

# American Studies Program

STANFORD UNIVERSITY

WINTER 2020

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

### SHELLEY FISHER FISHKIN

*Joseph S. Atha Professor of Humanities, Professor of English, and Director of American Studies*

I was truly delighted when American Studies senior Amir Abou-Jaoude agreed to be Editor of this American Studies *Newsletter*. I've had the pleasure of knowing Amir since he took my freshman seminar "Mark Twain and American Culture." He was a star debater, a fine writer, and wonderful to have in class. I was fortunate enough to have Amir become my research assistant for the next three years; in that capacity he did remarkable work, helping me immeasurably with the book I'm writing, *Citizen Twain: Mark Twain and Hal Holbrook on Racism, Jingoism and Corruption*. Many of us have read with pleasure the more than 70 pieces Amir wrote and edited in the Arts section of the *Stanford Daily*, which were fascinating, fresh, and often brilliant. I was thrilled when he decided to major in American Studies (as well as Art History!), and was not surprised when he became one of only 10 undergraduates awarded a Hume Humanities Honors Fellowship. Thank you, Amir, for putting your many talents to work for us in this Newsletter!



I'd also like to thank American Studies Coordinator Judy Richardson for serving as such a stellar interim director of American Studies during my first-ever sabbatical at Stanford. Judy is the kind of gifted teacher who leaves students asking for more; that "more" often leads them to major in American Studies. In addition to continuing to do outstanding teaching and advising, Judy has co-organized

with fellow program coordinator Beth Kessler, a series of creative community-building events and initiatives that have helped make fall and winter terms of 2019-20 particularly lively and stimulating. Thank you, Judy, for steering the ship so ably! And additional thanks to Beth for leading the American Studies' honors program for the past couple of years and spearheading our new honors workshop course.



It is a huge pleasure to welcome our new Academic Services Administrator, Amy Potemski, to the American Studies family. Amy brings to her work a strong background in education (she has a master's in public policy with a focus on education policy, and has done graduate work in the sociology of education), along with a positive can-do approach and an infectious enthusiasm. Be sure to stop by and say hello if you have not met her already!



It is impossible to overstate the debt of gratitude that we owe to Monica Moore, who has served as our Program Administrator for over 40 years, and who will be retiring this summer. Monica, we are immensely grateful to you for sharing your time, your wisdom, your compassion and your creativity with us as generously as you have over the years. We are delighted to honor you with the Monica P. Moore Lecture Series, begun last year, an ongoing tribute to your remarkable devotion to Stanford. We will miss you greatly!



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## Award-Winning Majors

We are so very proud of our accomplished, award-winning majors! We are tremendously pleased that the US-Ireland Alliance recognized Ella Bunnell's scholarship, leadership, and commitment to community and public service by awarding her a prestigious Mitchell Scholarship, which will enable her to study interfaith peace building and transitional justice. We are equally delighted that Carlos Valladares' exceptional contributions to the arts were honored with a Deans' Award, and that the originality of Carrie Couric Monahan's honors thesis was recognized with the David M. Kennedy Prize, as well as a Robert M. Golden Medal.

In their self-designed thematic concentrations, our majors have focused their studies on Social Policy, Inequality, and Democratic Institutions; on Sports and Leisure in Popular Culture; on the Politics of Health Policy. They have explored Racial Identity and Collective Memory; How Americans View Nature and the Environment; and Gender in Law and Politics. They have concentrated on Asian Americans in Popular Culture; Law and Political Inequality; Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Popular Imagination; and Artists' Visions of the American West. They have dwelt on Race, Law, and Social Justice; on Nineteenth-Century America; and on Visual Culture Since 1945. They have focused on Wellbeing Education; on Denim and American Identity; and on American Consumerism. They have explored Diasporic Art and Activism in the U.S.; Race and Ethnicity in Art and Entertainment; and Community, Identity, and Access to Justice. They have focused on Cultural History of the Margins; and on Cross-

Our majors have also engaged in public service, volunteering with a special needs aquatic program; with an organization that helps disadvantaged young people apply to college; with a program that tutors low-income students; and with a program that helps underprivileged students thrive academically, socially, and physically by providing stimulating after-school programs and nutritious food.

Cultural Concepts of Progress. They have examined how art and literature engage and challenge history, and how they help us envision alternative futures for our country.

Our majors have assumed many leadership roles on campus—as editors of campus publications; as organizers of exhibits and film series; as founders of theatrical groups; as directors of musicals and plays; as dancers, singers, improv artists, actors, and activists. They have won awards for writing, photography, and performance, as well as academic achievement, and several have done Honors in the Arts. They have helped lead Stanford teams to victory in baseball, basketball, football, and softball, and have competed as Stanford equestrians.

Our majors have also engaged in public service, volunteering with a special needs aquatic program; with an organization that helps disadvantaged young people apply to college; with a program that tutors low-income students; and with a program that helps underprivileged students thrive academically, socially, and physically by providing stimulating after-school programs and nutritious food. They have mentored middle-school girls in East Palo Alto and served as counselors at Camp Kesem, a camp that Hillel runs for children whose parents have cancer. With Bay Area JusticeCorps, one assisted self-represented litigants in

California family courts. We count among our majors two Public Interest Law Fellows and a Stanford Pride Fellow. Several of our students have held leadership positions at the Women's Community Center, and one has served on the National Advisory Board for Stanford's Haas Center for Public Service.

## Amazing Alumni

We also are very proud of our amazing alumni, whose ranks now include two college presidents(!) as well as award-winning professors at universities in Sweden, California, and Massachusetts, and the director of a leading university's humanities center. Our alumni have also been enlivening and improving secondary schools in California, Connecticut, Texas, Washington, and Milan, Italy. Many are engaged in post-graduate education themselves, pursuing degrees in Art History, Business, Law, and Sociology and Social Policy.

Our alumni are also prolific writers! Their recent books include *Life After Manzanar*; *Get Together: How to Build a Community with Your People*; *Law's Picture Books*; *How to Be Sort of Happy in Law School*; and *Real American*. They have been writers, editors, and commentators for CNN, ESPN, Reuters, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the *Idaho Press*, *Amerasia Journal*, and *Women and Social Movements in the United States, 1600-2000*. They

have helped preserve history and culture by working in museums devoted to western art and to automobile history, and by helping the storied Levi Strauss company preserve its past. They founded a winery, a law firm, and a tech company. They helped make the world more equitable and more just by working with foundations, nonprofits, public defender offices, community health clinics, and community organizations, and by advocating for social justice and environmental causes. They have worked to improve labor standards for childcare workers, house cleaners, seniors, and people with disabilities. They have worked to reform public education in low-income communities, to improve child protective services, and to address rural, tribal, and farm-worker community needs.

## Remarkable Faculty

Our faculty continue to do pioneering research while being deeply engaged and engaging teachers. With the assistance of American Studies VPUE summer undergraduate research interns, history professor Estelle Freedman is developing a new method for data-mining the rich but untapped collections of digitized women's oral history transcripts housed across the U.S.—including The History Makers interviews with over 900 female African American leaders. American Studies VPUE undergraduate research interns have also played a key role in the Chinese Railroad Workers in North America Project directed by Gordon H. Chang and Shelley Fisher Fishkin, which explored innovative ways to recover the experience of people who left no written records themselves. The project, whose work culminated last year—the 150th anniversary

of the completion of the transcontinental railroad—has been the impetus behind six books published in English and Chinese, traveling historical and photographic exhibits, digital visualizations and publications, a digital archive including a collection of oral histories, an archaeological research project, a documentary, an oratorio, and a curriculum guide. Due in large part to the project's efforts, the Chinese workers' role in building the railroad—completely neglected on the railroad's 100th anniversary—was front and center in this year's 150th anniversary commemorations.

History professor Ana Raquel Minian has probed an urgent and timely topic in her award-winning book, *Undocumented Lives: The Untold Story of Mexican Migration*. Gordon H. Chang has added texture and color to the experience of Chinese railroad workers in *The Ghosts of Gold Mountain: The Epic Story of the Chinese who Built the Transcontinental Railroad* and in the volume he co-edited with Shelley Fisher Fishkin, *The Chinese and the Iron Road: Building the Transcontinental Railroad*. Clayton Nall published *The Road to Inequality: How the Federal Highway Program Polarized America and Undermined Cities*. Jim Fishkin published *Democracy When the People are Thinking*. And Jack Rakove published *A Politician Thinking: The Creative Mind of James Madison* and co-edited the *Cambridge Companion to The Federalist*.

American Studies faculty also published articles and essays in journals including *The American Historical Review*, *American Literary History*, *The Boston Globe*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *College Literature*, *Foreign Languages and Cultures (China)*, *Historical Archaeology*, *Information*, the *Journal of American*

*History*, *Journal of American Studies* (*Republic of Georgia*), the *Journal of Transnational American Studies*, *Ms.*, *North American Review*, *Pacific Historical Review*, *Third Text*, *Texas Law Review*, and *The Times Literary Supplement*.

We are delighted to welcome to our American Studies faculty Jonathan Gienapp (History), whose book *The Second Creation: Fixing the American Constitution in the Founding Era* has won multiple awards, including being named the Best Book in American Political Thought by the American Political Science Association. We are

During each of the last two years American Studies has organized extracurricular events around a selected theme. In 2017-2018, in honor of the 30th anniversary of Gloria Anzaldúa's seminal work, *Borderlands/La Frontera*, we chose the theme "Borderlands Now."

extremely pleased that Kathryn Olivarius (History) has joined our faculty as well. Author of the forthcoming *Necropolis: Disease, Power, and Capitalism in the Cotton Kingdom*, Kathryn was awarded Stanford's Phi Beta Kappa teaching prize and a prize awarded in Seville, Spain, by the International Conference on Risk and Insurance in Business History. It has also been a true pleasure to have William Gow, winner of the Western History Association's Vicki Ruiz Prize for the Best Essay on Race in the North American West, teach in our Program.

## American Studies Events

During each of the last two years American Studies has organized extracurricular events around a selected theme. In 2017-2018, in honor of the 30th anniversary of Gloria Anzaldúa's seminal work, *Borderlands/La Frontera*, we chose the theme "Borderlands Now." Anzaldúa's book broke new ground in 1987 defying boundaries between history and poetry, memoir and manifesto, and Spanish and English to probe the pains and possibilities that emerged where nations, cultures, genders, and racial identities contended, collided, blurred, and bled. The year-long series of events included talks on Latino art in San Francisco and on Mexican migration to the U.S.; a faculty panel (including Paula Moya, Ramón Saldivar, and Shelley Fisher Fishkin) on Anzaldúa's impact and legacy; an open mic night in which students spoke to diverse borderlands in their own lives; and a symposium on "The Art and Culture of the U.S.-Mexico Border: 2000 Miles of Imagination that Unite and Divide Us."

In 2018-2019, a year that brought two significant anniversaries in transportation technology—the 50th anniversary of the Apollo Mission to the moon and the 150th anniversary of the building of the transcontinental railroad—the year-long theme was "America on the Move." In fall quarter, American Studies Coordinator Beth Kessler organized a film series, "From Here to the Moon," and also hosted "The Voyager Interstellar Record," a memorable conversation with Frank Drake and Timothy Ferris, a radio astronomer and a writer who had collaborated with astronomer Carl Sagan to collect sounds and images representing civilization

on earth as a message for extraterrestrials. In winter, Allyson Hobbs lectured on the appeals but also perils of automobile travel for African Americans in the 20th century, and Clayton Nall spoke about how the interstate highway system shaped inequality in American cities. As a grand finale for the "America on the Move" series in the spring, American Studies sponsored Stanford's commemoration of the Chinese laborers who helped build the transcontinental railroad, a multifaceted event that was attended by some 400 students, faculty, community members, and railroad worker descendants, as well as contributors to the Chinese Railroad Workers in North America Project from the U.S. and Asia.

In spring 2019 we also hosted a series of lunchtime book talks by American Studies faculty: Jonathan Gienapp traced how the Constitution became "fixed" over a series of early national debates; James Campbell illuminated the work of Civil Rights-era photographer Florence Mars; and Sam Wineburg gave a stimulating and provocative talk on his recent book, *Why Learn History (When It's Already on Your Phone)*.

It is truly a pleasure and an honor to be able to work with such terrific students and colleagues to make American Studies at Stanford the vibrant and stimulating program that it is, and to recognize the many positive ways in which our alumni are shaping our world.

(For more on our latest events and other news you can visit our website, [amstudies.stanford.edu](http://amstudies.stanford.edu), or ask to be added to our email list. We would love to hear what you are up to, and if you are in the Bay Area, we'd be delighted to see you!)



# UNDERGRADUATE HONORS THESES & AWARDS

## 2018 Honor Theses

Sydney Shepherd Harris, *Finding Mammy: Locating the Iconic Figure in African American Ideologies of Gender*

Carrie Monahan, *"A Dream Remembered": Collective Memory and Ancestral Responsibility in Eufaula, Alabama*

Carlos Valladares, Honors in Film and Media Studies for his thesis, *Many Arms to Hold You: Ensemble Acting in the 1960s Films of Richard Lester*

Nathan Weiser, *Slacker: A Film from Austin, Texas*

## 2019 Honor Theses

Ella Klahr Bunnell, *"Los[ing] the right to have rights?": Making a Case for the Abolition of American Criminal Disenfranchisement*

Gabriela Amelia Romero, *Statehood Denied: New Mexico and Territorial Incorporation, 1846-1876*

Siena Jeakle, Honors in the Arts for her project *Indigo Overthrow/Stanford Womxn in Comedy* (for which she and partner Dee Dee Anderson created a YouTube channel, a Stanford club, and an annual comedy festival)

## STUDENT AWARDS AND PRIZES

### 2018 American Studies Program Awards

**The George M. Fredrickson Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Honors Research:** Sydney Shepherd Harris

**The David M. Potter Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Honors Research:** Carrie Monahan



**The Albert J. Gelpi Award for Outstanding Service to the Program in American Studies:** Carlos Valladares

**Other Awards and Honors Received by American Studies Majors in 2018**

**The Robert M. Golden Medal for Excellence in the Humanities and Creative Arts:** Carrie Monahan

**The David M. Kennedy Honors Thesis Prize** (awarded annually to the single best thesis in each of the four areas of humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and engineering and applied science): Carrie Monahan

**The Deans' Award for Academic Achievement**, given each year to between five and ten extraordinary undergraduates: Carlos Valladares

**Graduated with Distinction:** Carrie Monahan, Carlos Valladares, Nathan Weiser

**Phi Beta Kappa:** Carrie Monahan, Carlos Valladares, Nathan Weiser

**2019 American Studies Program Awards**

**The David M. Potter Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Honors Research:** Ella Bunnell

**The George M. Fredrickson Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Honors Research:** Gabriela Romero

**The Richard Gillam Award for Outstanding Service to the Program in American Studies:** Callan Showers

**The Albert J. Gelpi Award for Outstanding Service to the Program in American Studies:** Ronald Pritipaul

**Other Awards and Honors Received by American Studies Majors in 2019**

**George J. Mitchell Scholarship:** Ella Bunnell

**The Robert M. Golden Medal for Excellence in the Humanities and the Creative Arts:** Siena Jeakle for her multipart Honors in the Arts project, Indigo Overthrow/Stanford Womxn in Comedy.

**Award of Excellence** (presented by the Stanford Alumni Association to students with superior dedication to Stanford University): Michelle Hull

**Public Service Honors Society:** Ella Bunnell, Callan Showers, Kathryn Rydberg

**Graduated with Distinction:** Ella Bunnell, Gabriela Romero, Callan Showers

**Phi Beta Kappa:** Ella Bunnell, Gabriela Romero

## UNDERGRADUATE SPOTLIGHT:

# American Studies Majors Pick Up Major Awards



Carrie Monahan

### Carrie Monahan Wins the 2018 Kennedy Prize

In June 2018, American Studies' Carrie Monahan was awarded the David M. Kennedy Prize, Stanford's highest award for an honors thesis, for her genre-crossing, book-length project, "A Dream Remembered: Collective Memory and Ancestral Responsibility in Eufala, Alabama." The award means that Monahan's thesis was deemed the best among those theses that won the Robert M. Golden Medal, which is awarded to the top 10% of honors theses in the Humanities and Arts. As the citation that accompanied the award put it:

*"Carrie Monahan's thesis, "A Dream Remembered: Collective Memory and Ancestral Responsibility in Eufala, Alabama," is a stunning, evocatively written, and absolutely unique accomplishment. Braiding memoir and family history into thoroughly researched local, regional, and national histories, this work of creative non-fiction explores fraught but urgent questions of race, responsibility, memory, and reconciliation—and does so with rare care, depth, sensitivity, and openness. In part what makes the thesis so impressive is just how richly yet seamlessly Carrie weaves together the results of her exceptionally ambitious, multi-year research forays—forays both extensive and intensive, involving everything from interviews and site visits, to local archival ephemera, to a wealth of historical and historiographical studies and literary sources. What makes this work of extraordinarily*

*deep mapping that much more significant and meaningful is the author's willingness to involve herself in—not distance herself from—the difficult reckonings at the project's heart."*

After graduation, Monahan attended Columbia School of Journalism. She is currently Research Assistant to the Editor-in-Chief at Reuters.

### Carlos Valladares Wins 2018 Deans' Award

In 2018 Carlos Valladares, a double major in American Studies and Film Studies, was one of only nine Stanford students to win the Deans' Award for Academic Achievement. As the call for nominations put it, this award recognizes more than just high GPAs or success in coursework: "The Deans' Award honors students for exceptional, tangible accomplishments in independent research, national academic competitions, a presentation or publication for a regional or national audience, or superior performance in the creative arts." Here is the citation the VPUE posted in announcing the awards for 2018, recognizing the accomplishments that earned Valladares this rare honor:

*"[Valladares] writes regularly for the San Francisco Chronicle as a film and jazz critic, after working there in the summer of 2017 as a Rebele Internship-funded staff writer. He co-founded and is the editor-in-chief of "Untitled," Stanford's undergraduate art history and film studies journal. In his junior year, and with the support of Professor Alexander Nemerov and Jason Linetzky, he curated and wrote the wall-texts for "Abstraction*



Carlos Valladares



Ella Bunnell

and the Movies,” an exhibition at the Anderson Collection which paired up films with paintings by Abstract Expressionist artists; slated to run for only 3 weeks, it ran for 3 months. Alexander Nemerov calls Carlos, a “one-of-a-kind student” who is “the most natural young scholar in 25 years of undergraduate teaching at Yale and at Stanford.” Drawing upon research funded by the Chappell-Lougee Scholarship, he is writing an honors thesis on acting and ensembles in the films of Richard Lester (“A Hard Day’s Night,” “Help!”). He is a research assistant for Dr. Christina Mesa on her upcoming book on black and white race relations in popular American fiction and film. As the Managing Editor of Arts and Life for the Stanford Daily, he writes a regular column on film (especially those playing at the Stanford Theatre) and has interviewed directors such as Kelly Reichardt, Steven Spielberg, Whit Stillman, and Terence Davies. In addition to his outstanding achievements, Professors Shelley Fisher Fishkin, Scott Bukatman, and Marci Kwon, along with Lecturers Judith Richardson and Elizabeth Kessler, commend Carlos for his rare gift of being able to extend his astute insights into film beyond the classroom to his fellow students and the broader public.”

