

# MAASA NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MID-AMERICA AMERICAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION

October 2003

## A Message from the President:

Dear MAASA members:

Quietly and behind the scenes, a small group of dedicated volunteers work year round to keep MAASA's activities moving forward. With a few changes – most notably our new electronic newsletter prepared by Jonathan Smith and our new revamped website prepared by Jim Farrell – we hope not to be so quiet and not to be so small. In short, electronic communication now enables more efficient, cheaper, more frequent communication among MAASA members about the organization's activities, and I hope we will all take advantage of these means.

Midway through my term as President, I am happy to report that a number of things are humming along quite nicely on several fronts: our journal *American Studies* (co-edited by David Katzman and Norm Yetman) continues to thrive and sponsor a reception annually at the ASA convention. If you want to meet other MAASA members, please come to that reception. In addition, back issues and other MAASA/*American Studies* information are always available at the Regionals table in the exhibition hall.

Cheryl Lester is busy working on our next MAASA conference, April 17-19, 2004 in Lawrence, Kansas, with a special theme of **Creating Communities: American Studies, Indigenous Nations Studies, and First Nations Peoples**. (See information on page 3.)

We are also beginning to make arrangements for a spring 2005 conference in Minneapolis, to be hosted by Carol Miller and the University of Minnesota, and the MAASA Board is working with potential hosts for a 2006 conference site.

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Our various prize committees are up and running for 2003-04, and so a full group of awardees will be announced at the 2004 conference. In addition, Jeffrey Miller continues to represent the region on the ASA regionals committee, which facilitates conversation among the various regional organizations, works to ensure the national organization maintains service to the various regions, and reports to the ASA Newsletter regularly regional activities. Kathleen Wells-Morgan provides an enormously important ongoing contribution as Executive Secretary, by managing our funds and tax reports on a year-round basis. Mary Ann Wynkoop makes arrangements annually for the board meeting which takes place in Kansas City each October.

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:** I do want to point out that all of us on the MAASA Board welcome anyone who wishes to get more involved in MAASA. In addition to bringing your own research presentation to a MAASA conference, members who want to serve on the various prize committees or nominate themselves for board membership are always needed. We hope to add a link to our website, making volunteer contact an easy thing to achieve. In the meantime, feel free to e-mail me at any time: [Lauren-rabinovitz@uiowa.edu](mailto:Lauren-rabinovitz@uiowa.edu)

MAASA is the oldest regional organization (it predates the formation of the ASA) and one of the most active: it flourishes because of member volunteers. It remains dedicated to ongoing conversation (on a much more human scale than is often possible at the ASA) and enrichment in topics related to American Studies.

Lauren Rabinovitz  
MAASA President, 2003-2004  
Chair and Professor of American Studies,  
University of Iowa

## News from Kansas State University

*The Avant-Garde and American Postmodernity: Small Incisive Shocks* by Philip Nel, Assistant Professor of English, was published by the University Press of Mississippi in November 2002. His next book, *Dr. Seuss: American Icon*, will be published by Continuum in January 2004.

## MAASA Prizes and Awards

The **Stone-Suderman Prize**, a \$250 cash award, honors the best article published each year in American Studies. Named for MAASA past presidents Albert E. Stone and Elmer Suderman, two accomplished scholars and writers, the prize affirms the quality of all the essays in the journal as it recognizes an outstanding published piece.

The **Elizabeth Kolmer Award** is given annually to honor teaching and mentoring in the field of American Studies and service to MAASA. The \$250 cash prize is named in honor of former MAASA President Sr. Elizabeth Kolmer, a model teacher and scholar and the first recipient of the award.

The **Graduate Paper Prize**, a \$250 cash prize, is given each April for the best paper presented by a graduate student at the MAASA annual conference. The paper, revised for publication, will be printed in a forthcoming issue of American Studies. Deadline for submission of completed papers for consideration for this competition is **March 12, 2004**.

## Let Us Hear from You!

MAASA News would like to include more member news in each issue. If any members have professional announcements (publications, presentations, promotions, and so on) you would like included in the Member News section of upcoming issues, please forward them to MAASA News at the Department of American Studies, Saint Louis University, 221 N. Grand Boulevard, Saint Louis, MO 63130.

