Noelle Askew defended her MAST thesis: “The Real Atlanta: Representations of Black Southern Culture, Masculinity, and Womanhood as Seen in Season One of the FX Series Atlanta.” Committee Advisors were: Dr. Griselda Thomas and Nichole Galy. 

Congratulations to Gayle Anderson, for successfully defending her Master’s thesis on artistic representations of Central American migrants in the U.S. Thank you to Dr. Ernesto Silva and Dr. Rebbik Aqil for co-chairing her thesis committee. Job well done.

So much has changed since I came to Kennesaw State five years ago to chair the Interdisciplinary Studies Department. Thanks to the hard work and dedication of ISD staff and faculty, we have grown in all sorts of ways and are able to provide many more opportunities for students. We now have more full-time faculty and as a department we offer many more courses, which enroll thousands of students each year. We offer multiple sections of a general education course in Science, Technology, & Society, new internships and ways to study abroad, and new programs, including a B.A. in Asian Studies, a Peace Corps Preparation Program, and a certificate in Diversity and Community Engagement. We are settled in our renovated suite on the second floor of the Social Sciences Building where we hope to continue hosting gatherings that facilitate exchanges with many departments and fields of study across the university. Even our web site has changed, and, thanks to our staff members Annie Moye and Cherie Miller we have more of a social media presence. This fall we have several new faces in the department who are featured in this newsletter: Assistant Chair Laura Davis, Assistant Professor of Asian Studies and Gender & Women's Studies Elizabeth Miles, and jointly appointed Assistant Professor of History and GWST La Shonda Mims. We also welcome a new joint appointed faculty member, long-time GWST affiliate Federica Santini, who is Professor of Italian Studies, and we are pleased to have MAST graduate Maya Hemphill serving as a Limited Term faculty member this semester. We are currently engaged in a search for a tenure track faculty member in African & African Diaspora Studies (AADS), the first full-time line devoted to this program.

In the spring, we celebrated the 15 year anniversary of the Maya Project, led by Alan LeBlanc. We also worked with others to host another successful SAUPO meeting in Atlanta and a wonderful talk by Dr. Suzy Kim, “Behind the Iron Curtain: Cold War Women in North Korea,” on International Women’s Day.

ISD faculty received a number of competitive awards from the College of Humanities and Social Sciences in the Spring. Asian Studies coordinator Heeman Kim won the Engagement Award, Griselda Thomas won the Diversity Advocate Award, and Roxanne Donovan was one of two winners of the award for Scholarship and Creative Activity. In addition, Griselda received the R.O.H. Social Justice Advocate Award from the Commission on Racial and Ethnic Diversity.

We honored our award winners at the college and university level and our recent graduates in AADS, Asian Studies, and the Master’s in American Studies (MAST) program in the Spring. This fall, we were able to honor our outstanding students and alumni at the CHSS Homecoming event—the creativity and commitment of our students continues to inspire us! Finally, I want to take this opportunity to thank Roxanne Donovan, who is on a well-deserved research leave this semester, for all the important work she did as Assistant Chair in ISD over the past few years.

Robbie Lieberman, Chair
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As a child, Liz Miles never would have guessed her adult self would be studying Japanese men and sexuality; now, she can’t imagine not doing so. Dr. Miles first went to Japan post-grad to teach English in Sendai with the JET Program. After a brief stint with the Asahi Shinbun, and a longer tenure with Stanford University Press, she returned to graduate school to pursue a M.A. in East Asian Studies at Yale. Realizing that “Japanese dudes are fascinating” (she foolishly, but understandably, per her mother) began her doctoral studies in 2010. Dr. Miles received her Ph.D. in Anthropology in May 2017 from Yale University, with a dissertation entitled, “Men of No Value: Contemporary Japanese Manhood and the Economies of Intimacy.” She is currently working on a journal article on male virginity movements in Japan. Dr. Miles is new to the Atlanta area and is always looking for good food recommendations!

LaShonda Mims received her PhD in History at the University of Georgia in 2012. Dr. Mims comes to KSU most recently from Towson University in Baltimore. She is the recipient of the Catherine Prelinger Award and Scholarship, presented by the Coordinating Council of Women in History. In 2014, the National Park Service invited her to join its Scholars Roundtable for their ongoing LGBTQ Heritage Initiative research project. Mims regularly presents her work at a variety of scholarly conferences, including the Urban History Association, the National Women’s Studies Association, the Library Orientation Exchange, the Southern Historical Society, and the American Historical Assn. Her manuscript in progress, Drastic Dykes and Accidential Activists: Lesbians, Identity and the New South explores lesbian life in Atlanta and Charlotte, NC, from WW II to present. Her publications include a forthcoming article in the Journal of Women’s History.