Valladares is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in both Art History and Film and Media Studies at Yale University, and continues to write on film, music, arts, and culture for *The San Francisco Chronicle*, *SFGate*, *Gagosian Quarterly*, *Film Comment*, *The Criterion Collection*, and other publications and sites.

### **Ella Bunnell '19 Selected as a Mitchell Scholar**

In 2019 American Studies Senior Ella Bunnell was one of only twelve students nationwide to be awarded a George J. Mitchell Scholarship, a year-long, fully funded fellowship for postgraduate studies at universities in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. Here is an excerpt of the piece that appeared in the *Stanford Daily* following the award announcement:

*Bunnell, an American studies major, will use her scholarship to pursue a master’s degree in Conflict Transformation and Social Justice at Queen’s University Belfast in Northern Ireland. Bunnell said she applied for a Mitchell Scholarship because her studies have all taken place at American institutions, with the exception of a quarter abroad in Oxford.*

*“I’ve developed an American-centric understanding of how the political process works,” Bunnell said. “I decided that, in order to expand my understanding, I should pursue graduate study abroad.”*

*After obtaining her master’s, Bunnell plans to attend law school and work in public service.*

*“I hope to continue to contribute to social justice work and criminal justice reform efforts throughout my career,” she said.*

*According to Bunnell, community involvement has played a pivotal role*

*in shaping her worldview. Growing up in Massachusetts, Bunnell performed community service with her Jewish community at Temple Israel Boston.*

*“These experiences were formative for me in relation to my perception of the world and the impact I hope to have,” she said.*

*As a freshman in high school, Bunnell began tutoring single mothers to prepare them for a high school equivalency test in homeless shelters throughout Boston.*

*“Meeting and learning from [these] women... prompted me to become more educated about the immense number of ways discrimination can manifest itself, and the implications it has for marginalized communities and our society as a whole,” she said.*

*Around the same time, she visited a prison in Western Massachusetts and spoke with people involved in restorative justice efforts.*

*“This experience humanized the impact of the criminal justice system for me,” Bunnell said. She traces her passion for civil rights, educational equity, and criminal justice reform to these experiences in high school.*

*While at Stanford, Bunnell has actively pursued her interests in political and social change. She has worked as a research assistant to Susan Olzak, studying civilian oversight of police violence.*

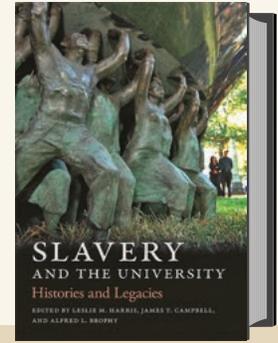
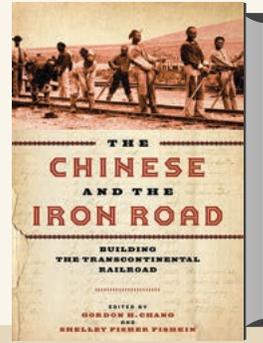
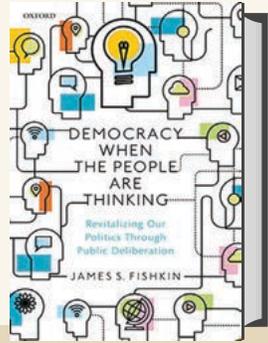
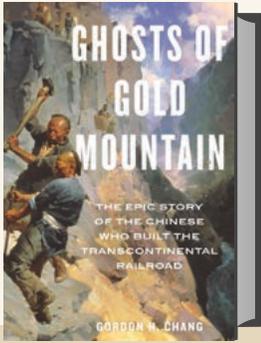
*Bunnell has interned for U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren through Stanford in Washington. She had previously interned with U.S. Representative Joseph Kennedy. She also worked in the U.S. Department of Justice’s Civil Rights Division and*

*with the American Civil Liberties Union.*

*She described the Mitchell Scholars application process as valuable in prompting her to think intentionally about her goals over the next few years. The first-round interview, conducted via video, required that she answer complex questions about current events and ethics. During the final interviews in Washington, D.C., Bunnell attended a reception with the Irish Ambassador and some alumni of the Mitchell Scholarship before talking with the other finalists at an Irish pub.*

*Having capped her Stanford career with her outstanding honors thesis, “Los[ing] the right to have rights: Making a Case for the Abolition of American Criminal Disenfranchisement,” Bunnell is indeed now a Mitchell Scholar at Queen’s University Belfast.*

*(Excerpts here are reprinted with permission from a Stanford Daily article by Annie Chang, November 27, 2018. <https://www.stanforddaily.com/2018/11/27/ella-bunnell-19-and-matthew-wigler-19-receive-2-of-12-mitchell-scholarships/>)*



**Gordon H. Chang**

In 2019, Gordon Chang published his book *The Ghosts of Gold Mountain: The Epic Story of the*



*Chinese Who Built the Transcontinental Railroad*, and co-edited with Shelley Fisher Fishkin

another book, *The Chinese and the Iron Road*. He has also been speaking to large crowds around the country about the Chinese railroad workers, most recently at Southern Methodist University, where he gave the Stanton Sharp Lecture to three hundred people. Chang is currently serving as Senior Associate Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education.

**James Fishkin**

In September 2019 James Fishkin organized (in collaboration with



Larry Diamond) *America in One Room*, a national experiment in deliberative democracy.

The scientific random sample of registered voters who came to Dallas for the event were selected by NORC at the University of Chicago. Stanford students in a Sophomore College course devoted to the event played a key role. *America in One Room* was covered extensively by the *New York Times*, *CNN*, 538, and

other media. It showed that when Americans discuss highly polarized issues together under civil conditions, they can change their views in surprising ways. *The New York Times* even published a special section with individual photos of all 526 participants in the sample. A special 2019 issue of the journal *The Good Society* is devoted to Fishkin’s book, *Democracy When the People Are Thinking* (Oxford, 2018).

**Shelley Fisher Fishkin**

American Studies Director Shelley Fisher Fishkin also continued to co-direct the Chinese Railroad Workers in North American



Project, and to speak and publish in relation to that project. With co-editor Gordon Chang

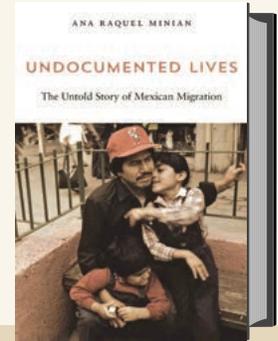
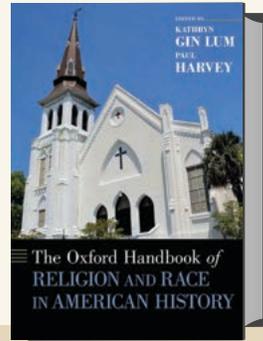
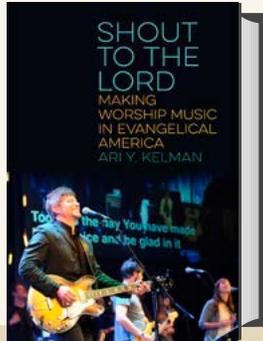
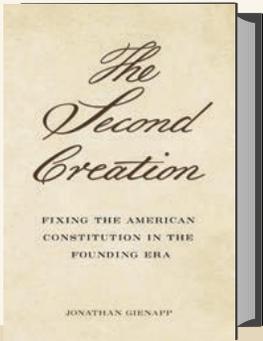
and associate editors Hilton Obenzinger and Roland Hsu, Fishkin published in 2019 *The Chinese and the Iron Road: Building the Transcontinental Railroad*, which includes her essay, “The Chinese as Railroad Workers after Promontory.” 2019 also saw the Chinese publication of a 19th century text that Fishkin edited (and for which she wrote the introduction, notes, and appendices), the 1871 book, *Why and How the Chinese Emigrate, and the means they*

*adopt for the purpose of reaching America* by Russell Conwell, an American journalist who went to China in 1870 to explore the home villages of the Chinese who came to America, and to trace how they were recruited and traveled to America. (The new edition was released at a book launch at Wuyi University in Jiangmen, China in June 2019.) Fishkin’s introduction to this book is available digitally under the Publications tab on the Chinese Railroad Workers of North American Project website, as is her annotated bibliography for “The Chinese as Railroad Workers After Promontory” (<https://web.stanford.edu/group/chineserailroad/cgi-bin/website/>). Beyond publications related to the Chinese railroad workers project, Fishkin also published pieces on transnational American Studies in *Oceanic Archives*, *Indigenous Epistemologies*, and *Transpacific American Studies* (Hong Kong University Press) and the *Routledge Companion to Transnational American Studies*; and she contributed an essay, “‘Originally of Missouri, Now of the Universe’: Mark Twain and the World,” to the book *Developing Transnational American Studies* (published in Heidelberg). Her essay “Every Atom: No. 79: Reflections on Walt Whitman at 200” appeared in the *North American Review* in August 2019 (<https://northamericanreview.org/open-space/every-atom-no-79>). She wrote “On Breaking the Gender Barrier

at Yale—50 Years Later,” for *Ms. magazine* (<https://msmagazine.com/2019/10/01/on-breaking-the-gender-barrier-at-yale-50-years-later/>). She also contributed an essay, “Ralph Wiley’s Surprising Serenity” to the *Cambridge Companion to Boxing*, edited by Gerald Early.

Fishkin gave keynote talks at conferences in Shanghai and Jiangmen, China, and in Basel, Switzerland. Her talk from the latter conference, “Nostalgia for a Fictive Past: Nation and Identity in a Post-Trump, Post-Brexit World,” will be published in a book in Germany this spring, to be titled *Brexit and Beyond: Nation and Identity*. With three colleagues from France, she also organized a conference at Stanford in April 2019 on “Digital Humanities to Preserve Knowledge and Cultural Heritage,” which was sponsored by a grant from the France-Stanford Center for Interdisciplinary Studies.

In 2019 Fishkin received an Albert Nelson Marquis Lifetime Achievement Award from *Marquis Who’s Who*; and a Trustee’s Award for Excellence from the California Preservation Foundation for her work as co-organizer of the Chinese Workers and the Railroad traveling exhibit. She was also honored by the American Studies Association, which created a new annual award in her name, “The Shelley Fisher Fishkin Prize for



International Scholarship in Transnational Studies.” The first award was presented in November 2019 at the ASA conference.

**Jonathan Gienapp**

Jonathan Gienapp’s book *The Second Creation: Fixing the American Constitution in the Founding Era* was published by Harvard University Press in



2018. A *Choice* Outstanding Academic Title and a *Spectator USA* Book of the Year, *The Second*

*Creation* won Harvard University Press’s Thomas J. Wilson Memorial Prize and the 2019 Best Book in American Political Thought Award from the American Political Science Association. It was also a finalist for the Organization of American Historians’ Frederick Jackson Turner Award. Gienapp published an op-ed “Originalism is the rage, but Constitution’s authors had something else in mind,” in the *Boston Globe* in October 2018; and his article “The Foreign Founding: Rights, Fixity, and the Original Constitution” was published in the *Texas Law Review Online* in 2019. Gienapp won Stanford’s 2019 Dean’s Award for Distinguished Teaching, for First Years of Teaching, in the School of Humanities and Sciences, and was nominated for the Phi Beta Kappa Teaching Prize.

**William Gow**

In Fall 2019, William Gow was awarded the Western Historical Association’s Vicki L. Ruiz Award for Best Essay on Race in the North American West for his essay, “A Night in Old Chinatown: American Orientalism, China Relief Fundraising, and the 1938 Moon Festival in Los Angeles,” which was published in the *Pacific Historical Review* in Summer 2018. An interview with him about the award and his research was featured on the University of California Press blog (Nov. 27, 2019).

**Margo Horn**

In Fall of 2018 Margo Horn was the Silverman Visiting Professor at the Cohn Institute for the History and Philosophy of Science at Tel Aviv University.



**Marci Kwon**

Since our last newsletter, Marci Kwon has had a number of articles published or accepted for publication, including “Wooden Fossils: The Time of Japanese Internment” in the forthcoming volume *Boundary Trouble*; “A Secret History of Martin Wong” in *The Present Prospects of Social Art History* (forthcoming 2020); “Folk Surrealism at the Museum

of Modern Art” in *Establishing the Modern: MoMA and the Modern Experiment 1929-1949*; and “The Education of John Kane” in a special issue of the journal *Third Text*, on “Amateurism and the Arts.” Kwon gave talks on clothing artist Kaisik Wong at the de Young



Museum’s Textile Arts Council and at UC Berkeley’s Museum of Anthropology; on “The Art of Executive Order 9066” at the National Gallery of Art’s Center for the Advanced Studies of the Visual Arts, for a symposium titled *Boundary Trouble: The Self-Taught Artist and American Avant-Gardes*; and on “The Evasive Bodies of May’s Photo Studio” at the American Studies Workshop at Princeton University. She has also done shared events and public conversations with artists including Mark Dion, Judy Chicago, and Davina Semo. A Faculty Research Fellow at the Clayman Institute for Gender Research in 2019-2020, and the recipient of an Annenberg Faculty Fellowship for Outstanding Junior Faculty at Stanford for 2017-2019, Kwon has received an Exploratory Grant from the Terra Foundation, for the “Chinese Diasporic Artists Research Initiative.” She was also awarded CCSRE’s Undergraduate Teaching Award and Stanford’s Asian American Faculty Award in 2019. Her book *Enchantments:*

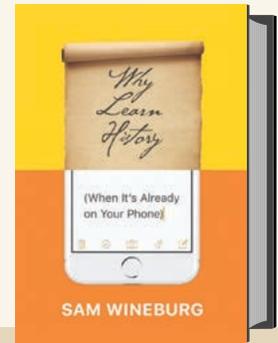
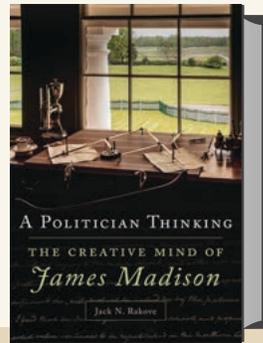
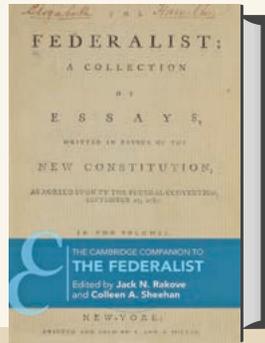
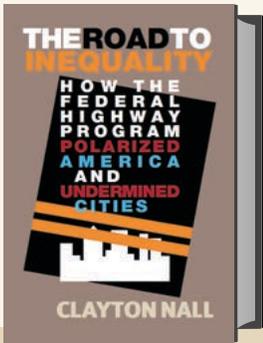
*Joseph Cornell and American Modernism* is expected to be published by Princeton University Press in 2020.

**Richard Meyer**

Richard Meyer is currently writing *The Master of the Two Left Feet: Morris Hirshfield Rediscovered*, the first book-length study of a Brooklyn tailor and slipper-manufacturer who, against all odds, achieved international renown as a self-taught painter in the 1940s. The book’s publication by Rizzoli will coincide with a Hirshfield retrospective, opening in October 2021, that Meyer will curate at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice. Taken together, the book and exhibition will showcase an outsider artist whose work was spectacularly visible in the 1940s but has been largely obscured



since. The exhibition will present 40 of the artist’s paintings, many of which have not been on public display for decades, alongside those of leading modernist artists, including Picasso, Mondrian, and Duchamp, who admired his work. Exhibition visitors will experience Hirshfield’s visual dazzle, intricate brushwork, flamboyant palette, and radical departures from realism to a degree never before possible. Ulti-



mately, the book and exhibition will present Hirshfield’s unlikely career as a painter not only as a missing episode in the history of twentieth-century American art but also as a case study of how artists may “go missing” from historical memory.

**Clayton Nall**

Clayton Nall’s book, *The Road to Inequality: How the Federal*



*Highway Program Polarized America and Undermined Cities* (Cambridge

University Press, 2018) received Honorable Mention for the Dennis Judd Best Book Award, which is given by the American Political Science Association for best book on urban politics published in the last year.

**Hilton Obenzinger**

Hilton Obenzinger continued as Associate Director of the Chinese



Railroad Workers in North America Project. He participated in the events commemorating

he 150th anniversary of the Golden Spike ceremony on May 10, 2019. He also attended

the “International Symposium on the Transnational Life of the Chinese Railroad Workers in North America” at Wuyi University in Jiangmen, Guangdong, China. The symposium was co-sponsored by Wuyi University, Jiangmen, China; the China Institute for Chinese Overseas Studies, in Beijing; the Editorial Office of the “Guangdong Overseas Chinese History” Project; and the Chinese Railroad Workers in North America Project at Stanford University. It was co-organized by the Jiangmen Overseas Chinese Historical Association and the Guangdong Qiaoxiang Cultural Research Center at Wuyi University. (“Qiaoxiang” is the term for the home villages of the workers.) Obenzinger gave presentations in both Utah and Jiangmen on the 1867 strike in the Sierra Nevada by Chinese workers. This year also saw the publication of *The Chinese and the Iron Road: Building the Transcontinental Railroad*, for which he was Associate Editor. (Details about the events and book can be found on the Chinese Railroad Workers in North America website, under Updates and Publications.) Obenzinger also wrote an essay, “Escape from Zion,” for the collection *Reclaiming Judaism*

from *Zionism: Stories of Personal Transformation*, edited by Carolyn Karcher, and has had poems published in two anthologies.

**Kathryn Olivarius**

Kathryn Olivarius is currently at work on a book for Harvard



University Press about yellow fever and slavery in the Deep South entitled *Necropolis: Disease, Power, and Capitalism in the Cotton Kingdom*. Her article “Immunity, Power, and Belonging in Antebellum New Orleans” was published by the *American Historical Review* in April 2019. In June 2019, she won Stanford’s Phi Beta Kappa Teaching Prize for excellence in undergraduate teaching. She was also awarded the Mansutti Prize by the International Conference on Risk and the Insurance Business in History in Seville, Spain.

