

# The American Studies Newsletter

## Letter from the Chair, Dr. Alex Lubin

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**AMERICAN STUDIES  
MSC03 2110  
425 HUMANITIES  
ALBUQUERQUE, NM  
87131-0001  
PHONE: (505) 277-3929  
FAX: 505-277-1208**

**Department Administrator:  
Sandy Rodrigue  
amstudy@unm.edu**



It's been another active year in the UNM American Studies Department where students and faculty think critically about where we are, what's going on about us, and how we got here. Students in the department engaged critical questions by examining issues of law and environmental justice, critical native and indigenous studies, Southwest and borderlands issues, race

and visual culture, the U.S. War on Terror, religion in America, queer politics, American popular culture and much more.

This year the department introduced a revised graduate program curriculum that adds required courses that we hope will better prepare our students for academic jobs. In addition, we have revised our admissions and funding process by prioritizing smaller cohorts of PhD students who are fully funded for a five-year period. Our hope is that the new curriculum and funding model will better mentor students and will also considerably reduce the time it takes for PhD students to complete their degree.

The faculty in American Studies, as usual, have been actively engaged in research, service to our profession and University, teaching, and community engagement. I would like to highlight just a few examples of the ways that faculty engage in scholarly and community engagement in ways that often go overlooked when we think about the work of professors. Dr. Jennifer Denetdale has been a member of the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission where she has been deeply involved in matters related to human and civil rights. Her experience on this commission informs her scholarship and teaching related to violence

directed at native people in "bordertown" cities. Dr. David Correia served as an official observer appointed by the Association of American Geographers to the Paris meetings of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. It was the twenty-first session of the conference of parties (COP21) and the eleventh session of the conference of parties serving as the meeting of the parties to Kyoto. Dr. Correia's participation in the UN conference informed the revisions he helped

make to our newly named area of focus in “Environmental and Social Justice.” Dr. Rebecca Schreiber obtained an American Studies Association community engagement grant so that American Studies undergraduate and graduate students can receive paid internships at the National Hispanic Cultural Center. These activities and more demonstrate the work of a dedicated faculty who see community engagement as integral to our conception of a scholarly life.

This year the department organized several research clusters with faculty across the campus in order to foster broad scholarly discussions. The topics for these clusters were: Bordertown Violence, Transnational American Studies, Global Inequalities and Solidarities, and Critical Indigenous Studies.

In this newsletter you will see evidence of a department doing great things, from undergraduate students presenting their senior theses to graduate students presenting their new research at conference and newly minted graduate students completing their degrees and obtaining fellowships and jobs. You will also see evidence of an active faculty, committed to all of the areas of a scholarly life. And you will also see some evidence of the impact of an American Studies degree on our alumni.

## Faculty News



### Dr. Amy Brandzel

It's been a really exciting year here in American Studies, especially with our Visiting faculty Cynthia Young and Zachary Morgan. They have enriched our conversations and they will be sorely missed. I've also had a lovely time focusing on undergraduate teaching this year, and am once again invigorated by the brilliance and excitement of UNM undergraduate students who continue to surprise and delight me with their refreshing viewpoints. My book, *Against Citizenship and The Violence of the Normative*, was released by University of Illinois Press this past March, and I've been humbled by the support and praise of the book. Moreover, it has been selected as one of the National Women's Studies Association's "Author Meets Critics" panels for the upcoming

conference in November. As the NWSA website describes, "Authors Meet Critics sessions are designed to bring authors of recent, cutting-edge books, deemed to be important contributions to the field of women's studies, together in robust conversation with a maximum of three discussants that both celebrate and critically engage the publication." My article, "The Subjects of Survival: The Anti-Intersectional Routes of Breast Cancer," was recently published by *WSQ: Women's Studies Quarterly*, in a special issue dedicated to the project of "Survival." And my future research is well on its way, as I am currently working on an edited volume called *Administering Difference: Identity-Based Disciplines in the Precarious Academy* with my former colleague Danielle Bouchard, and collecting research for my next monograph, *Queer Knowledge: The Law of Difference in Academe*.

### Dr. David Correia

This has been a busy year. Reviews of my 2013 book, *Properties of Violence: Law and Land Grant Struggle in Northern New Mexico*, continue to appear in academic journals, with the most recent appearing in May in the *Journal of Human Geography*. I continue to lecture on the contested history of New Mexico's colonial land grants. In October I was invited to participate in the annual UNM/SMU Taos Lecture Series in New Mexico. This year's theme was "New Perspectives on Taos History," and I was asked to lecture on the issue of "Land Grants and Nuevomexicano Identity."



In December I signed a book contract with Verso Books, the largest independent, radical publishing house in the English-speaking world, to co-author a book on police power and the politics and discourse of police reform in the wake of national protests over racialized police violence in the U.S. My co-author, Associate Professor Tyler Wall from the well-regarded Justice Studies program at Eastern Kentucky University, and I anticipate finishing the book this summer. Look for it in the spring of 2017.

While my work has shifted over the past two years to focus increasingly on questions around law and violence, I continue to work on environmental issues. In November and December I served as an official observer appointed by the Association of American Geographers to the Paris meetings of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. It was the twenty-first session of the conference of parties (COP21) and the eleventh session of the conference of parties serving as the meeting of the parties to Kyoto. These are the only international efforts to confront the issue of climate change and the Paris meetings were highly anticipated as possibly the first since Kyoto in 1997 that would culminate in a binding international agreement limiting greenhouse gas emissions. I published a critical analysis of the meeting in the spring of this year under the title "Climate Revanchism" in the international journal *Capitalism Nature Socialism*. You can access the article, along with my other articles, free at: [unm.academia.edu/DavidCorreia](http://unm.academia.edu/DavidCorreia).

