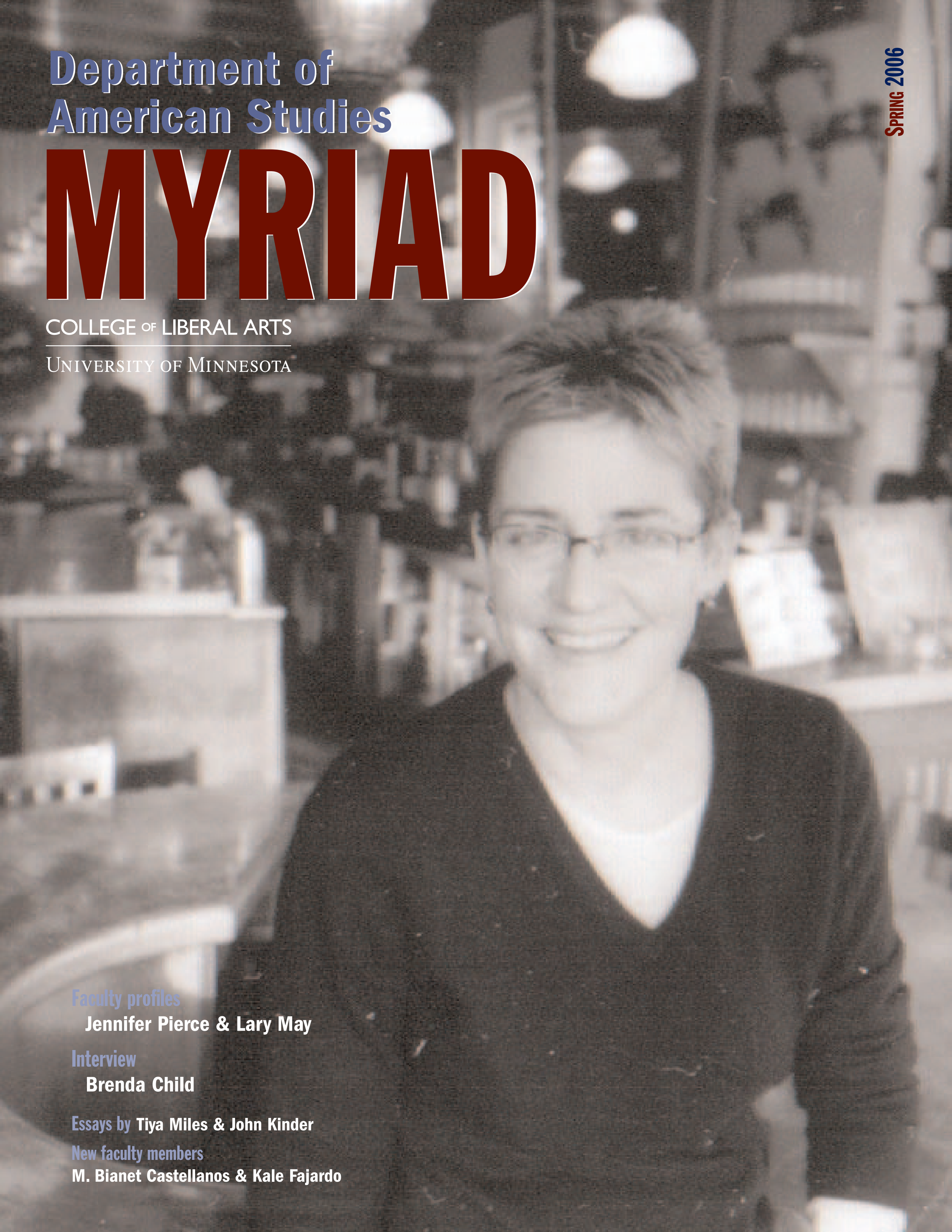

Department of American Studies

MYRIAD

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

SPRING 2006

Faculty profiles
Jennifer Pierce & Lary May

Interview
Brenda Child

Essays by **Tiya Miles & John Kinder**

New faculty members
M. Bianet Castellanos & Kale Fajardo

Dear American Studies Friends & Alumni,

I am pleased to introduce our second issue of *Myriad,* the magazine of our Department of American Studies. I appreciated hearing from many you last spring after our inaugural issue, and your enthusiasm inspired us to create another one.

The faculty members you will meet in these pages represent what is so exciting about the field of American studies in the 21st century. Professor Lary May, a pathbreaking historian, has been central to our department's development for nearly three decades. He has taught thousands of liberal arts students to understand how popular culture reflects and shapes politics. His books have covered the full sweep of the 20th century, right up to his new project looking at Hollywood—and the "culture wars"—in a global context.

Another story will introduce you to Professor Jennifer Pierce. As a sociologist and ethnographer, she reflects the important strand of American studies focusing on the social sciences. Pierce's exciting work on gender, labor, and race, both in the United States and globally, engages scholars and students in a rich and complex understanding of the world of work.

Our interview features Professor Brenda Child, a leading historian of American Indians. A true public intellectual, Child involves both undergraduate and graduate students in her work to study and preserve Ojibwe language and history in Minnesota and to strengthen our state's appreciation of its full cultural heritage.

Elsewhere in these pages, we introduce our new colleagues, professors Kale Fajardo and M. Bianet Castellanos. Both are anthropologists, and both are critical to an American studies that is less concerned with borders and more committed to the processes that create a global world.

As always, we want you to know about the fine work of our students and alumni. Writing on a timely topic, Ph.D. student John Kinder shares insights from his dissertation on wounded soldiers about how we think about war and masculinity. Our Ph.D. graduate Tiya Miles, now a professor of American studies at the University of Michigan, writes about her innovative book (based on her dissertation) telling the story of an Afro-Cherokee family in Oklahoma family over several generations—a volume recently named the best first book written by an American historian.

Finally, we express our heartfelt appreciation to our alumni and friends who have contributed generously to fellowships and scholarships for undergraduate and graduate students. Your gifts are crucial. We hope you will continue to partner with us as we educate outstanding scholars and citizens for the 21st century.

Sincerely,
Riv-Ellen Prell
Professor of American studies and department chair
prell001@umn.edu

COVER: Jennifer Pierce in early 2006 at Minneapolis's Cafe Barbette, a favorite hangout. Story on page 5. Photo by Richard G. Anderson.

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MYRIAD (ˋmir- e -əd) [Gk *myriad-*, *myrias*, fr. *myrioi* countless, ten thousand] 1: innumerable 2: having innumerable aspects or elements—the *myriad* activity of the new land—Meridel Le Sueur
–*Webster's Tenth New Collegiate Dictionary*

MYRIAD is a fitting title for this magazine. American studies is one of the most vibrant and inclusive of disciplines. Minnesota's American studies program—a national leader—is famous for drawing together open-minded and innovative scholars from a multiplicity of disciplines and for encompassing myriad methods, histories, and cultures.

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Studying a century of American moviemaking, Lary May probes the links between pop culture and national politics.

By Kate Tyler

PICTURING America

American studies professor Lary May grew up in the 1950s on the fringes of Hollywood in a world that was about everything the Cold War era was not: smoky nightclubs, show-biz swank, multiracial friendships, and lefty politics, just for starters.

It was the glamorous world of his mother, a Katharine Hepburn look-alike with movie-star connections and ambitions to match. Yet even while living within the most bohemian circles of Los Angeles and New York, the young May learned that this freewheeling parallel universe had limits in the conformist sociopolitical climate of the time. The long hand of McCarthyism reached out to harass family friends summarily branded as "communists" for criticizing prevailing political values. Worse, May's own family was forced to break up in social ignominy after his mother, who was both white and unmarried, gave birth to May's sister, whose father was black (a story that would later be told by May's sister, June Cross, in her 1996 Emmy-award-winning PBS documentary "Secret Daughter").

May today is an acclaimed historian who has devoted 30 years to studying the tensions and contradictions between popular culture—especially moviemaking—and national politics. He credits his unusual childhood experiences, as well as a political awakening in the 1960s, with planting the seeds for this work, which ventured into cultural history long before it was fashionable.

Initially, though, "My impulse was to run as far as possible from anything having to do with American politics and culture," May laughs. "My childhood had been so complicated that I wanted to separate myself from anything related to it." In college, he went for a European history major, even setting his sights on "becoming a European-style intellectual." But then came the countercultural foment of the late 1960s.

"I was in graduate school at UCLA, and I became intrigued by how the politics of the sixties were intersecting with the popular arts and with consumer culture," says May. "I was seeing it and living it—but reading about none of it in my political history or intellectual history textbooks. Where had all this come from? How did we get from the repressed 1950s of my childhood to the cultural flowering of the 1960s? It just amazed me that historians didn't know."