**Jack Rakove**

Jack Rakove became professor



emeritus in June 2019, but was called back to teach History 150A: Colonial and Revolutionary

America one last time during the fall 2019 quarter. His book *A Politi-*

*cian Thinking: The Creative Mind of James Madison* was published by the University of Oklahoma Press two years ago. Since then he has co-edited, with Colleen Sheehan, the *Cambridge Companion to The Federalist*, and finished writing another book, *Beyond Belief, Beyond Conscience: The Radical Significance of the Free Exercise of Religion*, which Oxford University Press will publish in the summer of 2020.

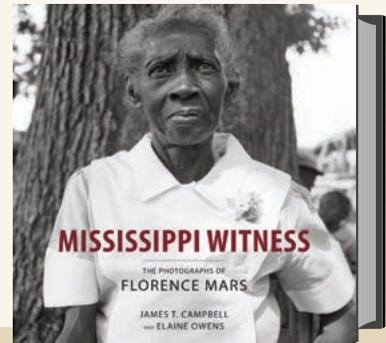
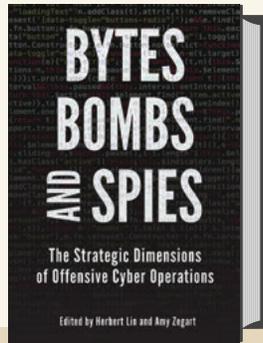
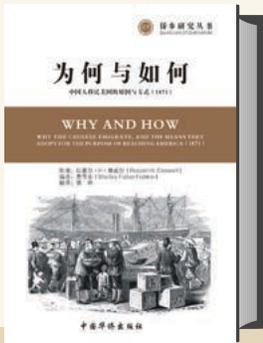
**Sam Wineburg**

Sam Wineburg, along with co-authors Mark Smith and Joel Breakstone, won the William and



Edwyna Gilbert Award for the best article in a journal, magazine, or other serial on teaching

history for their article “What Is Learned in College History Classes?” which appeared in the *Journal of American History* 104 (March 2018). Wineburg also published in 2018 a book, *Why Learn History (When It’s Already on Your Phone)*.



**Gavin Wright**

In April 2019 Gavin Wright presented the Tawney Lecture at the Economic History Society meetings in Belfast, on “Slavery and Anglo-American Capitalism Revisited.” He is revising the lecture for publication in *The Economic History Review*. Although the EHS is a British association, and the EHR a British journal, the lecture applies lessons from the British slavery-capitalism debate to American slavery.



**American Studies Instrumental in Launch of Stanford Oral History Text Analysis Project**

The Program in American Studies has been critical to launching The Stanford Oral History Text Analysis Project (OHTAP), which is developing a new methodology for data mining the rich but untapped collections of digitized women’s oral history interview transcripts housed in the university library and other collections across the U.S. Through the VPUE summer internship program, American Studies supported two research assistants—Cheng-Hau Kee (FGSS '19) and current history major Preston Carlson—who have



prepared interviews and metadata for quantitative and qualitative analysis. Preston continues to work with the project along with American Studies major Reagan Dunham, who joined the research team in winter 2020.

OHTAP is directed by American Studies faculty affiliate Estelle Freedman, who is also Robinson Professor in U.S. History, and Stanford Ph.D. Natalie Marine-Street, who is the manager of the Stanford Historical Society Oral History Program. The program’s digital humanities advisor, Stanford Ph.D. Katie McDonough, is currently a post-doctoral scholar at the Turing Institute of the British Library.

The project’s initial focus, related to Professor Freedman’s research on the history of sexual violence in America, is to explore whether and how women named, remembered, and interpreted forms of sexual violence in interviews conducted during the late twentieth century. These interviews cover lifespans over the entire century and include diverse racial and regional populations. The quantitative and qualitative analysis asks about how the language describing sexual violence, along with both personal and institutional responses to assault, abuse, and harassment, changed over time; how they differed across demographic groups; and what historical contexts enabled resistance and activism. Last summer a digital history grant from The History Makers online oral history project made it possible to include over 900 interviews with female African American leaders.

In the past year and a half the OHTAP team has created a searchable database of 2700 transcripts and developed a tool to extract relevant text for analysis through key words—terms that range from rape, harassment, and abuse to “hanky panky” and “hit on me.” At least 500 of the interviews discuss some forms of sexual violence. The project team is now beginning qualitative encoding of all of the relevant narratives to prepare to write about the methodology and results. A major long-term goal of the project is to establish methodologies for digital analysis of oral history that can be applied widely by a range of scholars, on multiple topics of inquiry.

# Welcome! Faculty New to the Committee-in-Charge

## HISTORY

### Jonathan Geinapp

Jonathan Geinapp is a scholar of Revolutionary and early republican America who is particularly interested in the period's constitutionalism, political culture, and intellectual history. He received his B.A. from Harvard University and Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University. His recently published book, *The Second Creation: Fixing the American Constitution in the Founding Era* (Harvard University Press, 2018), rethinks the conventional story of American constitutional creation by exploring how and why founding-era Americans' understanding of their Constitution transformed in the earliest years of the document's existence. *The Second Creation* was awarded the American Political Science Association's Best Book in American Political Thought award in 2019. It also won the Thomas J. Wilson Memorial Prize from Harvard University Press, and was a finalist for the 2019 Frederick Jackson Turner Award from the Organization of American Historians.

Professor Geinapp has also published articles in such journals the *Journal of the Early Republic*, *Constitutional Commentary*, the *Fordham Law Review*, and the *Texas Law Review* on topics pertaining to early American constitutionalism and interpretation, early national political culture, originalism and modern constitutional theory, and the study of the history of ideas. He is currently at work on another book project, "The Lost Constitution: The Rise and Fall of James Wilson's and Gouverneur Morris's Constitutionalism," which explores a distinct, yet forgotten, vision of constitutionalism, and recovers the central role these two delegates to the Constitutional Convention played in shaping early conceptions and debates about the Constitution. His next large project will rethink the rise of American democracy in the late 18th and early 19th century by interrogating, not how American political culture came under greater popular control, but how a peculiar understanding of "democracy" emerged in the first place.

Professor Geinapp—whose courses at Stanford include "The Worlds of Thomas Jefferson," "Was the American Revolution a Social Revolution?" and "The Rise of American Democracy," along with the core American Studies class, "Colonial and Revolutionary America"—was awarded a 2018-2019 School of Humanities and Sciences Dean's Award for Distinguished Teaching.

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## HISTORY

### Kathryn Olivarius

Kathryn Olivarius joined the Stanford faculty in 2017, having previously been *Past and Present* postdoctoral fellow at the Institute of Historical Research at the University of London. She holds an M.St. and a D.Phil. from University of Oxford and a B.A. from Yale University. An historian of the nineteenth century, Olivarius's primary interests focus on the antebellum South, the Greater Caribbean, slavery, and disease. In particular, her current research seeks to understand how epidemic yellow fever disrupted Deep Southern society, as nearly every summer the mosquito-borne virus killed up to ten percent of the urban population, generating cultural and social norms in its wake. Beyond the rigid structures of race and unfreedom in the region, she argues that there was an alternate hierarchy at work where rank and status were linked to immunity—or "acclimation"—status. Disease justified highly asymmetrical social and labor relations and accentuated the population's xenophobic, racist, pro-slavery, and individualist proclivities. Fusing health with capitalism, her forthcoming book will present a new model for how power operated in Atlantic society.

Professor Olivarius's research and teaching interests more broadly include historical notions of consent (sexual or otherwise); slave revolts in the U.S and the Caribbean; anti- and pro-slavery thought; class and ethnicity in antebellum America; the history of life insurance and environmental risk; comparative slave systems; technology and slavery; the Haitian Revolution; and boosterism in the American West.

Winner of the Stanford's Phi Beta Kappa Prize for excellence in undergraduate teaching in 2019, she teaches courses on the United States and Atlantic World ranging from the 16th through the 19th centuries, including "The Old South: Culture, Society, and Slavery"; "The Civil War and Reconstruction Era, 1830-1877"; "The Age of Revolution: America, France, and Haiti"; and "Rise and Fall of Atlantic Slavery, 1500-1900."



# William Gow



By Trenton Chang '20

In 2018, the Stanford American Studies Program put out a call for applications for a new lecturer position. To our great luck, that call brought us Dr. William Gow, an historian, educator, and documentary filmmaker. For the past two years, Dr. Gow has been an inventive teacher of interdisciplinary classes for American Studies, on such topics as race, ethnicity, and gender

in contemporary film; depictions of Asian Americans in popular culture; family history; and urban studies, including an upcoming course on Los Angeles.

Dr. Gow, who grew up in San Francisco, received his undergraduate degree from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts with departmental honors in Cinema Studies and a double major in History. He went on to receive an M.A. in Asian American Studies from UCLA and a Ph.D. in Ethnic Studies with an emphasis on Film Studies from UC Berkeley. He has also served as a public historian and was a board member at the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California. Dr. Gow is currently working on a book, prospectively entitled "Performing Chinatown," which examines the history of Los Angeles Chinatown and its relationship to Hollywood cinema during the Chinese exclusion era.

The product of deep scholarly research, this work finds roots in Dr. Gow's own background and experiences. He traces his ancestry to both Los Angeles and San Francisco Chinese communities. And although he certainly has a variety of degrees in ethnic studies to speak for his expertise on racial issues, Dr. Gow

has been thinking about race from a very young age: "Why are people trying to understand me for the way I look?" he recalls as a persistent thought in his childhood. As a mixed-race child of a Chinese father whose great-grandfather emigrated from coastal China to San Francisco, such questions of race were inescapable to him, inherently tied to his personal history.

Dr. Gow considers himself an "Asian Americanist," a designation that reconciles and centers the necessarily interdisciplinary nature of Asian American studies. Social history, film, and cultural studies all intermingle in his projects — and his personal interests in film and race further fuel his belief in interdisciplinarity.

I have had the pleasure of taking two courses from Dr. Gow over the course of my time at Stanford, and have always been struck by his ability to distill complex theoretical ideas and abstract language into digestible yet insightful explanations that I can carry into my daily life. As an Asian American, and an American Studies major, there is little more that I can ask of a mentor.

**A**s a scholar I am interested in the ways in which seemingly everyday people utilize popular culture to negotiate the dominant conceptions of race and gender that have long shaped so much of their lives in the United States. Historically, dominant conceptions of race and gender do not shift on their own. Rather, they do so as a result of the actions, choices, and decisions of actual human beings working within larger social structures. Too many scholars either forget this or get caught in theoretical models that don't allow them to acknowledge this.

Historians have long identified the World War II era as a turning point in the racial formation of Asian Americans, yet too often this shift is ascribed to the shifting geopolitical alliances of the Pacific War, with the agency of everyday Asian Americans left ignored or under-examined. So-called Bowl of Rice Festivals as well as related China Relief fundraisers during the late 1930s and early 1940s are a case in point. These celebrations were hypervisible. They were covered by the largest media outlets of the day. Yet at the same time, we know relatively little about the Chinese American women and men who participated in these festivals. Who were they? What motivated them? How did they conceive of their performances and other forms of participation?"

*William Gow, in an interview with the UC Press, on the occasion of his winning the Western History Association's 2019 Vicki L. Ruiz award for his essay "A Night in Old Chinatown: American Orientalism, China Relief Fundraising, and the 1938 Moon Festival in Los Angeles," published in the Pacific Historical Review. For the whole interview, go to <https://www.ucpress.edu/blog/48266/phr-award-winner-discusses-the-history-of-chinese-american-performances-and-the-future-of-asian-american-studies/>*

# American Studies Association Creates Shelley Fisher Fishkin Prize for International Scholarship in Transnational American Studies

The American Studies Association created a new prize and named it for Stanford English Professor Shelley Fisher Fishkin.

Fishkin, the Joseph S. Atha Professor in the Humanities and director of Stanford's American Studies program, has been involved with the association as a president and in other leadership roles for about two decades. She is an expert on Mark Twain, as well as 19th- and 20th-century American history and culture.

Fishkin has long argued for the importance of paying attention to the work of American studies scholars outside of the United States and has been an advocate for transnational collaboration.

The award, called the Shelley Fisher Fishkin Prize for International Scholarship in Transnational American Studies, was created to honor publications written by scholars outside the United States that present original research in transnational American Studies.

"Shelley Fisher Fishkin's leadership in creating crossroads for international scholarly collaboration and exchange has transformed the field of American Studies in both theory and practice," according to the association's announcement. "This award honors Professor Fishkin's outstanding dedication to the field by promoting exceptional scholarship that seeks multiple perspectives that enable comprehensive and complex approaches to American studies, and which produce culturally, socially and politically significant insights and interpretations relevant to Americanists around the world."

Fishkin said she was pleasantly surprised when she found out that the prize was named after her.

"It's lovely to have this happen while I'm alive to enjoy it," Fishkin said. "This is really a special treat. It's wonderful to have the institutional validation of the importance of transnational work in the field."

Fishkin has been working on promoting collaboration among American studies scholars across the world since the early 2000s.

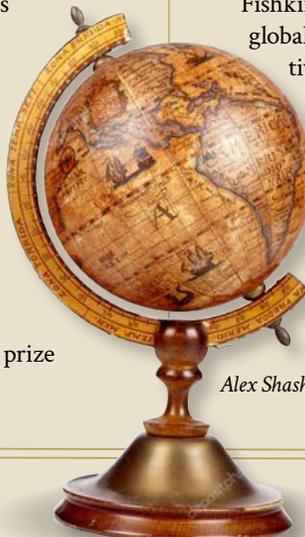
Since her presidential address to the American Studies Association in 2004, "Crossroads of Cultures: The Transnational Turn in American Studies," transnational issues have been at the center of Fishkin's research. She co-founded the *Journal of Transnational American Studies*, an online, open-access, peer-reviewed journal, in 2009 to help promote research in the field.

She is also a co-founder and co-director of the Chinese Railroad Workers in North America Project at Stanford, a distinctive transnational venture that had played a key role in this year's celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Golden Spike. It has ensured that the Chinese workers without whose labor Stanford wouldn't exist receive the recognition they were long denied.

Fishkin said she learned from her work on global responses to Mark Twain how instructive transnational perspectives can be.

"Very often scholars from other countries have insights into Twain that Americans didn't have," Fishkin said. "For example, scholars in Russia and China appreciated Twain's social criticism from at least 1960, whereas Americans viewed Twain as mostly a humorist until the 1990s."

Alex Shashkevich, Stanford News Service





## The Journal of Transnational Studies (JTAS) turns 10!

With its Winter/Spring 2019-20 edition now available, the innovative, open access, digital *Journal of Transnational American Studies*—which is jointly sponsored by Stanford’s American Studies Program and UC Santa Barbara’s American Cultures and Global Contexts Center—is celebrating its 10th birthday!

This exciting milestone issue spotlights the transnational poetry of Shirley Geok-lin Lim, one of *JTAS*’s founders, with a festschrift of eight essays, edited by Mohammed A. Quayum. These essays, as journal editors Nina Morgan and Shelley Fisher Fishkin write in their introduction, “speak to Lim’s transnational poetics” by placing her poems “in relation to her individual and representative experiences, from her life at home to her alliance with protestors in the streets of Hong

*Above: JTAS anniversary party at ASA. Below: New books by JTAS editors.*

Kong, from her family history to her relationship with the natural world around her.” The volume also marks the publication of five



new Lim poems, and includes in its “Reprise” section an interview with Lim originally published in *India* twenty years ago.

In addition to celebrating Lim, this issue includes three original tour/travel themed essays—on nineteenth-century Mexican Liberals’ accounts of Niagara Falls; on sounding “Black” in Paris; and on Laos and the construction of race and space in the writings of Thomas Dooley. There are ten new selections from scholarly books in the “Forward” section, introduced

by Jennifer Reimer. You’ll also find in this impressive issue several China-focused selections in the “Reprise” section, introduced by guest editor Selina Lai-Henderson. Among them are essays on film and music from *The Power of*

*Culture: Encounters Between China and the United States*, edited by Priscilla Roberts, as well as an overview of the first compendium/encyclopedia of

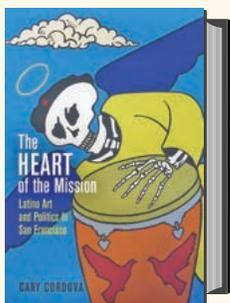
American literature written in Chinese for Chinese readers, by its editor, Yu Jianhua. As Lai-Henderson notes in her introduction to the “Reprise” section, this compendium is interesting not least for the different “canon” of American literature it presents, as it includes writers who may not make it into English-language anthologies, but who are important to Chinese readers.

Read it all for yourself at [https://escholarship.org/uc/acgcc\\_jtas](https://escholarship.org/uc/acgcc_jtas)



## BORDERLANDS NOW

# CARY CORDOVA on the Underrepresentation of Latinos in Art



Latino culture and California culture sometimes seem synonymous in the way that the two have fused to create dynamic and rich social settings around the state. Approximately one third of California residents speak Spanish as their first language at home. Obviously,

the contributions of Latino culture can be seen by just observing with the naked eye. Why, however, do we not see the same representation of Latinos within artistic culture? Cary Cordova, associate professor of American History at the University of Texas at Austin, came to speak at the second installment of the American Studies Art and Social

Criticism Series. Cordova – an archivist, curator and former oral historian of the Smithsonian – is an outspoken critic of the underrepresentation of Latinos in the art world. Cordova’s newest work, *The Heart of the Mission*, traces her roots in the city of San Francisco and the role that the city has played in developing and displaying the work of groundbreaking Latino and Latina artists.

Cordova acknowledges the vast breadth and diversity of Latino and Latina work within the San Francisco Mission District, while also finding frustration with the lack of acknowledgement and representation within the art world at large. Throughout her speech Cordova drilled home a singular point: despite how important and groundbreaking the artistic work of Latinos in the Mission District has been, the San Francisco art world, and the artistic community at large, have been frustratingly slow to desegregate and acknowledge the validity and accomplishments of the Latino artistic community.