## Dr. Jennifer Denetdale

My year was pretty busy. I enjoy teaching Indigenous Feminisms and Gender and plan to teach a graduate seminar that focuses on Indigenous gender and sexuality in the fall. I am pleased that Marcella Earnest, Nick Estes, and Melanie Yazzie are progressing in their program, with all three in the dissertation research and writing phase. I'm also pleased to be working with Darcy Brazen on her thesis.



For the fall semester, 2015, I was on sabbatical, which was productive. I continued working on my book manuscript, “The Navajo Nation, Gender, and the Politics of Tradition,” and focused on a chapter outline on the photography of Milton Snow. To write an outline of my chapter on the photographs of Milton Snow, I conducted research at the Museum of Northern Arizona, Flagstaff, AZ and the Navajo Nation Museum in Window Rock, AZ. Both of these repositories hold Snow’s photograph collections. During my sabbatical, I finalized two essays, “No Explanation, No Resolutions and No Answer”: Border Town Violence and Navajo Resistance to Settler Colonialism” for *Wicazo Sa Review* and “Return to ‘The Uprising at Beautiful Mountain in 1913’: Marriage and Sexuality in the Making of the Modern Navajo Nation,” chapter in *Critically Sovereign: Indigenous Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies*, ed. Joanne Barker. Both of these essays are in press. I also published an essay, “You Brought History Alive for Us”: Reflections on Nineteenth Century Diné Women’s Lives” in the volume *Empire and Liberty: The Civil War and the West*, editor Virginia Scharff (University of California Press, 2015) and provided an interview, “Southwest Talks: The New Mexico Review Interview Series” for *New Mexico Historical Review*, vol. 90, no. 3 (Summer 2015).

I was invited to deliver the inaugural address to the 23rd Navajo Nation Council, Ft. Defiance, Ariz. on January 18, 2015. I still feel very honored to be invited to address the newly elected Navajo Nation council delegates. I also delivered several lectures and presentations at conferences and for organizations that invited me to present. I shared my work, “Milton Snow’s Photography and the Narratives of Navajo Tradition and Modernization: A Critical Indigenous Feminist and Queer Reading,” at the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual American Indian Studies Association Conference (AISA) at UNM, which was held Feb. 5 & 6, 2015. I was also invited to Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island to meet Native students there and to present “Narrative of Unheard Voices: Indigenous Women & Violence” on March 11, 2015. It was also an honor to be a Diné scholar invited to be among a Mohawk community and share my presentation on Historical Trauma and Indigenous Peoples at the “Gathering of Good Minds Native American Health Summit” in Buffalo, NY on March 26-29, 2015. I was also on a panel, “Ethnic Cleansing or Genocide? Native Peoples and the United States,” at Organization of American Historians, St. Louis, Mo, April 16-19, 2015. This presentation keeps me attuned to topics and issues that are addressed in Indigenous histories.

Some other notable events this year includes my work with the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission to research and prepare a study on violence against Navajo women and LGBTQI. The Commission conducted a two-day working session on Navajo conceptions on gender and traditional gender roles in Flagstaff, Ariz. on Oct. 29 and 30, 2015. This work has been enlightening and have helped me illuminate Navajo perspectives on gender and sexuality. I was also honored to deliver the keynote address to the 20<sup>th</sup> Navajo Studies Conference, Flagstaff, AZ on May 28, 2015 and participate on book panels to celebrate the publications of *Nation to Nation: Treaties Between the United States and American Indian Nations* and *Empire and Liberty: The Civil War in the West*. I also took my first overseas trip when I was invited to be a keynote speaker at the Australian and New Zealand American Studies Association conference at Monash University in Melbourne, Australia on June 30-July 3, 2015.

I received a Feminist Research Institute grant, UNM, for Summer 2015 and an Excellence in Diné Studies award at 20<sup>th</sup> Navajo Studies Conference as a True Colors award from the Rainbow Naatsiilid program, Gallup.

I continued to participate in efforts to bring recognition to the department's curriculum that includes critical Indigenous Studies. To that end, I worked with my colleagues David Correia and Alyosha Goldstein with research clusters on border town violence and settler colonialism and concepts of development and capitalism. Within these clusters, we brought Duane "Chili" Yazzie and Amanda Blackhorse for UNM's Indigenous Resistance Day recognition and historian Brenda Child to lecture on Ojibwa subsistence practices and transitions to wage labor. I was also guest faculty for a Newberry Consortium in American Indian Studies seminar in Chicago, Illinois in the summer of 2015. Overall, it was a productive school year and I look forward the coming school year.



### **Dr. Alyosha Goldstein**

This spring I had the pleasure of teaching the "Theories and Methods in American Studies" seminar, the second course in the department's revised core graduate course sequence. It was a wonderful group of students and an energizing series of discussions. During the fall I taught a graduate seminar on "Land and Indigenous Politics in the Americas," with support towards designing and offering the course from UNM's Latin American and Iberian Institute, as well as the undergraduate theories and methods class. I've also continued as the Director of Graduate Studies, and I'm excited about the outstanding incoming graduate students who will be joining the department next fall.

