Dr. Griselda Thomas is jointly appointed in the Departments of English and Interdisciplinary Studies. Her research and teaching interests include contemporary fiction by Black women writers, twenty-first century film and media representations of Black women, Black feminist studies, cultural influences in African American communities, and trauma studies. Her African American literature courses are often cross-listed by English with African and African Diaspora Studies (AADS), Gender and Women's Studies (GWST), and American Studies (AMST).

This fall, Dr. Thomas will be teaching AMST 7460: Movements in American Culture. This interdisciplinary seminar will explore the current discourse concerning the role of the media in enabling, facilitating, or challenging the social constructions of the Black female body. With a focus on the intersection of race, class, gender, and sexuality, the course will examine historical and contemporary representations of Black women in the various mediums that serve to construct what is known as “popular culture.” Through the lens of Black Feminist Studies, Cultural Studies, and Literary Studies, the course looks at the historical relationship of African American women to mainstream culture through a critical examination of “popular” representations of Black women; analyzes the production and consumption of such representations; and further explores the ways these processes influence basic assumptions about social roles. The course will be offered in the fall semester on Thursday evenings from 6:30 to 9:15 PM.

Important Dates

**July 1:** Last Day to Petition to Graduate in Fall 2014  
**July 1:** Final Deadline for Fall 2014 MAST Applications  
**July 29:** Summer 2014 Graduation  
**August 14:** Final Day to Register for Fall 2014 Classes  
**August 18:** First Day of Fall 2014 Classes  
**August 18-24:** Drop/Add for Fall 2014 Classes  
**September 20:** Year of the Arabian Peninsula Day - University Place Amphitheatre  
**November 1:** Last Day to Petition to Graduate in Spring 2015  
**November 24-30:** Fall Break - No Classes  
**December 1:** Final Deadline for Spring 2015 MAST Applications  
**December 16:** Fall 2014 Graduation  

**February 19-22, 2015**

SASA encourages presentations, workshops, roundtables, and performance pieces that address the theme of Reconstruction, as well as topics that reflect the richness of American Studies.

Possible topics include but are not limited to:
- Considerations of W.E.B. DuBois’s *Black Reconstruction*
- Historical and/or cultural studies of Black resistance
- Queer Movements, Reconstruction, and Civil Rights
- Immigrant labor, communities, and Southern identity
- Teaching Reconstruction, Civil Rights, & the Immigration Act
- Ghost stories and ghost tours in the South
- Projects addressing the history, geography, and culture of Atlanta

Send 2-3 page session proposals and/or one-page individual paper abstracts and CVs to SASA2015@kennesaw.edu. The deadline for submissions is Friday, September 12, 2014.

www.southernamericanstudiesassociation.org
Mast Student Achievements

Students in the MA Program in American Studies are hard at work. Below is a list of their accomplishments in the 2013-2014 academic year. Congratulations!

Dudgick Bevins has accepted an offer to teach at the Harlem campus of Democracy Prep Charter High School in New York City. The school focuses on creating socially engaged citizens. They are excited to welcome Dudgick and the skills he has gained through his work with Alan LeBaron and the Maya Heritage Project as well as with Ugena Whitlock and the exploration of LGBT families.

Ann Burksley served as President of the McNeil Island Historical Society. In this role, she contacted state representatives and senators and encouraged them to support a State National Maritime Heritage Area designation for Washington coastal communities. She was also invited to speak with a University of Washington Landscape Architecture Urban Design class that toured McNeil Island.

Christine Debord presented a paper titled “Pacifist Fighters: Muhammad Ali and the Vlification of African American Dissent during the Vietnam Era” at the AADS Conference at Kennesaw State University.

David Galban received a Graduate Certificate in Leadership and Ethics from the Siegel Institute. He focused on commonalities and differences among global cultures, the impact of religion on culture, and theories and practices of leadership in a global world.

Rob Hadaway completed an internship with the Atlanta History Center where he worked with the Smith Family Farm, a Civil War-era farm that includes actors who portray characters from the time period. Much of his internship focused on the training of actors for their roles in the exhibit, including a group of adolescent actors who interned in the summer months.

