

AMERICAN GRAFFITI



Message from the Director

Greetings American Studies Students, Alumni, and Friends!

I am delighted to begin my tenure as director of American Studies. Teaching and getting to know the American Studies students over the past several years has been a real pleasure, and I look forward to working with them in this new capacity. I also look forward to collaborating with the many wonderful colleagues who comprise the extended community of American Studies at Northwestern.

On that note, I would like to thank Robert Orsi for his stewardship of the program over the past year as Interim Director. I am grateful for the care with which he led the program and guided the students. I also would like to express my deep appreciation to Ivy Wilson for his many years of leadership as Program Director. Professor Wilson's work to foster community by deepening connections across campus and supporting our students in countless ways has helped create and nurture a vibrant, interconnected Program. I am grateful for the support of these and other former directors. Thanks are also due to Ryan Marks for his work with the program and dedication to the students over the past couple of years. We wish him the best in his new endeavors.

The Program is thrilled to welcome Professor Amy Lippert to teach the senior seminar this year. She comes to us from the University of Chicago, where she was Assistant Professor of American History. She received her Ph.D. in history from UC Berkeley, and has held numerous fellowships including from the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Mellon Foundation, and the Huntington Library. Her first book, *Consuming Identities: Visual Culture in Nineteenth-Century San Francisco* (Oxford University Press, 2018), focuses on visual representations of people as essential components in the cultural history of modern life, and her research and teaching explore the cultural and urban history of the nineteenth century United States. Please join me in welcoming her when you see her in Kresge.

It is an honor and joy to work with such exceptional undergraduate students, and to help them delve into topics and questions meaningful to them by bringing interdisciplinary approaches into conversation. Every year the senior research projects demonstrate the value of our deep commitment to a liberal arts education within a research university. This past year we had a stellar crop of students, many of whose work was worthy of awards, including Grant Everly and Aliana Ruxin, who jointly shared the Carl Smith Prize for Outstanding Senior Essay in American Studies; selecting only two winners was a difficult choice in a stellar cohort with many excellent projects. You will find information about these students, who were recognized with program and departmental honors, Phi Beta Kappa, and many other awards, later in this newsletter. We are also thrilled to welcome an excellent group of new students for the cohort beginning the Program this year. It's a pleasure getting to know them.

The 2018-19 senior seminar also afforded the opportunity for collaboration and deep intellectual exchange with Gender and Sexuality Studies, as GSS students joined American Studies students in the seminar where they shared ideas, worked in peer review groups, and learned from each other throughout the year.



Professor Shana Bernstein (right) coordinates the Senior Symposium with Past Director Robert Orsi (left) and visiting professor for 18-19 Ryan Marks (center).

Last year the Program also welcomed Professor Elliott Gorn of Loyola University, who discussed his book on the historical and cultural effects of the murder of Emmett Till with Kevin Boyle (Northwestern University), Timothy Guilfoyle (Loyola University Chicago), and Robert Orsi. This coming year we will welcome Professor Connie Chiang, Director of the Environmental Studies Program and Professor of History and Environmental Studies at Bowdoin University, who on April 30 will share a talk from her book *Nature Behind Barbed Wire: An Environmental History of the Japanese American Incarceration* (Oxford University Press, 2018).

This year we are also continuing to build community among current and former American Studies students. This year we've been hosting weekly lunches for majors to give them an opportunity to just stop by and chat with each other and with faculty. A highlight was our excursion to see the movie "Harriet" and discuss it with Professor Kate Masur from the history department. Many thanks again to our fabulous student advisory board members Gabrielle Grossman and Amos Pomp for their help organizing it! Beyond our current students, we have been reaching out to Program alumni to hear from them about their experience with the Program, to learn about the many ways they have been contributing to the world after their time at NU, and to connect them to our current majors.

We look forward to the 2019-20 academic year and many to follow! For those of you in the world beyond NU, we hope you'll stay in touch.

Warm wishes to all,

Shana Bernstein



Shana Bernstein, Ph.D.