In addition to teaching and administrative work, it's been a full year of conferences, invited talks, and publications. I had the honor of giving the keynote address at the Critical Latinx Indigeneities conference held at the University of Utah in February and participating as an invited speaker in the "Poverty and Sexuality" symposium at Rutgers University. I presented new research at the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association, Modern Language Association, and American Studies Association meetings, as well as participated on a roundtable on Lisa Lowe's *The Intimacies of Four Continents* at the ASA. My essay "The Jurisprudence of Domestic Dependence: Colonial Possession and *Adoptive Parents v. Baby Girl*" was published in May as part of a special issue edited by Brenna Bhandar and Davina Bhandar on "Reflections on Dispossession: Critical Feminisms" for the journal *darkmatter*. During the fall semester I published "The Duration of Inequality: Limits, Liability, and the Historical Specificity of Poverty," in *Territories of Poverty: Rethinking North and South*, ed. Ananya Roy and Emma Shaw Crane (University of Georgia Press) and "Colonialism Undone: Pedagogies of Entanglement," in Sandy Grande, *Red Pedagogy: Native American Social and Political Thought* 10th Anniversary edition (Rowman & Littlefield).

I'm looking forward to the rest of 2016. A special issue on "On Colonial Unknowing" that I co-edited with Juliana Hu Pegues and Manu Vimalassery for the journal *Theory & Event* has been accepted for publication and will be published this fall. The special issue includes my essay "Puerto Rico and the Ends of Decolonization," an introduction I co-authored with Hu Pegues and Vimalassery, and essays by Shona Jackson, Tiffany Lethabo King, Justin Leroy, Shaista Patel, Audra Simpson, and Heidi Kiiwetinepinesiiik Stark. I'll also be completing my current book manuscript this fall. Thanks to my colleagues and students for making UNM American Studies such a generative place in which to work.

## Dr. Alex Lubin

This academic year I completed several research projects and launched new ones. I published the following chapters/articles:

Alex Lubin, "The American Boycott of Palestine," in Vijay Prashad, *Letters to Palestine: Writers Respond to War and Occupation*, New York: Verso. 2015.

Alex Lubin, "Between the Secular and the Sectarian: Malcolm X's Afro-Arab Political Imaginary," in special issue of *Journal of Africana Religions* on "The meaning of Malcolm X for Africana Religions: 50 years on," Vol. 3, No. 1, 2015.

Alex Lubin, "American Studies, the Middle East, and the Question of Palestine" *American Quarterly*, Vol. 68, NO. 1, 2016, pp. 1-21.

Alex Lubin, "Black Panther Palestine," *Studies in American Jewish Literature*, Vol. 35, No. 1, 2016, pp. 77-98.



In Fall 2016 I will have two co-edited volumes published: *American Studies Encounters the Middle East* (co-edited with Marwan M. Kraidy) September 2016, UNC Press; and *The Futures of Black Radicalism*, (co-edited with Gaye T. Johnson), January 2017, Verso Books.

This year I was invited to join the American Studies Association Distinguished Speaker's Bureau and had the pleasure of serving on the 2016 ASA conference program committee.



## Dr. Gabriel Meléndez

This academic year my teaching has been centered on undergraduate offerings and I taught multiple sections of "Introduction to Southwest Studies" and of my specialty course "Chicano-Latino Film," which did in fact have a graduate section. My other work has been to develop a lecture series at the National Hispanic Cultural Center of New Mexico called *La Canoa Legacy Talks*. The *La Canoa Series* featured a number of talks by faculty and community researchers with long-standing and accomplished records of research and teaching about New Mexico and the region. The series has aimed to serve the greater Albuquerque community by presenting new or overlooked information about our region to interested audiences. The series has proven to be a great collaboration between NHCC and UNM. I have also been at work copy-editing a short fiction collection titled *The Book of Archives* which is due to be published by the University of Oklahoma Press next spring and will be a part of the Chicano and Chicana Visions of America Series. The book contains forty-two vignettes and stories that tell the history of some rural communities in northeastern New Mexico. My editor says the work as a "volume that celebrates collective memory and the tradition it belongs to with and innovative presentation in two primary languages." I also published "The Literatures of Greater Mexico" a chapter-length article that will appear in *Literature Beyond Boundaries*, edited by Anna Nogar and published by Cambridge University Press. I will be traveling to Spain at the end of May to present a paper at the 10<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Chicano Literature and Latino Studies that will take place at La Complutense University in Madrid. My paper, "No Longer Hidden: Bless Me Ultima and Recent Chicano Cinema," is in a manner of speaking an addition to

my book on Chicano cinema which went to press just as *Bless Me, Ultima*, a classic work of Chicano fiction was being turned into a movie. The talk has been accepted as article for publication by Chiricú Journal. Next fall I am scheduled to teach “Chicano-Latino Film” and AMST 502 “Research Methodologies.” I look forward to once again working closely with American Studies graduate students and finding ways to work toward advancing their interests in publishing and teaching.

### **Dr. Kathleen Holscher**

Kathleen Holscher’s book *Religious Lessons: Catholic Sisters, Public Education and the Law in Mid-Century New Mexico* (Oxford University Press, 2012) was released in paperback in January 2016. Her article, “A Decision that Spits in the Face of Our History”: Catholics, the Supreme Court, and the Fight Over Public Prayer and Bible Reading,” is forthcoming in the Spring 2016 issue of *The Catholic Historical Review*. Katie also co-organized a roundtable on “Protesting Catholics: The ‘New Anti-Catholicism’ and the Politics of Public Religion in North America” for the 2015 annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion.