Federica Santini joined ISD as a jointly appointed faculty member in Foreign Languages. She holds an M.A. in Comparative Literatures from the University of Siena, Italy, and a Ph.D. in Italian, with a focus on 20th- and 21st-century Italian literature, from UCLA. Her main research interests are modern and contemporary Italian poetry, gender and women studies/feminist literary theory, experimental writings, and translation studies. Her articles and translations have appeared in numerous publications in the United States and Italy, including Rivista di Studi Italiani, Lilluminista, L’anello che non tiene, Il Verri, L’Ulisse, and Italian Culture. She has written extensively on Amelia Rosselli, Alfredo Giuliani, and Elio Pagliarani among others. She is the co-editor of four volumes, the last of which, the American edition of Alfredo Giuliani’s I Novissimi, Poetry for the Sixties, with Luigi Ballerini, was released by Agincourt in 2017.

Meya Hemphill graduated with an MA in American Studies in the Summer of 2017. She was formerly a Teaching Assistant (T.A.) for Dr. Griselda Thomas. She is “extra” busy this semester as a Limited Term instructor, which involves teaching five classes! She is teaching a Learning Community that’s connected to the LGBTQ Resource Center and several AADS classes, including the popular AADS 3500: The Black Woman. Greet Meya if you see her hanging out in the ISD Suite this semester. We appreciate her good cheer, despite her heavy workload. Congrats to Meya for being named the 2018 Homecoming Outstanding Anthropology Alumnus!
Miriam Brown Spiers has just been named an assistant editor at *Transmotion*, a journal that publishes “new scholarship focused on theoretical, experimental, postmodernist, and avant-garde writing produced by Native American and First Nations authors, as well as book reviews on relevant work in Indigenous Studies, and new creative work that seeks to push boundaries.” Brown Spiers also received this year’s “Safe Space” award from the office of LGBTQ Student Engagement presented to a member of the staff or faculty nominated by students as exemplifying the mission of the Safe Space Initiative.


May Gao had two peer-reviewed publications and one book chapter in 2018. Written about the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) of China, they were: Chapter 17: Globalization 5.0 Led by China: Powered by Positive Frames for BRI. *China's Belt and Road Initiative: Changing the Rules of Globalization* and Facilitators and Frames by China in Promoting the “Belt & Road Initiative.” *China Currents*, China Research Center.

Rebecca Hill’s “Capital or the Capitol?: The Hunger Games Fandom and Neoliberal Populism” will shortly be published in the *American Studies Journal*. She also had a review essay, “A Hundred Years of Fake News” published by *American Quarterly* in June 2018. Hill is working on a new book on political polarization in “geek culture.” She participated in the AMSTO (American Studies Student Organization) pre-Dragon Con Event with a talk entitled “Dragon Con Goes to College,” discussing what it is like to do research at fan conventions.

Letizia Guglielmo, GWST Coordinator, edited a timely collection entitled: *Misogyny in American Culture: Causes, Trends and Solutions*.

Jalesah Jackson, who teaches in AADS & GWST, was awarded an Errin J. Vuley Fellowship at the Feminist Women’s Health Center. She will be participating in and facilitating workshops and other action-based events that focus on the necessary skills, content knowledge, and strategies through the lenses of reproductive, gender, and racial justice.

Robbie Lieberman had a chapter entitled “You’ll Never Hear Kumbaya the Same Way: The Diffusion and Defusion of a Freedom Song,” in the book *Songs of Social Protest: International Perspectives*, published by Rowman & Littlefield in August. She also presented a paper “Martin Luther King’s Triple Evils: Putting Militarism at the Center of the 1960s” at the 1968 in the Americas Conference at University College London.

Anne Richards participated in the U.S. Fulbright Scholar Alumni Ambassador Summit in Washington, D.C., on September 11 and 12, 2018. Among the topics addressed were: reaching out to academic administrators, engaging faculty, recruiting from underserved areas, and amplifying the impact of the Fulbright program worldwide. Anne has served as a Fulbright Teaching Fellow (Sfax, Tunisia, 2006–2007), a Fulbright Specialist (Davao, Philippines, 2014), and a Fulbright Ambassador (2010–2013). She vets proposals for the Fulbright Specialist program in the areas of Conflict Management and American Studies, and she is a Member of the Board of the Fulbright Association’s Georgia Chapter.


Sarah Holliday, a GWST affiliate, gave the keynote address at Queer Research Day, which also included a presentation by Jessica Fisher, a MAST graduate student.

Linda Niemann published *Cosas: Folk Art Travels in Mexico*. “Love and friendship, art and craft, language and culture are the subjects of this look back at one woman’s experiences in Mexico over a period of twenty years.” It was published by the University of New Mexico Press in February.

Wendell McMurrain, who teaches in RELS, attended two sessions of Summer at Yale, concentrating on ethics and religion.

Federica Santini published a chapter in *Journal of Italian Translation*, entitled: *Italian translation of poems by Lynne McMahon*.

Annie Moye was accepted into the Public History PhD program at Georgia State and has been taking classes this fall. Congrats, Annie!

Cherie Miller was accepted into the MAST Certificate program and plans on graduating in Spring 2019.
Diversity
Social Justice
Community Engagement

Interdisciplinary Studies Department

Student Mixer

October 22
11-2 pm
Leadership Room, Student Center

Learn more about us
African & African Diaspora Studies
Asian Studies
American Studies
Gender & Women’s Studies
Latin American/Latin@ Studies
Peace Studies
Religious Studies
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Events
Student Groups
Research Symposia

free pizza!