MAST Alumni Updates

Ashley McFarland, ’15, is starting her Ph.D. in Media Research and Practice at University of Colorado Boulder, focusing on Media Studies.

Crystal Money, ’14, published “Do the Clothes Make the (Fat) Woman: The Good and the Bad of the Plus-Sized Clothing Industry” as part of the Siegel Institute Ethics Research Scholars program. She was also honored as the 2016 Childfree Woman of the Year.

Kaci Schmitt, ’11, graduated with a Master of Science in Counseling (School Concentration) from Oregon State University, and she is a school counselor in Beaverton, Oregon, a suburb of Portland.

Anna Tussey ’17, accepted a position teaching 9-12th grade ESOL at the International Transition Center in Gwinnett County. It is a new program designed for Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education.

Spring 2018 Courses

AMST 6401: Literature and Culture of the Americas, Dr. Na-Rae Kim, Wednesdays, 6:30 - 9:15 PM

AMST 7000: American Studies Scholarship, Dr. Rebecca Hill, Tuesdays, 6:30 - 9:15 PM

AMST 7460: Movements in American Culture: Food, Dr. Thomas Okie, Thursdays, 6:30 - 9:15 PM

AMST 7520: America in a Transnational Context: Feminism, Dr. Stacy Keltner, Online

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

Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Rudy Aguilar Joins ISD as Assistant Professor of LALS and AMST

Dr. Rudy Aguilar earned his B.A. in Latin American & Latino Studies from the University of Illinois at Chicago and PhD in American Studies from the University of Minnesota. His scholarly interests include U.S. Latino Studies, popular music, American Studies, immigration, and Mexicans in the Midwest. His dissertation examines how Mexican Sonidos (DJs) and members of Chicagoland’s Mexican immigrant population engage in community formation and hemispheric cultural processes when they curate sonidero dances with Latin American soundscapes, especially the Colombian cumbia. His latest research venture looks at Latino soul groups in the Midwest to explore more in-depth race-relations between Latino and Black communities during the sixties and seventies. In his spare time, Dr. Aguilar enjoys frequenting music stores in search for vintage vinyl records.
Welcome New Students!

Catherine Dietsch earned her Bachelor’s degree in Business and languages (French, English, and Spanish) in Great Britain, though she spent most of her childhood in Paris. Her degree led her to an international career in business where she gained expertise in export sales and administration. In 2010, she went back to university and obtained an MBA. During the past twenty years, she has travelled extensively for work and resided in various parts of the world (Australasia, Middle East, Europe, Latin America and the French West Indies). Her research interests stem from her

Jessica Fisher was born in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, but was raised in Adairsville, Georgia. She received her Associate’s degree in Communication from Georgia Highlands College in Spring 2014. From there they transferred to Kennesaw State University where they got their Bachelor’s degree in Communication with a concentration in Journalism and a minor in Gender and Women’s Studies. Jessica is primarily interested in transgender studies and applying academia and activism to transgender issues and politics.

Olivia Hopkins grew up in North Carolina but has lived in Minnesota for the past three years while her husband got his MFA. She graduated from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro with a degree in Art History and English Literature. She enjoys researching American folk art and focusing on the history and the culture of the South, especially that of marginalized communities. She also greatly enjoys food culture and history and is very excited to move back to an area of the country with rich culinary traditions.

What’s Going on in AMST 3750?

This semester, Dr. Katarina Gephardt’s Place in American Literature: Travel Literature class looks to travel classics such as William Least Heat-Moon’s Blue Highways: A Journey into America as they examine the genre and engage in discussions about authority and credibility in travel narratives. Students recently received guidelines for their midterm paper, which asks them to visit a specific place in Georgia and to write a travel narrative about their experience. Dr. Gephardt hopes that students will examine the role of place in construction of regional identity, increase their awareness of the elements of travel writing, and examine how travel writing contributes to an “imaginative mapping” of the U.S.

AMSTO Holds Successful Dragon Con Meet-Up

The American Studies Student Organization (AMSTO) held its annual KSU at Dragon Con event on August 29. Attendees discussed Dragon Con events, tracks, gaming, guests, cosplay, panels, pop culture, fandom, and of course, American Studies. The next AMSTO meeting is scheduled for September 19 from 5:00pm to 6:00pm in SO 2033.

Dr. Thomas Okie’s New Book, The Georgia Peach, Out Now

Dr. Thomas Okie, Assistant Professor of History and History Education, published a new book late last year chronicling the complex history of the peach and its socio-economic implications. Although Georgia is not the lead producer of peaches, it is commonly associated with the fruit, and the reason lies in a post-Civil War marketing effort to rebrand Georgia, Okie argues. Native to Asia and brought to the U.S. by Europeans in the seventeenth century, peaches in the nineteenth century came to represent the New South, one imbued with European sophistication and the Eastern exoticism that was popular at the time. Dr. Okie will be teaching his AMST 7460: Movements in American Culture: Food course in spring 2018.