### **Dr. Rebecca Schreiber**

In the fall I took a research leave as part of a Career Advancement Semester provided by the Dean’s Office in the College of Arts and Sciences in order to complete revisions on my book manuscript *Migrant Lives and the Promise of Documentation*. I also reviewed an essay for an issue of *Aztlán*. I presented “Counter-Documents: Undocumented Youth Activists, Documentary Media, and the Politics of Visibility” at The American Studies Association’s Annual Conference in Toronto. I also completed an essay based on the ASA paper for inclusion in the anthology *Remaking Reality* edited by Sara Blair, Joseph Entin, and Franny Nudelman, which is forthcoming from UNC Press.

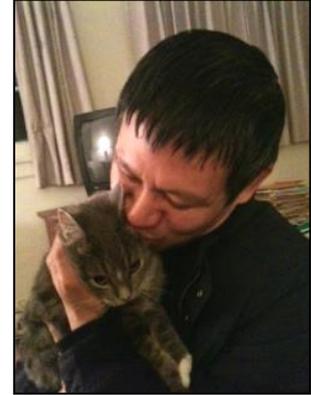
In the spring my essay “The Undocumented Everyday: Migrant Rights and Performative Strategies in the work of Alex Rivera” was published in a special issue of *Journal of American Studies* (April 2016). I also joined the Editorial Board of *Quarterly Horse*, which is the on-line journal of Rocky Mountain American Studies Association.

During the 2015-2016 academic year, Irene Vásquez, Bárbara O. Reyes and I organized a series of presentations related to the work of the Transnational Americas Research Cluster (TARC) at UNM. One of the areas of focus within TARC for the 2015-2016 academic year was transnational art and film production between the U.S. and Mexico, as well as in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands specifically. Related to this focus, TARC invited filmmaker Cristina Ibarra to screen and discuss her film work both with the group as well as with a broader audience during the fall semester. In addition, TARC organized ten other presentations by faculty at UNM and elsewhere. As part of this series I gave a talk “Countering the ‘Spectacle of Surveillance’ in the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands” in the spring.

In terms of university service, I served on the Faculty Advisory Committee for the Mellon-Mays Undergraduate Fellowship (MMUF) program at UNM. MMUF provides funding and support to college students who are interested in getting a Ph.D. and who are part of groups that are underrepresented on college and university faculties.

## Dr. Antonio Tiongson

Once again, the past year has been very busy but ultimately productive and gratifying. In the following, I want to highlight what I consider are notable moments. I co-edited a special issue of the *Critical Ethnic Studies* journal centering on the complications of performing comparative analysis. In addition to co-authoring the special issue Introduction, I contributed an essay interrogating the underlying assumptions of Afro-Asian inquiry and what this body of writing reveals about the challenges of engaging in comparative critique. The issue was published in the Fall 2015. In the Spring, I participated in the “Studying Race Relationally Conference” organized by the University of Chicago. The conference was a wonderful opportunity to share my work but also dialogue with scholars from various disciplines who are also interested in taking a self-reflexive approach to comparative analysis. Most gratifying for me, however, was presenting the Association for Asian American Studies (AAAS) Excellence in Mentorship Award to Rick Bonus, a dear friend and mentor who has profoundly influenced my career trajectory. Also gratifying is seeing a number of graduate students I work closely with move on to the dissertation writing stage.

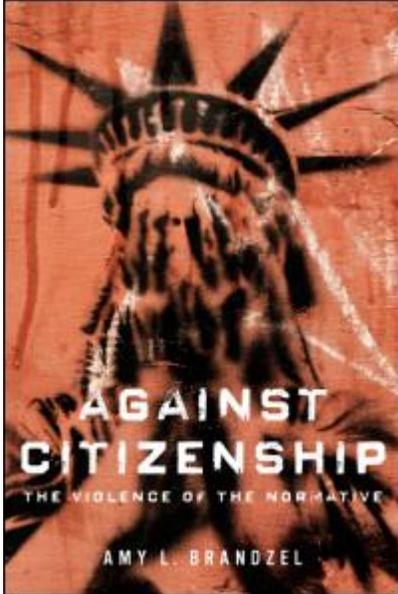


## Dr. Michael Trujillo



Michael Trujillo is currently completing an edited volume titled “Nuevo Mexico Emergent: Remaking Ethnography in the Heart of the Southwest.” He is also editing two posthumous book length manuscripts for submission to University of New Mexico Press. Those manuscripts include the deceased creative writer Jim Sagel’s “*El hoyo que nunca se vacia*/The Hole that Never Empties” and the late literary critic Laura Padilla’s “Land of Enchantment, Land of Mi Chante: Chicana/o Precursors and Divergences in New Mexico Literature.” This summer he is participating in two author symposiums for a planned edited volume “Genizaro Nation.” That book, edited by UNM professor Moises Gonzales, will examine Nuevomexicano Hispanic or Chicana/o identifications with indigenous ancestors incorporated often by force into Spanish colonial and Mexican society. Finally, he is submitting and/or revising several articles for publication including one titled “Chosen People: Reies López Tijerina, Richard Rodriguez, Angélico Chávez, and their Claims to Israelite and Israeli Identities.” Those articles will form part of his book manuscript tentatively titled “Dialectical Americas: Compelling Symmetries in New Mexico and the United States and Latin America.

## Faculty Publication



Amy Brandzel published, *Against Citizenship: The Violence of the Normative*. University of Illinois Press describes the book as follows, “Numerous activists and scholars have appealed for rights, inclusion, and justice in the name ‘citizenship.’ *Against Citizenship* provocatively shows that there is nothing redeemable about citizenship, nothing worth salvaging or sustaining in the name of ‘community,’ practice, or belonging. According to Brandzel, citizenship is a violent dehumanizing mechanism that makes the comparative devaluing of human lives seem commonsensical, logical, and even necessary. *Against Citizenship* argues that whenever we work on behalf of citizenship, whenever we work toward including more types of peoples under its reign, we inevitably reify the violence of citizenship against nonnormative others.