As May began to probe 20th-century social history for clues, he found a long trail of unanswered questions about the shaping of American society. One was

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May, from page 3

highly intriguing in the context of the freewheeling 1960s. “I found that social historians had a ton of data documenting that a revolution in morals had begun in the first two decades of the 20th century, including a rise in premarital sexuality,” says May. “Again, no one knew why.”

When May took a class with an early exponent of the brand-new field of American cultural history, “It was a revelation. The idea that popular culture was worth studying—that it could tell us something useful about American social and political life—doesn’t seem outrageous now, but it was a novel and contested idea among historians then. Eventually, it led me to film. All the data about changing morals in the early 20th century—well, those same decades also saw the rise of the film industry. What were the odds there was no link?”

The role of moviemaking

That’s how May, who joined the U’s faculty in 1978, began his groundbreaking studies, viewing U.S. cultural history through the lens of the Hollywood “dream factory.” From the silent era to the age of the global blockbuster, May’s work shows how America’s values and national identity have emerged from the complex interplay of pop culture and serious politics.

“Sometimes I have had to punch myself and say, ‘This is crazy, Lary,’” says May of his sweeping and innovative three-volume project. Besides archival research into the inner workings of Hollywood, May painstakingly analyzes hundreds of individual films selected according to a rigorous sampling method he himself developed.

May’s first book showed how the new Hollywood industry gave rise to mass culture and a new consumerist ethos. Created by immigrants and steered by social reformers, the new industry also advanced new visions of the American city, the family, and gender relations (the shift in morals was one result).

All of May’s books are widely cited and taught, but perhaps none moreso than the second volume of his trilogy. This now-classic book traces the seismic shifts in American identity that occurred from the depression-era 1930s into the Cold War 1950s. Exploring issues of race, nationalism, and public life, it turns on its head the conventional view of 1930s Hollywood culture as backward-looking or escapist, or as blandly affirming of New Deal capitalism. Even in the decade’s many musicals, comedies, and gangster films, May argues, the Hollywood industry of the 1930s was a powerful force for a new vision of America based on a progressive populism.

“It was about an alternative vision of the nation that was multicultural and egalitarian,” says May, whose book takes in everything from film plots to Hollywood labor unions to the design of movie theaters to the importance of Will Rogers, the enormously popular screen and radio star of Cherokee heritage who entwined this new vision into his folksy comedy in sophisticated ways.

The Hollywood vision of the 1930s “was not an anti-capitalist vision and it wasn’t Marxist,” May emphasizes. “It was a new Americanism. Property, markets, profits—fine. But at the same time, there was a belief that there should be some redistribution of wealth to ensure balance. It was about the commonwealth—that we are all equal citizens bound together in ties of reciprocity.”

This vision wasn’t really new, stresses May. “It was rooted in America’s long tradition of progressive republicanism—small ‘r’—which is about civic virtue, the active citizen, the common good.”

Many insist that America is rooted in liberal capitalism, bourgeois culture, and classlessness, May acknowledges. But along with American studies professor David Noble and several other prominent cultural historians, May staunchly maintains that “the long-term American tradition is a republican one.”

In the thirties, he says, “this vision is being reworked for a new pluralistic America. It’s about making room for people of many backgrounds, classes, and races—all of the new people in the cultures of the city.” His book lays out how this vision seeped into American social and political life, helping to create support for organized labor, the progressive policies of the New Deal, cultural tolerance, and frank debate of political ideas.

Competing visions

If the 1930s was the decade of the polyglot, egalitarian, liberal city, the 1950s was the era of homogeneous, consumerist, conservative suburbs.

May traces how the Second World War suppressed all progressive social ideals—and indeed, all critiques of American society—under a fierce patriotism, and how Hollywood followed suit. Patriotism (linked to capitalism and consumerism) remained supreme in the Cold War era that followed, and amid anticommunist fervor, the populism of the 1930s was recast as anti-American.

“Anticommunism becomes this kind of reshaping of American politics and

May, to page 12

LARY MAY, Morse-Alumni Distinguished Teaching Professor of American studies

FOCUS: 20th-century American history, popular culture, politics

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS: *The Big Tomorrow: Hollywood and the Politics of the American Way* (2000) ▮ *Recasting America: Culture and the Politics in the Age of Cold War* (ed., 1989) ▮ *Screening Out the Past: The Birth of Mass Culture and the Motion Picture Industry, 1900–1929* (1980).

FAMILY: Spouse, Elaine Tyler May, professor of American studies and history; three children–Michael, a public radio reporter in Austin, Texas; Daniel, a community organizer in Los Angeles; and Sarah, of Minneapolis, who is completing a master’s degree in education, theater, and dance. Also two cats, Bootsie Collins and Tina Turner.

HOME: A 1920s prairie/tudor home in Minneapolis’s Prospect Park neighborhood.

RECENT READS: *Manhood and American Political Culture in the Cold War* by K.A. Cuordileone (“it has very interesting and useful things to say about how anxieties about gender lay at the core of Cold War thinking”); *Anna Karenina* by Leo Tolstoy (“it knocked me out, I just loved it—I think I related to it because of my mother’s tumultuous love affairs ... no writer ever understood the irrationalities of love better than Tolstoy”).

SCREEN RAVES: *Brokeback Mountain* (“it provokes us to rethink conventional myths of American life”); “The Sopranos” (“I just think the show has so much to say about American life, about families, about how we all try to hold it together ... although I’m not as cynical about American life as they are in the show”); *The Asphalt Jungle* (“probably my favorite film of all time—a 1950 John Huston heist film that also contains subversive critiques about the American dream and McCarthyism ... it captures so much of the cultural-political interplay that interests me”).

CULTURAL OBSERVATIONS: “I’m sometimes asked if there’s anyone today who at all evokes Will Rogers, the 1930s populist ‘everyman’ who had such a great impact. Maybe Garrison Keillor, in a softer and more watered-down way. Jon Stewart of “The Daily Show” perhaps comes the closest.”

Jennifer Pierce ventures directly into the workplace to explore intriguing puzzles about inequality.

By Kate Tyler

ALL IN A DAY'S WORK

For a time in high school, Jennifer Pierce toyed with the notion of becoming a mathematician.

"I liked puzzles," says Pierce, an associate professor of American studies. She also loved the elegant formalism of trigonometry and calculus. "Math was unlike life, which I could see was messy and complicated," she explains.

In her hometown of Pueblo, CO, people in the 1960s and 1970s were reeling from waves of layoffs at the steel mill that anchored the town. Like many rust-belt cities nationwide, Pueblo was hit hard by downsizing in the steel and auto industries. Pierce grew up seeing many family friends and neighbors lose their jobs and struggle to come back financially. Laid off slightly ahead of the droves, her own father was able to land a decent job and go back to school—he eventually became a physician. But most of the people Pierce knew were not as lucky. By the time she was in junior high, "the town was filled with laid-off workers who couldn't find jobs—there just weren't anymore."

Against all that real-life complexity, "just plugging in the numbers to solve math problems started to look way too easy," Pierce says. That observation was reinforced when she started college, at the University of Denver. As a scholarship student at this private Rocky Mountain college—filled with wealthy students who'd rather ski than hit the books—"I was confronted with the issue of class for the first time," Pierce says. "In my town, everyone was working class. I had never thought about what that might mean in the larger context of society." The lectures on class stratification in her first sociology class changed all that. They gave Pierce what she calls "a whole new lens for understanding the world"—as well as a new outlet for her puzzle-solving inclinations.

Since then, Pierce has focused her attention not on calculating trig's tricky triangles, but on working through some of society's most intriguing and complicated social dynamics. Pierce, who joined the faculty in 1993, is a social ethnographer who studies the daily realities of the global workplace. Through

Pierce, **to page 6**

Pierce, from page 5

fieldwork and interviews, she sleuths out the messy lived experiences—especially around gender, race, and class issues—that get lost in statistical abstracts or pro-and-con pieces on the op-ed page.

Explaining sex segregation

Many of Pierce's research projects have exposed the fault lines of race and gender that run through the workaday legal world. Her much-cited first book, *Gender Trials,* is a micro-level analysis of the sex-segregated dynamics of two corporate law firms.

Class hierarchy is deeply entrenched in corporate law, says Pierce, who conceived of her study after working her way through college as a paralegal at a 350-attorney firm in the Bay Area. Pierce showed how that hierarchy hinges on a pair of gender-polarized archetypes: "Rambo litigators" (mostly men) and "mothering paralegals" (mostly women).