Cordova opened her talk by reading from a 1973 editorial piece from *The New York Times*. Journalist Robert Hughes had written an op-ed

about “vapid curation” of museums, in which he argues that museums are including questionable art simply for the sake of inclusion. The article is titled “And What About the Quota for Gay Militant Chicano Artists?” Hughes essentially dismisses Chicano and other minority art as illegitimate, claiming it is “noise” obscuring true and pure intellectual art. Cordova used this piece to frame her argument that the art world holds a longstanding contempt for non-western and minority artists. San Francisco, a city of diversity and opportunity, regularly excludes minority artists from artistic communities by not presenting or seeking out their work or including them in exhibitions, and thus cuts them off from the benefits and opportunities these collectives hold. Despite the roadblocks of Bay Area artistic politics and prejudice, Latino artists found their home within the Mission District.

In a city like San Francisco, filled with counterculture and intellectualism, it can be difficult to pinpoint an artistic center. For the past few decades, Latinos have created their own center





within the Mission District. Latinos were able to negotiate their own artistic politics by building publishing collectives, theatrical areas, galleries and spaces of their own. They re-scripted popular images for their own critiques and started movements for their culture. The most famous of these museums is Galería de la Raza, founded by the Chicano movement in 1970 as a place for Latino artists to display their own work on their own terms.

As Cordova emphatically described the need for recognition of this flourishing of artistic creativity, she remarked critically on the artistic world's ignorance of Latino contributions and art. In one story she told, a Latino artist walked around the National Portrait Gallery in Washington D.C. The artist asked why they were no portraits of Mexican Americans in the gallery, to which a docent replied, "We don't show portraits of foreigners."

Many pivotal works of art have come from Latino artists. Rupert García's "Down With Whiteness," a work almost unanimously praised by San Francisco art critics for its powerful imagery and impact, faced many barriers in being shown in museums that focused on traditional Western works. Eventually, García's work was shown along with disclaimers such as "These works are the opinions of the artist. They do not in any way reflect the opinions held by the

**Cordova acknowledges the vast breadth and diversity of Latino and Latina work within the San Francisco Mission District, while also finding frustration with the lack of acknowledgement and representation within the art world at large.**

institution of this museum and its staff."

As Latinos faced this kind of pushback for their political work, a group of Latino employees of the Smithsonian wrote a blunt letter known as "Willful Neglect." The letter detailed the ways in which Latinos have contributed to American art and the ways in which they are excluded from staff of museums and curatorial governance. Cordova agreed that exclusion of Latinos from museums is a systemic problem: even as diversity and equal opportunity initiatives present themselves more often in museums, boards of museums that have actual governance and power remain segregated and homogeneous.

At the end of her talk Cordova paused, choosing her words carefully. "At its essence," she said, "the art world

has not reckoned with Latino culture in an appropriate way." In light of DACA, the proposal of Trump's wall, and the horrific natural disasters wreaking havoc on Puerto Rico, it is more important than ever to acknowledge the validity and contributions that Latino artists have given to the art world. Galleries such as Galería de la Raza gave way to burgeoning movements that have changed artistic history. The Mission District is a pivotal center of counter-culture and artistic development that is largely ignored in the artistic community as a whole. As much as we feel that we have moved away from invalidating others' perspectives and art, we find ourselves at a moment that feels a lot like Robert Hughes's 1973 editorial.

Cordova finished on a cynical note. "We'd like to believe that history is a narrative of progress," Cordova said. "As much as we want it to be, and as much as we may delude ourselves into thinking it is, it simply is not."

Natalie Sada '21

*Article reprinted from the Stanford Daily, Nov. 6, 2017 ([www.stanforddaily.com](http://www.stanforddaily.com)). This event was also part of American Studies' Borderlands Now event series.*

*Above: Jesus "Chuy" Campusano, Michael Rios, and Luis Cortazar, Homage to Siqueiros, right panel detail, 1974. Mural inside the Bank of America building at Mission and 23rd Streets. Image courtesy of Andres and Sandra Campusano.*

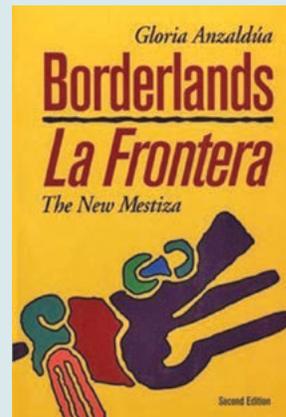
American Studies Hosts

# BORDERS AND BORDERLANDS

*Read-in and Open-Mic event*

In November of 2017, American Studies invited students to Margaret Jacks Hall to share their work in an open mic event honoring the 30th anniversary of Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* as part of the program's year-long event series "Borderlands Now." Ranging from an excerpted senior thesis to spoken word poetry, the work shared that evening provided diverse interpretations of the ambiguity, fluidity, and otherness inherent to "borderlands." The variety of stories spoke to Anzaldúa's ongoing power to inspire new generations

tion of a particular mestiza experience of the Southwest but also from its applicability to all kinds of borderlands—from its embrace of heterogeneity over dividedness for those inhabiting physical and psychological areas where conflicting cultural norms, languages, and identities collide. *Borderlands/La Frontera* celebrates this diversity in experience and identity, asserting that individuality transcends the confining boundaries of social expectations. As Anzaldúa explained in an interview, "the future belongs to those who cultivate cultural sensitivities to differences and who use



of writers and poets to examine the artificiality of socially-constructed borders of identity and being.

Queer yet Catholic, proudly *mestiza* yet subjected to her culture's ideas of male dominance, Mexican yet American, Anzaldúa was, in her words, "a border woman" in her conflicting identities. As she writes in the preface to *Borderlands/La Frontera*, "I grew up between two cultures... I have been straddling that *tejas*-Mexican border, and others, all my life." *Borderlands/La Frontera*, in its mixture of English, Spanish, and Nahuatl, embodies the cultural diversity of the "*tejas*-Mexican border" with which Anzaldúa was so familiar.

However, the book derives its power not just from its descrip-

these abilities to forge a hybrid consciousness that transcends the 'us' versus 'them' mentality and will carry us into a *nosotras* position bridging the extremes of our cultural realities." The legacy of *Borderlands/La Frontera* and, more broadly, Anzaldúa herself, is thus one of inclusion, diversity, and, most importantly, acceptance of the nuances and contradictions of individuality itself.

Those who shared their work at November's open mic event drew from the multifaceted nature of Anzaldúa's conception of borderlands to present their own interpretations of existence within and across artificially imposed boundaries of identity, language, and experience. For example, Carrie Monahan '18, who read an excerpt from her American

Studies senior thesis, interpreted Anzaldúa's message in the context of racial violence and historical memory in her ancestral home of Eufaula, Alabama. Describing how one of her ancestors participated in the lynching of Iver Peterson, a young black man accused of assaulting a white woman in Eufaula in 1911, Monahan reminded listeners of the violent implications of racial boundaries so embedded in American — and her own family's — history. With Monahan and her immediate family no longer living in Eufaula, Iver Peterson having died over one hundred years ago, and a “unisex

and shrinking your body almost-lifeless until you fit the cookie-cutter mold of Euro-American acceptance (bralettes and fishnets not included), and it's never perfect because your skin/name/history are all still brown flags but if you squint and stand far enough away, you might be able to trick someone into respecting you.”

Srinivasan describes white-washing as a form of survival, in which she lives according to another race's terms in order to be accepted. For her, borders of social expectations are permanent. By “finding a foothold in the system and climbing it, not

appreciate her mother's strength in the face of language barriers. Chang writes, “that night... / you will think of your mother, reading glasses on, / one finger sliding across an email from a language and a daughter / she has spent a decade trying to understand.” Rivera similarly portrayed forgotten and unknown languages as forms of borders. Describing the “language we have always known, but so often forget,” Rivera writes, “It is the language that allows us to understand the why from within, from the very living and breathing of our bodies and souls. It's our laughter, our

Anzaldúa's statement that “Men, even more than women, are fettered to gender roles.” Richardson said, “30 years later, we are still confronted with the rigidity of gender roles, and the expectations of stoic masculinity that many label as toxic... we still are facing the fallout from generations of men who have been taught that having emotional accessibility is weakness.” However, noting the growing idea of gender fluidity, Richardson expressed hope that the gendered borders Anzaldúa described are gradually breaking down: “It's a matter now of continuing to transform



black beauty shop” having taken the place of the town's former Klu Klux Klan headquarters, Eufaula's distant past could easily be forgotten. However, Monahan's decision to chronicle that distant past from the vantage point of the living present prevents it from being relegated to the impersonal confines of history. For her, the past and the present are intertwined in ways that transcend temporal boundaries.

Leela Srinivasan '18 also related Anzaldúa's idea of borderlands to issues of race and belonging. Relaying her personal experience of being a woman of color who has struggled with white standards of beauty and behavior, Srinivasan said: “Whitewashing yourself means burning your hair almost-lifeless

to the top, but still enough for a view,” non-white individuals can reclaim some of the power that their racial oppression has taken from them. Still, Srinivasan's piece revealed how such a tactic imposes painful costs—“a million tiny deaths,” as she put it.

Juliana Chang '19 and Ailyn Rivera '19 both interpreted borderlands through the lens of bounded language. In her spoken-word piece, Chang gives voice to a Chinese-speaking mother who struggles to understand her English-speaking daughter: “*here is the daughter I have given to another world / here is where her heart lies. / here are the words I did not know how to give her,*” says the mother. The daughter, who has difficulty accepting her Chinese heritage, ultimately comes to

tears, our screams, our hums. It is the wisdom and spirituality of emotion.” For Rivera, who wrote the piece upon turning 20 years old, living in the borderlands means overcoming the fear of voicelessness and embracing the vulnerability of living as a conscious, emotional being. In different ways, Carlos Valladares '18 and Ron Pritipaul '19 also spoke of recovering and learning to value cultural inheritances from ancestors—Latin American and Indo-Caribbean, respectively—against potent assimilative pressures and hegemonic presumptions about cultural value and belonging.

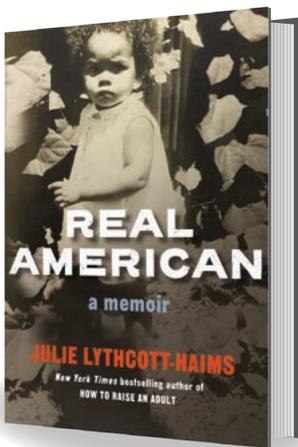
Taking another tack, Kady Richardson '18 focused on issues of gender that are also central to *Borderlands*. Responding to

this landscape into a place where the gentleness Anzaldúa hoped for grows rampant and in abundance,” Richardson said.

Ultimately, Anzaldúa's vision of a “hybrid consciousness” has extended beyond the bounds of her written work, becoming a living reminder of the power of courageous individuality. In the words of Professor Shelley Fisher Fishkin, who befriended and worked with Anzaldúa, “May [Anzaldúa] continue to be a *Nepantlera*—bridging communities, bridging worlds, speaking to us from the grave through her words on the page, inspiring us, challenging us, goading us to break down the barriers that divide us from one another.”

*Gabriela Romero '19*

## Julie Lythcott-Haims' *Real American: A Reading and Discussion*



The first day of March 2018 found a rapt audience settled in the Terrace Room of Margaret Jacks Hall, as Stanford American Studies alumna Julie Lythcott-Haims shared stories of passion, sorrow, and thoughtfulness. In her memoir *Real American*, Lythcott-Haims considers her experience growing up black in America. She provides perceptive commentary on the modern-day racism that insidiously perpetuates legacies from historical oppression in the United States.

In a review of the book, Equal Justice Initiative founder Bryan Stevenson called *Real American* a “compelling, incisive and thoughtful examination of race, origin and what it means to be called an American,” noting that the book explores “the American spectrum of identity with refreshing courage and compassion.” All he says is true—but Lythcott-Haims’ stories also display an emotional honesty that wrecks the most wonderful kind of havoc on the reader.

A notable anecdote (which Lythcott-Haims revealed to no one for decades) concerns a birthday of hers in high school. After arriving to school to see the birthday sign affixed to her locker, carefully written by her best friend, Julie’s day was marred when a later passing period revealed a racial slur hatefully left by an unknown visitor on her sign. This is just one instance that she cites of how racism pervades society. She constantly raises questions of identity and what Americanism is when so many people living here promote systems of hurt.

Lythcott-Haims spoke of self-acceptance, citing a particularly impactful experience that she had during her stint as Dean of Freshman at Stanford. She explained how she learned to come to terms with discomfort and shame of her earlier years, finally owning her relationship with being a black woman in this country. She illuminates the complicated emotions of her journey, so that a reader feels every step intensely.

Questions from the audience were earnest, heartfelt, and often tinged with the pain of mutually-experienced racism in America. Comments and questions posed by moved individuals were salient evidence of how Lythcott-Haims’ words had swiftly connected the audience, both with each other and to her—her capacity for accessing



and sharing emotions. As people spoke in response to her stories, the rest engaged in chain reactions of nodding, humming, and leaning in to signal affinity with whoever was taking up space in that moment. Just in an hour, “Dean Julie,” as she was called during her time at Stanford, produced a sense of inter-group connection. It makes sense that her job was once fostering an environment that would make groups of freshmen feel welcome in their new home.

Of all the advice she doled out, Lythcott-Haims emphasized that the most beneficial thing a parent can do for a child of color is to surround them with role models who look like them. She said that a child’s self-confidence will be unimaginably buoyed by the presence of mentors who can model what it means to live as a person of color in our country.

Overall, Lythcott-Haims’ reading was an impactful experience for those who attended – an honest, informative, and beautiful delivery of the contents of an important read.

*Kady Richardson '18*

On Tuesday, May 16, 2018, the Margaret Jacks Hall Terrace Room was packed with listeners, eager to hear Ana Raquel Minian present research and insights from her new book, *Undocumented Lives: The Untold Story of Mexican Migration*. An associate professor of History, Minian is also on the American Studies Committee-in-Charge. By providing historical context and sharing heart-wrenching anecdotal narratives, she painted a comprehensive and poignant picture of the challenges of mid- to late 20th century Mexican migration.

Much of Minian's talk focused on American discrimination towards migrants in the 1970s. Americans were quick to claim that Mexican migrants were draining significant welfare resources. These and other claims engendered stigmatization that followed migrants as they attempted to find economic opportunity in America.



Noting that many Mexican migrants traveled to the United States seasonally, Minian called attention to an ironic outcome of policies created to prevent such immigration. Although the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act was designed to fortify the border, it actually led to more Mexicans entering and staying the US. As individual Mexican men found it more difficult to traverse the border and earn enough to support families in Mexico, families were compelled to migrate together permanently.

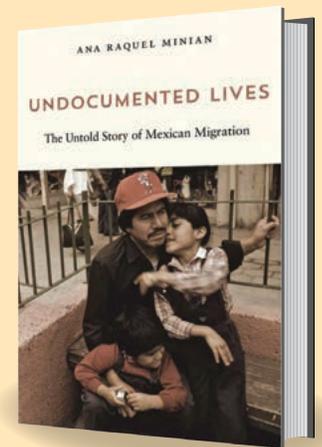
Minian introduced other social developments that corresponded to the changing landscape for Mexican migrant families. For example, an interesting effect from a

husband being absent was increased suspicion of extramarital activity, which often pressured women to stifle their social agency and remain in the home. Another side effect was male displacement: men viewed their homes in the US as temporary, but also viewed their homes in Mexico as squeezing them out, demanding that they seek economic gains elsewhere. These issues, alongside a myriad of other social consequences, are encompassed in Minian's book. She examines the ways that the Mexican and US borders have experienced irrevocable melding in the last several decades.

Minian's talk concluded with an emphatic note. Despite the various travails of the period, Mexicans managed to fight for their needs and rights in both countries. Overall, Minian's book is essential reading for Americans to incorporate into their repertoire on Mexican-US relations, if they hope to better understand the challenges of immigration.

*Kady Richardson '18*

## Ana Minian on *Undocumented Lives: The Untold Story of Mexican Migration*



***Although the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act was designed to fortify the border, it actually led to more Mexicans entering and staying the US.***



*Above: Danza De La Tierra (2009), by Judy Baca. Latino Cultural Center, Dallas, TX. Used by permission.*

In May, The Bill Lane Center for the American West presented the final symposium in its 2017-18 ArtsWest series. The symposium, titled “Art and Culture on the US-Mexico Border: 2,000 Miles of Imagination that Unite and Divide Us,” was moderated by Ana Raquel Minian, associate professor of history at Stanford University. It focused on how art and music are shaping social, cultural and political identity in the U.S.-Mexico border region.

The four panelists were Enrique Chagoya, artist and professor of art and art history in the School of Humanities and Sciences at Stanford University; Anna Indych-López, associate professor of art history at CUNY Graduate Center; Alejandro L. Madrid, professor of music at Cornell University; and Chon A. Noriega, art curator and professor of film at UCLA.

## **ArtsWest Symposium Examines Real and Imagined Borders Between U.S. and Mexico**

“This event brings to a close a year of stellar ArtsWest programming that explored marginalized communities in Western American arts ranging from Chinese exclusion as seen through historical portrait photography in San Francisco’s Chinatown to prospects for women artists on the West Coast to cross-border art movements shaping the Southwest,” said Marc A. Levin, ArtsWest coordinator and scholar. “This symposium synthesized the muses of art, music, cinema and street murals to link social movements and cultural expression that bridges the divides of bi-national identity and border politics.”

The symposium was also the culmination of Borderlands Now, a yearlong series of events sponsored by the American Studies Program to mark the 30th anniversary of the publication of Gloria Anzaldúa's book *Borderlands/La Frontera* and to explore the range of issues her work engages. "This event highlighted the ways in which the border is both a herida abierta, an open wound, as Anzaldúa puts it, and a site of vibrant creativity," said Shelley Fisher Fishkin, the Joseph S. Atha Professor of Humanities and professor of English and director of Stanford's American Studies Program.

The leitmotif that emerged during the symposium was the idea of borders in our heads and how we cross them. "Borders are mostly about imagination; us, them, other. They are less about geography," Noriega said during his discussion of Chicano cinema as a lens for understanding media and culture, sociology and mass communications, and ethnicity and gender that merge art with populist politics in film.

Noriega also talked about his role in curating the Los Angeles County Museum of Art's groundbreaking art exhibition, *Home—So Different, So Appealing* (2017-18), which showed over 100 works exploring the themes of immigration and political repression, dislocation and diaspora, and personal memory and utopian ideals found in Latinx and Latin American art. The exhibition was part of *Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA*, an exploration of Latinx and Latin American art in dialogue with Los Angeles led by the J. Paul Getty Museum.