Brandzel's focus on three legal case studies--same-sex marriage law, hate crime legislation, and Native Hawaiian sovereignty and racialization--exposes how citizenship confounds and obscures the mutual processes of settler colonialism, racism, sexism, and heterosexism. In this way, Brandzel argues that citizenship requires anti-intersectionality, that is, strategies that deny the mutuality and contingency of race, class, gender, sexuality, and nation--and how, oftentimes, progressive left activists and scholars follow suit.

*Against Citizenship* is an impassioned plea for a queer, decolonial, anti-racist coalitional stance against the systemized human de/valuing and anti-intersectionalities of citizenship.”

## *Bravo Undergraduates!*

*The American Studies Department at UNM extends its most sincere congratulations to this amazing group of graduating seniors receiving a Bachelor of Arts in American Studies. Best wishes for all your future endeavors.*

### **Bachelor of Arts in AMST**

**Kara Caramillo** (Summer)

**Catherine Chenevey** (Fall)

**Heather Foster** (Fall)

**Samuel Kerwin** (Fall)

**Robin Moses** (Fall)

**Alyssa Perez** (Summer)

**Cassandra Porter** (Summer)

**Cristofer Romero** (Spring)

**Matthew Romero** (Spring)

## *The American Studies Senior Thesis Symposium*

The American Studies Department's Senior and Honors Thesis Symposium took place on Monday, April 25th, 2016 from 2:00-5:00pm in the Acoma Room, SUB 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor. Presentations included the following:



**Kara Caramillo:**

The Struggle over Indian Education

**Syxx Espinoza:**

*Big Bang Theory, 30 Rock, Grace and Frankie*: Female Gender Construction in Sitcoms

**Gregory Garcia:**

Filipino Life in San Diego: Identity Formation through Youth Gang Involvement in the “American” Melting Pot

**Victoria Garcia:**

“The Crusade against Ignorance”: The Battle for Education in the United States

**Alex Gillikin**

“Womyn Born Womyn”: An Overview of Essentialism and Trans-Exclusion in Radical Feminist Spaces

**GiGi Guajardo:**

“Who Lives? Who Dies? Who Tells Your Story?”: Stories of Our Nation as Told by the American Musical

**Adam Gutierrez:**

Hip-Hop as Malcolm's Hex: Rage, Resistance and Recordings

**Joshua Heckman:**

Academia: Chicana/o, Cultural Nationalism and Marxism

**Alyssa Perez:**

First-Generation College Students and Influences in Their Success

**Cassandra Porter:**

Polyamory in America: Getting the State Out Of Our Bedrooms

**Cris Romero:**

“Lazy, Entitled Narcissists”: Contemporary Activism and Youth Engagement

**Alex Romero:**

Patriots without Borders

**David Sisneros:**

Places versus Spaces: Street Artists Interpretation on the Use of Public Space in Their Communities

## 2015-2016 Graduate Student News

### Donatella Davanzo



American Studies PhD Candidate Donatella Davanzo received a fellowship from the Center for Regional Studies to include her photographic collection about Route 66 through Albuquerque (2013-2015 fellowships) into the New Mexico Digital Collections site. The work involved developing criteria for the selection of images, final selection, and researching information about the subject of each image and inputting metadata for each image.

In August, she presented in Springfield, Missouri a selection of this visual collection of the contemporary Route 66 during the annual meeting of Route 66 Archives and Research Collaboration. Her photographs and paper, “Framing Route 66 Crossing Albuquerque,” showed evidence of known and unknown realities of historic corridor along Central Avenue and along the pre-1937 alignment.

In October, she presented her photographic documentation of Route 66 at the University of California at Berkeley during the 2015 International conference “The Image.” The special focus of the 2015 Image Conference was “Media Materiality” addressing themes of production, consumption, and distribution of images in an age of “new” media. Her presentation, “One moment in time for the ‘Mother Road’ through Albuquerque (NM)” explored documentary practice as a photographic genre that operates with a specific visual vocabulary. By showing her topographic images, she illustrated the urban and rural landscapes of Route 66 as a repository of cultural and human experiences in the ordinary life, revealing the role of the image in documenting the unique relationship that photography has to time and space.

### Nick Estes

Nick is a Doctoral Candidate in American Studies. This year, he published three articles in peer reviewed journals. They are: “Off the Reservation: Lakota Life and Death in Rapid City, South Dakota” in *The Funambulist* (May-June 2016): 22-7; “Guest Editor’s Introduction” (co-edited volume with Melanie K. Yazzie) and “‘There are No Two Sides to This Story’: An Interview with Elizabeth Cook-Lynn” both in Special Edition: Essentializing Elizabeth Cook-Lynn. *Wicazo Sa Review* 31(1) 2016, forthcoming. Nick also received several awards for his academic achievement: Susan Kelly Power & Helen Hornbeck Tanner Fellowship, Newberry Library, Chicago, IL; UNM-Mellon Dissertation Fellowship, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, UNM; History Scholars Fellowship, New Mexico Office of the State Historian; Outstanding American Indian Student Service Award, American Indian Student Services, UNM.