Rambos rule, says Pierce, while the paralegals are expected "not just to work long hours doing incredibly demanding work, but also to be cheerful and nurturing and to stroke the egos of the litigators" (that is, to do "emotional labor," as sociologist Arlie Hochschild has put it).

"All the paralegals generally are treated very badly by attorneys, but the few male paralegals aren't treated nearly as badly as the women," says Pierce. The gender stereotypes keep the women stuck: the more they conform to the "mothering" ideal, the more exploited they are; but failure to conform can bring criticism and negative job reviews.

Documenting this no-win bind, Pierce's study helps explain why corporate law has remained strongly sex-segregated even as women earn law degrees in almost equal proportion to men. In such a gender-stratified realm, women attorneys face a distinctly uneven playing field, Pierce stresses. Those who ape the male-identified "Rambo litigator" ideal are seen as unacceptably brash; those who don't are scorned as weak.

Pierce homes in on the stories people tell to make sense of race and inequality.

Passion for storytelling

Pierce's book was widely hailed for its cutting-edge empirical and theoretical insights. Much to Pierce's delight, reviewers also praised its engaging prose.

"It's important to me that I tell the stories well," Pierce says. Influenced by her mother, a voracious reader (and talented artist), Pierce read her way through the Pueblo town library as a child, and her earliest ambition—even before her infatuation with math—was to be a writer. "For a while, most of the books I checked out of the library had to do with women writers—Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar,* the memoirs of Lillian Hellman," recalls Pierce. "I was also writing short stories. I think I turned to math when I realized writing novels wasn't a real job."

As a storytelling sociologist, Pierce sees her work as "a way of filling in the complete picture of social relations, and especially presenting a more nuanced picture of what work and the workplace look like. So much history is told by people in positions of power—heads of state, political parties, corporations. But there are many other points of view."

Interdisciplinary scholarship

Storytelling is itself a central theme of Pierce's forthcoming book on affirmative action in post-civil rights America.

Her new project focuses on a decade in the life of the legal department of a large California corporation, one with a federally mandated affirmative action program. Her innovative approach combines ethnography with something akin to literary analysis. Using fieldwork and interviews conducted 10 years apart—in 1989 and 1999—she presents a complex picture of workplace racial dynamics, and then homes in on the stories people tell to make sense of race and inequality.

"This study demonstrates why I was a good fit for American studies," smiles Pierce, a highly interdisciplinary scholar who came over from the sociology department in 1998. In classes she teaches on such subjects as the global economy, ethnography, and affirmative action, she routinely assigns works by novelists, historians, and cultural theorists alongside sociological texts.

"I want our students—and we have terrifically smart students in American studies, by the way—to conceive of the world broadly, not narrowly," explains Pierce. "I want them to examine many viewpoints, ask hard questions. With affirmative action, for example, we get such simplistic views from the media—

JENNIFER L. PIERCE, **associate professor of American studies (also an affiliated faculty member in women's studies, sociology and law); past director of the Center for Advanced Feminist Studies**

FOCUS: Gender, race relations, contemporary workplace and labor studies, social theory.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS: *Gender Trials: Emotional Lives in Contemporary Law Firms* (1995) ▮ *Feminist Waves, Feminist Generations: Life Stories from the Academy, 1964–2000* (ed. with American studies Ph.D. graduates Hokulani Aikau & Karla Erickson, forthcoming 2007) ▮ *Qualitative Sociology: Special Issue on Personal Narratives* (ed., 2003).

NEXT PROJECT: A study of gender and service work in the global economy ("I'm very interested in what's happening as service jobs become dominant in the U.S. and elsewhere. It's mostly low-end jobs and mostly women everywhere, but there are differences between the U.S. and other countries. In Japan, they have a different understanding of service, for example. And in Germany or France, you're ignored—no one cares if you like the waiter; there's not that extra emotional labor that's usually expected of service workers in the United States."

FAMILY: Partner, Gabriella Tsurutani, an information architect for the Minnesota Department of Transportation. Also, a dog, Anna, a Welsh Corgi, and two cats, a calico named BLT ("for 'bossy little thing'") and a black cat named Winston ("after the British prime minister").

HOME: A two-story home on a steep hill in Minneapolis' Bryn Mawr neighborhood near Cedar Lake.

RECENT READS: *Shadow in the Wind,* by Carlos Ruiz Zafón ("a wonderful and intriguing novel, set in 1950s Spain, about a bibliophile who becomes involved in a murder mystery"); *Snow,* by Orhan Pamuk ("a haunting novel about a young Turkish poet who is caught up in the tensions and contradictions between Western ideals and radical Islamic factions in modern Turkey").

MOVIE RAVES: *Syrianna,* "an absorbing movie about politics, the Mideast, oil, big business, but it's a puzzle to figure out what's going on, which is probably why I like it"; *Brokeback Mountain,* "a beautiful and moving film."

OTHER PURSUITS: Walking around Cedar Lake, hiking, downhill skiing, knitting ("my friends now have way too many colorful scarves and shawls"), U of Minnesota Gopher women's basketball ("I have season tickets ... they have these two really amazing sophomores, tall as trees").

either you're for 'hard work' or you're for 'special privileges.' Civil rights and racism are portrayed as yesterday's story; today's story is about 'individual success.' The realities are so much more complicated, and insights from different disciplines are helpful in seeing that."

The messiness of affirmative action

In her study, Pierce discovered right off the bat that the corporation's legal department had lost almost all of its employees of color (and well over half the women attorneys) over the course of the decade. (In contrast, nearly two-thirds of the white male lawyers remained). But why?

From white attorneys still in the company, Pierce heard that one of the departed African American attorneys, Randall Kingsley, had been lured away by a great job in a prestigious corporate firm—that he made a high salary, drove a pricey sports car. Yet when she tracked down Kingsley—who, as it turned out, earned a modest salary in a two-person practice and drove a VW Rabbit—she heard he'd left the company in weary frustration after enduring a long history of slights and disparate treatment.

Pierce says that the firm "was by no means overtly racist, and it did have an affirmative active program." Yet Kingsley and the other attorneys of color all told of being badly mentored compared with their white counterparts, of getting crummy case assignments and the least competent secretary, of being routinely stood up for lunches with colleagues.

"I found that white attorneys tended to see these things in isolation," Pierce says. "I'd hear, 'I guess I did forget a lunch with the guy once, but what's one lunch date'? Randall was just 'oversensitive,' they suggested. But for Randall and the other attorneys of color, it wasn't one lunch date. It was the sum total of lots of missed lunch dates, in conjunction with a lot of other stuff as well."

"Many people don't see their whiteness or the privilege that accompanies it."

One interesting finding is that whites in the company held misconceptions about the qualifications of their attorneys of color. Many, for example, told Pierce that Kingsley had attended an inferior law school, and they attributed his having landed a job at the firm to affirmative action. But in fact, Kingsley had earned his degree from one of the country's most prestigious institutions.

Put all this together, says Pierce, and "You get a telling picture of racial relations in the workplace. The white attorneys had these individual success stories—'I worked hard, I went to a prestigious school, I made the law review, I landed this good job.' The narrative is very much the story of liberal individualism. It's in keeping with the conservative view that hard work is everything and that gender or race or class has nothing to do with success."

The white attorneys tried valiantly to make sense of Randall's departure within this framework, says Pierce. Yet the "Randall left for a better job" story not only was untrue, but also conflicted with the prevailing tale about Randall's "inferior credentials"—a myth, says Pierce, "that would seem to reflect racial stereotypes."

Pierce's working title for her project, *Racing for Innocence*, is based on Kingsley's observation that the white attorneys seemed to be "working like crazy to be the most hip, non-racist white guys." As Pierce sees it, "Many white professionals simply don't recognize the connections, opportunities, and class dimensions that figure into their success. They don't see their whiteness, or the privilege that goes with it. It's a story of hard work—they have no other framework. This precludes them from seeing—or taking responsibility for—patterns and practices that systematically exclude people."

Surprising ambivalence

Pierce's study is most boundary-breaking in its second phase: unearthing the sources of the stories people tell about race. "People's stories always have personal and idiosyncratic elements," Pierce notes, "but they also draw from broader narratives in the culture."

The narrative of individual success has figured prominently in the backlash against affirmative action., she observes. In contrast, "during the heyday of the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s there were strong narratives about eliminating structural barriers in society."

Her work will illuminate the cultural and historical contexts for these viewpoints through a content analysis of scores of newspaper op-ed pieces, magazine commentaries, and popular films.