Professor Bernstein is Clinical Associate Professor of Legal Studies and Director of the American Studies Program at Northwestern University. She is a Distinguished Lecturer for the Organization of American Historians and has received grants and fellowships from institutions including the Mellon Foundation, the Huntington Library, the Stanford Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity, and the Feinstein Center for American Jewish History.



Christine Helmer, Ph.D.

Professor Helmer teaches Religious Studies and German. She co-taught a class called Resistance: Germany 1939/America 1969 as part of the seminar sequence. In 2017 she was awarded an honorary doctorate in theology from the University of Helsinki for her work on German reformer Martin Luther. Professor Helmer's area of research and teaching specialization is Christian theology from historical, systematic, and constructive perspectives.



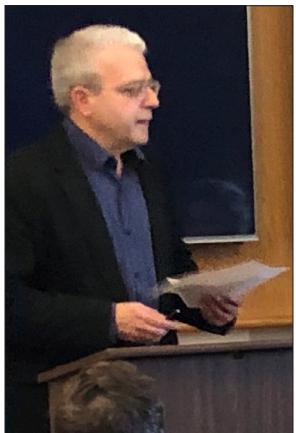
Amy Lippert, Ph.D.

Professor Lippert earned her PhD from the University of California, Berkeley and has taught in the Departments of History at the University of Chicago and Colby College. Her first book, *Consuming Identities: Visual Culture in Nineteenth-Century San Francisco*, focuses on visual representations of people as essential components in the cultural history of modern life. Her research and teaching explore the longue durée nineteenth-century United States.



Imani McPhaden

Imani begins her fourth year as the Program Assistant for American Studies. She resides in Evanston with her two children, Stella and Duncan. When not at work or feeding growing children she is an associate board member for Awakenings, a local arts organization, and organizes Genderqueer Chicago, a support and resource organization for transgender and gender nonconforming Chicagoans of all ages.



Robert Orsi, Ph.D.

Professor Orsi is the first holder of the Grace Craddock Nagle Chair in Catholic Studies. Professor Orsi studies American religious history and contemporary practice; American Catholicism in both historical and ethnographic perspective; and he is widely recognized also for his work on theory and method for the study of religion. In 2002-2003, he was president of the American Academy of Religion.



Ivy Wilson, Ph.D.

Professor Ivy Wilson is an Associate Professor of English and teaches courses on the comparative literatures of the black diaspora and U.S. literary studies with a particular emphasis on African American culture. As well as being a former Program Director he is also teaching a class called Work, Labor, and Social Formation. He is the author of *Specters of Democracy: Blackness and the Aesthetics of Nationalism* (Oxford University Press).

Class of 2019

Nicholas Anderson

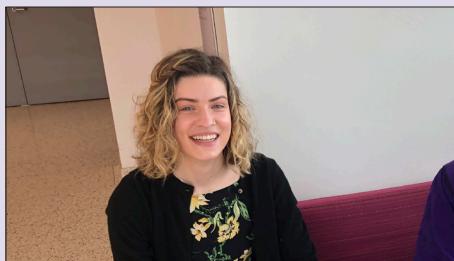
Murals of Memory: The 1934 West Coast Waterfront Strike
Advisor: Professor Daniel Immerwahr, Department of History



Claire Fahey

If Looks Could Kill: The Aesthetic Power of Radical Female Militants in the New Left

Advisor: Professor Michael Allen, Department of History



Grant Everly

The United States' Vertical Border: A Case Study of the 2016 Ecuadorian Mass Deportation of 121 US-bound Cubans

2019 winner of the American Studies Carl Smith Award for Outstanding Senior Essay
Advisor: Professor Galya Ben-Arieh, Department of Political Science



Irina Huang

"I'm so OCD": Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder as a "Model Minority" of Mental Illness

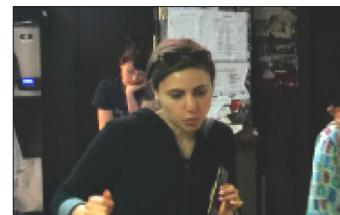
Advisor: Professor Justin Tse, Asian American Studies Program