### David Maile

David Maile is a first-year PhD student in American Studies. This first year was a busy, productive one for David. At the June 4-6, 2015 Native American and Indigenous Studies Association (NAISA) convention, he presented a paper titled “He Moena Pāwehe Makana: Weaving Anti-Capitalist Resistance into Kanaka Maoli Critiques of Settler Colonialism,” for which I was awarded the NAISA Student Paper Prize. In the summer of 2015, he worked as a research assistant at the Institute of American Indian Arts' (IAIA) Museum of Contemporary Native Arts (MoCNA) with Chief Curator Candice Hopkins on the exhibit “Visions and Visionaries,” which opened on August 20, 2015 and will be available to view until July 31, 2017. He published a journal article titled “Going Native: *South Park* Satire, Settler Colonialism, and Hawaiian Indigeneity” in a special edition issue on settler colonialism in *Cultural Studies* <=> *Critical Methodologies*. The article is

currently available online, and the print issue is forthcoming. Finally, he received the Gerald Davis Award from the UNM American Studies Department for my seminar paper titled “Resurgent Refusals: Protecting Mauna a Wākea and Kanaka Maoli Decolonization.”

## Rafael Martínez

This was an extremely productive and eventful academic year in which I would like to share some of the highlights and milestones accomplished towards my Ph.D. program. In the spring 2016, I taught the AMST 184 “Introduction to American Pop Culture” course online and will be teaching the AMST 186 “Introduction to Southwest Studies” course in the fall of 2016. The highlight of teaching this semester was that students nominated me for the “Teaching Assistant Award” by the Faculty of Color Awards hosted by the Project of New Mexico Graduates of Color (PNMGC), and I won the award! Another academic milestone for this year is finishing coursework for my doctoral program, and I will be preparing for my doctoral examinations this coming year. I would like to share that I received a nationally recognized award by the Alliance of Hispanic Serving Institution Educators (AHSIE) for my scholarship and community work. I also had the pleasure of attending a great deal of academic conferences including the Religious Studies Conference (Dr. Kathleen Holscher mentor), the Mid-America American Studies Association Conference (MAASA), the National Association of Chicana and Chicano Studies (NACCS) (Dr. Irene Vasquez, mentor), and the Asian American Association Studies Conference (AAAS) (Dr. Antonio Tiongson, mentor). These were all conferences that have helped me expand my work and research interests. Finally, I am happy to announce that an article I submitted to the *Americana Journal of American Studies* in Hungary was accepted for publication thanks to the mentorship and guidance by Dr. Gabriel Melendez that assisted me in the process of developing my paper as well as to the Transnational Research Collective hosted by SHRI who helped me progress of the paper.

## Melanie Yazzie

Melanie is a Doctoral Candidate in American Studies. This year, she published “Solidarity with Palestine from Diné Bikeyah” in *American Quarterly* 67.4 (December 2015) and “Policing the Crisis of Indigenous Lives: An Interview with the Red Nation” in *Policing the Planet: Why the Policing Crisis Led to Black Lives Matter*, edited by Jordan Camp and Christina Heatherton, Verso, 2016. She also co-edited Special Edition: Essentializing Elizabeth Cook-Lynn. *Wicazo Sa Review* 31(1) 2016, forthcoming with Nick Estes. Melanie is the recipient of two grants for 2016-18: University of California President’s Postdoctoral Fellowship, Department of Feminist Studies, UCLA and ACLS Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship in Native American & Indigenous Studies, Department of History, Northwestern University. She also received third place for Excellence in Beat Reporting (with Nick Estes) from the Native American Journalists Association, June 2015.

## American Studies Graduate Student Association

ASGSA slightly reorganized this year in order to include participants from each cohort. It has been a great opportunity for students in different cohorts to meet and share advice and inspiration. We hope to continue this structure next year.

Both semesters this year, ASGSA worked with the Transnational Research Collective to sponsor a paper writing workshop. Students from both organizations met to share a meal and conversation and workshop papers. We plan to organize more workshops like these next year. In addition, Dr. Alyosha Goldstein and Dr. Jennifer Denetdale generously led a workshop on publishing which attendees greatly appreciated. In March, ASGSA helped host the prospective student visit. The lunch with prospective students had a great attendance from current students and we look forward to getting to know our new colleagues in the fall.

With help from the American Studies department, ASGSA provided financial support to twelve students for travel to present at conferences and conduct dissertation research. We applaud all twelve for working hard to share their research!

## *Graduate Student Graduations*

The Department wishes to congratulate these graduate students on their hard work and graduations this year:

### *DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY*

**Tita Berger** (Summer)

“Place, Imaginary, Identity: Place Ethnography in Truth or Consequences, New Mexico”

**Jordon Johnson** (Fall)

“Complicating Transgender: White Privilege and the Politics of Rurality”

**Cynthia Martin** (Summer)

“Decolonizing the Body: Breast Cancer and the Environment in Toxic Times”

**Gbenga Olorunsiwa** (Summer)

“(African) American Dreams: Postcolonial Critique in the Writings of Ama Ata Aidoo, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and Teju Cole”

**Rosemary Sallee** (Summer)

“Femmage and the DIY Movement: Feminism, Crafty Women, and the Politics of Gender Performance”

### *MASTER OF ARTS*

**Caroline Goodman** (Summer)

“Reclaiming the Land: Indigenous Articulations of Environmentalism at Bears Ears”

**Claudia Mitchell** (Summer)

“Silence and Voice in the Archives of Tomás Atencio y la Academia de la Nueva Raza: Education, Resistance, Activism and Gender Politics”

## *Research Clusters*

This year the American Studies Department, with support from the College of Arts and Sciences, created multiple research clusters to foster research collaboration among faculty across the College, not just in the Department. The three areas of focus for the research clusters were Global Inequalities and Solidarities, Transnational Americas, and Extractive Capitalism. Faculty in each cluster were responsible for planning events and/or guest speakers related to their areas of collaboration throughout the year.