We also welcome institutional and departmental news submissions. Please forward news items about your department to the address above.

# 20th Annual Meeting of the Mid-America American Studies Association (MAASA)

## “CREATING COMMUNITIES: AMERICAN STUDIES, INDIGENOUS NATIONS STUDIES, AND FIRST NATIONS PEOPLES”

April 17 - 19, 2004

Hosted by The American Studies Program, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas

In 1965, the *Midcontinent American Studies Journal*, the predecessor to *American Studies*, published a special issue, "The Indian Today," co-edited by Stuart Levine and guest editor Nancy Oestreich Lurie. A slightly revised version of this issue was subsequently published by Everett Edwards Press and was awarded the 1969 Anisfield-Wolf Book Award for its contributions to American race relations. MAASA would like to use the occasion of the impending 40th anniversary of the publication of that special issue to consider the lives, experiences, identities, and status of indigenous Mexican, American Indian, and Canadian First Nations peoples today; their relationships with federal, state, and local governments; and their cultural, economic, political, social relationships with other indigenous peoples and their allies throughout the world. We invite papers, panels, roundtables, and workshops that will:

- Examine the continuities and changes that have occurred in the lives of indigenous peoples since 1965.
- Revisit and critically assess *The American Indian Today*
- Explore the ways in which dialogue and cooperative efforts among academics, tribal members, and political officials might fruitfully be developed, particularly but certainly not only the ways in which institutions of higher education might serve as resources for tribal communities and in which tribes may offer powerful examples for American Studies

*Accepted papers may be considered later for publication in 2005 as part of a joint special issue of American Studies and the Indigenous Nations Studies Journal tentatively entitled "Indigenous Peoples of the United States Today."*

The MAASA Board is sponsoring the following workshops on the topic of teaching. If you would like to be considered as a presenter in one of the workshops, contact the workshop chairs by e-mail directly.

- Workshop on Teaching to and about Different Peoples, Professor Cornel Pewewardy ([oyate@ku.edu](mailto:oyate@ku.edu)) and Professor Carol Miller ([mille004@tc.umn.edu](mailto:mille004@tc.umn.edu))
- Workshop on Teaching the American Studies Undergraduate Major, Professor Lauren Rabinovitz ([lauren-rabinovitz@uiowa.edu](mailto:lauren-rabinovitz@uiowa.edu))
- Workshop on Getting a Fulbright and Teaching Abroad, Professor Norman Yetman ([nyetman@ku.edu](mailto:nyetman@ku.edu))

For each proposal, please submit your name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, institutional affiliation, title of paper, 250-word proposal, and a brief biographical note to:

Cheryl Lester, 2003 MAASA Conference Chair  
American Studies Program  
University of Kansas, Bailey Hall  
1440 Jayhawk Blvd., Room 213  
Lawrence, KS 66046  
FAX: 785-864-5772

Please send email submissions to [massa2004@ku.edu](mailto:massa2004@ku.edu)  
(Please attach as a Word document and indicate "proposal" in the subject line)

**The deadline for submission of conference proposals is January 16, 2004.** Notification of acceptances will be made by **February 2, 2004.** Conference registration, housing, and travel information will be mailed at that time.

Although papers and complete sessions on any aspect of the conference theme would be especially appropriate, MAASA also welcomes presentations, complete panels, roundtables, or workshops on all aspects of interdisciplinary research and teaching, political and cultural activism, museums, and archives relevant to American Studies. MAASA also is especially interested in the political and cultural work people are doing outside of the academy. Thus, we invite the participation of activists, artists, and others concerned with the well-being of Native nations and tribal communities.

**Important Note to Graduate Students:** The Mid-America American Studies Association will award a **\$250 prize** for the best American Studies paper delivered at this conference by a currently enrolled graduate student. Following acceptance of a conference proposal, the deadline for submission of completed papers for consideration for this competition is **March 12, 2004.** Essays should be no longer than 20 pages, exclusive of notes. The winner will be acknowledged at the conference, and the paper (upon recommendation of the Prize Committee) will be forwarded to the editors of *American Studies* (MAASA's scholarly journal) for revision and subsequent publication. Submit four copies of the essay (**postmarked no later than March 12, 2004**).