Chagoya presented a slideshow of his socio-political paintings that depict matters of war, borders and immigration, religious and cultural differences, global politics and the plight of migrants as Mesoamerican symbols of invasion, suffering and the blurring of borders. He explained

that some of his work is an attempt to reverse the displacement of people from their lands, citing the 1847 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo when Mexicans became U.S. citizens when their border changed overnight. "Now, the borders are in our heads and within us. Social, religious, gender, economic and class borders are hard to cross," he said.

Another corrective art form related to the border is the community mural, according to Indych-López. She talked about how the participatory community mural can counter a community's feeling of invisibility. The process and the product allow a community to construct its own history. Citing her recently

**"Borders are mostly about imagination; us, them, other. They are less about geography."**  
 CHON A. NORIEGA

released scholarly monograph on Chicana public artist and muralist Judith F. Baca and Baca's internationally famous mural *The Great Wall of Los Angeles*, Indych-López also discussed projects deeper into border region territory in El Paso, Texas, and Santa Fe, New Mexico, that address Latinx art production that contends with border culture, transnational diversity, immigration and dislocation, historical ruptures, and the visual construction of racial, ethnic, gender and class identities.

The art form that crosses borders most easily is music, according to musicologist Madrid. He spoke about the trans-border musical traditions that blend classical, popular and folk music that transcends place, history, geography, politics and the intersection of globalization, ethnic

identity and border culture. He shared remembrances of growing up a "border kid" in the 1970s, and how easy it was to come and go to visit relatives on either side of the border, or simply go grocery shopping across la línea. He laments that now those porous lines have disappeared and only music can cross borders without paperwork.

The discussion that followed the individual presentations allowed for a lively exchange among the presenters, the moderator and audience members. Reflecting on the event, Noriega said of the discussion portion, "It's where the issues of artistic and cultural expression that were explored in the presentations were put into direct dialogue with the political turmoil now defining the U.S.-Mexico border. What was most striking was the diverse personal experiences in the room, and how these helped move the discussion toward a more nuanced and humane understanding of the fluid and overlapping boundaries between the two countries."

Fishkin added, "The fecund imaginative vision of the artists and musicians discussed at the symposium underlined the fascinating complexity of the border as a dynamic, complicated place — one both fueled and torn by the multiple cultures that collide there."

In support of the symposium, Alexandra "Mac" Taylor, ArtsWest research assistant, compiled an annotated bibliography of over 40 sources detailing art and artists that are emerging around the U.S.-Mexico border. She also produced a 12-minute podcast, "Emerging Border Art," that is a look at visual art exploring the border and borderlands between the U.S. and Mexico and includes an interview with Chagoya.

*Robin Wander, University Communications, Director of Arts Communications*  
 ((This article first appeared on the Bill Lane for the American West website, <https://west.stanford.edu/news>, on June 15, 2018. It is reprinted here with permission.)





# The Voyager Interstellar Record

**A**t the end of the 1942 melodrama “Now, Voyager,” Bette Davis’s lover asks her if she has everything she wants. She falls into his arms and chides him, “Oh, Jerry, don’t let’s ask for the moon. We have the stars.”

In the early 1970s, NASA stopped asking Congress for funding to go to the moon and turned its attention to the stars. The planets were perfectly aligned to conduct a grand tour of the universe. This project culminated in the launch of the Voyager probes in 1977. Voyager 1 visited Jupiter, Titan and Saturn, while Voyager 2 traveled to Uranus and Neptune. After their planetary missions were complete, the probes continued into interstellar space. In 40,000 years, the spacecraft will be closer to the star Alpha Centauri than the sun. When the Voyager probes were launched, the scientist Carl Sagan realized that they would traverse myriad solar systems. Therefore, he wanted to include a message from Earth that would facilitate contact with extraterrestrial life. Sagan recruited journalist Timothy Ferris and radio astronomer Francis Drake to compose a message. They created a golden record and affixed it to the probes. Ferris curated the musical selections on one side of the record. On the reverse side, Drake encoded 118 images onto the disc.

Ferris and Drake discussed their work on the record in a conversation sponsored by the American Studies program and moderated by program coordinator Elizabeth Kessler. They described the choices they made in compiling the record, the challenges of sending it into space, and the reception it received on Earth. The event elucidated the significance of the record. It is not simply a message sent to the stars, but an optimistic vision meant to inspire those on Earth.

The playwright Arthur Miller once observed that great civiliza-

tions rise and fall, and “what do we have left of it all but a handful of plays, essays, carved stones and some strokes of paint on paper or the rock cave wall – in a word, art?” The committee that produced the record only had eight weeks to finish their work, but they were aware that their creation would outlast all of them. The golden record would remain intact for two billion years, long after the demise of humanity. If aliens were to find the record in the far future, it would serve the same function that art fulfills for us. It would provide them insights into the mores of an antique culture.

Therefore, Ferris strove to make a “good record,” while Drake worked to create a comprehensive slideshow. Although the Voyager project was an American initiative, they felt the record should reflect the whole world. Ferris included

music from a variety of different traditions, while Drake ensured that people of all nationalities were visible in the images. Both acknowledged that religious beliefs have played a crucial role in shaping society, but no hymns or icons are included on the record. There was only a finite amount of space, and it was impossible to represent every denomination.

Furthermore, they chose to concentrate on cooperation between people, not conflict. The golden record paints a rosy portrait of Earth. The only pictorial sign of warfare is the battlements that surround the Great Wall of China. While dissonant pieces like “The Rite of Spring” were selected, even these were chosen to illustrate collaboration between culture. Ferris juxtaposed Stravinsky’s melody with African folk music, and he hoped aliens would recognize that both possessed the same pulsating rhythm.

Yet, some of the curatorial choices were more prosaic. For example, in selecting the pictures, Drake had to approach each one through the eyes of an extraterrestrial. How would aliens that look like a bipedal squirrel or a 14-legged spider perceive these photographs? Initially, Drake wanted to include a picture of Mikhail Baryshnikov and a ballerina dancing. The image of two people gracefully intertwined seemed poetic, but the photograph could confuse aliens. Baryshnikov and his partner are so close together that extraterrestrials could perceive them as a bestial being with two heads. Therefore, the picture was not chosen for the record. Drake feels that even some selected images are not clear enough. A spectacular photograph shows dolphins jumping in midair, but although it may be awesome, it is also ambiguous. An alien unfamiliar

with animals could infer that Earth features a fleet of flying fish.

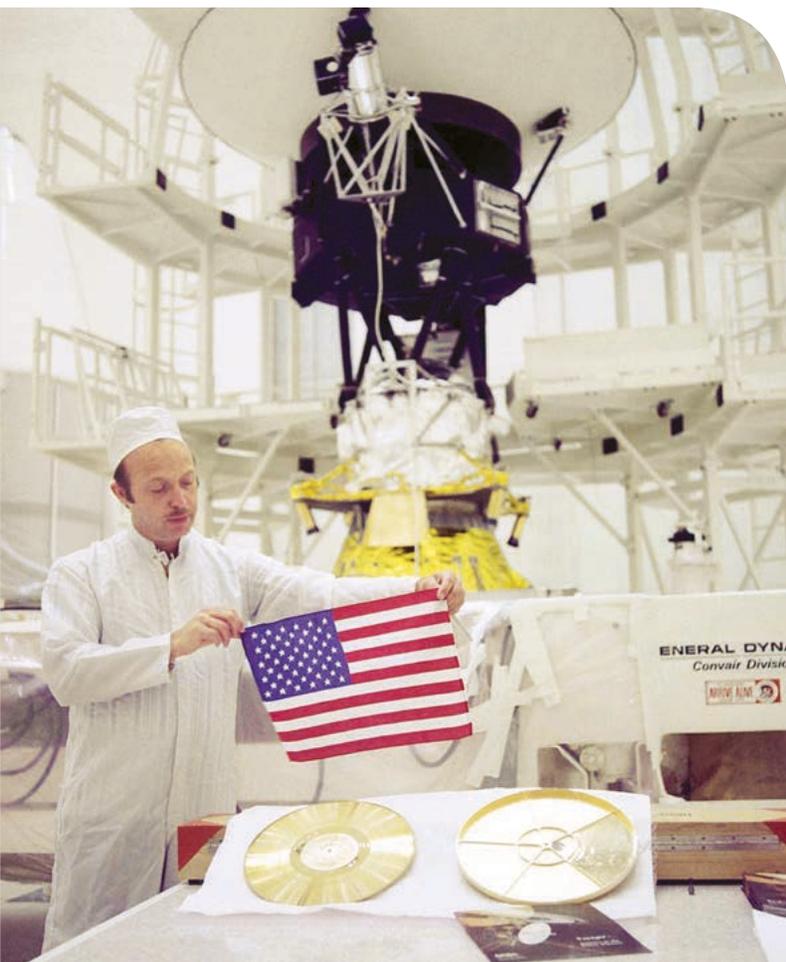
In adopting this approach, Ferris and Drake became artists. The critic Viktor Shlovsky wrote that the artist’s power is “to make the familiar seem strange . . . to describe an object as if he were seeing it for the first time.” While extraterrestrials might never find it, terrestrials would certainly see it. Yet, although humans would be familiar with worldly customs, Ferris and Drake are still proliferating a strange vision of the Earth. People do not usually exchange greetings in different languages or consider how a Western monument of musical modernism draws on the rites of another culture. News photographs, unlike those on the Golden Record, rarely depict people coming together across political boundaries. Instead of contemplating the magnificence of the dolphin, humans wreak havoc on its habitat. Ultimately, the Golden Record does not reflect the actual Earth, but the aspirations we have for our planet.

Ferris and Drake made clear that the record is intended for extraterrestrial consumption. Ferris stated that the “worst-case scenario” would occur if aliens did not retrieve it and it floated adrift in space forever. Still, perhaps Bette Davis is wrong. The Golden Record does not have to have the stars in order to be relevant. Forty years after it was dispatched into deep space, it reminds us of the wonderful world we could construct right here.

*Amir Abou-Jaoude '20*

*(This article is reprinted here courtesy of the Stanford Daily, where it originally appeared on October 26, 2018. <https://www.stanforddaily.com/2018/10/26/timothy-ferris-and-frank-drake-discuss-their-dispatch-to-deep-space/>)*

*Opposite: Artist’s conception of NASA’s Voyager 1 probe entering interstellar space. Below: Voyager project manager John Casani with the Golden Record and its cover before the launch of Voyager 2 in 1977. (Image credits: NASA/JPL-Caltech)*



## Clayton Nall talks about *The Road to Inequality*

On January 9, 2018, American Studies hosted a talk by Assistant Professor Clayton Nall as part its America on the Move series. Professor Nall spoke to a standing-room crowd about his recently published book, *The Road to Inequality: How the Federal Highway Program Polarized America and Undermined Cities*. The project tracks the ways in which the federal highway system has facilitated the nation’s geographic and political polarization.

Nall demonstrates how the political views of suburbanites have not simply been a result of residents voting for suburban geographic interests. According to Nall, the nation’s federally financed network of highways facilitated a Republican exodus to the suburbs and in the process increasingly divided the nation along suburban and urban lines.

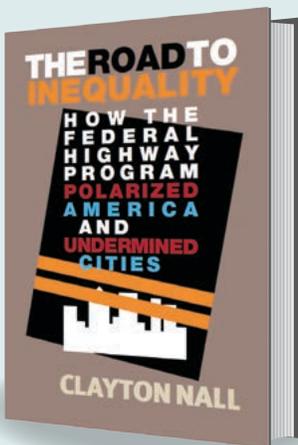


Social Survey and original survey data, Nall demonstrates that differences in attitudes on transportation policy cannot be attributed solely to place-based or personal economic interests. Instead he argues that partisanship is a primary driver of these differences in opinions. Up until

the 1970s, survey data show little difference in support for mass transit between Republicans and Democrats. But since the 1970s, Republicans—who have become almost entirely non-urban—have become increasingly less likely to support mass transit while Democrats have continued to support these policies, even if they live in the suburbs. In tracing how these partisan differences over transportation policy do not necessarily vary by place of residence, Nall demonstrates that partisanship, not place-based differences, is driving these policy opinions.

Nall concluded his talk by showing that the growing partisan divide on transportation issues may have had little influence on transportation funding at the federal level but has impacted policy at the metropolitan level. Thus, Nall argues that geographic polarization has had a greater effect on local transportation policy than federal transportation policy.

*William Gow, Lecturer in American Studies*



With this, Nall traces a mutually reinforcing dynamic: as transportation infrastructure helped create a partisan geography, that partisan geography in turn shaped the politics of transportation in metropolitan areas. Whereas transportation was once a fairly non-partisan issue, public attitudes toward transportation policy are now divided along partisan lines. Highway spending has maintained strong bipartisan support, but Democrats and Republicans now increasingly diverge on how to allocate funding for public transportation and in particular for mass-transit programs. In general, Nall finds that Democrats and Republicans disagree most significantly on transportation policies that involve the targeting and redistribution of transportation funds to the poor.

Drawing on historical surveys in Roper Center Archives along with the General

***According to Nall, the nation’s federally financed network of highways facilitated a Republican exodus to the suburbs and in the process increasingly divided the nation along suburban and urban lines.***

**M**artha and the Vandellas skip through a Detroit auto plant. Singing “Nowhere to Run,” they follow a Ford Mustang down the line, riding in the convertible as it’s being assembled, to the joy and confusion of the workers, and the surprise of a white man waiting for his new car at the end of the line. Often considered the first music video, the performance aired in 1965 on an episode of the CBS-TV show *Murray The K—It’s What’s Happening, Baby*. For Allyson Hobbs, Associate Professor of History and Director of African and African American Studies at Stanford, this clip begins to illustrate the ambivalent place of the automobile in African American history, as both a symbol of freedom and status and a site of restriction and danger for black drivers not only in the Jim Crow-era South, but across the United States.

In March 2019, Hobbs shared her research (and Martha and the Vandellas) with an engaged audience of American Studies students, faculty, staff, and community members. Drawing on her second book project, *Far from Sanctuary: African American Journeys and the Road to Civil Rights* (forthcoming with Harvard University Press) Hobbs complicated the fantasy of the “open road” in American life. For African Americans in the twentieth century car ownership provided a way of participating in consumer culture, and with it a sense of belonging; for men a car was a source of pride, for women agency. Cars also played an important role in the Montgomery bus boycott, and in organizing during the civil rights movement.

But spontaneity was impossible. Black mobility has long been a source of white anxiety in the United States, and an occasion for violence, from the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 into the twentieth century, as the technology of the automobile introduced new possibilities for movement. Delta gas station owners would refuse to sell gas to cars with out-of-state license plates, for example, hindering African Americans living in cities like Chicago who wanted to bring family members out of the South. Jim Crow laws restricted access to lodging and food, and African American motorists were often subject to brutality and unwanted attention from white locals and law enforcement.

In 1936 Victor H. Green published the first *Negro Motorist Green Book*. The series drew on information gathered through the postal workers union and tips from travelers, mapping what Hobbs calls a “rival geography.” Green, a Harlem postal worker, printed more than fifteen thousand copies annually, and for decades after the series went out of print in 1965, the *Green Book* helped motorists navigate hostile spaces and laws, and find friendly homes, hotels, restaurants, salons, and service stations. In writing *Far from Sanctuary* Hobbs followed routes described in the guides, and found most of the places described in the *Green Book* no longer exist. But this history continues into the present, the American road still a complicated, contested space of both possibility and violence.

Rachel Heise Bolten, Ph.D. Candidate in English

## Allyson Hobbs Talk: Far from Sanctuary: African American Travel in the Twentieth Century

*For African Americans in the twentieth century car ownership provided a way of participating in consumer culture, and with it a sense of belonging; for men a car was a source of pride, for women agency.*



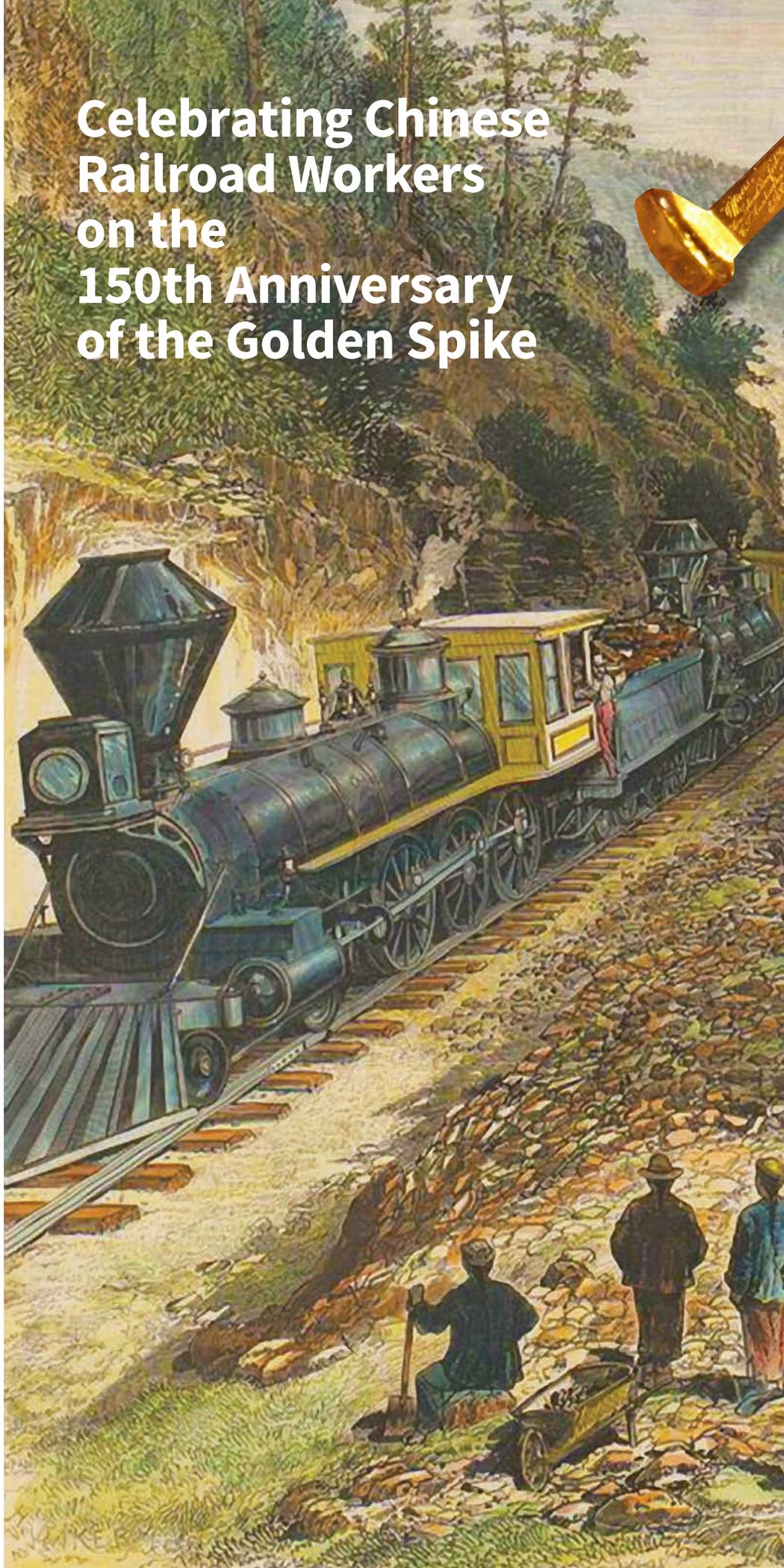
# Celebrating Chinese Railroad Workers on the 150th Anniversary of the Golden Spike

On April 11, 2019, the Chinese Railroad Workers in North America Project at

Stanford commemorated the 150th anniversary of the completion of the transcontinental railroad by celebrating the thousands of Chinese workers who were instrumental in that work. The multifaceted day-long program, which was the culminating event of American Studies' "America on the Move" series, drew an estimated 400 people to Tresidder Memorial Union, including members of the Stanford community, the general public, and scholars from the project's international network.