### **Transnational Americas**

During the 2015-2016 academic year Irene Vásquez (Director, Chicana and Chicano Studies and Associate Professor, American Studies), Rebecca Schreiber (Associate Professor, American Studies), and Bárbara O. Reyes (Director, Southwest Hispanic Research Institute, Associate Professor, History) organized a series of presentations related to the work of the Transnational Americas Research Cluster at UNM. The purpose of this

interdisciplinary research cluster is to explore transnational social and civic expressions in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands during the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.

The Transnational Americas Research Cluster (TARC) is made up of graduate students and faculty doing interdisciplinary work in the areas of American Studies, Art History, Cinematic Arts, Chicana and Chicano Studies, History, Latin American Studies, Sociology and English. The graduate students are also part of the Transnational Research Collective (TRC). In addition to the organizers, TARC faculty include: Dr. Adan Avalos, Assistant Professor, Cinematic Arts, Dr. Kency Cornejo, Assistant Professor, Art History; Dr. Joseph J. Garcia, Visiting Assistant Professor, Chicana and Chicano Studies; Dr. Patricia Rosas Lopategui, Lecturer III, Chicana and Chicano Studies; Dr. Michael Trujillo, Associate Professor, American Studies and Chicana and Chicano Studies, and Dr. Raquel Rivera, Visiting Assistant Professor, Sociology.

One of the areas of focus within TARC for the 2015-2016 academic year was transnational art and film production between the U.S. and Mexico, as well as in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands specifically. Related to this focus, TARC invited filmmaker Cristina Ibarra to screen and discuss her film work both with the group as well as with a broader audience during the fall semester. The group also invited Neil Rivas, a visual artist, to share his work with faculty and students in the spring. (However, Rivas was not able to travel to UNM due to the stipulations of a fellowship.) In addition, Dr. Jorge Ibarra, Emeritus Professor of English, National Council of Culture, Cuba presented a paper for TARC, as did Eduardo Campos Lira, PhD candidate, University of Sao Paolo. The group also held one-day symposium to complement the Maxwell Museum's exhibit of Sabino Osuna's photographic work on the Mexican Revolution, and participated in a livestream of the UC Davis Comparative Border Symposium.

## **Global Inequalities and Solidarities**

The research cluster in global inequality and solidarity explores underlying causes, historical developments, and the contemporary nature of social, political, and economic inequality. The cluster – an informal grouping of faculty and graduate students across UNM departments – takes as its vantage point the peripheries of the United States, a location through which to understand the processes of U.S.-led globalization, but also the consequences of U.S. actions on social inequalities across the globe. Understanding the contemporary moment of global inequality relies on historicizing transformations in political economy; while the cluster is focused on the contemporary predicament of inequality, we are committed to understanding from where and when the contemporary moment emerges. Moreover, the research cluster in global inequality and solidarity explores the formation of transnational social movements to challenge global inequality across national borders. Often developed from within the global south, or on the peripheries and borders of the first world, this research cluster explores how and why social movements form across national borders and in what ways global social movements are based in shared struggle and/or incommensurate particularities.

Lectures sponsored by the Research Cluster in Global Inequalities and Solidarities were:

- Dr. Cynthia Young (UNM American Studies, visiting professor) “COINTELPRO and the Roots of the NYPD’s War on Muslims”
- Dr. Aviva Chomsky (Salem State University, Massachusetts) “Undocumented: How Immigration Became Illegal”
- Dr. Tamara Kay (UNM Sociology) “Big Bird Goes to China: Negotiating Diffusion on the Longest Street in the World”
- Dr. Paul Amar (University of California, Santa Barbara) “The Security Archipelago: Human Security, Sexuality Politics, and the End of Neoliberalism”

## Critical Indigenous Studies

The research cluster on Critical Indigenous Studies sponsored two high-profile talks. The incoming president of the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association, Brenda Child (University of Minnesota) delivered a lecture to a campus-wide audience of students and faculty based upon her recently published book, *My Grandfather's Knocking Sticks: Ojibwe Family Life and Labor on the Reservation* (2014). The research cluster also organized a well-attended presentation by Maylei Blackwell (UCLA), co-sponsored with UNM University Libraries, in the Willard Room of Zimmerman Library. Blackwell's talk, "Indigenous Migrant Women Remapping Los Angeles: Geographies of the Sacred, Circuits of Belonging, and New Spaces of Belonging," focused on the ways in which Los Angeles has become a "transnational hub" for many cultures, specifically for an increasingly indigenous diaspora from Mexico and Guatemala.

## *Bordertown Violence*

Native people in Albuquerque describe life in the city for Native people, particularly homeless people, as dangerous. Constant harassment, including by police, is part of everyday life, and that harassment is often accompanied by verbal threats and the command to "go back to the reservation." Being "off the reservation" was a capital offense in colonial New Mexico throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, and the patterns of violence against Native people today links that history of colonial violence to contemporary patterns of violence against Native people. Students and faculty in the department of American Studies established the Bordertown Violence project during the 2015-16 academic year in order to focus attention on this colonial past and settler-colonial present. We organized a series of lectures in October to correspond with Indigenous People's Day of Resistance and Resilience. Diné activist Amanda Blackhorse delivered a lecture on campus titled "Reclaiming the Indigenous Identity." Blackhorse is the lead plaintiff in *Blackhorse v. Pro Football Inc.*, which sought to cancel six federal registrations for trademarks that include the term "Redskins." In 2006, Blackhorse joined other Native American plaintiffs to file a petition with the United States Trademark Trial and Appeal Board (TTAB) seeking to cancel the trademark registrations of the Washington NFL team that contain the word R\*dsk\*ns. The petition resulted in a court decision that ruled the term "R\*dsk\*ns" is disparaging to Native Americans, especially when used for professional football services – particularly the National Football League's (NFL) Washington R\*dsk\*ns.

