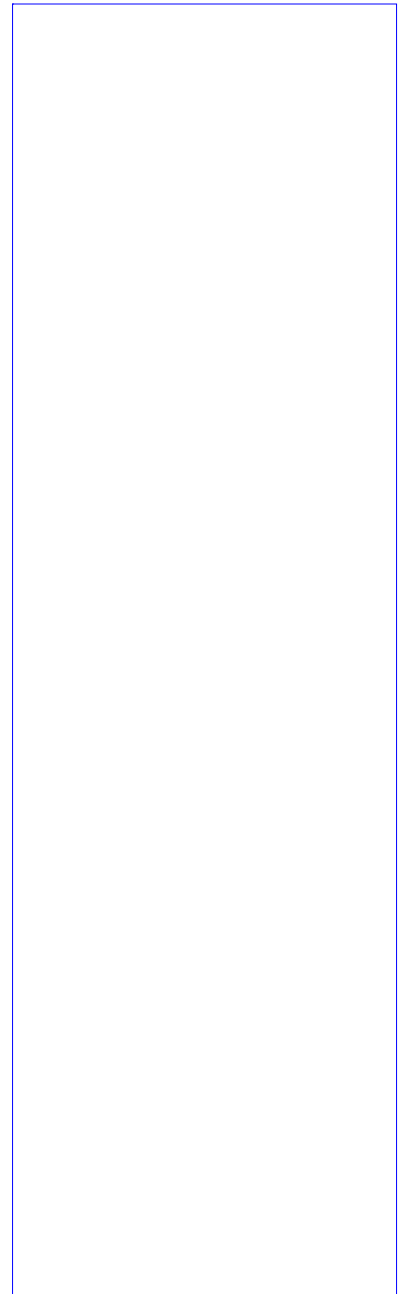


Our Department
A Word from Gregory M. Pfitzer, Chair

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**American Studies
Majors/Minors
Abroad**

tan. Most of these ideas have stemmed from a Shangri-La picture portrayed in movies, books and even historical accounts. Throughout the trip we have been learning the truth; everything is nuanced. All countries have kinks in their systems that need constant attention and work. Sometimes, in our criticism of America, we get caught up with looking towards other cultures as a "Shangri-La," a pure place in which we can find peace. Tibet and Bhutan have been subjects of this misconception. They too have their nuances, their points of conflict, bedbugs, terrible cuisine, strange smells. They aren't peaceful kingdoms in the clouds untouched by materialism. Neither is America paved with gold-something I have to keep telling people here. I've had countless conversations with both Tibetans and Bhutanese about America. Most look forward to a time when they can come

to America, some think they can only succeed with an American visa, and some use adjectives like "advanced" to describe our country.

Is it luck or fate that we've been able to be in Dharamsala at such a crucial time for the Tibetan commu-

nity, and in Bhutan during their first democratic elections? We are Americans abroad, witness to two crucial moments in history.

Since 1959, the Dalai Lama and Tibetan Refugees have been living in exile around the world, their main government located in Dharamsala, India. In 1989, the world stood by and watched while Tibetan protests were stifled violently by the Chinese

religion and govern themselves, while China will have international and military control of the area. In addition, China will cease the Han resettlement policy in Lhasa. But the activists of the community don't agree with this strategy. They want complete independence, and don't believe that Tibetans will stop fighting if and after the Middle Way is put into action. Their argument is that the Chinese government will not be invited to the table of discussions; there needs to be pressure. To the community, it is a disgrace that the world has recognized China as an international power by letting them host the Olympics while continuing to persecute Tibetans.

Bhutan is entering an interesting and experimental stage of Constitutional Monarchy. After 200 years of political upheaval, and a century of compassionate monarchy, the 4th king, Jigme Senge Wangchuk, has requested that the country become democratic. But the people are conflicted. Why move into democ-

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**American Studies
Faculty Award 2008**

Our Seniors: The Class of 2008

Dario Abreu, Bronx, NY, Major

Dario double majors in Economics and has accepted a job with Morgan Stanley in New York City in their Investment Banking division. At Skidmore, Dario has been active in Raices (2004), intramural softball (05-07) and was the Economic Students Representative for 06-07. He enjoys playing baseball, listening to music, and an occasional long walk on the beach. Dario says he "had a huge passion for American History in high school and knew I wanted to learn more about the different aspects of American history. During my second semester here I enrolled in Prof. Zangrando's American Identities Post 1870s course. After that class I knew I wanted to take more American studies. It was not until Prof. Woodfork's Diversity in the United States class when I knew I wanted to become a major. The connection between American Studies and Economics is so strong because you learn how people of all races, identities, and background are affected by economic policies. Plus how could I say no to Prof. Lynn and Prof. Zangrando?" Dario advises junior and sophomore majors and minors to "Take every class you can in the American Studies Department, even if you have fulfilled your requirements. It is one of the departments at Skidmore where you really do leave the class wanting to know more."

