
NEPCA NORTHEAST POPULAR CULTURE ASSOCIATION



September 2017

NEPCA established 1974

WELCOME

Last fall we handed out NEPCA door prizes with our Wordmark and the slogan: "NEPCA—We're Popular." At the time, we thought we were being cheeky and clever. Little did we know! NEPCA's 2017 Call for Papers smashed all records for proposals and we had to place numerous papers on a waiting list. We should have the largest conference in organizational history, but don't worry: NEPCA has no plans to become another generic mega-association. We'll still put on the welcoming face-to-face type conference we always do. This year there will simply be more of us.

Our visit to the University of Massachusetts Amherst also marks the first time in organizational history in which the conference will be held in the same facility in which there is also lodging and dining. It will take place Friday October 27 and Saturday October 28, 2017 in the **UMass Campus Center**, which is pictured above. It is the building at the very end of the Campus Pond and to the right of the W.E.B. DuBois Tower Library.

You can read about local arrangements on NEPCA's Website: <https://nepca.blog/2017-conference/> At last report, Campus Center rooms were filled, but check for cancellations. Don't despair if you can't get a room in the Campus Center, as the Website has other suggestions. UMass is the center of the Five Colleges consortium and there are more than 35,000 students in Amherst-Northampton corridor, so there are many lodging and dining options.

NOTE TO THOSE NOT CHOSEN IN 2017

NEPCA had to make hard choices this year. We were constrained by fire laws that limit how many people can be in the meeting rooms and space set aside for our luncheon. In some cases we had to slice entire panels from the schedule to make the numbers "fit," and we had to turn down superb proposals simply because there was no place in the schedule for them.

If your paper was not accepted this year, please know it was no reflection upon you or the quality of your work. You were not "rejected;" you were simply shut out in the numbers crunch. We cordially invite you to submit again for next year's conference, which will be held at **Worcester State University** of Friday and Saturday October 19-20, 2018 in Worcester, MA. See this newsletter for early details for 2018.

2017 NEWSLETTER CONTENT

This newsletter will provide conference information on the following:

- Lodging and food suggestions
- Membership information and benefits
- Travel directions
- Information on NEPCA prize winners
- Links to officers and area chairs
- New book reviews and links to older ones
- Articles and links to teaching tips
- The conference schedule
- Issues to be discussed by the Executive Council
- Other information pertinent to NEPCA members, including the 2018 conference
- Registration form for in-person attendees (not necessary for those who registered online)

KEEP YOUR MEMBERSHIP UP TO DATE

Membership works like this. You are **currently** a member if:

1. You are a lifetime member or a past president
2. You have registered for *this year's* conference
3. You have mailed a check or paid via Pay Pal during the 2017 calendar year.
(Memberships run October to October.)

Your membership expires at the end of October 2017 if you registered for the 2016 conference, but do not fall into any of the categories listed above. If you wish to continue receiving *NEPCA News* and to be a member of NEPCA, please renew your membership by **December 31, 2017**. You can do so on PayPal from our Website by clicking on the "Payments to NEPCA" tab, or you can send a check c/o NEPCA to: Robert E. Weir, NEPCA Executive Secretary, 15 Woods Road, Florence, MA 01062. Membership is \$30 for full-time faculty members and \$15 for all others (retirees, adjuncts, part-time faculty, graduate students,

independent scholars). You can become a lifetime member for the bargain price of \$150 and never have to worry about renewing again.

NEPCA's PayPal payment site can be accessed at: <https://nepca.blog/payments-to-nepca/> *Do not click the PayPal icon—it's just there for show. Use the live links.*

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS:

Here are five good reasons to renew your membership:

1. NEPCA is an all-volunteer organization, but our vendors are not. Our "free" Website isn't free—we pay an annual hosting fee. If you've been enjoying daily cultural content we send your way via other social media sources, we pay for that too. There are also other expensive bills that come in through the year. Our annual conferences are very expensive, as is liability insurance, something NEPCA can't afford to be without.
2. NEPCA awards book- and graduate-paper prizes that advance academic excellence. Those prizes alone require the equivalent of nearly 40 full-time membership fees.
3. If you are looking for a way to show your academic dean you are being productive, write a **refereed book review** for NEPCA. This option is available only for active members.
4. NEPCA is a tax-exempt organization, hence your membership fees are **tax deductible**—a boon for all of you looking to reduce taxable income and are too busy grading papers to stash your cash in the Cayman Islands. Instead, get the satisfaction of supporting a professional organization that promotes things you care about.
5. NEPCA receives no outside income other than that provided by members. We are affiliated with the Popular Culture Association, but each regional must be self-supporting. We don't even hold bake sales!

DIRECTIONS and PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Driving:

The GPS address for UMass is: 300 Massachusetts Avenue, Amherst, MA 01003. This will only take you to the Visitors Center, however, and the Campus Center is a 10-15 minute walk from there. The GPS for the Campus Center parking garage is **1 Campus Center Way**.