Alexia Levitt

One Woman, Two Voices: The Story of Sigrid Schultz and Her Reportage on Germany During the 1930s and 40s

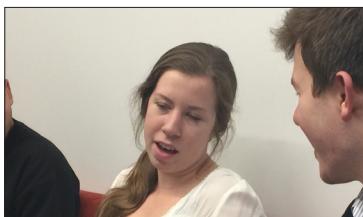
Advisor: Professor Sarah Cushman, Holocaust Education Foundation



Caroline Thomas

School Discipline and the Cognitive Repercussions of Childhood Trauma: An Examination of Discipline Policy in Connection to Juvenile Delinquency

Advisor: Professor Mary Pattillo, Departments of Sociology and African American Studies



Aliana Ruxin

Seeds Are Stories: Toward Generating Collaborative Seed Systems

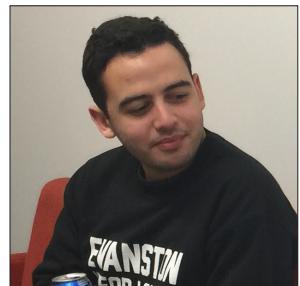
2019 winner of the American Studies Carl Smith Award for Outstanding Senior Essay
Advisor: Professor Robert Orsi, Department of Religious Studies



Charles Valdes

Cuban Exiles, Cuban Americans, and Twentieth Century Press

Advisor: Professor Galya Ben-Arieh, Department of Political Science



Current Students

**Margot Bartol**

Class of '22

Margot is involved in student government and Mayfest productions. She hopes to focus her studies on American-Chinese culture relationships or immigration and refugee studies.

**Caleigh Bell-Rosof**

Class of '22

Caleigh's interests span across Gender and Sexuality Studies, Legal Studies, American History, Sociology, and particularly criminal justice reform.

**Thomas Bentsen**

Class of '22

Double-majoring with Theatre and minoring in Dance, Tom is a proud member of *THUNK A Cappella* and performs and works on theatre productions across campus.

**Margaret Cheever**

Class of '22

Maggie is interested in environmental policy, access to education, and their effects on communities. She loves speaking Spanish and reading magical realism as well as Russian literature.

**Claire Corridon**

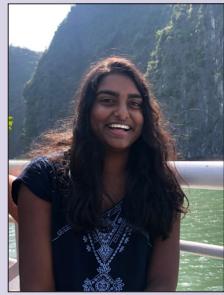
Class of '21

Double-majoring with Political Science, Claire studied in Spain for Fall '19. She works with Supplies for Dreams as a mentor and is a chair for Northwestern's Model United Nations.

**Sam Gardner**

Class of '22

Sam is interested in European, Russian, and U.S. history as well as current foreign affairs. He enjoys Northwestern comedy groups, long camping trips, and sailing on Lake Michigan.

**Keerti Gopal**

Class of '21

Keerti studies electoral politics, social movements, and environmentalism. She is involved with the Peer Health Exchange, *Nine Lives Podcast*, and *THUNK A Cappella*.

**Gabrielle Grossman**

Class of '20

Double-majoring with Psychology and a minor in Creative Nonfiction, Gabby is writing her Senior Thesis on vegetarian groups and their relationships with other social movements.

**Kate Hader**

Class of '22

Kate is interested in the intersections of race, gender, politics, and pop culture. On campus she is a DJ at WNUR and a member of Planned Parenthood Generation Action.

**Vivien Hough**

Class of '21

Vivien is studying the legal history of discrimination in the United States. She recently completed research as a Leopold Fellow on the history of coeducation at Northwestern University.

**Zoe Johnson**

Class of '20

Zoe minors in Theatre and English. For her senior thesis project she is writing two plays, one about adolescent experiences of menstrual pain and another on the anti-vaccine movement.

**Mara Kelly**

Class of '21

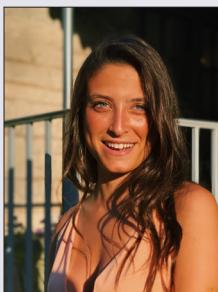
Mara double-majors with Religious Studies, focused on religion, politics, and media. She spent the summer of '19 in Jordan as part of an intensive Arabic immersion program.



