

THE AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALIST

WILLIAM AND MARY AMERICAN STUDIES GRADUATE PROGRAM NEWSLETTER VOL 1, FALL 2011

WILLIAM AND MARY INTERSECTS WITH WYOMING (TWICE)

HELIS SIKK

ASGSO is very pleased to report that the visit of this semester's American Studies guest lecturer, Professor Eric Sandeen, was a huge success! Sandeen, who has been a longtime Director of American Studies at the University of Wyoming, and an active member of the American Studies community, gave a lecture on photographic representations of the post-nuclear landscape, and shared his views on the current state of the field during an informal brown-bag discussion with the grad students. Professor Sandeen was so impressed with the academic rigor of the American Studies Program and the al fresco dining opportunities of Williamsburg that he is reportedly planning on settling down here if his prospective urban farming business in Detroit does not pick up.

Williamsburg was not the last we saw of Professor Sandeen. There were a few bold sisters (no

brothers this time) who took a trip all the way to Baltimore, Maryland to the 2011 American Studies Association conference. We are all modernists at heart, but there are those moments when we not only want to talk about what American Studies is, but have the urge to see it in action, and experience it first hand. Although our interest was not entirely anthropological, we were indeed curious about how our fellow Americanists *perform* American Studies.

Needless to say, the conversation between Wyoming and William and Mary on the state of the field continued throughout the conference. Some of the most invigorating and profound ones involved discussing (re)imagining the possibilities for (trans)forming and (re)pairing the intersections of prison, humor, and fat studies. Such exchanges confirmed that the world is our oyster and only the future will tell what kind of exciting directions the field of American Studies will take.

INAUGURAL ISSUE

On behalf of ASGSO, I want to welcome you to the first installment of *The American Exceptionalist*. We intend this newsletter to foster community spirit within the American Studies Graduate Program. We present student perspectives on program news to keep alumni informed, current students involved, and prospective students interested in William and Mary. We hope you enjoy the content and we welcome your feedback.

Thank you for reading.

NEEVE KELLY
ASGSO VICE PRESIDENT
NEWSLETTER EDITOR

SEASON OF CHANGE

NEEVE KELLY

Every fall brings change to Williamsburg: new students, new classes, and new reasons to avoid the Leafe. But this semester also brought significant shifts to the American Studies Program.

Most noteworthy, we welcomed a new professor. Kara Thompson (PhD, UC Davis) just began her joint appointment in English and American Studies. Along with her enthusiasm, Kara brings specializations in Literatures of the Americas, Native American Studies, Late-Nineteenth-Century American Literature, Critical Theory, and Queer Theory. If you haven't had the pleasure of meeting her yet, be sure to stop by and say hello at office 6B in College Apartments.

This semester also witnessed a reorganization of program power. After years of loyal service, Maureen Fitzgerald and Charlie McGovern stepped down from their roles of Director and DGS, respectively. Though we miss them dearly, we wish them the best as they enjoy their well-deserved breaks. And we

are lucky to have Chandos Brown and Grey Gundaker as substitutes. Our new Director and DGS are old pros at these positions and are leading our program with confidence and congeniality.

There is new management on the student level, as well. The ASGSO torch has been passed to another cohort. Presiding over the 2011-2012 American Studies Graduate Student Organization are Helis Sikk as President, Neeve Kelly as Vice President, David Pratt as Social Chair, Sarah Stanford as Treasurer, and Jan Hübenthal as Secretary. As officers, we are happy to represent the graduate students and we encourage our fellow brothers and sisters to get involved.

The addition of Kara, the leadership of Chandos and Grey, and the installation of new ASGSO officers are changes that should invigorate the program with fresh perspectives and highly-caffeinated energy. These transitions promise to promote a successful year.

COLLEGE APARTMENTS GETS FACELIFT

SARAH STANFORD AND
FEMKE BUNSOW

We are proud to report that College Apartments received a makeover this semester. After a multi-year hiatus, the American Studies Photo Collection is back on the walls. Check the third floor atrium for Bob Dylan and visit President Kennedy in the library.

New technologies can also be seen in College Apartments this year. Jean has installed a new microwave and temperature controlled water cooler in the department kitchen. Please take note that, although we now have all the comforts of home, living in College Apartments is still frowned upon.

The ASGSO bulletin board has also been updated. The new bulletin board, created by Sarah, Liz, and Nicolette features a stylish homage to the Fourth Grade with a border of gold stars. Future plans include glitter and dinosaurs. Check the board for updates on ASGSO events and department announcements.