One of the most intriguing insights from her ethnographic research is that white professionals do acknowledge the persistence of racial discrimination in America, but are hard-put to explain it within their bootstrap framework.

Says Pierce: "Affirmative action is just a messier issue for people than we're led to believe by Gallup polls, pundits, and talk radio hosts." Many of the white male professionals she interviewed "would talk about meritocracy, color blindness, about the importance of hiring the best person for the job."

But, says Pierce, "I also heard things like, 'I do think there's been discrimination in the past and that it sometimes happens now,' and 'it troubles me that we don't have more black attorneys—I don't believe in quotas, but I think we should hire more."

For Pierce, an intellectual sleuth with an underlying bent for social justice, this finding has powerful implications. "I ask my students to consider what might happen if people developed smart counternarratives that capitalized on the real ambivalence people feel about affirmative action. That could blow the whole debate about affirmative action wide open.

"That's what I hope all my work does—prompt us to think much more deeply about issues of social inequality."

RECLAIMING HISTORY

A model of the engaged scholar, Brenda Child works to expand the meaning of historic preservation in Minnesota.

How did you come to write your book on American Indian boarding schools?

I grew up hearing the stories of my grandmother, who had been a student at the Flandreau Boarding School in South Dakota in the 1920s. She left the Red Lake reservation in Northern Minnesota for Flandreau when she was 12 and didn't come back until her late teens. One story that stuck with me was about how the school sent the girls out to be servants for local white households, which was to be a good experience for them, a way of learning the values of white middle-class society. When I began to study history, it was jarring to find there was nothing written about these sorts of stories—lots of policy studies about Indian education, but nothing about Indian people's experiences.

Associate professor Brenda Child joined the American studies department in 1998. An enrolled member of the Red Lake Band of the Chippewa Tribe, she won the North American Indian Prose Award for her groundbreaking book *Boarding School Seasons: American Indian Families 1900–1940* (University of Nebraska Press, 1998), which drew on letters to explore Native experiences of the government boarding schools Indian children were compelled to attend in the late 19th and early 20th century.

Child, who has a Ph.D. in history from the University of Iowa, teaches courses on multiculturalism and American Indian history. She is on the board of the Minnesota Historical Society (the only historian and the only American Indian there), where she chairs the historic preservation grants committee for the state. She also is on the board of the Division of Indian Work and *The Circle* newspaper in Minneapolis, and on the editorial board of the journal *Ethnohistory.* **Her current projects** include a book about Ojibwe women for Viking Press and a study of the labor practices of Ojibwe men and women in the 20th century. She is also working with U colleagues and community partners on projects involving language preservation and historical education.

Child makes her home in St. Paul's Battle Creek neighborhood with her spouse, Patrick McNamara (a professor of Latin American history), son Frankie (16) and daughter Benay (5).

You set out to fill in that missing picture?

I knew I wanted to try to write about experiences of Ojibwe people at school, and the schools in the context of Indian families and communities.The challenge for me as an historian was to try to find documents where Indian people told their stories. People said, you know, this stuff doesn't exist for Indians. But at the National Archives, I found piles and piles of letters from students and their parents at boarding schools like Flandreau.

What do you want people to take away from your book?

Despite the policy of assimilation, despite the difficulties people experienced, despite the repressiveness and sometimes violence of the institutions for Indian people—most Indians not only survived, but Indian families continued to be families during that time. Parents were still interested in their kids, still tried to be parents to them, still wrote to them—children knew they were loved by their families. Sometimes people have wanted to view Indian people as victims—to emphasize "this severed the bonds of family and tribe." But Indian people refused to let that happen. If there's a central theme for me, it's don't underestimate the strength of Indian family and community and tribal ties.

Was cultural assimilation the prime objective for the schools?

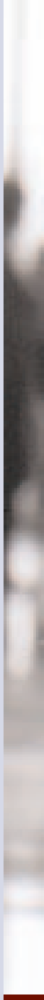
You can't really think about Indian education without thinking about the U.S. government's land policies of the late 19th and early 20th century. Even after the treaties and the establishment of reservations, Indian people in the late 19th century were in possession of vast territory. These were communally held lands until the government pushed policies for the allotment of reservation lands—meaning Indians would own lots individually. Allotment made it easier for non-reservation interests to get hold of Indian land, often through unscrupulous means—that's often what happened. The big land grab was really bad in Minnesota, because the timber companies were so influential here. Red Lake was unique because it was not allotted, unlike virtually every other Indian tribe in the late 19th and early 20th century. Up in White Earth, you can see the legacy of allotment—over 90 percent of the land within the original reservation borders is no longer owned by Indians. Where the boarding schools came into all this is that they were intended to separate young Indians from family and community values of tribalism and communalism. The idea was that young people would develop a new set of values, get vocational training, and maybe move away from the tribal community. So yes, it was about cultural assimilation, but it was inseparable from the land grab.

How is it that Red Lake escaped allotment?

Most people attribute it to our hereditary chiefs. People still quote Madwaganonint, a famous 19th-century chief from my hometown of Redby. When a commission came up from St. Paul to try to convince the Red Lakers to allot their land, he said, "No, we can't imagine owing land in any way but together." The fact that it was not allotted is one reason why Red Lake is the most interesting Indian community I know. That, and the fact that we were not relocated—unlike the Indians around Mille Lacs, for example. The roots are deep in Red Lake, and the sense of tribal and communal identity is very strong. It's also a place where there's still a system of hereditary chieftainship that dates from years and generations past. We have elected tribal officials now, but the hereditary chiefs still play a formal role in politics, in leading the reservation as a sovereign political entity. It's a very conservative community in many ways. We're a place that really held onto traditions and language.

You're now involved in a major cultural preservation project in the state.

It involves the Fort Snelling historic site. My project grew out of conversations we had at the Minnesota Historical Society (MHS) about how to renovate Fort Snelling for Minnesota's 150-year anniversary of statehood (2008). When I first started teaching at the U, I called out there to say, "I'm going to bring my class out, because we're reading about the Dakota War of 1862." And they said, "Well, we don't really deal with that." I was stunned to learn that. The site's interpretation of pioneer



Brenda Child photographed at the Minnesota Historical Society. Much of Child’s scholarship involves collaboration with Minnesota communities and organizations. “I’m from here,” says Child. “I grew up here. My family is here, and my relatives have been here for generations and generations. My research is here. And I’m a member of not only the Red Lake nation, but of the Twin Cities community. Everything I do relates to things I care deeply about—family, community, Minnesota history, and tribal heritage and issues of cultural self-determination.”

life in Minnesota is set in the 1830s, so it doesn’t reflect a moment in time that deals with that longer troubled history of Dakota people here. We’ve now said, at MHS, we’re going to tell that story. We’re discussing exhibits that would deal with the 1862 conflict and with the concentration camps in which Dakota people were held at Fort Snelling in the 19th century. We don’t talk a lot in Minnesota about the fact that this was the site of the largest mass execution in the history of the U.S. Yet that is something that should be part of the interpretation at Fort Snelling as well, as painful as that history is for all of us.

Are Indian people eager for that to happen?

You know, Fort Snelling was the center of the region’s cultural life and political life in the 19th century. It also figured into Indian history in so many ways—it was a primary place of trade and cultural interaction; treaties were signed there. So when we say we’re going to tell these stories and it’s long overdue, that does resonate for Indian people. What I and some of my University colleagues have suggested is that this presents an opportunity to think deeply about what historic preservation really might mean for Indian people.

What might that entail?

For Indian people, our important places are in the landscape, in the environment, or they’re embedded in our culture and especially in our language. There is no bigger issue in Indian country today than language preservation. When I was growing up on the Red Lake reservation listening to my grandmother and mother speak Ojibwe, I took the language for granted. What’s happening now across Indian country is that we’re losing the people that we counted on for cultural knowledge and language. And what all Minnesotans need to know is that Native language isn’t just part of our community life in Red Lake or Lower Sioux. It’s also a part of our wider cultural history in Minnesota. The name of our state comes in part comes from a Dakota word. If you look at place names across the state—*Wabasha*, *Wayzata*, *Shakopee*, *Chaska*—these Ojibwe and Dakota names are embedded in Minnesota life. Far more than Swedish, for example, Native culture and language constitute the longer history of this place where we all live. As part of our strategic plan at MHS, we’ve resolved to work toward the revitalization and preservation of indigenous languages of Minnesota. A similar resolution was passed by the Minnesota legislature two years ago. It’s consistent with a broader sense of what historic preservation should be—not just about preserving architectural treasures in our state, important though that is as well.