Danielle Kosover

Class of '21

Danielle minors in Spanish. She is passionate about collective justice and liberation throughout the evolution of the Americas.



Hannah Lachow

Class of '20

Hannah double-majors with Economics. She is interested in education policy and involved in A&O Productions on campus.



Matthew Marth

Class of '21

Matt is an Evans Scholar hoping to double-major with Legal Studies. He is interested in community organizations and the politics of housing.



Michael McHugh

Class of '22

Michael double-majors with Statistics and minors in Classics. He is primarily interested in studying the historical developments of American religious doctrine.



William Paik

Class of '20

Will double-majors with English Literature and minors in Asian American Studies. He focuses on the Alt-Right in Berkeley and their use of the public sphere. He also performs stand-up comedy.



Ruby Phillips

Class of '20

Ruby focuses on African American Studies and History, specifically interracial marriage in the U.S. She is involved in Northwestern Peer Health Exchange.



Amos Pomp

Class of '20

Amos is involved in Real Food at NU, Peer Health Exchange, and peer advising. His senior thesis is about access, inclusion, and social identity within the outdoor industry in the U.S.



Meilynn Shi

Class of '20

Meilynn will be entering the Feinberg School of Medicine in the fall of 2020. She is interested in healthcare policy and eliminating barriers to access.



Danielle Spitz

Class of '22

Danielle is interested in Women's Health as well as American history. Outside of the classroom, Danielle works on the podcast *Nine Lives* and volunteers for College Mentors for Kids.



Julia Tarnow

Class of '21

Julia double-majors with Environmental Policy and Culture. She is interested in sustainable and ethical food systems. She spent Fall '19 studying in Scotland.



Jon Wolf

Class of '20

Jon is triple-majoring in American Studies, Music, and Philosophy. His senior thesis will be a collection of poems documenting the environmental history of interior North America.



Friends, family, and other American Studies majors at the 2019 Senior Symposium.

American Studies in Action



In the fall quarter of 2018, Elliott Gorn came to campus to discuss his book, *Let the People See: The Story of Emmett Till* (Oxford University Press, 2018).



Meilynn Shi ('20) and Will Paik ('20) grab a quick bite to eat during a Tuesday Drop-In Lunch, a new weekly event to encourage students to study together and speak to advisors. Gabby Grossman ('20) updates Shana Bernstein on her thesis progress.



Mara Kelly ('21) puts on a brave face before traversing the harsh Evanstonian winds on the way to afternoon classes.

Amy Lippert and Zoe Johnson ('20) take a break from thesis writing to breathe deeply.



American Studies majors attended the film 'Harriet' with History Department Professor Kate Masur and then met for a discussion at the Celtic Knot in Evanston.



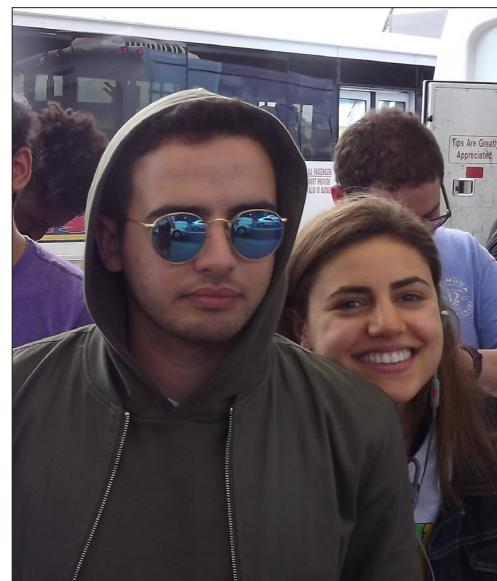
The 2016-17 academic year wrapped up with a picnic at Centennial Park, just south of campus. Above, Irina Huang ('19) with Nick Anderson ('19). Below, Grant Everly ('19) with Claire Fahey ('19).



Charlie Valdes ('19) and Alexia Levitt ('19), ready to take Manhattan by storm during the 2017 American Studies trip to NYC.