PARTIES IN THE USA

DAVID PRATT

While we're all here first and foremost to study, it's important also to form bonds, intellectual and otherwise, among ourselves and across departments in William and Mary's relatively small graduate community. In that spirit, ASGSO has reimagined its role as a social organization, providing more opportunities for all American Studies graduate students to get together outside the classroom and to spend time with our colleagues in the History and Anthropology departments.

After starting the semester off with a smash year-opening party at Professor Leisa Meyer's house, attended by many members of both the American Studies and History departments, ASGSO hosted a karaoke night at the Bourbon Street Grille. American Studies, History, and Anthropology students showed up for a night of food, drinks, and powerful renditions of Natalie Imbruglia classics. For our next interdisciplinary social event, we painted our faces green and gold and tailgated a William and Mary football game, wherein the Tribe took on and handily defeated the Wildcats of New Hampshire.

After several big events, we decided to take it easy and get in the spirit of Halloween with a small gathering in College Apartments for some fall snacks and pumpkin carving. For Halloween itself, however, we teamed up with the Anthropology department to hold the biggest gathering of American Studies, Anthropology, and History graduate students in recent memory. Our interdisciplinary costume party was a huge success, one we hope to replicate and even improve upon many times over in the coming semester and succeeding years.

To end the semester, we got together to celebrate the holidays with music, ugly sweaters, and a white elephant gift exchange. Heading into the final, busiest week of the semester, the ASGSO holiday party was a much-needed reminder of the close-knit and supportive graduate community of which we are all a part and from which we all benefit as we chart our paths through graduate school.

FROM TOP TO BOTTOM: JANINE YORIMOTO AND JAN HÜBENTHAL DRESS AS A MID-CENTURY HOUSEWIFE AND HER CLOSETED HUSBAND FOR HALLOWEEN; ANTHROPOLOGY'S AMANDA JOHNSON, AMST'S HELIS SIKK, AND HISTORY'S THOMAS GILLAN TAILGATE; DAVID PRATT AND CHANDOS BROWN MAN THE GRILL AT LEISA MEYER'S OPENING PARTY



THE LEAGUE OF EXCEPTIONAL PETS

ZOEY ALDERMAN-TUTTLE

THE LEAGUE OF EXCEPTIONAL PETS - Z ALDERMAN-TUTTLE

PUCK WAS ALARMED. HE HADN'T SEEN HIS PERSON TODAY. WHERE COULD SHE BE?

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HE CALLED HIS FRIEND MINOS.

Minos, have you seen your person?

No! We should find them!

THEY CALLED TOGETHER THE LEAGUE OF GRAD STUDENT PETS. ALL THEIR PEOPLE WERE MISSING!

Where could they be?

Minos

Rusty

Tony

Bandit

Puck

We must find them!

MINOS WENT TO AROMA'S

They are not at Aroma's!

TONY WENT TO COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG...

They are not in CW!

RUSTY LOOKED AT THE DELLYS.

They aren't at Paul's, College or the Greenleaf!

BANDIT CHECKED OUT THE LIBRARY.

They aren't at the library!

PUCK HAD AN IDEA!

I know! College Apts!

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THEY CLIMBED TO THE SECOND FLOOR OF COLLEGE APTS.