You envision Native language preservation as part of the new Fort Snelling?

What we envision is that the renovated historic site would include a center for Dakota and Ojibwe language preservation—with indoor space for workshops and research on language; outdoor space for language learning, perhaps especially for children; and virtual space—an online space to foster community, share curricular materials, and coordinate things like Ojibwe and Dakota “language tables” around the Twin Cities (potlucks where everyone is speaking Indian). These are just very early ideas. What we’re doing now is finding out what communities need. I have an amazing American studies graduate student working on this project with me, by the way—Scott Shoemaker, a second-year Ph.D. student in American studies. Scott is a Miami from Indiana and he was a leader in resurrecting the Miami language in Indiana; he’ s also a landscape architect.

You’re talking with Indian people around the state?

Yes, with the help of two wonderful undergraduates and a civic engagement grant from the University. We want to bring Indian people into the project. We start by explaining the concept, which essentially is bringing Native people back into Fort Snelling as a project of decolonization—the idea that this is part of Indian history, too; we should return to this place and have a stake in it, and we should do it in such a way that it gives something back for Indian people. We share our ideas; then we ask people to help us shape what the project should be. What would you imagine for Fort Snelling? What are your needs? If there were a language center at Fort Snelling, would you use it? Would it be proper to have something like this there? Would you stay away from Fort Snelling because of its negative history? You know, my own family is from Northern Minnesota; my family wasn’t interned at Fort Snelling in the 19th century. But for many Dakotas, 1862 is still as painful as though it happened last week.

What sort of responses have you gotten so far?

A whole range—largely very positive. We’re still in the very early stages of talking and visioning—and of course, we’ll need money to make this happen. But it makes me happy to think that if we’re successful at this, not only would Minnesota be on the cutting edge, but … well, you get a little older and you think about what’s going to be here for people in the future.

Historical narrative

How does an American studies scholar come to write a historical novel about an Afro-Cherokee family?

Photo by Jessica Yurasek

Tiya Miles is an assistant professor of American culture at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Her book *Ties That Bind* (U of California Press, 2005) has been awarded the 2006 Frederick Jackson Turner Award from the Organization of American History.

In 2005, I published my first book, a revised and augmented version of the Ph.D. dissertation that I had written in the Department of American Studies at the University of Minnesota. The book, titled *Ties That Bind: The Story of an Afro-Cherokee Family in Slavery and Freedom*, covers the sweep of 19th-century Cherokee history through the experience of one Native and black mixed-race family—Shoe Boots, a famous Cherokee war hero, Doll, an enslaved African American woman (and Shoe's sexual partner), and their five children.

The narrative shows how the social, political, and economic changes that shaped the family members' lives were formed in large part by major historical happenings—including colonialism, slavery, Cherokee nationalism, Indian Removal, and the U.S. Civil War. There is loss, betrayal, and suffering in the story, and wrongs inflicted by oppressed groups upon other oppressed groups. At the same time, there is bravery, perseverance, and love—and glimmers of what might have been, if only racial hierarchy and race slavery had not taken such powerful hold in the early years of U.S. nation-building and Cherokee nation-building.

Since the book's release, I have been asked by readers how I discovered my topic and how I found the fragmented sources necessary to reconstruct this story. I've also been asked how I came to use literary works as conceptual guides for understanding the themes and meanings of the family's life and times, and, more fundamentally, how I determined to press forward with this project despite its sensitivity and its complex relationship to contemporary political and racial struggles within former slaveholding Native tribes.

There are long answers to each of these questions, which speak to the delicate and layered processes, the trials and misadventures, of historical research and interpretation. But there is also a short answer to all of the questions about how I came to produce *The Ties That Bind:* Because of the intellectual openness instilled in me by my American studies mentors.

At Minnesota, the seeds of my book were planted in classes that challenged me to view the world of ideas in new ways. A course on race in U.S. history helped me to understand race as a materially real ideological construction and as a force in political and social life. A comparative course on literature in the American South and South Africa brought seemingly distant places and politics into intimate relationship. A course on place and Native American literature treated literature as a key site where theorization of Native experience emerges. And a course on Native American history introduced the historical overlap between the Native American and African American pasts through a reading and discussion of race and anti-black feeling in a southern Indian tribe. Each of these courses, among others, taught me fresh ways of framing questions, seeking answers, and thinking about histories, texts, and socio-political relations.

In addition, my dissertation advisors (David Roediger, Carol Miller, Jean O'Brien, Brenda Child, and Angela Dillard) permitted me to think broadly and boldly about my topic. I still have a letter from David pinned to a bulletin board in my office. Responding to a dissertation chapter I had sent him, he wrote: "Be as free-wheeling as you want to be."

From the start, my advisers gently pushed me to take risks with the material I was struggling to understand, let alone find sources for. They gave me methodological and interpretive courage as I developed what was a fairly unusual dissertation. Along the way, they asked questions that challenged me anew—pushing me to fill in gaps in historiography, to distinguish between imagined realities and arguments for which I had firm evidence, and to think through and clearly explain my rationale for using literature as historical source and for reading historical documents like texts.

Part of our work as American studies scholars is to critically assess U.S. claims of exceptionalism with regard to lofty ideals like freedom, and so I do not want to claim exceptionalism for the academic field of American studies. Exciting work is produced in every corner of the academy, and American studies struggles with its own demons of disciplinary identity, diversity, and power. Still, for me, American Studies has been a liberating and satisfying space for intellectual and methodological creativity.

The lingering effects of war

How do wounded soldiers share Americans' views of their nation and themselves?

Few people know that you can find one of the cheapest meals in Washington, D.C., at the Walter Reed Medical Center. The cafeteria is subsidized—an acknowledgment, if only slight, of the economic hardships facing many military families. I made this discovery in fall 2004 while conducting research at the National Museum of Health and Medicine, a trove of surgical photographs, tissue samples, and medical paraphernalia in a quiet sector of Walter Reed's sprawling campus. Munching away on my veggie burger, I tried not to stare at my fellow diners—amputees wearing bathrobes, college-age boys in wheelchairs, all recent casualties of the U.S. war on "terror."

Eighty-five years earlier, in the aftermath of another fatally idealistic crusade, men with similar injuries had arrived at Walter Reed by the thousands. Following the Great War, the hospital had served as the nation's premiere military rehabilitation center. Today, on the brink of closure, it continues to prepare war-mangled troops for a life after injury.

My dissertation, "Encountering Injury: Modern War and the "Problem of the Wounded Soldier," tells the story of earlier generations of wounded warriors, men whose bodies bore the scars of America's wars. My research spans the 75 years between the Civil War and World War II, but I focus primarily on the World War I era, when physicians, social critics, veterans' groups, and antiwar activists grappled with what became known as the "problem of the wounded soldier," a debate about the social, economic, and cultural legacies of war injury.

Ph.D. student John Kinder, shown here at the VFW Club in Mendota, has published several articles and book reviews on the cultural history of American warfare. His essay "Iconography of Injury" will be included in *Picture This! Reading World War I Posters* (U of Nebraska Press, 2006).

The "problem of the wounded soldier" was inspired, in part, by changing realities on the battlefield: thanks to advances in emergency medicine, men who would have died in previous campaigns now survived, although often with life-shattering disabilities. For many observers, it was unclear how hundreds of thousands of permanently injured men could be reabsorbed into postwar American society. At the same time, the "problem of the wounded soldier" was the product of culturewide anxieties about the nature of modern warfare, the United States's future as a military power, and the nation's obligations to those who suffer in its name. In the minds of countless Americans, the Great War's production of injured bodies and minds was evidence that modern war needed to be abandoned altogether.

Researching the lingering effects of war injury has forced me to move beyond the boundaries of traditional "military history." I draw insights from many disciplines, including the history of medicine, the history of popular culture, and the burgeoning field of disability studies. Like many cultural historians of warfare, I believe that the consequences of military power cannot be separated from the ideas and images that give war meaning. War's violence is never relegated to soldiers' bodies alone. It lives on in the language we speak, the stories we remember, the metaphors we use to organize the world.