In her remarks for the anniversary, Shelley Fisher Fishkin, who co-directs the Chinese Railroad Workers in North America Project with Gordon H. Chang, recalled the project's inception:

"When I got to Stanford, I was vaguely aware of the importance of these Chinese workers for this wonderful university that had just given me a job, and I wanted to find out more about them. So I went to Special Collections and asked to see a letter from one of the workers. There wasn't any. I asked my colleague Gordon Chang in History where I might find some. His answer was nowhere. Not a single letter or journal or even remittance envelope in the hand or voice of one of these 12,000 to 15,000 Chinese workers had yet surfaced – in the US or China. With the 150th





anniversary of the completion of the railroad approaching in 2019, we decided to find out more about who these people were and what they experienced.”

Since its launch in 2012, the project has become a much-lauded globe- and discipline-spanning phenomenon. Attracting support from dozens of offices, organizations, and entities at home and abroad, it has drawn in some 150 scholars and researchers from around the world, working in a wide range of fields, along with a cadre of student researchers at Stanford. It has yielded multiple conferences in the U.S. and Asia, numerous publications, curricular materials for K-12 schools, an open-access digital archive, oral historical collections, an award-winning traveling exhibition, and more. The project even played a part in the creation of a new oratorio.

Some of the fruits of these multifaceted labors were on display during the April 11th celebration. Visitors to Tresidder that day were treated to a veritable smorgasboard of visual, physical, digital, textual, and oral historical materials that helped bring the lives, work, and significance of Chinese immigrant laborers back into view. There were tables displaying artifacts unearthed by archeological digs, and stations featuring digital visualizations. There were posters created by student researchers, and videos of interviews with the workers’ descendants. The celebration included a temporary installation of the traveling exhibition by Li Ju, which paired historical images of railroad construction sites with contemporary photographs, reinscribing the Chinese workers’ presence into those places. The event also spotlighted publications, serving in part as a de facto launch party for two major books to emerge from the project: Gordon Chang’s *The Ghosts of Gold Mountain: The Epic Story of the Chinese Who Built the Transcontinental Railroad*, and the collection *The Chinese and the Iron Road: Building the Transcontinental Railroad*, co-edited by Chang and Fishkin (with Hilton Obenzinger and Roland Hsu).

A plenary session in the later afternoon featured remarks by members of project and Stanford University officers—among them Provost Persis Drell, who said, “Today Stanford honors the contribution of the Chinese

Railroad workers to the establishment of the university. We honor the memory of these courageous migrant workers and recognize their many contributions to our country and their important role in this pivotal moment in history.”

The poignant and inspiring centerpiece of the day was the world premiere screening of “Making Tracks: The Philip P. Choy Story,” a documentary by Barre Fong and Connie Young Yu. The film’s subject, Philip Choy, had worked indefatigably to get recognition for Chinese railroad workers, only to find himself and the history he hoped to celebrate eclipsed during the Golden Spike centennial celebration in Utah in 1969, pushed off the program to accommodate the last-minute arrival of Western film star John Wayne. Choy, who continued to hope that the sesquicentennial Golden Spike celebrations would be different, passed away in 2017. One wishes he could have been in Tresidder on April 11, 2019, to see how the work had gone forward, to see the crowds engaging with and celebrating that history, to know that the efforts continue. Still, his presence was felt. As the project’s Director of Research, Roland Hsu, said, “We have taken up the challenge from Phil Choy and our predecessors to write this neglected history of the Chinese who risked their lives, left their families, and traveled across the ocean to build



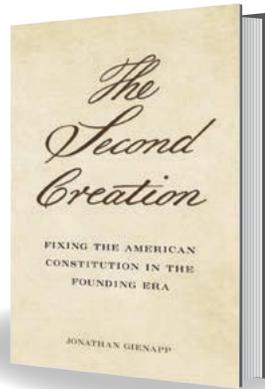
the railroad and their fortunes. We honor their lives and accomplishment; we celebrate our recovered collective memory. We pass along to the next generation this challenge to discover the personal voices of these Chinese railroad workers.”

*Judy Richardson, American Studies Coordinator.*

*(For more on this event, and other links to Project publications, press, materials, and videos, including “Making Tracks,” go to <http://web.stanford.edu/group/chineserailroad/cgi-bin/website/>.)*



# Jonathan Gienapp on the “Fixing” of the Constitution in the Founding Era



In late Spring 2019, faculty members and students filed into the Terrace Room of Margaret Jacks to hear Jonathan Gienapp’s talk on his book *The Second Creation*. Gienapp, who recently joined the American Studies faculty, is an assistant professor of History who specializes in Revolutionary and early republic America. In his talk, he introduced his audience to an alternative way of thinking about the American Constitution. When people think about the creation of the American Constitution, he explained, they often focus on the years 1787 and 1788, when the Constitution was written and ratified. In *The Second*

*Creation*, he asserts that the Constitution was not born fixed, but rather in flux. Upon its creation, it was shrouded in uncertainty, as people asked questions from whether it was a written text or a framework for future politics, if it was a completed document or a partial list of key principles. Gienapp boldly stated that these questions were answered through four debates that took place in the decade after its ratification.

The first of the four debates, argues Gienapp, was in the Spring of 1789, which put into question who could remove executive officers. In dissecting this debate, Gienapp illustrated the “Constitution’s fundamental makeup, or the extent to which it was a complete and finished instrument.” The second debate focused on how the Constitution was to be amended—would there be an appendix, or would new laws be woven into it? The third debate looks at Alexander Hamilton’s signature piece, chartering a national bank, and questions regarding Congress’s role in its creation. In the fourth debate, Gienapp explored the controversial Jay Treaty. Members of the House who opposed the treaty argued that they had a say over whether the treaty would take effect. In delineating these debates, Gienapp unveiled to his audience not only the process through which uncertainties surrounding the Constitution were resolved, but also the process by which the Constitution became what latter-day Americans would consider a set and sacred text.

The book also moves beyond well-known Founding Fathers like Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, to illuminate the now largely overlooked contributions of more obscure figures like Elbridge Gerry and John L. Lawrence. These individuals, along with many others, breathed life into the Constitution. Some of their ideas died out, some collided, and others gained strength. What we learn is that without their indelible voices, the Constitution’s norms and practices might have been radically different.

In sum, *The Second Creation* charts the tumultuous transformation of the Constitution in the American imagination. As Gienapp put it, early political leaders sought to fix it—to repair or to resolve it. But in this they also ended up fixing it, in the sense of cementing the Constitution in stone; thus the double meaning in the book’s title. And so, Gienapp’s eloquent and detailed mapping of this process not only offers a new and fresh perspective on Constitutional history, but also speaks to current debates regarding originalism and the Founder’s intentions.

Valo Janigian '21



# Digital Humanities and the Preservation of Cultural Heritage



Images from the Florentine Codex by Bernardino de Sahagún—twelve illustrated books on various aspects of Aztec culture, annotated in both Spanish and Nahuatl. The Florentine Codex Project led by Obed Omar Lira is creating a digital annotated edition of these colonial-era texts.

On April 15, 2019, scholars from around the world in a number of fields—linguistics, computer science, cultural studies, and of course, American Studies—convened in Stanford’s Center for Spatial and Textual Analysis (CESTA) for a day-long workshop on “Digital Humanities to Preserve Knowledge and Cultural Heritage,” which was co-sponsored by American Studies, and funded with a grant from the France-Stanford Center. Despite the many challenges of culture and knowledge preservation, all in attendance maintained a hopeful, positive tone, eager to learn from colleagues and peers the new affordances of digital humanities tools and techniques.

Dr. Obed Omar Lira (Bucknell University) is the leader of the Florentine Codex Project, an effort to create a scholarly annotated edition of the *Florentine Codex*. This Spanish colonial-era documentary work by Bernardino de Sahagún focuses on indigenous American culture. It features twelve illustrated books on various aspects of Aztec culture, annotated in both Spanish and Nahuatl. Dr. Lira thoughtfully noted that the illustrations are not merely visual, but replete with semantic and material meaning as well. He encouraged us to think about the images not just as representation, but as presentation itself. Similarly, the materials used to create the pigments for the illustrations were inextricably linked to the meaning of the image.

Dr. Lira emphasized his desire for a decolonial approach to the codex, centering a few main objectives: first, to treat the image as a source of knowledge, second, to foreground the Nahuatl text, and third, to annotate Sahagún’s intentional changes and inadvertent errors in translation and representation. The ideal outcomes for this project included a digital edition of the work, a dictionary of Aztec glyphs, and a Nahuatl-Spanish dictionary.

Dr. Samantha Blickhan (Zooniverse) presented some findings about using the crowd-sourced platform Zooniverse to achieve high-accuracy transcriptions of anti-slavery manuscripts from the Boston Public Library. Even as artificial intelligence algorithms continue to make leaps and bounds, handwriting recognition remains an elusive problem area due to the sheer complexity and variability of human handwriting. Though computers have not quite learned to read our writing, humans perform exceptionally well in identifying writing despite these confounding factors.

Dr. Blickhan presented an intuitive system of multiple reviews, mutual double-checking, and the pre-labeling of text lines that allowed for a volunteer corps of Internet citizen-scientists to tackle the problem of handwriting transcription. While the intellectual journey of a humanities student is arguably incomplete without the ritual of poring over digitized, centuries-old handwriting, this project has monumental implications for the transcription of manuscripts into easily mineable, searchable corpuses at scale. The project continues today and can be found at <https://www.antislaverymanuscripts.org/>.

Dr. Kaoru Kay Ueda and Lisa Nguyen (both at the Hoover Institution) brought to life the vibrant world of Japanese American diaspora print culture. Dr. Ueda is the lead curator of the Japanese Diaspora Initiative, a Hoover Institution project to facilitate research in Japanese and Japanese-American history and culture from the post-Civil War era to the World War II period. In the last few years alone, the Japanese Diaspora Initiative (JDI) has compiled the largest online archive of Japanese diaspora newspapers on the Internet, featuring over a half million images of pages across 90 titles.

The JDI especially aims to make this online collection as easy to search as possible. However, with bilingual text and non-Western customs of text/paragraph orientation, automating transcription of the text has proven to be a formidable challenge for human and machine alike. The varying age and quality of the newspapers has affected the quality of optical character recognition (OCR), a computer vision technique that remains an open problem in artificial intelligence research. Similarly, it is difficult to communicate the nuances of text and article segmentation in these newspapers to people without requisite cultural understanding, which has hindered the human side of the effort as well. Despite these obstacles, Dr. Ueda and Ms. Nguyen have already compiled an impressive body of resources in this initiative. The archive can be accessed at <https://hojishinbun.hoover.org/>.

The ROSETTA Project, spearheaded by Dr. Ronald Jenn (Université de Lille), Dr. Amel Fraise (Université de Lille), Dr. Shelley Fisher Fishkin (Stanford University), and

Zheng Zhang (Université Paris-Saclay), began as an outgrowth of Dr. Fishkin’s Global Huck initiative. Global Huck was a collaborative project examining translations of Mark Twain’s *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* across various languages. It brought



together a similar all-star team of translation studies scholars, literary scholars, computer scientists, and of course American Studies scholars. Like Global Huck, the ROSETTA Project has a special interest in serving under-resourced languages, using translations to build corpuses, dictionaries, and other linguistic tools in languages that currently lack such resources. The project uses crowdsourcing and other human-centered data collection techniques, as well as natural language processing algorithms to further develop tools for under-resourced languages.

Because Mark Twain is one of the most translated authors in the world, and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* covers a variety of socially and internationally relevant topics from slavery to childhood, this work is a powerful starting point for the development of corpora in under-resourced languages.

Currently, the ROSETTA team is tackling paragraph alignment, a functional mapping of English to non-English paragraphs in translations of *Huckleberry Finn*.

Overall, the advent of increasingly powerful digital tools at scale from character/image recognition to natural language processing has created exciting new possibilities

for all areas of humanities research. Narratives and stories, previously forgotten, overwritten, or overlooked are now in reach. Nevertheless, these new technical tools remain works in progress. Despite the addition of the qualifier “digital,” the human remains at the core of digital humanities.

Trenton Chang '20



# WHY LEARN HISTORY

(When It's Already on Your Phone)



In April 2019, American Studies hosted a lively and thought-provoking lunchtime talk by Sam Wineburg (Margaret Jacks Professor of Education and, by courtesy, History at Stanford) on his latest book, *Why Learn History (When It's Already on Your Phone)*. In the book, Wineburg probes how increased reliance on the online sources at our digital fingertips can lead to historical distortions, misinformation, amnesia, and worse. Thankfully, the book is as much guidebook as cautionary tale, as Wineburg also offers a number of effective ways to evaluate websites and navigate the information minefield. Here Professor Wineburg shares an excerpt from the book's introduction:

In October 2010 the *Washington Post* broke a story about a fourth-grade textbook called *Our Virginia, Past and Present*. The book describes the role African Americans played in the Civil War.

If you are a movie aficionado and have seen *Glory* and know the story of the 54th Massachusetts and the 180,000 African Americans who served the Union—constituting over 10 percent of the fighting force—you might expect that to be the focus.

Wrong. *Our Virginia, Past and Present* presented Virginia's fourth-graders with this historical "fact": "Thousands of Southern blacks fought in the Confederate ranks, including two battalions under the command of Stonewall Jackson."

It has long been known that the Confederate army forced slaves into service as cooks and laborers who provided backup for weapons-bearing troops. We know of dozens of cases like this. We even have scattered photographs of slaves suited up in uniform sitting next to their masters.

But that's not what we're talking about here. We are talking about the formal mustering of *thousands* of black soldiers under Jackson alone,

and by extension, thousands more under other generals. We are talking about enslaved black Americans voluntarily risking their lives so that they could remain enslaved.

Common sense balks at these claims. The only document we have from the Confederacy about drafting African American soldiers comes in the waning days of the war, a last-ditch effort less than three weeks before Lee's surrender at Appomattox.

Where, then, would *Our Virginia, Past and Present* find backing for a claim rejected by every reputable Civil War historian?

When queried about her sources, author Joy Masoff told the *Washington Post* that she conducted her research... on the Internet. The links she provided led to the website of the Sons of the Confederate Veterans, "A patriotic, historical and educational organization, founded in 1896, dedicated to honoring the sacrifices of the Confederate

soldier and sailor and to preserving Southern Culture."

Our first reaction might be shock at Ms. Masoff's carelessness. However, I want to suggest something different. I want to consider

**We live in an age when going to the library means turning on our laptops and making sure we have a wireless connection. Being on the Web and searching for information is radically different from how anyone learned to do research a generation ago.**



# NOTABLE ★ EVENTS

Here are some more of the exciting events American Studies hosted as part of our “Borderlands Now,” “Art and Social Criticism,” and lunchtime book talk series.

the possibility that Joy Masoff is not so different from you or me.

We live in an age when going to the library means turning on our laptops and making sure we have a wireless connection. Being on the Web and searching for information is radically different from how anyone learned to do research a generation ago.

In the past, we tended to cede authority to established figures. We relied on them to make sure that what we read was accurate, that it had gone through rounds of criticism before it met our eyes. Only a small number of us were published authors. Most of us consumed information others had created.

The reality we inhabit is very different. The Internet has obliterated authority. You need no one’s permission to create a website. You need no hall pass to put up a YouTube video. You need no one’s stamp of approval to post a picture on Instagram. Tweet to your heart’s content—just look at the president. Go ahead—be an author!

In our Google-drenched society, the most critical question we face is not how to find information. We’re bombarded by stuff. But what do we do once we have it?

Welcome to the chilling future of learning the past, where not just our students but our textbook authors fall victim to fake history. Back in the analog Stone Age, information literacy meant learning to decipher the hieroglyphics of the *Readers’ Guide to Periodical Literature*. The challenge then was how to locate information. Suffocating under an information overload, we face a different question: what information should be believed?

Technology has left no part of modern life untouched. Yet, in the midst of these transformations, school, and what we teach there, remains stuck in the past.

In an age when no one regulates the information we consume, the task of separating truth from falsehood can no longer be for extra credit. Google can do many things but it cannot teach discernment. Never has so much information been at our fingertips but never have we been so ill-equipped to deal with it.

*(This abridged excerpt appears here courtesy of Professor Wineburg.)*

Stanford's American Studies Program presents

**T.J. DEMOS**

Professor in the Department of the History of Art and Visual Culture and Founder and Director of the Center for Creative Technologies, University of California, Santa Cruz

**AGAINST THE ANTHROPOCENE: THE MANY NAMES OF RESISTANCE**

What new creative strategies (or radical art) are modeling to address challenges in the sphere of ecology? T.J. Demos draws on his new book, *Against the Anthropocene: Visual Culture and Environment* today to explore how artists are partnering with science activists to form new collective aesthetics to imagine a just and sustainable world in an era of catastrophic climate change. Demos writes widely on the intersection of contemporary art, global politics, and environmentalism.