In addition, we invited Diné leader and longtime social and political activist Duane "Chili" Yazzie to campus to deliver a lecture discussing Diné responses to the Gold King Mine Spill. The spill dumped over three million gallons of toxic mine sludge into the Animas and San Juan Rivers and left many Diné farmers like Yazzie without access to water and proper irrigation for his farm. Their visits included events off campus as well, as the bordertown violence project has been active in organizing community-based events. Yazzie discussed the legacies of corporate environmental pollution, the ongoing violations of Navajo sovereignty, and current movements to address the exploitation of Navajo lands and people. In addition to campus events, Yazzie and Blackhorse participated in, and spoke at, a march and rally in Albuquerque that same week that attracted more than 1,000 people celebrating Indigenous People's Day of Resistance and Resilience, an event co-organized by members of the bordertown violence project. In addition, the faculty and students involved in the bordertown violence project have developed an ongoing research project focused on the problems Native people face in bordertowns when they seek healthcare. The project spawned the Native Health Equity Coalition, an Indigenous-led research project linked to political organizing around the structural problems that limit Native access to health care.

## Dual Enrollment at Amy Biehl High School



Many Albuquerque high school students are eligible and encouraged to take college courses as “dual enrollment” courses. Typically, high school students take courses on main campus, and integrate in large courses with college students. Sometimes, these students can get lost in the crowd and find the transition to the college classroom daunting.

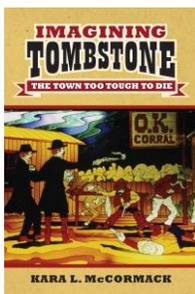
In an effort to better mentor dual enrollment high school students, this year the department of American Studies began to offer college-level courses in the high school. This year, we began to offer core, general education courses at Amy Biehl High School. During the Fall semester, American Studies graduate student

Caroline Goodman offered “Introduction to Southwest Studies.” In Spring, American Studies graduate student Raquel Madrigal offered “Introduction to Race, Class, Ethnicity.” Following completion of these courses, Amy Biehl High School students have completed 6-hours of general education courses, and are well on their way toward earning a BA in American Studies.

We look forward to continuing our relationship with Amy Biehl in the future, and have plans to offer another core course there in the Fall, 2016 semester. At the end of Spring, American Studies Director of Undergraduate Studies, Rebecca Schreiber, hosted Amy Biehl juniors to talk about the American Studies major and UNM in general (pictured below). We hope that these efforts will encourage Albuquerque high school students to select UNM for college, and American Studies as a degree program.

## Alumni News

**Karen Roybal (PhD, 2011)** is currently an adjunct lecturer for the Chicana and Chicano Studies Department and a Visiting Scholar at the Center for Regional Studies at UNM. Beginning in the fall, she will be an Assistant Professor of Southwest Studies at Colorado College. Congratulations Karen!



**Kara McCormack (PhD, 2013)** is currently a Lecturer in the Humanities at Stanford University. She teaches for the Thinking Matters program, which helps freshmen “develop the ability to ask rigorous and genuine questions that can lead to scientific experimentation or literary interpretation or social policy analysis” (Thinking Matters website). Her book, *Imagining Tombstone: The Town Too Tough to Die*, was published by University of Kansas Press in May, 2016.

*Joel Wigelsworth* (BA, 2015) has been busy since graduation. He spent several months writing for the Life in New Mexico section of the *Albuquerque Journal* in 2015 where he wrote about items of historical and/or cultural interest in the state. He has also been contacted to write a chapter for a forthcoming book. His chapter will be based on an article he wrote for the *Journal* about a Civilian Conservation Corps camp in western New Mexico. The book is being edited by American Studies alum **Peggy A. Gerow (PhD, 2007)** and historian Joan M. Jensen.

**We would love to hear from our alumni. If you have news you'd like to share (a new book, new appointment, an adventure that studying with us may have helped prepare you for, etc.), please let us know. You can send your news in an email to [amstudy@unm.edu](mailto:amstudy@unm.edu), and we'll be sure to include it in our next newsletter.**

## *From the Administrator*

*Sandy Rodrigue*



As always, this has been a busy year at my desk. There have been plenty of changes this year, both inside the department and across the university. While there are always learning curves when changes occur, they are generally never insurmountable, and work life is never boring.

This year, members of the department have focused a lot on what I call outreach. Faculty and students in our research clusters reached out to members of other departments to bring a group of fantastic speakers to campus. There has been lots of community activism in many areas, academic and otherwise. We started teaching our classes on campus at Amy Biehl High School to encourage critical thinking in the next generation of scholars. Many of our students and faculty continue to be recognized for the work they do both at the university and in their communities at large. It is a very exciting time to be part of this department!

Looking forward, I am excited to welcome our incoming cohort of graduate students. Some of them are familiar to the department as they were already taking classes and working with our faculty. Others are coming to us from out of state, and we are eager to have them here as well. I continue to be excited by the diversity that is found among the American Studies students and faculty. It is their energy and creativity that encourages me every day in my job, even when it's tough.

On behalf of the American Studies students and faculty, I say thank you to our alumni for your continued support of the department. Please feel free to email us at [amstudy@unm.edu](mailto:amstudy@unm.edu) to keep us posted on your accomplishments. I'd love to be able to pass them on to the faculty, current students, and other alumni!