Each year, new American Studies Majors participate in a series of small seminar classes throughout the year. Sophomores complete the sequence together with the same students with whom they will eventually write and present their thesis papers. In the winter of 2017, 2019 graduates were taking a course called "The Cold War and the Color Line", taught by former American Studies Director and Professor Kate Baldwin.



Aliana Ruxin ('19) and Amos Pomp ('20) relax after the 2019 Senior Symposium, when Graduating Seniors present their American Studies Thesis Projects.



Program Committee Members



Kevin Boyle, Ph.D.

William Smith Mason Professor of American History

New to the Program Advisory Committee in Fall Quarter of 2019, Professor Boyle is an historian of the twentieth century United States, with a particular interest in modern American social movements. He authored *Arc of Justice: A Saga of Race, Civil Rights and Murder in the Jazz Age*, which received the National Book Award for nonfiction, The Chicago Tribune's Heartland Prize, and the Simon Weisenthal Center's Tolerance Book Award. He has held fellowships from the Rockefeller Foundation, the Fulbright Foundation, the American Council of Learned Societies, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation, and the Andrew Carnegie Corporation.



Anthony Chen, Ph.D.

Associate Professor and Director of Undergraduate Studies of Sociology

Joining the Program Advisory Committee in Fall Quarter of 2019, Professor Chen is interested in American political development and public policy since the New Deal, with a special focus on the politics of social policy, civil rights, health care, and economic regulation. In addition to his appointments in Political Science and Sociology, Chen is a Faculty Fellow at the Institute for Policy Research at Northwestern University of California, Berkeley, where was a Soros Fellow and later a Robert Wood Johnson Scholar in Health Policy Research. Before joining the faculty at Northwestern, Chen was on the faculty for eight years at the University of Michigan.



Nitasha Sharma, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of African American Studies and Asian American Studies; Director of Graduate Studies, Department of African American Studies; Director, Asian American Studies Program

Professor Sharma's academic activities are based on an interdisciplinary, comparative, and ethnographic approach to the study of difference, inequality, and racism. The central goal of her teaching, research, and writing is to develop models for multiracial alliance building by zeroing in on cultural phenomena that unearth and challenge the factors that structure contentious race relations. In 2018 she received Northwestern's Provost's Award for Faculty Excellence in Diversity and Equity.



Janice Radway, Ph.D.

Director of Gender and Sexuality Studies, Walter Dill Scott Professor of Communication and Professor in American Studies

Professor Radway is past President of the American Studies Association and former editor of American Quarterly. She is the author of *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy, and Popular Literature*, which won the Fellows Book Award from the International Communication Association as a classic in the field. She is currently working on a book entitled *Girls, Zines, and their Travels: Selfhood and the Struggle for New Social Forms in the 1990s*. Professor Radway teaches "Girlhood in Public Culture," and "High School in American Public Culture".

Professors Shana Bernstein, Robert Orsi, and Ivy Wilson are also on the American Studies Program Committee.

After graduation Grant started as a legal intern with the International Justice Mission in the Dominican Republic. His work there focuses on human trafficking, commercial sexual exploitation of children and adolescents, seeking system reform in law enforcement, public justice, and victim attention. Upon returning from the DR in August 2020, he plans to work either in criminal justice or migration-related work, specifically legal and social services related to childhood trauma. He plans to attend law school and hopes to supply trauma-informed legal care.



Nick began as the Community Engagement Fellow at Cradles to Crayons, the 2018 NU Dance Marathon's primary beneficiary. Cradles to Crayons is a nonprofit that provides 0-12 year-olds experiencing poverty and homelessness throughout the Chicagoland area with high-quality new or gently-used items for their success at home, school, and play. He keeps the warehouse well stocked by organizing collection campaigns with small businesses, youth groups, and corporate groups.



Caroline took a position at Booz Allen Hamilton, a consulting firm in D.C., on a team geared towards bringing commercial best practices to government clients. She anticipates law school in her future and eventually hopes to fuse her interests in social policy and national security.



