Fall 2016 Courses

AMST 7000: American Studies Scholarship
Dr. Rebecca Hill, Tuesdays, 6:30-9:15pm
This course explores a variety of themes, theoretical influences, and methodological approaches currently alive in American Studies and its related disciplinary fields. Particular emphasis is placed on the current controversies and scholarship focused on race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality. The course is organized around broad thematic concepts, with attention to global perspectives. The course introduces some basic conceptual building blocks in the field, as well as explores some of the historical development of American Studies.

AMST 7200: American Social Movements
Dr. Robbie Lieberman, Wednesdays, 5:00-7:45pm
This course is focused on the history and culture of U.S. social movements in the twentieth century. We will look closely at how movements organized and to what ends, how they expressed themselves and tried to live out their values, and what sort of lasting impact they had. Students will be exposed to current theories, methods and sources employed by scholars that change our view of these movements. They will also be encouraged to consider the relationship of various movements to each other across time and space, including movements that are active in our own time.

AMST 7310: Regional Studies – Women in the West
Dr. Kay Reeve, Thursdays, 6:30-9:15pm
The American West has often been portrayed in popular culture as the domain of strong men and helpless women, a view of the West dubbed a “hisland” by historian Susan Armitage. This course will explore both the stereotypes and the actual lived experiences of women in the American West, including the interactions of women of differing racial and cultural backgrounds with one another and with the land and the environment—i.e. the place -- that is defined as the American West.

AMST 7410: Literature and Performance in American Culture – Performance and the Black Female Body
Dr. Griselda Thomas, Mondays 5:00-7:45pm
This interdisciplinary seminar explores the current discourse concerning the role of the media in enabling, facilitating, or challenging the social constructions of the Black body. With a focus on the intersection of race, class, gender and sexuality, students will examine historical and contemporary representations of Black women in the various performance mediums that serve to construct what is known as “popular culture.” Through the lens of Literature, Black Feminist Studies, and Cultural Studies, the course looks at the historical relationship between African American women and 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 and race.

AMST 7700: Practicum – Internship or Applied Research Project
AMST 7900: Capstone Experience

Graduate Student News

Stefanos Milkidis has had a very busy semester presenting his research across the region. In February, he presented "Towards Queer Liberation: Remembering the Riots Before Stonewall" at the 28th Annual Graduate History Forum, “Repairing the Troubled Past,” at University of North Carolina in Charlotte. This paper was also delivered at the AMSTO Student Research Symposium in March. Also in March, Stefanos presented, “Reconstructing the Queer Past: Memory and Historical Consciousness in the Post-Gay Liberation Era,” at the 8th Annual Southeast Regional Graduate Conference at Florida State University. Speaking of the opportunity, Stefanos said: “Presenters from all over the country examined aftermaths and new beginnings, and investigated how individuals, societies, ideas, and boundaries evolve throughout time. It was a great experience for me to participate and meet faculty and students from a variety of doctoral programs.”


Tanya Brinkley presented her paper, “Faux Feminist: A Retired Army Officer’s Auto-Ethnographic Study in Feminism,” at the 2016 Southeastern Women’s Studies Association at Winthrop University in Rock Hill, South Carolina.

Aajay Murphy won the February Staff Member of the Month award for his exceptional work as the editor of Kennesaw State University’s Digital Commons.
On March 9th, the American Studies Student Organization (AMSTO) hosted the second MAST graduate student research symposium, following the successful “Unconventional Wisdom Symposium” in spring of 2014.

Co-presidents Tanya Brinkley and Stephanie Craven wished to capture the innovative and eclectic research taking place in American Studies scholarship, especially within the MAST program. The title of this year’s event, “American Studies: A Showcase of the Possibilities of Interdisciplinarity,” communicates this wish. The event consisted of student research panels, a “Chat-n-Chew Speedy Research Mingle,” and a keynote lecture by American Studies scholar Donald Pease.

Several MAST students and alumni presented their work. The first panel of the morning took its name from the title of the symposium, providing “A Showcase of Possibilities.” This panel, moderated by Robbie Lieberman, Chair of the Interdisciplinary Studies Department, featured Camille Kleidysz, “From We Real Cool to Hip-Hop: The Second Wave of the Black Arts Movement,” highlighting the role of black female poets in the construction of the hip-hop movement; Stefanos Milkidis, “Towards Queer Liberation: Remembering the Riots Before Stonewall,” calling upon historians to refrain from minimizing the struggles of gay activists before the famous Stonewall Riots; and, Naznin Sultana, “Bangladeshi Muslims in Atlanta: A Study of Islam and Islamaphobia in the American Society,” an ethnographic exploration of Bangladeshi Muslim identity in the face of growing Islamaphobia; and, Anna Tussey, “Neoliberalism, Nationalism, and the Columbus Narrative: Understanding the impact of ‘America’s Discovery’ in Education,” focusing on the narrative of entitlement embedded within the story of Columbus’ famed 1492 voyage.

Ashley McFarland, MAST alumna and program administrative specialist, moderated “New Directions,” a panel capturing the transnational scholarship being produced in the MAST program. Tanya Brinkley presented, “Faux Feminist: A Retired Army Officer’s Auto-Ethnographic Study in Feminism,” highlighting the tension between her identities as a military veteran and feminist. David Galban delivered, “Intersecting Traits: Human Migration and Cultural Productions,” also drawing from memories of his own identity construction; and, Lynne Tipton presented the paper, “She’ll Be Coming Around the Mountain,” regarding the debates surrounding the business of climbing Mount Everest and the native Sherpa.

The final panel, moderated by Rebecca Hill, director of the MA Program in American Studies, was dedicated to discussing matters of state law enforcement and incarceration. Stephanie Craven presented, “By the People: For the Children: The 1980 Child Welfare Act and the Racialized Foster Care System,” weaving in narratives from her personal experience as a foster parent. Heather Harris delivered her research on, “Prison Activism and Advocacy in Georgia from 2010-2014;” and Alex Vuich discussed policing from the perspective of the policers in “Ethnography and Law Enforcement: Reflections of North Georgia’s Sheriff’s Deputies.”

For lunch, the MAST program provided pizza and a “Speedy-Resarch-Mingle,” in which listeners rotated from speaker to speaker, each presenting on a different topic. These included, “If Trump isn’t a Fascist, Who is?” by Rebecca Hill; “The Great Speckled Bird,” by Lynne Tipton; “Naked for Justice,” by Ashley McFarland; “Blackening of a White World,” by Naznin Sultana; “History from the Margins,” by Ari Eisenberg; and “The Hesitant Feminist,” by Tanya Brinkley.

To conclude an exciting and intellectually stimulating day, Dr. Donald Pease delivered his keynote lecture, “The Recent Planetary Turn in American Studies,” to an audience of faculty, staff, and students from across the KSU community.