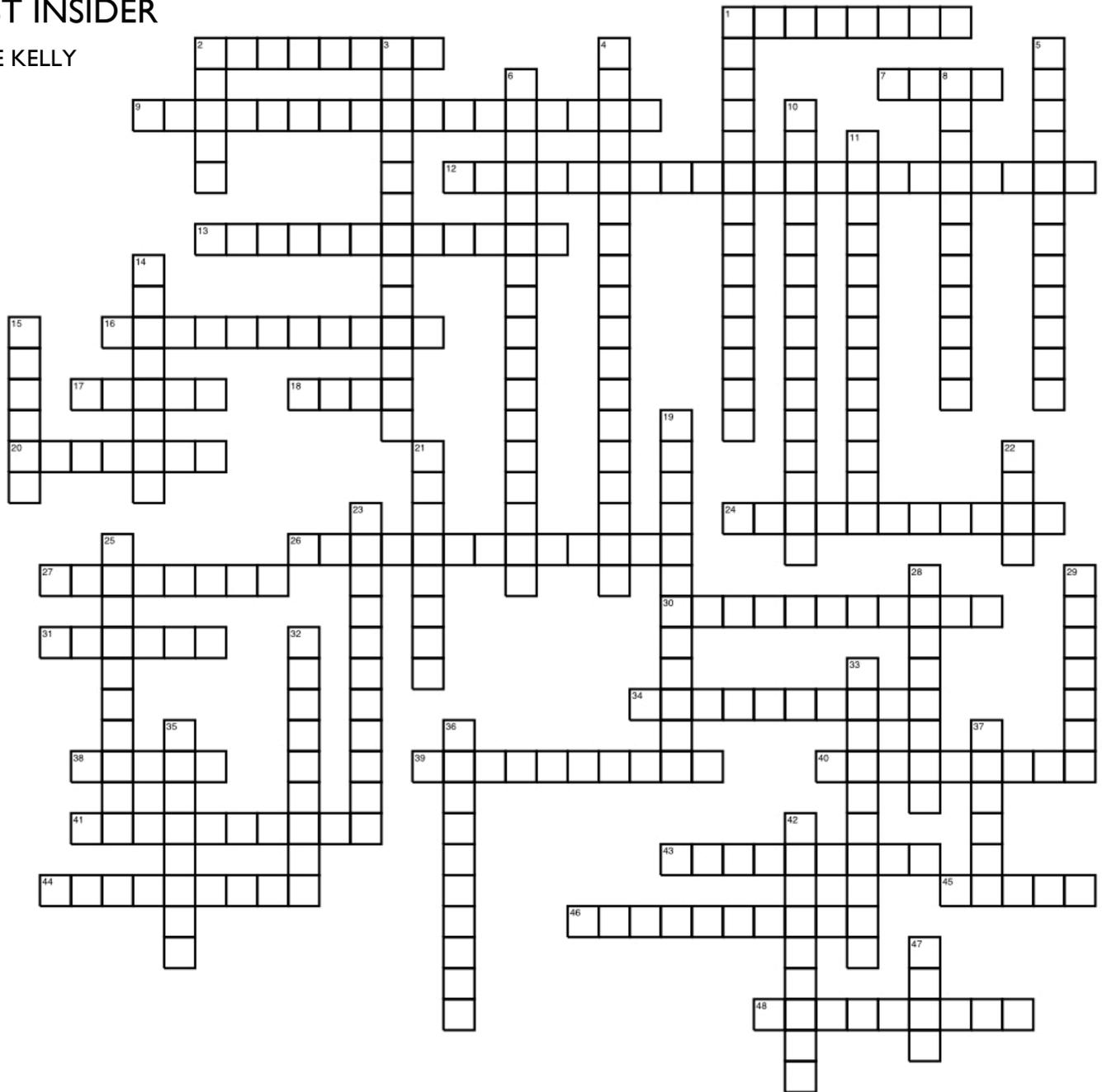
WHAT THEY SAW SHOCKED THEM!

Eek!

TO BE CONTINUED!

AMST INSIDER

NEEVE KELLY



Across

- 1 AMST drink of choice
- 2 creepiest CA feature
- 7 scene of viral video with swarms of students
- 9 (Christian) festival of lights
- 12 where to adopt a study buddy
- 13 current DGS
- 16 Williamsburg _____ Project
- 17 she delayed the semester
- 18 most popular classroom
- 20 new colonialism
- 24 GSA president/Coldplay singer
- 26 ASA president
- 27 another pizza place
- 30 third floor resident
- 31 location/condition of swamp fire
- 34 clock starter
- 38 English homebase
- 39 campus caffeine
- 40 program MVP
- 41 dirtiest deli
- 43 some students say it's too loud and bright
- 44 aggressive locals
- 45 grad student council
- 46 2012 ASA location
- 48 unofficial baker

Down

- 1 (more) annoying newsletter
- 2 history home
- 3 ho house alternative
- 4 cinematic celebration
- 5 new professor
- 6 former director
- 8 Fall 2011 guest
- 10 former DGS
- 11 gender specific and grammatically incorrect
- 14 refrigerator magnet message
- 15 \$1 on Wednesdays
- 19 current director
- 21 LGBT grad group
- 22 international summer camp
- 23 first class
- 25 2011 host with the most
- 28 urban retreat
- 29 tribe mascot
- 32 monthly mini-conferences
- 33 "L" in ASLO
- 35 Graduate _____ Symposium
- 36 anthropology quarters
- 37 mediocre but convenient
- 42 ASGSO president
- 47 midnight snack shack