Continuing the work from her Senior Thesis, Aliana began her Princeton in Latin America fellowship as a Research Field Assistant at Conservación Osa in Piro, Costa Rica. The Osa peninsula is home to 2.5% of the world's biodiversity, and OC works to conserve that biodiversity through rainforest restoration, wildlife monitoring, healthy waterways, and community network programs. She's putting her thesis work into action by starting a seed bank.

Alumni Updates

Dan Rubin '78

"I spent my twenties in newspapers in Norfolk, Virginia., and Louisville, Kentucky, uncovering waste and corruption, observing, as an old editor once put it to me, 'how people deal with reality.' Then I landed at the Oz that was *The Philadelphia Inquirer* at the end of its staggering run of Pulitzer Prizes. I never left. We had twins, my wife became a tenured teacher in the schools outside Philly, and I played through the entire course, from suburban reporter to the city desk, feature writer, feature columnist, foreign correspondent (Berlin), full-time blogger, and finally got the job of my dreams: metro columnist. I taught urban journalism at Penn for a decade until my new day job became too taxing. By then I had taken a job as an editor at *The Inquirer*. ...Through all of this my background in American Culture/Studies served. The interdisciplinary nature suited me. So did what I'd learned about gathering historical materials and layering them with interviews and observation to come up with something of value."

Joe Crespino '94

"As an American Studies major at Northwestern, I met some amazing professors in small seminars who used historical documents, photos, films, essays, stories, novels, and books to teach me how to think and write about the American experience in precise, interesting, and sophisticated ways. It is no exaggeration to say that the program changed my life. Today I teach and write about American history at Emory University in Atlanta. In 2018 I published my third book, *Atticus Finch: The Biography—Harper Lee, Her Father, and the Making of an American Icon*. It never would have occurred to me to write a book like that had I not been so lucky to have an American Studies professor like Carl Smith, one of the founders of Northwestern's program."

Peter Frosch '01

Peter lives in St. Paul, Minnesota where he serves as President & CEO of GREATER MSP, the regional economic development partnership for the Minneapolis Saint Paul region. GREATER MSP is a public-private partnership of over 300 organizations working to strengthen the competitiveness of the metropolitan economy. Their work includes business attraction and expansion, talent, entrepreneurship and innovation, global air service, regional marketing and more. "The American Studies program was a rich and formative experience. It launched me into a fulfilling and challenging career that takes me around the world and enables me to make a positive impact on the lives of people in my local community."

Rebekah Park '02

"After earning my PhD in anthropology and leaving my tenure track job, I moved to New York to work as an applied anthropologist for a Danish company called ReD Associates. I feel that I have returned to my American Studies roots because I work at a consulting firm that draws from the humanities and social sciences. I work with former architects, journalists, political scientists, philosophers, among others. We help Fortune 500 companies change the way they view their industry or business, develop new visions for the future based on our observations of human behaviors, and to help businesses understand the people and the worlds that they live in today. The most recent project I just finished was studying conspiracy theorists in the US and the UK to better understand how and why people come to believe in conspiracy theories, and what and how people act upon that knowledge, if at all. The purpose of this project was to provide new insights that would help reduce disinformation and harmful extremism based on conspiracy theories."



Joe Crespino, Jimmy Carter Professor of History at Emory University, meets with former President Jimmy Carter.

Lauren Gutterman '03

When I entered college, I was a Theater major and was planning to become an actor, but my interests soon changed and I became passionate about women's, gender, and sexuality studies and U.S. history. The American Studies program allowed me to design my own course of study around these interests. In the process of writing my senior thesis on the New England Watch and Ward Society's anti-burlesque campaign in the 1930s, I was able to conduct archival research for the first time, and I began to envision a career in academia. I'm now an assistant professor of American Studies at the University of Texas at Austin, where I teach courses on the very same issues that captured my attention at Northwestern: women's and gender history, LGBTQ studies, popular culture, and social movements. I recently published my first book manuscript, *Her Neighbor's Wife: A History of Lesbian Desire Within Marriage*, and I co-host a podcast on the history of sexuality in the U.S. called Sexing History.