Information and registration forms will be available at <http://www.kuce.org/programs/maasa>. Information about MAASA is available at <http://www.stolaf.edu/people/farrellj/maasa/>. If you have further questions about the 2004 MAASA Conference, please contact: Cheryl Lester, American Studies Program, University of Kansas, 785-864-2309, [chlester@ku.edu](mailto:chlester@ku.edu).

2<sup>nd</sup> Annual 19<sup>th</sup> Century Graduate Student Conference***“Identity Politics and the Politics of Identity in the 19th Century”***

March 4-6, 2004

Sponsored by the University of South Carolina

Keynote Speaker: Ron Bosco of SUNY-Albany, President of the Thoreau Society

American, imperialist, woman, slave, homosexual—each of these words connotes a particular identity, a particular set of qualities defined and codified by a reported set of public behaviors. However, there is often slippage between the public identity and the private self, between how an identity is defined and how it is lived. Identities are both constructed and construed, both a means of joining and of defining a group. The reflexive nature of identities, especially highly charged identities, can make them both positive ideological state apparatuses and negative repressive state apparatuses. In the nineteenth century numerous and rapid changes resulted in a sharp foregrounding of these contradictory aspects of identity politics. Eighteenth-century political revolutions had given voice to individuals while the nineteenth-century Industrial Revolution and the rise of working class re-silenced them. Nineteenth-century thinkers such as Darwin, Marx, Hegel, Mill, Emerson, and Freud fostered theoretical changes in the individual and his/her perception of self. The growth of cities necessitated a renegotiation of the individual's place in a larger corporate entity.

Our second annual graduate conference is looking for papers that highlight how the unique circumstances of the 19th century affected the relationship between self (the private individual) and identity (the public individual). Literature exposes these relationships in many ways: within single texts, between a text and its author, within a group of writers, etc. For example, how are imperialist prejudices revealed, refuted, or embraced within a single work? How does the initial stigma of being a novelist affect the public relationship between a writer and that writer's works? Or, how are identifiers such as “Romantic” and “Transcendentalist” contested?

Possible topics could include but are not limited to:

**Sexuality and gender, Class, Religion, Rise of fiction and fictional genres, Science/Technology, Education, Nationalism and Imperialism, Race/Postcolonialism, Reevaluations of 19th century, Publications and their imagined communities (gift books, periodicals, travel narratives)**

**Abstracts of 250 words or less are due by November 15th, 2003.** Please include your name, the name of your institution and program, and any A/V needs you may have. Submit abstracts electronically on the web at [www.uscgradconference.org](http://www.uscgradconference.org) or via e-mail to:

American Literature  
Chris Heafner  
[heafner@gwm.sc.edu](mailto:heafner@gwm.sc.edu)

British Literature  
Jamieson Ridernhour  
[ridernhour@sc.edu](mailto:ridernhour@sc.edu)

Comparative Literature  
Kristi Krumnow  
[kkrumnow@aol.com](mailto:kkrumnow@aol.com)

General Information  
Margee Husemann  
[husemann@gwm.sc.edu](mailto:husemann@gwm.sc.edu)

## 14th Annual Mardi Gras Graduate Conference on Language and Literature

***“Exile, Segregation, and the Language and Politics of Identity”***

February 12 - 13, 2004

Sponsored by the Louisiana State University English Graduate Student Association

Keynote speaker: Poet Natasha Trethewey

At a time when national security and terrorism seem to inform every global decision, and issues such as racial profiling and religious intolerance continue to be of concern, the rhetoric of “us” and “them” is again prevalent. More than ever, individuals or groups deem it imperative that people be “identifiable” as a member of a particular nation, race, or religion. Misunderstanding, prejudice, and oppression persist. And yet, postmodern identity has become fragmented and harder to define. It is recognized more often as multi-faceted, constructed by chance and by choice, by behavior and by psychology, consciously and unconsciously, collectively and individually. This conference theme asks participants to consider identity in all its manifestations. We welcome submissions from all periods, disciplines, and mediums. One panel will be dedicated to creative submissions. Potential areas/methods of investigation may include but are not limited to:

**Exile(s) Segregation(s) Linguistic Identity(s), Regionalism/Nationalism Political Identity(s)  
Feminist/Queer Theory, Power Struggles Separate Spheres Genre Studies,  
Rhetoric Popular Culture Cinema, Ideology Multiculturalism Integration**

**250-word abstracts and/or proposals for panels must be postmarked by December 15, 2003,** and should include the name of presenter, mailing address, university affiliation, email address, telephone number (home and/or office), title of the submission, and any media equipment requests. Preferably, send abstracts within an email message. No attachments please.

Send email submissions to: [costello2004conchair@yahoo.com](mailto:costello2004conchair@yahoo.com) Conference website at: <http://www.english.lsu.edu/conferences/2004>

LISA E-Journal is inviting contributions to an issue on:

## „The United States through the Prism of American and British Popular Music”

"I'm so bored with the USA.  
But what can I do?"

"I'm so Bored with the USA," *The Clash*, 1977

For over a century and in modes ranging from hagiography to protest, popular music has been a prime theatre of observation and representations of the United States on record, in concert and more generally in the performing arts. Studying this field, with its senders-artists and their productions-and its receivers-gatekeepers and audiences-could enable us to cast a different light on the USA as a source of inspiration, rejection and attraction for musicians on both sides of the Atlantic in order to explore certain visions of that country, or at least to examine some of the forces that shape and/or distort it.

This survey will revolve around three axes: aesthetic, economic and socio-political. We shall first analyse North American musicians' viewpoints on the United States. For instance, a reference to the State of Alabama has very different connotations depending on whether one finds it in a piece by John Coltrane, Canadian musician Neil Young or the Southern rock band Lynyrd Skynyrd. What do we learn about the USA from artists? To what extent can we claim that their productions and status in the entertainment industry have metonymic, metaphoric or even prophetic dimensions? Far from operating in isolation, the North-American musical field has a relationship with its British counterpart which may well be described as special.

In the 19th century for example, English and Scottish ballads were adapted into African-American folklore to depict the feats of "bad guys" such as Staggerlee or Railroad Bill. However, even though we remember the strong popularity of blues in 1960s Britain, we tend to regard musical trends and subcultural movements such as punk and techno as specifically English and forget the works of American pioneers in New York and Detroit. What sorts of response do American and British music and musicians draw across the Atlantic? Is it possible to delineate particular perspectives on the United States from the music produced in the United Kingdom?

**All contributions, preferably in English, should reach us by 30 October 2003.** Please attach CV separately. Submit to Eric Gonzalez at [eric.gonzalez@uhb.fr](mailto:eric.gonzalez@uhb.fr)

Contributions accepted for this project will be reviewed by at least two reviewers with the understanding that the materials have not been submitted to another journal. All submissions should be double-spaced, and conform to the MLA style. Articles should not exceed 20 pages (5,000 words) in length, excluding references.

**For additional information about this conference, please check on LISA e-journal website at <http://www.unicaen.fr/mrsh/anglais/lisa>).**

The Velvet Light Trap, an academic, refereed journal of film and television studies published semi-annually by University of Texas Press, is inviting contributions for an issue focused on:

## “Defining the Americas: Media Within/Across Borders”

The history of the American continents has long been one of establishing and crossing borders. From pre-colonial times to the present, people and cultures define and redefine themselves and their borders, especially in response to perceived conquest opportunities or threats. As cultural discourse, media interrogates the construction of identity within and beyond national or other boundaries. Issue #55 of the Velvet Light Trap will explore media as it relates to and is a product of citizenship in the Americas.