Tuesday, Oct. 10 5:15 PM The Terrace Room, Margaret Jacks Hall  
Open to the Public without Charge

Co-sponsored by the Stanford Arts Institute, Department of Art and Art History, The Program in Part of American Studies' 2nd

**ART and SOCIAL CRITICISM** Lecture Series

Stanford's American Studies Program presents

**BETTI-SUE HERTZ**

Lecturer in American Studies, Stanford University

**OUR BODIES, OUR SELVES: REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS AT THE JANUARY 21, 2017 WOMEN'S MARCH**

The lecture series is a special look at the proliferation of outspoken, unflinching, CIV signs on reproductive rights—expressions of agency and empowerment that emerged on the January 21, 2017 Women's March. Hertz also compares competing narratives about the imagery on these signs and what they communicate about reproductive freedom and sexuality. The lecture takes stock of what we do and do not have in common, culturally and biologically, across various social markers including access to power.

TUESDAY  
NOVEMBER 28  
5:15 P.M.

- the terrace room
- margaret jacks hall
- big, 460, 4th floor

open to the public without charge

part of American Studies' 2nd  
**ART AND SOCIAL CRITICISM**  
Lecture Series

Co-sponsored by Stanford Arts Institute, Department of Art & Art History, Committee Studies in Race and Ethnicity, and Program in Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

American Studies and the Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity present

**CROSSING BORDERLANDS**

Join us in celebrating the 30th anniversary of the publication of Gloria Anzaldúa's rigorously self-reflective yet prophetic genre-breaking book.

In this panel, three distinguished faculty members from different academic disciplines come together to discuss how Anzaldúa's path-breaking work has impacted their own.

Moderated by Professor Paola Moya, with featured panelists:  
Tiffany Brannon, Assistant Professor of Psychology UCLA "Postrigidity Institutional Inclusion Through Borderlands"  
Shelley Fisher Fishkin, Joseph S. Atha Professor of the Humanities, Stanford "Crossing Borders with Gloria Anzaldúa"  
Ramin Sadivari, Hagland Family Professor of Humanities and Sciences, Stanford "Monstrous in the Borderlands"

February 13, 2018, 1:30 PM - 2:50 PM  
Building 370, Room 370

WINTER 2017-2018

STANFORD'S AMERICAN STUDIES PROGRAM INVITES YOU TO A LUNCHTIME TALK BY AMERICAN STUDIES FACULTY MEMBER.

**JAMES T. CAMPBELL**

Edgar E. Robinson Professor in United States History, Stanford

on his new book...  
**MISSISSIPPI WITNESS: THE PHOTOGRAPHS OF FLORENCE MARS**

By James T. Campbell and Elaine Cross (University Press of Mississippi, 2019)

In June 1964, Neshoba County, Mississippi, provided the setting for one of the most notorious crimes of the civil rights era: the Klan-orchestrated murder of three young voting rights workers, James Chaney, Michael Schwerner, and Andrew Goodman. Captured on the road between the towns of Philadelphia and Meridian, the three were driven to a remote country crossroads, shot, and buried in an earthen dam, from which their bodies were recovered after a forty-four-day search. The crime transfixed the nation. In this climate of furious conformity, only a handful of white Mississippians spoke out. Few did so more openly or courageously than Florence Mars. A fourth-generation Neshoban, Mars braved social ostracism and threats of violence to condemn the murders and decry the climate of fear and intimidation that had overtaken her community. She later recounted her experiences to Witness in Philadelphia, one of the classic memoirs of the civil rights era.

Though few remember today, Mars was also a photographer. Shocked by the ferocity of white Mississippians' reaction to the Supreme Court's 1954 ruling against racial segregation, she bought a camera, built a homemade darkroom, and began to take pictures. Determined to document a racial order she knew was dying, Mississippi Witness features over six hundred of these photographs, most taken in the decade between 1954 and 1964. Almost all published here for the first time. Powerful and provocative, the photographs in Mississippi Witness testify to the abiding dignity of human life even in conditions of cruelty and deprivation, as well as to the singular vision of one of Mississippi's—and the nation's—most extraordinary photographers.

MONDAY, APRIL 22  
12:30 PM  
THE TERRACE ROOM  
4TH FLOOR, ROOM 424  
MARGARET JACKS HALL

This event is free but registration is required.  
Register at: <http://bit.ly/CampbellEvent>  
A light lunch will be served.

**BORDERLANDS NOW**

The American Studies Department and Stanford Film Society present a screening and discussion of

**El Norte**

a film by Gregory Nava (1983, 139 minutes)

7pm, Wednesday April 25th, 2018  
Math Corner, Bldg 380  
Rm 380x

A brother and sister escaping mindless labor and a murderous Guatemalan government head to America in hopes of something better.

★★★★★  
Seen after 30 years, *El Norte* retains its direct power to move and anger. The story needs no updating; it repeats every day. — Roger Ebert

Photo: James Film and Gregory Nava/1983

STANFORD'S PROGRAM IN AMERICAN STUDIES PRESENTS THE NEXT EXCITING **BORDERLANDS NOW** EVENT

**RHODESSA JONES**

PERFORMER, PLAYWRIGHT, ACTIVIST.

Creator of the Medea Project  
Theater for incarcerated women  
in Atlanta; Director of El Cultural Odyssey

SPEAKING ON  
**borderlands inside and outside: "GATHERING STORIES AT THE END OF THE WORLD"**

MONDAY NOV 27 | 5:15 PM  
THE TERRACE ROOM | MARGARET JACKS HALL  
4TH FLOOR | BLDG. 460  
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC WITHOUT CHARGE

Jones will speak with us about the creation of the Medea Project. Theater for incarcerated women within the San Francisco City and County Jail and the actor recent production, "Birthright" responding to attacks on Planned Parenthood. She'll also talk about her recent national tour and creating art for social change in the Trump era.

## 1970s

**Barbara and Jim Moroney**, both American Studies majors, classes of '79 and '78 respectively, launched the 2016 inaugural vintage of their Sixmilebridge Vineyards winery in October 2019. Sixmilebridge is located on the west side of Paso Robles, in the Adelaida Viticultural Area. The tasting room will open in April of 2020. (Go to [sixmilebridge.com](http://sixmilebridge.com) for more.)

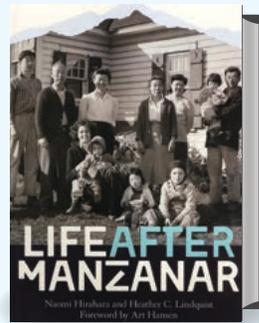
## 1980s

Living in Denver, Colorado, **Sarah Rockwell '80** is a lawyer at Kaplan Kirsch & Rockwell, a firm that she co-founded 16 years ago. With 31 lawyers, and offices in Denver, New York, DC, and Boston, the firm works on a variety of large projects, including transit and rail, airports, redevelopment projects, and public-private partnerships. They also have a significant environmental practice. Sarah's area of focus is in land use and real estate, representing both public and private entities primarily on urban redevelopment projects. She is also chair of one of the boards of the Downtown Denver Partnership (downtown's business organization), which is involved in everything from placemaking, to event planning, to addressing issues of affordable housing and homelessness. An ardent follower of Stanford football, Sarah enjoyed returning to campus for daughter Caroline's graduation from Stanford in 2018.

Having raised three (now grown) children, **Lori Eschelmann Hunter '81** is currently an edible garden designer for clients who are mostly based on the San Francisco Peninsula. Her most time-consuming professional endeavor of the past year, though, has been purchasing, with three other partners, Rossotti's Alpine Inn in Portola Valley, and renovating the tavern and beer garden—"an incredibly positive and rewarding experience."

**Henry T. Windsor '81** works at The Brinton Museum in Big Horn, Wyoming. Recently named the #2 Western Art Museum in the US by *True West* magazine, the museum features a collection of Plains Indian Art that is one of the finest in the country, along with other Western Art appropriate to the history of northern Wyoming and the Bighorn Mountains. In December 2019, the museum hosted the premiere of the WyomingPBS documentary "State of Equality," which celebrated 150 years of women's suffrage in Wyoming. Henry is pleased to report that he has been "making good use of my American Studies education" these past four years in what he calls his "retirement" job working as the museum's Marketing Director.

**Heather Lindquist '82** co-authored *Life After Manzanar* (Heyday 2017) with fellow Stanford graduate (and award-winning mystery writer) Naomi Hirahara,



with whom she had worked on exhibits at Manzanar National Historic Site from 2001-2004. The book focuses on what happened to people after they left Manzanar and had to start their lives all over again after World War II. Heather's latest project is writing the exhibit script for a new visitor center at the Eleanor and Edsel Ford House in Michigan. She writes, "I've had a fascinating career thanks to taking Professor Joe Corn's Am. Stud. class on material culture (1981-82) and discovering the world of exhibit development."

**Ethan Orlinsky '86** graduated from NYU School of Law in 1989. After a nearly three-year stint at the Simpson Thacher & Bartlett law firm, working in its New York and London offices, he moved on to Major League Baseball, where he has been ever since, serving in a variety of capacities over his tenure. He started out as Associate Counsel at Major League Baseball Properties, becoming its Director of Legal Affairs and then its Senior Vice President and General Counsel. Later he became Senior Vice President of Legal, Business and Club Affairs of Major League Baseball, and most recently was promoted to Special Counsel to the Commissioner. He lives in New York City with his wife Dana and their two daughters Abigail (11th grade) and Alexandra (9th grade).

Currently, **Aimee Berzins Schmitt '89** is involved in sales and marketing for a large swimwear retailer by day, and by evening heads up a new swim team program she started in her small town. The former at this point supports the latter, but the latter is what gives her the most meaningful experience, as it allows her "to pour my past experience into young lives and provide positive encouragement and confidence as they grow through the sport of swimming."

In 2018-2019, **Mark Weiner '89** was the Fulbright Distinguished Chair in American Studies at Uppsala University in Sweden, where he taught American politics while also researching social and political aspects of the Swedish ambulance service. The year before, he co-curated an exhibit about the history of illustrated law books from the thirteenth century to the present for the Grolier Club in New York. The exhibit catalogue, *Law's Picture Books*, received the Joseph L. Andrews Legal Literature Award from the American Association of Law Libraries. Mark lives in Connecticut with his wife, Stephanie.

## 1990s

**Sheryl Savage Tecker '90** followed her American Studies degree into a career in education. After teaching and being a site administrator, she is now the Assistant Superintendent for

## Breaking news: Jonathan Holloway '89 to be Rutgers President



Historian and American Studies alumnus Jonathan Holloway '89 is making some history himself. On January 21, 2020, Rutgers University named Holloway to be its next president. He will be the first African American to hold that position.

From 1999-2017, Holloway was on the faculty at Yale University, where he served as Head of Yale's Hopper College, chair of the Council of Heads of Colleges, and chair of African

American Studies, before becoming in 2014 the first African American to be Dean of Yale College.

Holloway will be heading to Rutgers from Northwestern University, where he has been Provost since 2017.

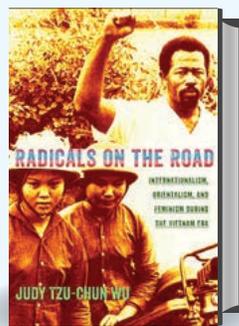
**Congratulations President Holloway!**

La Habra City School District in southern California, and recently earned her doctorate in Education. She is also pleased to report that nephew Andrew Savage followed in her footsteps, receiving his degree in American Studies from Stanford in June 2019

After seven years in Cairo, Egypt, **Wayne Rutherford '90, STEP '91**, has moved with his wife to Milan, Italy, where he is now the Director of the American School of Milan (ASM), a pre-K through 12th-grade school of 900 students, serving the US Diplomatic Corp and others interested in an American-style education, and accredited by the American Middle States Association of Schools and Colleges.

Wayne is finding Milan "fascinating and wonderful, in many ways," noting not least that this "innovation, financial, design, and engineering hub of Italy" is also bustling with preparations to host the 2026 Winter Olympics. With previous positions in Sapporo, Japan and Dakar, Senegal, Wayne has now been Director/Head of School for four international schools, and has spent his entire career in education overseas. He is also proud dad to two children, who are at colleges in Oregon, having completed the International Baccalaureate Diploma program in Cairo.

**Judy Tzu-Chun Wu '91** is a professor of Asian American Studies at the University of California, Irvine, and just began a term as director of the Humanities Center there. She received a Ph.D. in U.S. History from Stanford University and previously taught at The Ohio State University. She authored *Dr. Mom Chung of the Fair-Haired Bastards: The Life of a Wartime Celebrity* (UC Press, 2005) and *Radicals on the Road: Internationalism, Orientalism, and Feminism during the Vietnam Era* (Cornell University Press, 2013). Her current book project, a collaboration with political scientist Gwendolyn Mink, explores the political career of Patsy Takemoto Mink, the first woman of color U.S. congressional representative and the namesake for Title IX (in 2002 Congress renamed the Title IX Amendment of the Higher Education Act, which was coauthored by Mink, to the "Patsy T. Mink Equal Opportunity in Education Act"). Wu also is working on a book that focuses on Asian American and Pacific Islander Women who attended the 1977 National Women's Conference. She co-edited *Women's America: Refocusing the Past, 8th*



*Edition* (Oxford, 2015), *Gendering the Trans-Pacific World* (Brill, 2017), and *Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies* (2012-2017). Currently, she is a co-editor of *Women and Social Movements in the United States, 1600-2000* (an online resource and journal) and editor for *Amerasia Journal*.

**Lisa Nellor Grove '92** recently left Savannah, GA, where she had served for six years as Director / CEO of Telfair Museums, to take an exciting new position in Chicago as Deputy Director of the future Obama Presidential Center Museum. In this role, she is hoping to create "a bold new vision of what a 21st century presidential library can be, and the role it can play as a campus for active citizenship."

Since graduating (as Michelle Cheng), **Michelle C. Kim '95** attended UCLA law school, worked as a Public Defender for 16 years, and is now a Judge with the Los Angeles Superior Court.

Currently in his 23rd year as a teacher, **Josh Walker '95** has spent the last 20 of those years teaching English and history at the middle school level. He also serves on his school leadership team, advises multiple clubs, and coaches tennis at the local high school. Co-director of his school district's gifted and talented program, Josh was recently awarded a Fulbright Teachers for Global Classrooms fellowship. Always looking to sharpen his skills as an educator, he spent

time last summer in professional development at Yellowstone National Park, Duke University, and UC Davis. “Becoming a teacher wasn’t part of the plan when I left Stanford” he writes, “but it’s been good to me!” He has been married for 22 years and has three children, ages 18, 16, and 13.

**Anne Wicks ’95** is the Director of Education Reform at the George W. Bush Institute in Dallas. The Education Reform Initiative pursues research and policy work focused on advancing accountability and school leadership. It also manages the Laura Bush Foundation for America’s Libraries. Anne would be happy to speak with students and alums interested in education policy.

**Eryn Brown ’96** is a partner and talent manager at Management 360, where she represents and helps build the careers of acclaimed writers, directors, and actors from around the world. She says, “The work is all-consuming but worth every bit of stress for the opportunity to help brilliant artists bring to life stories which make the world a better place.” In recent months her work has taken her to France, Denmark, England, Mexico, Italy, and Hungary. Although she enjoys the privilege of traveling the world for cinema, she was also happy to spend the last few months of 2019 in California, watching her nephew play football (albeit for Cal).

**Ari Kurtz ’96** has been at Google in Atlanta for nearly a dozen years. Married with four- and six-year old daughters, he reports that he does his best to keep up with Stanford football, but between the kids and the often late broadcast time of games on the east coast, it’s challenging (“Thank goodness for DVR.”) Recent adventures include a family trip last summer to the UK, going from London to Edinburgh to the English countryside in Shropshire and, most importantly (if you ask his daughters), to Peppa Pig World near Southampton.

“Life is good,” says **Mike Robbins ’96**. He finished the manuscript for his fifth book, *WE’RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER: Creating a Team Culture of High Performance, Trust, and Belonging*, which is scheduled to come out May 5, 2020. In 2019 he was also a guest on NPR’s TED Radio Hour, where we was interviewed about one of his TED talks, on “The Power of Appreciation.” He lives in Novato, CA with wife Michelle and their two daughters, Samantha (13) and Rosie (11).

**Casey Harmon ’97** is currently working in automotive lending as Senior Vice President of Corporate Development at Westlake Financial Services in Los Angeles. Last year, he spent two weeks in Mexico, chaperoning his ten-

year-old daughter’s educational exchange trip with a sister school in Guadalajara—“an amazing experience for our family!”

## 2000s

**Annie Albertson ’00** is a trademark lawyer, working at the law firm of Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton LLP in their L.A. office. An attorney for 16 years, she loves working in the intellectual property area. Annie’s husband David (also Class of 2000, though not an AmStud major) is an associate professor at USC, and together with their three children (ages 10, 7, and 5), they have been living on the USC campus for five years as part of the resident faculty program: “We can’t get away from the collegiate experience, I guess!”

In 2018, **Kathryne Young ’01, JD’11, PhD ’14**, published a book called *How to Be Sort of Happy in Law School* with Stanford University Press, and also won the Distinguished Teaching Award at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, where she is a currently Assistant Professor of Sociology, working at the intersection of law and the social sciences. “I’m proud to be an AmStud alum!” she writes.



**Jessica Mendoza ’02** continued to cover Major League Baseball for ESPN as the only female national TV analyst through 2019, and in 2020 will become the first woman to serve as a *solo* analyst for MLB national telecasts and radio coverage. She also recently worked for the Mets front office as a special advisor to the General Manager, fellow Stanford alum Brodie Van Wageningen.

**David Martin ’03** finished a professional tennis career of eight years on the ATP Tour in 2011. He attended Loyola Law School in Los Angeles (’15) and is now working as a land use attorney at Winstead PC in Dallas, Texas. On the board of the Mill City Community Association, whose goal is to promote a healthy neighborhood, he is also involved with ACT (Advocates for Community Transformation), a legal nonprofit focused on facilitating healthy neighborhoods in Dallas.

Since leaving the Farm, **Vinita Kailasanath** (minor ’04) has bounced between the coasts a few times (including time spent in scenic Central New Jersey!) but returned to Stanford for law



school (JD '10). She primarily works on tech deals, including licensing, development, and collaboration deals to create and bring new products to market. Lately, much of her work has been in digital health, so she spends a lot of time helping tech and life sciences companies talk to each other. She also gets to do a lot of exciting work with foundations and movements, like Time's Up.

**Christine Olivas '04** is still running her own marketing and strategy consulting practices based out of Philadelphia ([christineolivas.com](http://christineolivas.com)). She also performs standup comedy and sings in a non-profit a cappella group.