Rebekah Park in Idaho where she interviewed conspiracy theorists who live "off the grid".

Aaron Neinstein, MD '03

"I have such fond memories of my time in the program and am grateful for the impacts it has had on my life and career – I even ended up pursuing a career in diabetes following my senior American Studies thesis work... on diabetes. What made the American Studies program so unique and special was the way that it brought together very bright people with diverse backgrounds and interests, mixed us with highly talented, dedicated professors teaching on interdisciplinary topics, and let us loose to pursue together intellectually interesting debates and discussions. We learned how to think critically, to write, to debate, and to appreciate the power of ideas and evidence. This ability to 'speak across disciplines' has been invaluable in life and in my career in academic medicine.... I'm Associate Professor of Medicine at the University of California, San Francisco, where I have a clinical practice in Endocrinology, focused on diabetes care, and participate in medical education. I'm also Director of Clinical Informatics at the UCSF Center for Digital Health Innovation, where I lead a multi-disciplinary team focused on advancing interoperability and digital transformation of care delivery. In the past, I helped lead the Epic EHR implementation at UCSF and was on the founding team of Tidepool, a non-profit that creates open-source software to empower people with diabetes. I have focused my career on empowering patients and physicians to better access, share, understand, and use health information for more connected, collaborative care."

Mark Shpizner '09

"To me, American Studies stands out ...because it is so multifaceted and lends itself exceedingly well to most areas of adult life. The program doesn't just encourage individual creativity — it requires it, forcing students to question and challenge seemingly everyday parts of our culture (many of which we likely take for granted) as cultural artifacts worthy of intellectual pursuit and analysis. In this way, the program teaches students how to think in a world where we are increasingly teaching our kids — and, at work, our employees — how to do. I've had unforgettable career opportunities that I can directly attribute back to what I learned in the American Studies program.... [including in my current job] as head of BlackRock's US & Canada Institutional Product Strategy."

There isn't enough space to share all of the stories that American Studies and American Cultures alumni have sent to Program Director Shana Bernstein. Over the coming year we will be presenting more stories on our website: www.amstp.northwestern.edu. If you would like to add your story, please send an email with a short bio and a photo to AMST@northwestern.edu.



Sarah Logan visits Bangladesh with Congressional staff to examine the work of the Gates Foundation.

Sarah Logan '13

"American Studies was the highlight of my Northwestern experience ...[After graduation] I moved to D.C. ... and worked at the U.S. Department of the Treasury in the Office of Public Affairs. After Treasury, I moved to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, where I still work...I focus on our work and partnership with the U.S. government. I've recently been involved in the launch of a new organization called the Gates Policy Initiative, which will focus on lobbying federal policymakers on issues across global health, development, education, and economic mobility. American Studies directly contributed to my career path; my thesis focused on the 2012 Democratic National Convention, which was some of the background and experience that led me into the political and policy space. Through American Studies, I learned how to analyze and synthesize issues clearly, which has been invaluable in my trajectory post-school. Writing well and critical thought are undervalued, and desperately needed across government, policy, and philanthropy."

Christina Powers, '13

"The American Studies Program afforded me the unique opportunity to become an academic amphibian: ...I moved across art history, ethnic studies, civil engineering, and sociology to uncover linkages between these ostensibly different disciplines. When I reflect on experiences that have shaped my worldview, I recognize how the program—with its diverse faculty and my similarly inquisitive peers—not just validated, but actively encouraged my curiosity as a practice. It empowered me to navigate the world after college with the guiding principle that in order to understand any system fully, I had to cobble together constituent and seemingly unrelated pieces to truly understand the whole. Since graduating in 2013, I worked in education initiatives across the non-profit and private sectors... Currently, I lead the Data & Impact team at Generation, a global workforce development nonprofit, where we are working to advance the organization's approaches to assessing, analyzing, and demonstrating our impact on the lives of thousands of job-seekers around the world."