In contemporary discourse, "American" film and the "American" experience are often conceptually limited to Hollywood and the United States. While the editors are open to this conceptualization of the Americas for inclusion in this issue, we are particularly interested in articles that highlight film and television throughout the far northern, central and southern regions of the Americas. The editors are also seeking submissions that address the impact of post-crisis nationalism on the cultural industry's film and video production. Submissions from a variety of analytical approaches are strongly encouraged, including reception, political economy, textual analysis, discourse theory, historiography, feminism, queer theory, critical race theory, psychoanalysis and any other methods in cultural studies. Possible topics for this issue include, but are not limited to:

- \* Impacts and representations of nationalism or provincialism in film and television
- \* NAFTA/FTAA and other globalization efforts impact on identity formation/representation and production
- \* Crisis and national identity formation/representation in film and television
- \* Regional cinema or television
- \* Minority and women's involvement in all levels of production
- \* Identity within or across regional/national borders
- \* Analysis of mainstream and independent depictions of culture
- \* Reactionary or propagandist film/TV
- \* The "local" or the "other" as subject matter and/or target audience
- \* Media and its relationship to the State
- \* Regional generic conventions
- \* Innovation, experimentation, and imitation in form and narrative
- \* American cultural practices as they intersect with each other, including African American, Asian American, Jewish diaspora, Latino/a, American Indian and other Indigenous cultural practices ("American" referring to the continents)
- \* The works and issues involved in the Caribbean and other islands of the American Hemisphere
- \* Hybridization or notions of racial purity
- \* Redefinitions of social institutions
- \* Dominant, counter-cultural or subcultural social movements in film/TV
- \* National/international media law
- \* New media and culture, including the Digital Divide

**All submissions are due January 16, 2004.** To be considered for publication, papers should include a 100-200 word abstract, 15-25 pages, double-spaced, in MLA style, and the author's name and contact information should only be included on the title page. Queries regarding potential submissions also are welcome. Authors are responsible for acquiring related visual images and the associated copyrights. **For more information or to submit a query, please contact Afsheen Nomai at [afsheen@mail.utexas.edu](mailto:afsheen@mail.utexas.edu).** Submit five copies of the paper to:

The Velvet Light Trap  
C/o The Department of Radio-Television-Film  
University of Texas at Austin  
CMA 6.118, Mail Code A0800  
Austin, TX, 78712

# Fifth International Crossroads in Cultural Studies Conference

## “Policing the Crisis”

University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign,  
June 25-28, 2004

The mandate of the 2004 conference, “Policing the Crisis,” is to connect critical cultural analyses to progressive political action in an age of violence and global uncertainty.

We are living in a time of global uncertainty. What is happening in the world today lies outside “the realm of human understanding” (Roy, 2001, p. 32). Whether in foreign policy, education, the environment, or the economy, an Orwellian regime of misrepresentation and propaganda operates. The George W. Bush foreign policy tears at the conscience of concerned citizens everywhere. A politics of fear has offset a politics of hope. In light of these uncertain and violent times, cultural studies scholars have a moral obligation to police this crisis, to speak to the death of lives, culture and truth, and to undo the official pedagogies that circulate in the media. We must seek non-violent regimes of truth that honor culture, universal human rights, and the sacred. And we must seek critical methodologies that protest, resist and help us represent and imagine radically free utopian spaces.

And so, too, must this Crossroads Conference—this international gathering of voices—seek a new politics of resistance and truth, a politics of opposition, a world-wide joining of hands in the “globalization of dissent” (Roy, 2001, p.33). “A new day has dawned, to be met by a humankind’s refusal to allow men to any longer make and wage war in the name of vainglory, profit and corrupt political ideologies” (Sontag, 2003, p. 3). It is up to the poets, writers, artists, and scholars in cultural studies to make sense of what is happening. To remain silent is to be in collusion with this immoral political regime.