**Brian Goodman '06** is now in his third year as Assistant Professor in the Department of English at Arizona State University, and he is working hard on his first book, which includes a chapter that builds on thesis research he did as an undergraduate at Stanford. In fall 2018, he and his partner Alison welcomed their first child, Milo, into the world.

**Ashlea Turner '06** is a 2019 recipient of the *Houston Business Journal's* Women Who Mean Business Award. The selection criteria include career achievement, contribution to company, community involvement and leadership. Each honoree is in a senior leadership position at their respective organization. At the time of the award, Ashlea was the Chief Governmental Relations and Strategy Officer for

the Houston Independent School District (HISD). Having secured over \$1 billion in state and federal funds for Houston schools, she left HISD and launched her own consulting firm, Gavel In, LLC, which she describes as “a premier legislative services firm specializing in lobbying, public affairs, and political strategy.” The firm advances the advocacy needs of public and private sector clients at all levels of government.

**Jessica Diss '07** has been living in her hometown of Reno, NV since graduating from law school at UC Davis in 2012. After working more than a year at the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency and four years at the Nevada Public Utilities Commission, as an administrative attorney and then an assistant general counsel, she joined the office of Nevada's new Governor, Steve Sisolak, in Carson City last February. She is working as a senior policy analyst, serving as a staff liaison to several agencies, including the Nevada Governor's Office of Economic Development; the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation; the Office of Workforce Innovation; the Department of Tourism and Cultural Affairs (which includes the Nevada Indian Commission); the Ethics Commission; and the Office of Science, Innovation and Technology. Her first five months in the office were dominated by Nevada's biennial legislative session, which goes from February

to June in odd-numbered years. “We have a small staff for a Governor's Office (fewer than 25 people), she writes, “and the work is challenging but very fulfilling.” She married Andrew Diss in July 2015. They had a son, Sterling, in 2017 and were expecting their second child when she wrote us. Jessica is active on the board of her local Stanford Alumni Club. She and fellow club-members enjoyed a visit last summer from Professor Emerita Wanda Corn, who traveled to Reno's Nevada Museum of Art for the opening of the exhibit on Georgia O'Keeffe she curated. Jessica travels back to Stanford as often as she can (usually for fall football games).

In November 2018, **Ari Neumann '07** was promoted to Director of Community and Environmental Services at RCAC, a non-profit serving low-income rural communities in thirteen western states. His team annually provides assistance to hundreds of rural, tribal, and farmworker communities to address community needs around drinking water, sanitation, and economic opportunity. One perk of the job, he tells us, is being able to travel all throughout the western US and visit dynamic communities in the region. He's been happily married to wife Candace for 8 years and enjoys spending time with his two young sons, Leo (age 6) and Toby (age 2).

**Milton Heath Solórzano '07** is enrolled in a preparation program to teach at the postsecondary level and serves as a class correspondent for the *Stanford*

*Magazine* Class Notes. In that role he encourages radical inclusion and welcomes fellow Class of 2007 students to write in with any updates on their life, not just weddings, babies, and promotions (“although those are great too!”)

After bicycling through South America and working on a sailing research vessel in the Farallon Islands, **Katie Harrington '08** switched gears and received her Master's in Marine Science from Moss Landing Marine Laboratories (California State University, Monterey Bay). She is now a Research Associate with Hawk Mountain Sanctuary in Pennsylvania and leads a long-term study of the rare and uniquely sociable birds of prey called Striated Caracaras (*Phalacrocorax auratus*) who inhabit the Falkland Islands and the extreme southern coasts of Chile and Argentina.

Since graduating from Stanford, **Rebecca Velasco '08** has been committed to a career reforming K-12 public education systems, “so that students in low-income communities have the same access to opportunities that I had in school,” she writes. She is currently the Senior Manager of Strategy & Growth at The Partnership for Los Angeles Schools, an in-district school transformation organization that partners with the Los Angeles Unified School District to manage 18 high-need schools (in Boyle Heights, South L.A., and Watts) and to scale best practices district-wide. Her role

focuses on increasing national awareness of the Partnership's model for school transformation and engaging with external partners (districts, funders, and non-profits) to support the implementation of the model in other cities. While at the Partnership, she is participating in the Broad Residency in Urban Education, a two-year leadership development program for individuals working in the central offices of urban school systems. Before joining the Partnership, she worked at the California Charter Schools Association; earned her Master of Public Policy degree at USC; and was a part of the founding Los Angeles and Oakland teams at Spark, a national non-profit that provides career exploration and self-discovery opportunities for middle school students in high-need schools. She has lived in South Pasadena since 2013. Outside of work, she has prioritized travel this year, including a lot of camping and backpacking trips and weekend trips around the state. 2019 destinations included Los Alamos, Los Olivos, Sonoma, San Diego, Point Reyes, Angeles National Forest, Palm Springs, Santa Barbara, and Big Bear, along with multiple visits to the San Francisco Bay Area.

**Natalie Chladek '09** graduated from business school at UCLA Anderson in 2016 and followed her then boyfriend (now husband) to Boston, where she currently works as a product manager for Harvard Business School's online education group. Although she barely survives winters and stays

up too late watching Stanford sports on TV, she loves working with faculty at HBS to create and deliver online business education courses. Still, she says, "I miss Stanford dearly and make many trips back." These include a trip last May, when she got married at the former Stanford Barn, and a return visit in October for her 10th reunion.

**Kelley Fong '09** will be finishing a Ph.D. in sociology and social policy at Harvard this spring. Her work focuses on children, youth, and families in America (not-so-coincidentally, the exact concentration she designed for herself as an AmStud major). Currently, she is researching and writing about child protective services and families' school and neighborhood choices. Tracing the origins of this research back to her senior thesis on homeless parents' involvement in their children's education, Kelley writes that she continues "to be grateful for all that I learned from the wonderfully supportive, generous, and brilliant American Studies faculty, students, and staff."

**Andrea Fuller '09** is still living in New York and pursuing data-driven investigative stories for *The Wall Street Journal*. She recently played in a live-action game inspired by the TV show *Survivor* and went hiking in Glacier National Park. She surprisingly lived to tell about both.

For the past eight years, **Kerry Pigott '09, STEP '10**, has been working as an elementary teacher in the Northshore School District, which is in the Seattle metropolitan area. She has taught 1st through 3rd grades. "I love teaching," she writes, "and am also continually learning too." From January to June 2018 she lived in Finland as part of the Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching. Her research project centered on movement in the classroom and how active learning can support students with ADHD. She recently completed an endorsement in Special Education as well. "There's always a lot to learn!"

**Bailey Richardson '09** published her first book, *Get Together: How to Build a Community with Your People*—a handbook based on research she and her partners did on thriving groups, from run clubs to Star Wars superfans. "Although these communities feel magical, they don't come together by magic," Bailey writes.



## 2010s

After five years connecting the world through music, **Dean Schaffer '10** left his job at Smule in December 2018 to reconnect with his passion for making music of his own. He spent much of the last year playing in a jazz ensemble and learning to play the piano, while also starting a new professional adventure as a product manager at YouTube Music in February 2019. Another year full of weddings brought him and his partner Natalie as near as San Luis Obispo and as far as London.

**Samantha Buechner '11** is a Vice President on the Renewable Energy and Environmental Finance team at Wells Fargo. In this role she originates, negotiates, and performs due diligence on solar and wind project finance transactions. Before joining Wells Fargo in 2013, she helped Fortune 500 companies develop their sustainability strategies at boutique consulting firm GreenOrder. In her spare time, she volunteers at GRID Alternatives and WeCare Solar. She also enjoys skiing, rock climbing, kiteboarding, and squash.

After five years with *The Sacramento Bee*, **Alexei Koseff '12, MA '13**, joined the *San Francisco Chronicle* in January as their new Sacramento correspondent. He is still covering the state Capitol and California politics, with a focus on Governor Gavin Newsom "who has kept me busy during his first year in office." Some of Alexei's favorite recent stories include a profile he

wrote of a tattoo removal program for state prison inmates and a look at how prosecutors are fighting back against a new California law that limits when an accomplice to a homicide can be charged with murder. In his free time, he trains and performs with a hip-hop dance group, Boogie Monstarz.

**Miles Bennett-Smith '13** spent several years in tech and venture capital, but decided to put his degree to real use and went back to school to pursue his MA in Policy, Organizations and Leadership from Stanford's School of Education. This year, he is thrilled to be starting in the classroom teaching AP US History at Summit Prep in Redwood City, while also coaching the cross country and basketball teams.

**Sophi Scarnewman** (Newman) '13 and husband Bobby welcomed a son, Donato, in October 2016, and are finding parenting just as rewarding and as challenging as everyone promised it would be. She writes "we are having so much fun seeing his imagination and abilities blossom." Parenting aside, Sophi began on her current path toward becoming a physician assistant in 2017. Since then, she has been taking many science courses, from organic chemistry to immunology. (Sophi sees her AmStud background as a "huge advantage" even here, as "making interdisciplinary connections helps me build context for the new concepts I learn.") She began working as a medical scribe at Marin General Hospital in 2018, and in 2019 took on a role at a community health clinic near home in Richmond, CA, where she splits her time

between clinic operations (fixing equipment, developing protocols, quality improvement (tracking performance and targeting areas to improve), and medical scribing (shadowing a provider and completing the notes for the day). Her job brings together so many elements she loves—people, public service, data, and science. She will be applying to physician assistant school in 2020.

**Christina Walker '13** went on to teach elementary school students in Connecticut after graduation. After a few years teaching, she decided to leave the classroom and start her own company, Homeroom ([www.homeroom.com](http://www.homeroom.com)) with fellow Stanford alum, Casandra Espinoza Stewart '11. Their platform helps elementary school PTAs manage onsite after-school enrichment programs. Since launching, they have scaled to schools in 26 districts and 11 states, and were recently featured in *Forbes*. "Each day," Christina writes, "we show up at Homeroom with the goal to provide families with the ability to discover and manage high-quality after-school enrichment classes that are convenient, accessible and affordable."

**Miranda Mammen '14** graduated from Harvard Law School in 2019, and has since started a fellowship with the National Domestic Workers Alliance in Oakland, CA, focused on improving labor standards for nannies, housecleaners, and care attendants for seniors and people with disabilities.

**Will Robins '14** has returned to Stanford as an MBA Candidate at the Graduate School of Business. "Great to be back on the farm!" he writes.

Having worked as the city/county/health/arts/crime reporter in Helena, Montana for two years **Thomas Plank '16** has started a new job in Boise, Idaho as a county reporter for the *Idaho Press*.

**Benina Stern '16** is working in the Programs Department of the Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles, and finding it "a great mix of things I enjoy doing—the analytical puzzle of putting on live events, thinking creatively about what events we should program and how audiences would respond to them, [and] taking in a lot of great films and performances." She would be happy to talk to American Studies students about what it's like working in the non-profit arts world—or about life in L.A.

**Jordan Huelskamp '17** graduated from Columbia Journalism School in 2018, and started working at Artsy, the leading online resource for learning about and buying art. She finds it highly engaging to be at "an interdisciplinary company, where art meets science — not unlike American Studies at Stanford."

**Emily Waltman '17** embarked on her first year as a teacher. She teaches English/Language Arts at Jere Baxter Middle School in Nashville. The work is challenging, but Emily is thrilled to discover

that she enjoys teaching just as much as she hoped she would.

**Ali Stack '17** is in her first year at the UCLA School of Law.

**Ronald Pritipaul '19** is back in the Bay Area, working at Levi Strauss & Co., where he started by managing the sample library and working with the Levi Strauss Archives to preserve the company history by preparing clothing samples to be archived. He also assisted the Merchandising team in preparing for the Fall 2020 collection, and helped with materials for the Contemporary Jewish Museum's current exhibit: Levi Strauss: A History of American Style. Recently promoted, Ron is now officially "Design Coordinator" for the Men's Bottoms Team at Levi's.

**Kathryn Rydberg '19** spent the summer after graduation traveling, including scuba diving in the Cayman Islands and returning to Italy for the first time since studying abroad there while at Stanford in 2017. She began work as a Content Strategist at SevenDesign in Sausalito at the end of the summer. Her job involves writing content for marketing materials, as well as branding and social media strategy. Living in San Francisco with two other Stanford alums, she reports "life is good!"

**Ella Bunnell '19** is currently pursuing a Master's degree at Queen's University Belfast as a 2020 George J. Mitchell Scholar. She studies Conflict Transformation and Social Justice, focusing on interfaith peace-building and transitional justice.



AN INTERVIEW WITH

# Lynn Mahoney '86

San Francisco State University President

**A**fter graduating from Stanford with an American Studies degree in 1986, Lynn Mahoney received a Ph.D. in History from Rutgers. She is the author of *Elizabeth Stoddard and the Boundaries of Bourgeois Culture*, a study of the 19th-century novelist and poet. In addition to her scholarly accomplishments, Dr. Mahoney has also served as an administrator at several state universities, including the State University of New York, Cal State Long Beach, and Cal State L.A. She became president of San Francisco State University in July 2019. Newsletter editor Amir Abou-Jaoude '20 recently talked with Dr. Mahoney about her experience in American Studies, the value of an interdisciplinary approach to learning, and the challenge of preparing students for the turbulent twenty-first century.

**Amir Abou-Jaoude (AA):**  
**When you came to Stanford, what sparked your interest in American Studies?**

Lynn Mahoney (LM): I think I was like many students that when I started at Stanford, I thought I'd be pre-med. I started thinking I'd be a biology major. I had some family encouragement to pursue medicine. I started with chemistry and calculus and did not enjoy either. I particularly struggled in chemistry. By the end of my freshman year, I realized I was not going to be pre-med and I needed to choose another major. Even then, I kept thinking I would be in the sciences. I switched from bio to human biology. I didn't like that. Then, I tried computer science. The whole time I was doing that I was taking history and literature courses. Finally, sometime my sophomore year, I thought, "wait, I love those courses. Why am I not doing a major in history and literature?" I started exploring the humanities and discovered this thing called American Studies that would allow me to take both literature and history. I didn't

have to choose. My junior year I was pursuing American Studies.

**AA: Was there a class or professor in American Studies that had an indelible impact on you?**

LM: I was blessed in all sorts of ways to have spectacular professors all through my American Studies experience. The professor that jumpstarted my academic career was Joe Corn, who was the program director at the time. He was a historian of science and technology. I took my senior seminars with him. He co-taught one of them with his wife who was a professor in art history, Wanda Corn. What they introduced me to were the beauties of interdisciplinary study. He was always very accessible, so he would spend a lot of time talking outside of class about what we were studying. He was the first who let me think that a doctorate was something I could potentially pursue.

**AA: Did Stanford's American Studies program shape your interests as a scholar?**

LM: It absolutely did. My love was history and literature, and

*My love was history and literature, and I think I took just about the same number of courses in both. The notion that you could use literature to understand history absolutely was something that I learned as an undergraduate and learned to love.*

I think I took just about the same number of courses in both. The notion that you could use literature to understand history absolutely was something that I learned as an undergraduate and learned to love. My work on Elizabeth Stoddard came out of my work with American Studies scholars, who tended to be more interdisciplinary.

**AA: Could you talk a little more about how the American Studies program affected your subsequent research projects?**

LM: One of the overriding questions when I was an undergraduate was why there's no socialism in the United States. That was one of those historical problems that came up in many, many classes—in history and even in literature. One of the things I graduated from Stanford with was a key interest in was how people create class identities and how they create them over

American Studies, which is really the construction of whiteness and the construction of racial identity. That came afterwards. My initial focus was on class, and that came out of my Stanford education.

**AA: How did your American Studies major determine your career path after graduation?**

LM: When I graduated, on the one hand I felt like my Stanford degree in American Studies had prepared me for everything. I had studied some of the most challenging policies in U.S. history from an interdisciplinary perspective. I felt prepared for everything, but at the same time, I vaguely felt prepared for

to graduate school to test the waters. I took education courses, I took geography courses, and I took history courses. That's when I made the decision that history was my love and I would go on for a doctorate.

**AA: In addition to your work as a historian, you have also become an administrator at several state schools—SUNY, Cal State L.A., and now SFSU. How did you transition from professor to president?**

LM: I never anticipated becoming an administrator. It wasn't something I thought about or imagined early in my career, but I became very interested in making sure students achieved their educational outcomes. Many state university students struggle to graduate. Having had a slightly bumpy history at Stanford where I kept changing majors, I have some sympathy for students who are finding college difficult to navigate. I just started getting involved in university projects that were designed to help students complete their degrees more successfully. One opportunity led to another. I directed an advising center for a little while. That led to an opportunity to be Associate Vice President for Undergraduate Studies at Cal State Long Beach, the Provost and VP for Academic Affairs at Cal State L.A., and now President at SFSU. What ties it all together is a commitment to helping students achieve their educational goals.

**AA: How has American Studies affected your approach as an administrator?**

LM: One of the first history courses I took at Stanford was taught by Clay Carson and it was called "The 1960s: The Tumultuous Decade." What I learned there I have carried with me for more than thirty years. I

carried it through my American Studies degree and my Ph.D. It's the power of ordinary people to change their lives, the power of ordinary people to transform their world. I carried that sense of empowerment. There are times in history often where the world is a difficult place. I think we're at one of those times right now, but the message of history is that ordinary people can work together to transform their world. That's the kind of empowerment I want to pass on to students who go to state universities like San Francisco State. My training as an American Studies student and as a historian really is fuel for my administrative career.

**AA: Speaking more broadly, why do think American Studies as a discipline remains relevant today?**

LM: I think my instinct when I was twenty-two that my American Studies major had prepared me for everything was in fact the right instinct. We're facing very pressing twenty-first century challenges—climate change, the resurgence in white supremacist ideologies and violent behaviors, geopolitical unrest all over the place. The thing about an American Studies degree is it doesn't give you all the answers, but what it does is it teaches you how to ask questions and understand issues in very complicated ways. The present is very complicated, and if you can't understand how to approach it or question it in complex, interdisciplinary ways, you're going to struggle. Having an undergraduate major that teaches you how to ask questions and understand problems in complex ways is going to prepare you for everything, and then you can learn the other stuff.

*This transcript has been condensed and edited for clarity.*



time. The work on [Elizabeth] Stoddard grew out of that. In particular, I became interested in how gender and culture are used to create class-based identity. That's where that book came from. After the Stoddard work, I became much more interested in what I think now is one of the overarching questions in

nothing because [my degree] didn't lead to a specific career objective. At that time, I wasn't leaping headlong into graduate school. In fact, it took me a little while to come to that. At first, I didn't know what I wanted to do. I did a couple of odd jobs for about a year, and then went back

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