Samantha Offsay-Nissen '13

"I am endlessly grateful for all that I received from American Studies- both the department, faculty, and my cohort of students. In a culture prone to classifying and codifying things into their own categories, American Studies encouraged us to look closer and to ask questions--to see links and places where one thing bleeds into the next. Professionally I incorporate my American Studies major every day. I am a Vice President of Original Programming at STARZ tasked with finding new stories as well as working on the shows that we already have in production. As an AMST major, my focus was how art and literature affect and reflect societal change, so I am deeply aware of the potential impact stories have on us. TV is the storytelling medium that finds us in our homes, when we think we've shut off for the day but are actually absorbing and creating our biases based on the shows we watch. When we see empowered, complex characters each week in our own living rooms, they seep in and begin to change the way we perceive the world around us. As Mr. Rogers once said, television has the power to make a community of the entire country."



While working for Generation, Christina Powers spent parts of 2019 traveling to Pakistan, Hong Kong, India, and Brazil.

Rhaina Cohen '14

"Years out of college, I still think about how I struck gold by discovering the American Studies program. Through the small seminar-style classes, lounge where students and professors crossed paths, and program events, I developed close relationships with professors. Taking classes across the humanities and social sciences taught me to be at ease with having an outsider perspective (I was never going to know more about literature or political science than students in those majors) and to connect ideas across disciplines. Every quarter, it felt like no matter how disparate the classes I was taking, I could find through-lines among the courses and often discussed them with professors. In short, American Studies encouraged a kind of energetic and creative intellectual inquiry. I'm currently a producer for the NPR podcast and radio show Hidden Brain, which typically ranks among the top 15 most-downloaded podcasts in the country. The show is centered on human behavior and blends research and narrative. Our episodes often connect to inequality and identity, two major themes I explored in American Studies. We cover research in the social science, from anthropology to psychology to economics, so my job feels not far from my interdisciplinary experience in American Studies. I arrived at NPR after completing a master's in Comparative Social Policy from Oxford, where I was a Marshall Scholar."



Hayeon Kim at Google where she works on communications and program management.

Aliana Ruxin '19

"I'm a Research Field Assistant at Osa Conservation (Conservación Osa) in Piro, Costa Rica. We also have an agroecological farm, Finca Osa Verde, where I work with a team of five other farmers. Agriculture and conservation are often at odds, but we're trying to change that through agroecological practices that promote sustainable use of resources for the environment, producer, and consumer. We're just beginning to supply food to the research station here in an effort to localize our food system, as well as experiment with new crops in the lowland wet tropics. It's interesting putting my thesis to test in the field; I argued for quite detailed 'seed story' documentation, which I still wholeheartedly believe in, but I have had no time to research and record detailed seed stories yet. Still, when deciding which new crop types to attempt to grow here, I've wished for a better database of the geographies of where particular seeds have grown successfully, which is something I drew attention to as a shortcoming of status quo seed information. Which is to say...I'm looking forward to continuing this seed bank project by saving and growing out new varieties, creating our seed bank database with seed stories as a protocol, creating a seed saving brochure, and expanding access to local farmers."

Russel Kahn '16

Russel's first job after graduation was for Creative Artist Agency, first in the Motion Picture Literary department in Los Angeles, and then in the Theatre Literary and Talent departments in New York City. His next big project was to perform in and produce a large scale immersive experience called ARCADE AMERIKANA at Brooklyn's Industry City, recognized by *TimeOut New York* as one of the city's 10 best immersive theatre events. He spent Summer 2019 assisting Rachel Brosnahan on set for THE MARVELOUS MRS. MAISEL, and continued as the first hire at her Amazon Studios production banner, Scrap Paper Pictures. "My American Studies background has been invaluable at every moment of my (nascent) career...Working across mediums, it is crucial to understand how stories inform and are informed by our culture at large. As a creator and a producer, the ability to approach this question critically from many angles has enabled me to move forward."

Hayeon Kim '17

Hayeon was admitted to a rotational marketing program at Google, but deferred it for a year to complete her Master's of Science degree in Migration Studies at Oxford where she wrote about the adoption and deportation of Korean children to/from the U.S. She currently works on the events marketing team for Google Cloud. She aspires to pursue a JD/PhD degree and hopes to pursue academia and perhaps teaching!

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