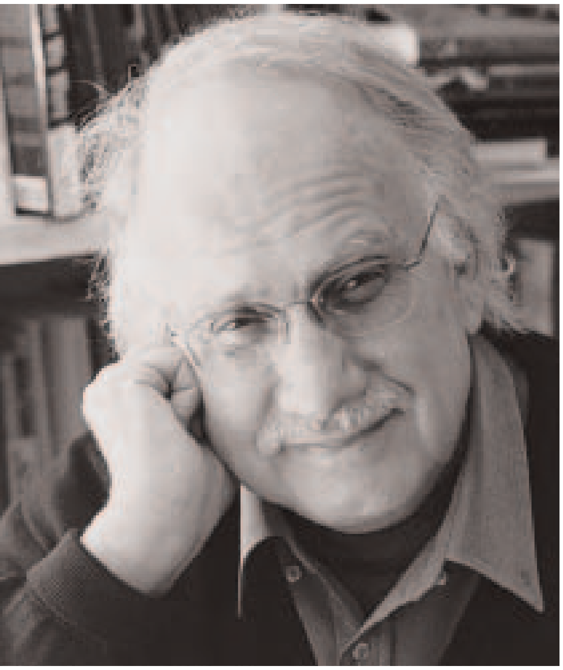
Although my interest in wounded and disabled soldiers is hardly autobiographical, I can admit to a lifelong fascination with war. As a child, I was enthralled by the stories my best friend's father, a Vietnam War vet, would tell of his combat experience, and I can recall some half-formed notions of bravely charging into enemy fire myself. During the Gulf War, however, I had a change of heart. Watching television coverage of the destruction—Baghdad silhouettes lit up like Fourth of July, TV generals chuckling proudly at the sight of charred Iraqi soldiers—I began to reevaluate my attraction to war. I also began to think more carefully about war's legacies—not only for combatants and their loved ones but also for those, like me, who watch safely from afar. How have

Kinder, **to page 14**

May, from page 4

identity rather than simply a paranoid crusade or a virtuous effort to catch spies," says May. "It's really a counterrevolution against the vision of the 1930s."

The small-'r' republican vision of capitalist America as "a society that empowers the many" was in many ways radical, but it wasn't communist, stresses May. "It was deeply American. Certainly it was linked to American social realities and to the American tradition in a way that the fixed ideas of the Cold War were not."



The turnabout between the 1930s and 1950s seemed complete. In the postwar years, "repression of dissent and of difference became the consuming themes of political life," says May, and American identity was conflated untrammeled capitalism and consumerism. Whereas about half of the Hollywood films of the 1930s had cast rich people or big business in negative terms, May's research found, "by the 1950s, it was down to just 5 percent."

The political is personal

But the fifties did give way to the countercultural sixties, and May finds popular culture leading the way. "If the fifties repudiated the ideas of the thirties, the sixties recovered them," he says. Even in the placid and conservative 1950s, the boundaries were being pushed by slyly subversive films (especially in the film noir genre) and by such iconic figures as James Dean and Marilyn Monroe.

Just as important, says May, there remained rambunctious city worlds (real and metaphorical) where diversity, creativity, and liberatory impulses just kept popping out all over the place.

May draws on his own personal history to help students in his cultural history classes make sense of America's 20th-century arc. He is an award-winning teacher whose classrooms crackle with lively debates and creative assignments (students might do intergenerational oral histories or engage in "Meet the Press" type debates as historical figures).

Students flock to May's courses, and if they get a kick out of May's legendary anecdotes about meeting Elvis Presley and Johnny Cash in Las Vegas, they get down to serious discussion after viewing "Secret Daughter," the acclaimed documentary by May's sister (soon to be published as a book). May uses it in his "Popular Culture and Politics" course as "a sort of coming out story that illuminates America's struggles and changes around race, sexuality, and gender."

In her film, his sister probes how she came to lead two lives—as the adopted child of a black couple in Atlantic City, as well as the biological child and "secret daughter" of a white woman—May's mother—in New York and Los Angeles.

May was 14 when his mother gave birth to June out of a tumultuous relationship with stage and film personality Jimmy Cross (half of the famous comedy duo "Stump and Stumpy" and a model for white comedians including Jerry Lewis). The family lived together in New York until June was 6. But as June's complexion grew darker, so did the family's story, especially after May's mother left Cross, whose anger at his declining career had turned violent. A mixed-race family headed by a single-mother proved too much in the 1950s, even in New York. Watching Lary, his mother, and sister come and go from their Upper West Side apartment, neighbors circulated a petition to get them evicted.

When May's mother sent her daughter to live with black friends in Atlantic City, "She agonized," says May. "She truly thought June would be better off with a black family, and certainly she knew her own life would be less complicated. It was easier to rearrange the facts to conform with social expectations."

Social mores are powerful, May emphasizes; his family kept June a "secret" until going public in the 1996 documentary. June spent every summer with Lary, his mother, and his stepfather, the comic Larry Storch. But the family told friends June was an abused child they'd informally adopted.

His students find this story riveting, May says—not just because it's juicy, but because "it embodies so much about the changing patterns of American life, about the tensions between popular culture and politics, about how chaos and change are normative in American life, and about what is pushed down in a society finds a way to push up again."

The culture wars

May is expanding on these ideas in the third volume of his trilogy, which will look at the interaction of culture and politics from the Cold War to today. If the fifties repressed the thirties, and the sixties recovered the thirties, "the post-sixties period fostered an enormous backlash that repudiated the sixties—a backlash that continues to reverberate today."

That's changing, May says, with the rise of the global economy, which "has created a new international cultural space. That's a big part of what today's culture wars are all about."

Since the 1950s, most Hollywood profits have come from abroad, May notes, and Hollywood films themselves have become truly international, "with the vast majority being financed abroad or having some combination of foreign producers, directors, and writers."

Says May: "A lot of what's happening is that American culture is becoming more porous. Think of *Brokeback Mountain*—this landmark 'gay cowboy' picture is by a Chinese director. A conservative political climate narrows the space for creativity, critique, and experimentation. But a globalized society expands that space—just as Hollywood's immigrant founders did."

Looking out over the 20th century, May says one lesson is "that the making of American identity doesn't just happen—it's bound up in struggles over time. It's about the flowing river, not about the building up of a fixed foundation. That's what I want my students to take away."

HAPPY TO BE HERE

One tends toward land, one toward sea. Meet our two newest faculty members.

From left, M. Bianet Castellanos and Kale Fajardo, who joined the American studies faculty this past fall.

M. BIANET CASTELLANOS

My anthropological inquiry of migration was inspired by my own migration experience at the age of three.

It was an atypical migration in its sheer volume. In the mid-1970s, my mother, accompanied by her eight children and her younger brother, left her village and extended family in Mexico to join my father, who was working as a migrant farmworker in the San Joaquín Valley of California.

My siblings and I went on to spend summers, weekends, and vacations alongside our parents in that valley, picking fruit and vegetables to support our large family. This backbreaking work introduced me to the social, economic, cultural, and legal barriers that define class and race in America.

After receiving my B.A. in anthropology from Stanford, I joined Teach For America to improve the social and economic opportunities of minority students. For three years, I taught bilingual education in low-income California school districts.

My work with these communities was incredibly rewarding, but I returned to graduate school at the University of Michigan to think critically about education, gender, and economics vis-a-vis migration processes. Before coming to Minnesota, I was a University of California President's Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of Ethnic Studies at UC San Diego.

I am now working on a book examining the role indigenous people play, through their labor and culture, in the development of tourism, transnational spaces, and the modern nation-state. It is based on an ethnography of a Yucatec Maya community's migration experiences to Cancún, Mexico's most popular tourist city. I have worked with this community for over 15 years, a reflection of my commitment to sustaining long-term relationships with indigenous communities.

My new project, based on a hemispheric approach to indigenous studies, explores gender, class, and race relations among Maya immigrant communities in Southern California. My work will benefit immensely from the interdisciplinary approach to class, race, and gender of the American studies department at the University of Minnesota. I am very excited to be here, and look forward to helping to build the department's post-national curriculum.

KALE FAJARDO

My research interests in Filipino seafaring, maritime trade, migration, and trans-oceanic connections began to take shape when I lived and studied in Santa Cruz, California, in the 1990s.

I raced for a local Hawaiian outrigger canoe club and spent many hours training in the water. At the same time, in graduate school at UC, Santa Cruz, I was involved in lively debate with Pacific Islander graduate students who were pondering Pacific Islander histories of travel, as well as Chicana students interested in issues of race, class, gender, and sexuality in "the borderlands" (e.g., along the U.S./Mexico border).

My interest in these sorts of social and cultural issues, as well as my love of the sea, eventually led me to research the intersections of travel, seafaring (which includes shipping/maritime trade), migration, and masculinity in the "border spaces" of an archipelago like the Philippines. In 1997–98, I conducted ethnographic and historical research on these issues in the port cities of Manila and Oakland.