Joshua Benjamin, New York, NY,
Major

Josh loves American history and because of this he was drawn to the American Studies major. He wanted to study the subject more – beyond the textbook. Josh says "it runs in the family. Both my parents and my uncle were American Stud-

ies majors." Josh has spent his free time watching and participating in sports ("Go Yankees!"), playing guitar, and writing about sports. Josh was a member of the Skidmore Democrats all four years at Skidmore and for three was a DJ at WSPN. He would like to go to journalism school and would love to continue his radio show or become a broadcaster. Over the summer he plans to look for a job and write for his friend's website (www.dividendsthatyield.com). To the Junior and Sophomore American Studies majors, he advises, "Don't let Senior Seminar stress you out! At times it'll feel like torture, but I promise it's easier than it seems."

Margaret Farrell, Westport, CT –
Major

It was quite by accident Margaret became an American Studies major when she incorrectly filled out her registration8

AM Faculty



Following Commencement, Professor Casey will begin a year's leave;

Our Student Assistants

Majors/Minors Abroad

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racy when the past century has been blessed with good leadership, where Gross National Happiness is more important than Gross National Product? Some believe this will bring more freedom to speak, others are adamantly against the change, most are skeptical, calling it an "experiment."

Being confronted with the realities of these different nations and different cultures, induces a curiosity of our own culture. This year seems to be a year of questioning; we must ask ourselves again what we want from our government, and how we want to present ourselves to the rest of the globe. This year is perfect for reform; for far too long we have been caught up in our dreams, now it is time to make them realities. Bhutan is making a dream of democracy come true, and the Tibetans are trying to make the dream of freedom a reality. It is an inspiration to take action at home. It is an honor to be a witness.

Sarah Magida '09, London

I took two American Studies classes at King's this semester. One on Women's Autobiography, and one on Mass Media. I thought that the Mass Media class was particularly interesting because we talked a lot about the differences in the British system

and the American system (mostly in regards to newspapers, radio, and television). Outside of London and American Studies related events I spent a day in Bilbao over spring break, and there saw an exhibit at the Guggenheim called "In Transit: 300 Years of Art in the USA." And I spent about 5 hours walking through the exhibit with the audio guide following the

history of America through its art and artists. Cheers!

Amy Proulx '09, Florence

Since I have traveled around parts of Europe before – this being my first visit to Italy – I decided before I left that I would try and get as much out of Italy as I possibly could.

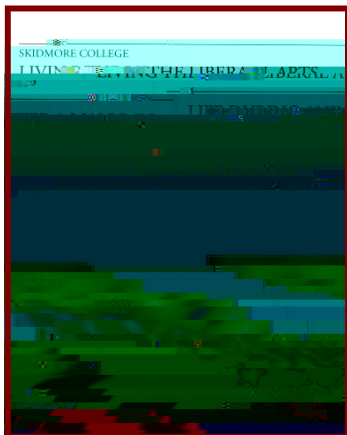
With such childish excitement I tried so patiently to wait for the plane to land. I usually don't prefer window seats, but I am now grateful that I was able to just gaze out into the sweet clouds of ether. With a new day starting I had no idea

what was in store for me. It was about 7 o'clock in the morning and the sun was just rising, creating a breathtaking view of rosy pinks and oranges clashing with ruby reds. As I continued my journey closer to Florence the clouds began to thin and slowly disappear, leaving a magnificent panorama of the mountain tops and eventually a view of small red-like rectangular shapes that slowly transformed before my eyes into familiar villa tops: Welcome to Italy.

The first couple of nights I stayed in a hotel for an orientation program. I was not only utterly exhausted from the flight over, but also, I quickly found myself beginning to comprehend the fact that I truly was in a foreign country.

There is so much to see I can't even

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Left to right: **Joanna Colangelo '02**, (MA candidate, American Studies, Bowling Green University); **Lauren Doherty '04** (Historian & Research Associate, Municipal Historian, Curtin Archaeological Consulting, Inc., Town of Day); **Kevin Grinwis '96** (Project Manager, Omni Housing Development Corp.); **Andrew Scopp '06** (3rd Grade Assistant Teacher, 6th Grade Soccer Coach, The Rippowam Cisqua School); **Krista Senator '99** (Reading Teacher, Schuylerville Elementary School); and, **Michael Quincy '86** (Automotive Content Specialist, Consumer Reports)

On September 27, 2007, the American Studies major was the focus of a panel on "Living the Liberal Arts: Life During and After Majoring in American Studies." "Living the Liberal Arts" is an ongoing effort by the Office of Career Services (originally funded by the Mellon Foundation) to enlighten students and help them with the process of making a decision about which major they might choose.