Blaine McCarty served as co-president of the American Studies Student Organization (AMSTO) and helped coordinate the Unconventional Wisdom Student Symposium. He also hosted a successful Pop Culture Chat that focused on Beyoncé and feminism.

Aajay Murphy was hired by the Horace W. Sturgis Library at KSU as a Communications Specialist.

Yen Rodriguez served as the President of the Graduate Student Association at KSU and became the first student to receive the ROH Social Justice Award from the Presidential Commission on Racial and Ethnic Dialogue. He also published an essay titled “Cut from the Same Cloth” in Muslims in Popular Culture and recently accepted a position as a Leadership Coordinator in the Center for Student Leadership.

Vanessa Schill presented a talk titled “Remodeling Disney Princesses Through Participatory Culture in the Gender, Race, and Media Course” at the Western States Communication Association Conference in Anaheim, California. She was also recently hired as a Part-Time Instructor in the Department of Communication at Kennesaw State University.

Lynne Tipton served as a research assistant for author Melissa Beck, who is writing an Arcadia History Book to be completed in August 2014. The book features the history of the Louisvile and Nashville Railroad.

After completing her American Studies practicum with KSU Sports Marketing, Emmie Trull was offered a position as an Administrative Associate in Student-Athlete Success Services at Kennesaw State University.

Sean Watkins was hired as a Part-Time Adjunct Professor in the Department of First-Year and Transition Studies and will be teaching a student-engagement course for freshmen.

Christi Williams will receive her Master Naturalist certification this summer from the Department of Natural Resources in conjunction with the School of Forestry at UGA. She started this as a result of her MAST practicum with the Yellowstone Institute last summer.

Faculty News and Publications

Regina Bradley published “Kanye West’s [Hip Hop] Sonic Cosmopolitanism” in The Cultural Impact of Kanye West and started the “Outkasted Conversations” project. This critical dialogue series features scholars, fans, and artists who discuss the significance of Outkast’s music and spirit in how we understand Black American popular culture. The project has been featured and praised in The New York Times, Huffington Post Live, Ebony Magazine, and others.

Jane Barnette accepted a position at the University of Kansas and will be leaving KSU. Congratulations Jane!

Rebecca Hill, Director of the MAST Program, gave an invited talk as part of a lecture series titled “Created Equal” at Salem State University. She gave presentations at the Society of Utopian Studies and at the Organization of American Historians and her chapter titled “The History of the Smith Act and the Hatch Act: Anti-Communism and the Rise of the Conservative Coalition in Congress” was published in Little Red Scares: Anti-Communism and Political Repression in the United States, 1921-1946. She was also elected to the editorial board of the American Studies Journal and was elected co-chair of the American Studies Association Committee on Programs, Centers, and Departments.

David King’s book titled Marcescence: Poems from Gahneesah will be released on September 6th by Finishing Line Press. The book commemorates the 150th anniversary of the battles in the Atlanta Campaign and affirms the enduring importance of both place and past.

Alan LeBaron co-edited the journal Norteamérica Revista Académica, which is published at the National University of Mexico and co-wrote the introductory essay titled “The 2013 Immigration Reform that Wasn’t”. He also received two grants for work on the Maya Heritage Community Project, one to create a project with Cherokee High School and the other to establish a “transnational” internship in Guatemala.


Rooting for the Home Team, an anthology published by University of Illinois Press to which Catherine Lewis contributed a chapter, has won the North American Society for Sport History Book Award for Best Anthology. Dr. Lewis’s article is entitled “Bobby Jones, Southern Identity, and the Preservation of Privilege”.

Kenneth Maffitt published “Nueva política social, viejo contrato social: Políticas de vivienda y protesta urbana en la periferia de la Ciudad de México, 1960s-1980s” in Revista Historia in Chile.

Dan Paracka, Director of Academic Initiatives, helped develop the 2014-2015 Year of the Arabian Peninsula. Events include a conference titled Women of Oman: Changing Roles and Transnational Influence, a lecture by Gabriel Said Reynolds from the University of Notre Dame titled “Islamic Origins and the Koran,” as well as a participatory event titled “Hijab for a Day”.