--Norman K. Denzin, Professor, Institute of Communications Research, U of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign  
Director, Fifth International Crossroads in Cultural Studies Conference

Possible topics for this conference include, but are not limited to:

**Critical Pedagogy & Cultural Studies; The Political & Cultural Studies; Race, Identity, & Representation; Performative Cultural Studies; Cultural Studies/Critical Methodologies; Neoliberalism, Governmentality & Cultural Studies; Sport & Cultural Studies; Asian/Asian-American Cultural Studies; Media Studies; Globalization, Transnationalism, and Cultural Studies; Latina/o Studies; "Open" Topics**

**The deadline for paper proposals to be accepted for consideration is February 1, 2004.** Papers that privilege the mandate of the conference will be given the highest consideration. We anticipate notification of acceptance/rejection of submission by February 15, 2004. Guidelines for submitting a paper can be found by visiting our official website, <http://www.crossroads2004.org>. There you will find further information on conference program areas, plenary/keynote speakers, timetable of events, hotel accommodation, registration, and local activities in Champaign-Urbana.

We are pleased to announce that Lawrence Grossberg (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill) and Meaghan Morris (Lingnan University, Hong Kong) will each give a keynote address. Further, plenary speakers confirmed at this time are: Bryant K. Alexander (California State University, Los Angeles), CL Cole (University of Illinois), Lauren Berlant (University of Chicago), Christopher Dunbar (Michigan State University), Henry Giroux (Pennsylvania State University), Peter McLaren (University of California, Los Angeles), Toby Miller (New York University), Paula Saukko (University of Exeter, United Kingdom), Keyan G. Tomaselli (University of Natal, Durban, South Africa), and Mary E. Weems (Cleveland State University).

## Biennial Conference—Race in Education

“CLOSING THE GAP:

THE ROLE OF RACE IN EDUCATION FIFTY YEARS AFTER BROWN”

Sponsored by

The Institute for the Study of Race Relations, Virginia State University

**April 1-3, 2004**

Petersburg, Virginia

The focus of this conference is on research and innovative programs and techniques which have proven effective in minority education, and particularly the education of African American students. We are also interested in innovative theories and approaches to thinking about the achievement gap between minority and majority students.

Dr. William B. Harvey, Vice President and Director, Office of Minorities in Higher Education, American Council on Education) will be the keynote speaker. With a Ph.D. from Rutgers University, Dr. Harvey is a 30-year veteran of postsecondary education, and has written and spoken on various topics dealing with diversity in higher education, including tolerance, racism and race relations on campus, and obstacles facing African American and Hispanic scholars and students. Also speaking at the reception will be renowned civil rights lawyer Oliver Hill, Sr., one of the NAACP litigators in the *Brown vs. Board of Education* case.

Possible panel themes include: **Race and education reform; Race and student retention; Race, gender, and education; Race, class, and culture; Race and teacher education; Race and theories of intelligence; Integration vs. voluntary segregation; Career aspirations of ethnic or racial minority undergraduates; Race as an integral part of the curriculum.**

For more information about the conference and where to send proposals, go to [www.vsu.edu/isrr](http://www.vsu.edu/isrr).

MAASA News is published in February, June, and October.

### **Editorial Staff:**

Editor: Dr. Jonathan Smith ([smithj2@slu.edu](mailto:smithj2@slu.edu))

Associate Editor: John Kille ([killeji@slu.edu](mailto:killeji@slu.edu))

### **Contact:**

MAASA News--Department of American Studies  
Saint Louis University  
221 N. Grand Boulevard  
Saint Louis, MO 63103

### **New Members Welcome!**

MAASA membership includes subscriptions to *American Studies* and to *MAASA News*.

MAASA Membership	\$20.00
Student Membership	8.00 ( <i>requires verification</i> )
Emeritus Membership	14.00

*for foreign postage, please add \$12.00*

Send checks (payable to MAASA) to  
MAASA Business Manager  
2120 Wescoe Hall  
University of Kansas  
Lawrence, KS 66045

**MAASA 2004 Conference**  
See page 3 for more details



### **MAASA'S MISSION**

MAASA's "purposes are to foster the study of American culture in all its aspects, to provide a forum for communication and discussion among its members and the general public, and to promote scholarship by the publication of the journal, *American Studies*. These ends are to be achieved by the organization of regular meetings, by recognition of outstanding contributions to American Studies, and by cooperation with the national American Studies Association."

From the MAASA Constitution  
Article I: Name and Purpose