While writing my dissertation in Oakland, I worked full-time at Bay Area non-profit organizations, including Global Exchange, the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission, the Asian and Pacific Islander Wellness Center, and the National Maritime Museum Association. It paid the bills, but more than that, it gave me opportunities to collaborate with—and learn from—many activists and educators who shared my interests in making local/global connections and organizing for social justice.

I finished my Ph.D. in cultural anthropology in 2004 and moved to Minneapolis (a river city!) last summer. I am now writing a book, to be titled *Cross Currents,* exploring how we can rethink some of the dominant notions of globalization by being more attentive to oceanic spaces, places, and movements. Examining Filipino seafaring from pre-colonial sailing to the global shipping industry, I hope to expand understanding of the role of maritime trade in past and present globalizations. Another goal is to examine the impact of maritime trade and seafaring on how people understand or imagine masculinity (in its many forms).

I'm thrilled to have joined this department. There's a lot of energy here around post-nationalist American studies and a strong commitment to looking at communities in the U.S. locally, transnationally, and globally. I am honored to work among such visionary colleagues and such engaged and interesting students.

IN THE FOREFRONT

Photo by Diana Watters

American studies professor **Elaine Tyler May**, an internationally recognized historian of 20th-century U.S. social history, has been elected to the Society of American Historians. May—who also was recently honored with the U's Distinguished Women Scholars Award in Humanities, Social Sciences, and Arts—becomes one of just 250 fellows in this prestigious group.

Last year, May completed a new edition of her college textbook *Created Equal: A Social and Political History of the U.S.* (with Jacqueline Jones, Peter Wood, Thomas Borstelmann, and Vicki Ruiz; Longman Press). An in-demand speaker, she lectured recently on the legacy of the Cold War at a cultural history conference honoring historian Lawrence Levine, and on reproductive choice in historical perspective for the Minnesota Women's Political Caucus. She chaired a panel on Cold War culture for an American Studies Association conference (which included a presentation by graduate student **Trecia Pottinger**).

Undergraduate students

Congratulations to the recipients of our department's undergrad awards: **Emily Groene, Jesse Larson,** and Emily Schumann, William C. Nelson Undergraduate Scholarship; **Jim Curran,** Mulford Q. Sibley award for Best Senior Paper; and **Erika Tindall,** Sibley award honorable mention.

We salute our recent B.A. graduates (double majors are noted): **Ellen Hea Ok Anderson, Bryan Keith Deiman, Daniel Brian Dwight** (geography), **Erica Rae Flynn, David George Gordon, Lea Marie Hegge** (women's studies), **April Lynn Koepp, John Riley LaBree, Sondra Ann Matara, Olivia Dene Meyer, Richard Gail Osterberg, Chana Comfrey Ouray, Annie Lyn Pearson, Emily Lew Schumann, Ashley Clare Sierra, Kate Kristine Stone, Kong Vang** (political science), and **Alicia Dawn Zutter**.

Graduate students

We proudly send our newest Ph.D. grads out into the world: **Hokulani K. Aikau** (with sociology), "Polynesian Pioneers: Twentieth Century Religious Racial Formations and Migration in Hawai'i" (Jean O'Brien Kehoe and Jennifer Pierce, advisers); **Scott M. Laderman,** "Witnessing the Past: History, Tourism, and Memory in Vietnam, 1930-2002" (Patricia Albers and Elaine Tyler May); **David Patrick Monteyne,** "Shelter from the Elements: Architecture and Civil Defense During the Early Cold War" (Katherine Solomonson); **Mary Rizzo,** "Consuming Class, Buying Identity: Middle-Class Youth Culture, 'Lower-Class' Style and Consumer Culture, 1945–2000" (Tyler May); and **Yuka M. Tsuchiya,** "Military Occupation as Pedagogy: The U.S. Re-education and Re-orientation Policy for Occupied Japan, 1945–1952" (Tyler May).

Our newest M.A. grads are: **Aaron Yeats Carico** (Kevin Murphy), **Maria Paz Gutierrez Esguerra,** (Brenda Child), and **Maura Megan Seale** (Rod Ferguson and Jani Scanduri).

Core faculty

M. Bianet Castellanos recently was a featured speaker on issues related to Mayan migrants, both in the Rockefeller Center's Gender and (Im)migration Workshop Series at Dartmouth College and in an anthropology colloquium series at Macalester College.

Brenda Child gave the keynote address at the Graduate Symposium on Women's and Gender History, U of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, and spoke at a U of Oklahoma symposium honoring Wilma Mankiller (the proceedings will be published this year). Also, she was honored by the U of M American Indian student organization, along with her former student Peggy Flanagan, the first American Indian to sit on the Minneapolis School Board, and Carrie Schommer, a Dakota elder and teacher.

Kale Fajardo presented a paper on Philippine trade issues at the Anthropological Association's annual meeting in Washington, D.C. Kale also traveled to the Philippines in December and January to conduct research on seafaring, migration, and globalization in Manila and surrounding areas.

Visiting professor **David Karjanen** contributed a chapter to *WAL-MART: The Face of 21st Century Capitalism,* ed. Nelson Lichtenstein (New Press, 2006). He also represented U.S. scholars studying comparative migration at a conference in Germany.

Lary May has lectured at the Humanities Center of the U of California, Riverside, and at the Minnesota Humanities Center, on issues related to the Hollywood film industry, global America, and American mass culture. Also, he gave a keynote address about F. Scott Fitzgerald at the 2005 International Fitzgerald Conference in Vevey, Switzerland, and he spoke about "the myth of country life in modern politics" at the Chippewa Valley Museum conference on farm life last fall.

Jennifer L. Pierce chairs the editorial committee for the U of Minnesota Press. She was awarded a Graduate School grant for her book project about corporate culture and the backlash against affirmative action, and was selected for a fellowship at the Rockefeller Study and Conference Center. She and American studies Ph.D. grads Hokulani Aikau ('05) and Karla Erickson ('04) presented work at the Mid-America American Studies Association Meeting based on their intro to their forthcoming edited anthology *Feminist Waves, Feminist Generations*. She and Erickson also have a forthcoming article on service work in the journal *Ethnography.*

Riv-Ellen Prell was the Suzanne and Lawrence Fishman Scholar at the Vassar College Faculty Seminar in Jewish Studies. She gave the Farkosh Family Lecture in religious studies at Carleton College, presenting "a Jewish case study on feminism and religion." She was one of four U.S. scholars invited to Israel for a conference on the concept of peoplehood sponsored by the Jewish Agency. She published a review of Sherry Ortner's *New Jersey Dreaming: Capital, Culture, and the Class of 58* in *Jewish Quarterly Review* (2005) and her edited collection *Women Remaking American Judaism* is due out in 2007.

Associated faculty

Photo by Diana Watters

John Archer (cultural studies & comparative lit) last year published the book *Architecture and Suburbia: From English Villa to American Dream House,* 1690-2000 (U of Minnesota Press, 2005. He also received the 2004–07 McKnight Research Award.

In a tribute to **John M. Dolan** (philosophy), the U's College of Liberal Arts has established the John M. Dolan Professorship in Philosophy, that department's first endowed chair.

Erika Lee (history) was awarded the History Book Prize from the Association of Asian American Studies for her book *At America's Gates,* a study of U.S. immigration history with a focus on Chinese immigrants.

Richard Lee (psychology) received an Early Career Award from the American Psychological Association for distinguished contributions to ethnic minority psychology.

Kinder, from page 11

wars shaped Americans' views of their nation and themselves? And in what ways do we continue to live with past wars, both "good" ones and "bad" ones?

Studying the "problem of the wounded soldier" allows me a unique insight into these very questions. In my research, I have made some remarkable finds—government films preaching the gospel of "war risk insurance," diaries of frontline nurses, children's posters detailing war's brutality.

Yet I always return to the disabled soldiers themselves, men like those arriving daily at Walter Reed. Their enfeebled bodies, their wounds and illnesses, their dreams and nightmares, their speeches and drawings, their struggles to remake their lives—all constitute a record of U.S. war-making, one that continues to be written long after the guns fall silent.

Alumni News

We have been heartened to hear from our alumni who are doing so many interesting things. We are heartened by their good wishes and good memories of their years at Minnesota. These updates are gleaned from their letters and e-mails. Please continue to stay in touch with us so we can share your news with others.

Joe Austin (Ph.D., ’96) and **Rachel Buff** (Ph.D., ’95) are associate professors of history at the U of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, where Rachel also directs a small ethnic studies program.