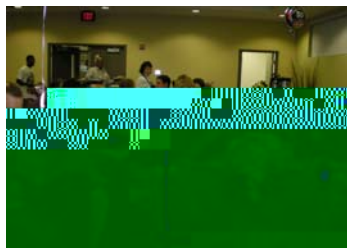
After opening comments by Career Services Assistant Director Penny Loretto, the audience was treated to an alumni perspective of the American Studies degree. Each panelist

answered a series of questions regarding how their major related to the path they've followed, how they got their job, what graduate education was required, what might be some of the next career steps for someone in their job, what talents, personality traits and specific skills help people in this field, what they like and dislike about their job, the biggest misconception about their job, and what they know now that they wish they had known when they were at Skidmore. After the panel presentation, an opportunity was offered for questions and comments from the students in attendance.

The brochure given to the audience included panelists' answers to selected questions, a listing of American Studies alumni who are career advisors, majors or careers which relate

to American Studies graduates, professional associations, grants, awards and scholarships, American Studies programs on the web, a list of what employers want from college graduates, a chart of some available internships, online employment listings, networking and prospective resources for American Studies majors.

We were happy to see some of our alumni and pleased to hear their perspectives on their American Studies degrees and how these degrees relate to their jobs and their lives.





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icans form health ideals and view their bodies? What part do these commercials play in shaping social roles, and how do those messages contribute to beliefs about health? What is the status quo for health in America, and what is the contribution of television food advertisements to that status quo? This thesis is divided into two parts: Part I focuses on the

tunity of getting to know all the talented faculty and students in the Dance department, as well as the American Studies department. While summer plans are still up in the air, Katie will be teaching second grade at Friend's Select School in

Abigail's major is English. She is a member of the Periclean Honor Society as well as the Honor's Forum. Abigail has tutored in the Writing Center and worked as Assistant in the Office of the Dean of Studies. She is applying to Teach for America to work in either the New York City or Boston area. After completing two years with TFA, she plans to return to graduate school. Abigail says "Enjoy your time at Skidmore because once you are a senior you will realize rather rapidly how intimidating the real world can be." She points out that you should start early putting together your applications for jobs, graduate school, internships and whatever you plan on doing after you graduate. "Senior year is busy enough without having to stress about deadlines."

Carrie von Glahn, Ringwood, NJ,
Major

Carrie double majors in English (and minors in History), but came to American Studies in her freshman year when she took AM 201 with Professor Lynn. After that she decided that American Studies was

Our Faculty

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tiful places, and the views are truly
breathtaking especially from the top of

the Duomo and Piazzale Michelangelo,
both offering you an unforgettable pano-
ramic view of Florence and the Arno
valley.



Fall, 2008, Course Offering Preview

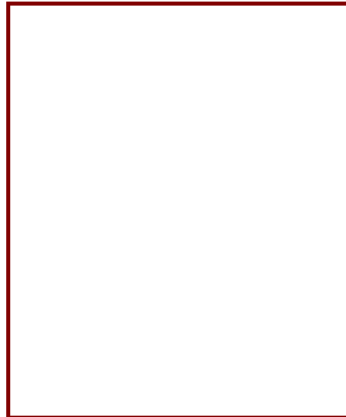
lar culture and analysis of popular culture as a defining characteristic of Americans. Specific focus will be upon the evolution of modern electronic forms of communication in the twentieth century, and the interrelationships between the popular and elite and folk culture will be explored. Illustrative topics include: popular genre literature, mass movements, celebrities and heroes, and film, radio, and television.

AM 260J: Diversity in the U.S., WF, 12:20-1:40, Grady-Willis

An examination of the ways in which people in the United States try to reconcile the realities of cultural difference with preconceived notions of a unified America and American identity. Students will learn about the United States as a complex, heterogeneous society that has been profoundly shaped by both the connections and conflict implicit in its multicultural heritage. Students will also address interrelationships and tensions that characterize a culturally diverse democracy by examining how accepted cultural traditions intersect with contested themes such as race the family, adoption, gender, sexuality, and education.

AM 360B: The 1950s, WF, 10:10-11:30, Lynn

An examination of the ways in which people in the United States try to reconcile the realities of cultural difference with preconceived notions of a unified America and American identity. Students will learn about the



viola (purple), our soccer team "Fiorentina" is currently ranked 4th. I love soccer, but a soccer game in Italy is more than watching the game and your favorite player; it's entertaining in its own way to simply watch the crowd and people around you. Since soccer games have become more and more violent over the years it is forbidden in the stadium and in many supermarkets in the city to sell alcohol on game days. It's rather humorous to watch American students walking around the stadium with

two – little do they know – non-alcoholic beers in each hand. Especially as an American Studies major, from an American perspective, it's fascinating to not only learn, but also to experience life in Italy.

Besides going to soccer games, visiting the many museums and Renaissance art exhibitions that Florence has to offer, on the weekends I am most likely traveling



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