, and other fields that demand equal partnerships with the people of research."

Wende Ballew, who will graduate in May 2011, has been accepted by the American Studies PhD program at the University of Kansas, Lawrence. Congrats, Wende!

Noah Echols was just named one of the Top 50 Most Creative Atlantans by readers of the magazine *CommonCreativ*.

Emily Fox will graduate from the MAST Program in May 2011.

Dr. Anne Richards' book was just released: *Complex Worlds: Digital Culture, Rhetoric, and Professional Communication*. Anne will be teaching in the MAST Program in the fall (AMST 7320: America in Transnational Context: Muslims in America)

Rian Satterwhite will present his paper: *Sustainable Leadership: The History and Implications of an Emerging Consciousness* at the American College Personnel Association in Baltimore.

ALUMNI UPDATE :

Kyra Whitton.

Kyra graduated in December, 2010 and moved immediately to Washington State, where her husband, Steve, is stationed with the Army.



Endelyn!

Dates to Remember

Summer Registration: March 21 - May 2, Final Registration: May 12-May 26

Fall Registration: April 4 - May 26 Final Registration: August 15-16

Last day to petition to graduate in December is: JULY 1, 2011!

March/ April 2011

The MA in American Studies Program

Sam Quinones, LA Times

April 12, 2011 6:30 - 9:15 p.m.
Room 1000 - Prillaman Hall

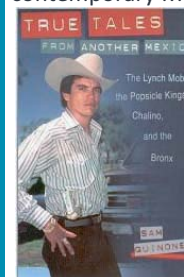


Sam Quinones currently writes on immigration, gangs, and drug-trafficking for the Los Angeles Times. He is the author of two books of non-

fiction: *True Tales From Another Mexico: The Lynch Mob, the Popsicle Kings, Chalino and the Bronx* based on his experiences while living in Mexico, and *Antonio's Gun and Delfino's Dream: True Tales of Mexican Migration* about contemporary immigrant experiences in the U.S. He spent the 1990s reporting on life in Mexico, for which he won the Alicia Patterson Fellowship.

In 2008, Quinones won the prestigious Columbia School of Journalism's Cabot Prize for excellence in reporting on Latin America.

During his years as a reporter, Quinones has spent time with gang members and governors, walking in the headquarters of the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) and the slums of Eastern Mexico City. He has hung out with the street taco vendors, Los Tigres del Norte, polygamous Mormons, Drag Queens, and many others who make up contemporary Mexico and the U.S. Mexico Border.



Quinones is presenting a *True Tales!* writers workshop on 4/13 at Kavarna Coffee Shop 707 E Lake Dr, Decatur



Georgia Writers Association

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Boundaries

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Dr. Melissa Checker Speaks to AMST Students & Faculty March 17, 2010



Dr. Checker

Anthropologist Melissa Checker spoke about her book *Polluted Promises: Environmental Racism and the Search for Justice in a Southern Town* at Kennesaw on March 17, 2011.

HAPIC activists Arthur Smith and Reverend Charles Utley who were members of the group Checker studied joined her in Atlanta for a panel at Project South the following day. In addition to the Hyde Park activists, KSU professor, Stacy Keltner and student Gaudie Cheeks of Think!Action! were on the panel to discuss social engagement in the classroom. The group had a lively discussion about the meaning of socially engaged scholarship and teaching.

These events were sponsored by: American Studies (Undergraduate and MA), Dept. of Geography and Anthropology, Imagining America at KSU, and Peace Studies.

Summer MAST Course Offerings

AMST 7200: American Cultural Movements: The 1st Amendment in American Media (8 weeks) Josh Azriel, T/TH 1:00 3:45 pm

This course analyzes the historic role the First Amendment has played in American Media. We define American media as newspapers, magazines, radio, television, film and Internet. This begins with the philosophical underpinnings of the First Amendment and ends with the role it plays in today's contemporary use of the Internet. Students will learn the origins of the First Amendment, the role the US Supreme Court has played in determining its applicability to different forms of media and how technology affects how we can interpret the law.

AMST 7410: Literature and Performance in American Culture: Thomas Merton: Writer, Monk, & Social Activist (8 weeks) David King, M/W 5:00 8:45 pm

In the more than 40 years since his death, Thomas Merton's reputation as a gifted writer, monk, and social activist has continued to grow. Merton's work has never been more available, and the wealth of excellent scholarship associated with his writing has continued to attract the attention of a secular audience. In its growing desire for contemplation, peace, and solitude, this new audience represents perhaps Merton's ideal reader. This graduate course will place Merton in a variety of American contexts: as part of the American contemplative tradition; as a member of the 20th Century Catholic Literary Renaissance; as a product of the Beat Generation; and as a remarkable social activist, who from his position as a cloistered Trappist monk, served as both conscience and compass for the generation of Americans who came of age during the Cold War and Civil Rights eras. It will feature a visit from the founding editor of the Thomas Merton Annual, the foremost journal on Merton studies.

AMST 7500: PRACTICUM (Internship or Applied Research Project) & AMST 7900 Capstone

Human Rights in the Americas

By Dr. Kenneth Maffitt, Assistant Professor of History and American Studies.



In the Master's Program in American Studies at KSU, we talk a lot about "engaged" learning and scholarship. This means that we are interested in exploring connections between the topics we are researching and studying and the concerns of the world beyond the university. In my fall 2010 course, AMST 7320, Human Rights in the Americas and the World, I felt it was especially important to raise this issue.

While reading about topics such as genocide, human trafficking, poverty, and persecution of immigrants, it is natural for one to wonder what can or should be done. To provide students with a forum to explore such questions, I divided them into what I called "Save the World" groups and asked them to, as a group, take one concrete action of their choice on an issue of their choice. The name for the groups was facetious, of course. In fact, I really had no expectations for what the students would do; I just wanted them to begin to take steps to develop their own notions of engaged scholarship in the area of human rights.

As it turned out, the students took the assignment very seriously. I was impressed that all of the efforts were ambitious and anchored by a desire to do something that was unique and not ephemeral. One group chose to work with an alternative high school in Marietta that enrolls many underprivileged students; a second group spent the semester blogging on the meaning of human rights-sensitive consumption; a third explored the role of social media in sharing information about sex trafficking; and a fourth attempted to start a new human rights group on campus.

The work of the first group, consisting of Emily Dolezal, Jessica Killcreas, Pamela Needham, and Chris Smith, is worth highlighting, in part because, like many successful groups, they had to overcome a rough start. They rejected several ideas as too time consuming or too ambitious; on the other hand they passed over several for being too boring and limited. They finally decided to work with Oakwood High, an alternative school in Marietta. Part of their approach involved simply asking Oakwood officials what relatively simple thing they could do for the school. Teacher Noel Majors replied that students who are also parents have particularly urgent needs, so the MAST group went to work collecting donations.

"We ended up with six large boxes of children's clothing, a bag of coats, a bag of shoes and hats, blankets, and even some clothes for the moms..." Killcreas said. "The items we collected will benefit at least thirteen infants and toddlers of [the] students."

Not satisfied with merely being generous, the group also put together a classroom lesson plan on human rights, which Killcreas presented to two classes, which discussed the material enthusiastically.

Reflecting on her participation in her group's blog on consumption and human rights, Mandy McGrew nicely summed up the "engagement" component of the class. "I got a lot of feedback from friends and family who don't usually participate in these discussions," she said. "I wasn't just sitting in the classroom talking about it. I was teaching the wider community."



Jessica Killcreas teaching a human rights lesson