After leaving a job at Disney to become a high school teacher, **Jane Healey** (Ph.D., ’91) has for the last seven years “been having great fun” teaching literature and American studies courses at Menlo School, just down the street from Stanford U. Among her topics: 20th-century drama as a lens on cultural history, and baseball and lit (for which AmSt alum John Bloom, who wrote a book on baseball card collecting, helped Jane develop the syllabus).

Polly Fry (Ph.D., ’99) was a producer for the documentary “Minnesota: A History of the Land,” which premiered on public television last year. She is now developing an in-house production facility for the U of Minnesota.

Thomas Fisch (M.A., ’77) is associate professor of sacramental theology and liturgy at the U of St. Thomas Divinity School. Fisch, who went on from American studies to earn a Ph.D. in theology/liturgy from the U of Notre Dame, recently edited *Primary Readings on the Eucharist* (Liturgical Press, 2004), a collection of historical and theological essays.

Valerie Neal (Ph.D. ’79) is the curator of space history at the Smithson-ian National Air and Space Museum.

Ole O. Moen (Ph.D. ’78) is associate professor of American civilization at the U of Oslo. He also is secretary general of the European Association for American Studies and an international adviser for American studies centers in Belgrade and Beirut.

Elizabeth Anderson-Kempe (Ph.D., ’96) has been working in the field of “user research” since she left us. For ELabas of Chicago, she combined the skill sets of social science researchers and designers to help companies improve the “user experience” of their customers. From 2000 to 2003, she traveled extensively for a firm she started in London. She now works as a freelance consultant based in Los Angeles.

Benjy Flowers (Ph.D., ’03) accepted a position as an assistant professor position at the Georgia Institute of Technology’s College of Architecture. His book *Constructing the Modern Skyscraper* is due out this year from the U of Pennsylvania Press.

David Noon (Ph.D., ’01) published articles on historical memory (in *Rhetoric and Public Affairs)* and gender and professional identity in American child study (*History of Psychology),* and has a forthcoming piece on 19th-century evolutionary constructions (*Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences).* David also reports that he has “a surprisingly successful blog” (http://axisofevelknievel.blogspot.com)

Other Ph.D. grads publishing recently include **Steve Garabedian** (’04), an article on protest and folk songs of the 1930s–40s (based in part on his dissertation about blues music and American cultural politics, in *American Quarterly);* and **Rhoda Lewin** (Ph.D. ’78), the book *Reform Jews of Minneapolis* (Arcadia Publishing, 2005)

Yuka Tsuchiya (Ph.D. ’05) is teaching at Japan’s Ehime University. Some of her students correspond via e-mail with U of Minnesota students.

Mary Elizabeth Strunk (Ph.D., ’03) is a research assistant at the Five College Women’s Studies Research Center, Mount Holyoke College.

Recent Ph.D. grads **Hokulani Aikau** (’05) and **Karla Erickson** (’04) have landed assistant professor positions at the U of Hawaii and Grinnell College, respectively.

Several of our alums have been recognized for their scholarly and professional accomplishments:

Sandra McKay (M.A., ’69) was awarded the U’s Outstanding Achievement Award, its highest alumni honor. She is a professor at San Francisco State U, where she teaches courses in sociolinguistics, applied linguistics, and language pedagogy. The author of 12 books, she has been involved in teacher education programs around the globe. She also holds a B.S. and a Ph.D. from the U.

David Nye (Ph.D., ’74) has been awarded the most prestigious prize in the field of the history of technology, the Leonardo da Vinci Medal for lifelong achievement. The author of nine books and several edited collections, he is a professor in the School of Comparative American Studies at the U of Warwick (England).

Sharon Leon (Ph.D., ’04) was awarded the Stanley Jackson prize for the best article in *The History of Medicine* in the past three years. The article, based on her dissertation research, is about Catholic participation in the American Eugenics Society in the 1920s. Leon is a research assistant professor and educational projects director at George Mason U’s Center for History and New Media.

American studies Ph.D. student co-chairs pathbreaking conference on Hmong women

When the first-ever conference on Hmong women took place at the University of Minnesota last fall, the Department of American Studies had reason to be especially proud, Besides being a cosponsor of the conference called Building on Hmong Women’s Assets: Past, Present and Future, the department is home to one of its primary organizers, **Chia Youyee Vang,** a Ph. D. candidate and a Samuel and Sylvia Kaplan Fellow in Social Justice.

Along with community leader Krystal Vujongyia, Vang co-chaired the conference planning committee, working with Hmong women gradu-ate students, community leaders, and scholars. Their vision and hard work ultimately brought together 166 people from throughout the United States for pathbreaking discussions of Hmong women’s pre-migration contributions, their opportunities since the mid-1970s (when the first wave of refugees arrived in the U.S.), and their prospects.

Among the conference topics: historical/political transformations, representations of Hmong women, women’s roles during the Secret War of Laos, leadership roles, higher education experiences, entrepreneurship, political activism, sexism, literary contributions, and philanthropy.

Deaths

We report with great sadness the recent deaths of two of our American studies alumni.

Endesha Ida Mae Holland

Endesha Ida Mae Holland earned a B.A. in African and African American studies from the U of Minnesota in 1979. Seven years later, she earned an American studies Ph.D., the first African American woman to do so.

Her experiences growing up in Greenwood, Mississippi, before the Civil Rights movement became the basis of her Ph.D. dissertation. That work, in turn, was the basis of her celebrated play, “From the Mississippi Delta,” which was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize and produced in New York, Washington, and London, among other cities. She published a memoir under the same title (Simon & Schuster, 1997) as well as six other plays. Holland was a professor emerita of theatre at the U of Southern California and previously taught American studies at the State U of New York, Buffalo.

"She was just all about hope and all about life," American studies professor Elaine Tyler May (Holland’s Ph.D. adviser and a close friend) told the *StarTribune.* "She believed that she came from a community of love and affection, hearing rich stories from her mother and family. She was able to weave those stories into something magnificent and beautiful.” (www.startribune.com/466/story/215621.html)

John Herman Randall, III

John Herman Randall earned a Ph.D. in American studies from the U in 1954. He taught American literature at Boston College starting in 1962, retiring as an associate professor of English in 1998.His many publications include *The Landscape and the Looking–Glass: Willa Cather's Search for Value.*

BRICK BY BRICK

Our gifts range from $5 to $50,000. We build our endowments little by little, brick by brick.

We count on the commitments of many, rather than the windfall gifts of only a few large donors.

American studies scholarships open doors for undergraduate students. Emily Gorene, an undergrad major, is a William C. Nelson Scholarship recipient. The funds have allowed her to progress more rapidly through her American studies major (with minors in Spanish and Portuguese). Jesse Larson, a returning student, has used his scholarship to complete his American studies major in a timely fashion and to look forward to a wider range of work opportunities than he had as a younger man. Emily Woods completed her American studies B.A. in the fall with the help of the Nelson Scholarship, one of the few scholarship opportunities she found. She was pleased to be "rewarded for my academic achievements," and grateful for the leg up.

Our scholarships also support student research. Seniors in American studies are even now participating in the senior seminar, where they will write their senior papers. Some will receive support from the Mulford Q. Sibley fund to travel to film archives or museums for their research.

We in the Department of American Studies are fortunate to have funds that have been endowed by our faculty, alumni, and friends—funds that make it possible for our majors to conduct original research and to make timely progress on their degrees. Every year we see the difference that private gifts make in the lives of our undergraduates.

Our graduate students also benefit in many ways from private gifts. They are supported by fellowships in their years of study, as well as by funding for archival and ethnographic research and dissertation support. Over the years we have seen even small research grants lead to exciting dissertations and wonderful books published by outstanding presses. Our M.A. and Ph.D. alumni work in education, politics, museums, and social services. Many teach in colleges and universities in North America, Europe, and Asia.

Our endowed funds honor great teachers and scholars in American Studies—Bernard Bowren, Joseph J. Kwiat, David Noble, Mulford Q. Sibley, and Mary Turpie. They also honor our generous donors—our department's alumni and former students and others who believe in our work. Samuel and Sylvia Kaplan, Charles Christensen, Fred Erisman, and William C. Nelson have made it possible for us to educate our students more effectively. We are proud to have their names on our funds, just as we are honored by all of the contributors who support them.

What we are especially proud of is how many of our alumni and friends contribute to our efforts. In the last two years, our gifts have ranged from $5 to $50,000. We build our endowments little by little, brick by brick. We count on the commitments of many, rather than the windfall gifts of only a few large donors. We express our appreciation to all those who are our partners in teaching students to read, write, and think effectively about the United States in a global world.

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