For you Luddites without GPS, all roads to UMass are funneled to **Route 9**. Those traveling from the east, west, or north on the New York/Massachusetts Turnpike (**I-90**) that do not know the area should *ignore* signs (from the east) telling them to exit at Palmer or (from the west) at Westfield. Take I-90 to **Interstate 91 North** and take **Exit 19** at Northampton. Turn right off the exit onto **Route 9** eastbound. It is about six miles to Amherst from there. Look for a left turn onto **Route 116** just past a mall complex in Hadley. It is well signposted. (If you miss it, there's a second chance in another mile where you can turn left after you pass a Stop n' Shop.)

Those traveling from the **south** should plot the best route to **I-91 North** and proceed to **Exit 19** and proceed as above.

*** Travelers Tip 1: You will cross the Connecticut River after exiting at #19. Take a quick glance to your right for a spectacular look at the river as it carves through the Holyoke Range in the distance.

*** Travelers Tip 2: Route 9 is often congested. It's a good idea to allocate an extra 20 minutes in case you hit Route 9 at a busy time.

Those traveling I-91 from the **north** should take **Exit 25** at Deerfield, where you will briefly be on Routes 5/10 before making a left onto **Route 116**. It is 8 miles to UMass from here and you will pass through the town of Sunderland on your way. The UMass exit is signposted.

Here is a link for more detailed directions from UMass:

<https://www.umass.edu/visitorsctr/directions>

Parking:

Classes will be in session on Friday so do not park in a non-pay lot or you will be ticketed and/or towed. Do not park in lots earmarked for students or faculty.

Those arriving on Friday should consider buying a day pass for parking, which will be generally cheaper (\$6) than the \$1.50 hourly fee.

You can park in most lots for **free** on Saturday except the Campus Center lot. Those staying in the Campus Center hotel can get **vouchers** for parking. There will be plenty of parking by the Mullins Center arena on Commonwealth Avenue for Saturday. The Campus Center is a 5-minute walk. It is, however, uphill so those with mobility issues should turn off Commonwealth Avenue *toward* the Campus Center Garage on Campus Center Way, but make a left onto Natural Resources Way and park in Lot 65.

Here's a link for a map of UMass:

<https://www.umass.edu/transportation/sites/default/files/mapCampusParking.pdf>

You can print maps from here: <https://www.umass.edu/visitorsctr/campusmaps>

There's an interactive map available as well, though in my humble opinion, it's more hindrance than help. If you're brave, go to: <https://umts.github.io/ParkingMap/>

Train:

There are two Amtrak trains per day that go to Northampton, one from the north (Vermont) and one from the south (originates in Washington, DC.) This is Amtrak's *Ethan Allen Express/Vermont* train. Here is the schedule:

<https://www.amtrak.com/ccurl/369/779/Vermont-Schedule-071017,0.pdf>

From Northampton you can take a taxi, Uber, Lyft, or bus to UMass. It is highly recommended that, unless you have mobility issues, you take the # 43 PVTa (Pioneer Valley transportation Authority) bus to UMass. The service is frequent and cheap (\$1.60). Here is the bus schedule:

<http://www.pvta.com/schedules/B43.pdf>

For buses, exit the train platform and walk away from the station into downtown Northampton (2 minutes). When you come to Main Street, you have a choice. If you have plenty of time and wish to meander through downtown, go west on Main Street (left) and walk up to the Academy of Music (3 blocks) to catch a #43 bus. If you are more rushed, go east (right) and walk a block to the Post Office bus stop.

There are also several Amtrak trains from Boston to Springfield. From Springfield you can take a **Peter Pan Bus** to UMass. It is highly recommended that you consider taking a Peter Pan Bus *directly* from South Station Boston as service is more reliable, cheaper, and (often) faster.

Long-Distance and Local Buses:

Both **Greyhound** and **Peter Pan** provide bus service to Amherst and stop on the UMass campus. Go to <http://locations.greyhound.com/bus-stations/us/massachusetts/amherst-umass/bus-station-41272> for Greyhound service connections from your area to Amherst.

For Peter Pan service consult: <https://peterpanbus.com/>

Megabus has service to the Hadley Mall, where one would then board a # 43 PVTA bus. Here is the schedule link: <http://www.pvta.com/schedules/B43.pdf>

Air:

Bradley International Airport (BDL) in Windsor Locks, Connecticut is the closest airport (46 miles) to UMass. Unfortunately, bus service between the airport and the campus is very difficult and time-consuming. Those arriving by air generally use private transportation. Uber typically charges around \$65 each way for such a trip. If a larger group is traveling, a shuttle is more economical.

For information on shuttles from Bradley, Logan Airport in Boston, and JFK in New York see: <https://www.umass.edu/ipo/iss/transportation.php>

Other Local Transportation:

Five Colleges bus service in partnership with **PVTA** provides service to downtown Amherst, Northampton, South Hadley, and all five colleges (Amherst, Hampshire, Mount Holyoke, Smith, and UMass). It is both inexpensive and extensive, so most people (not just students) use it. <http://www.pvta.com/schedules/B43.pdf>

Those who prefer private transport can use Uber, Lyft, and cab services such as T Valley Cab (413-461-3545), Tik Tak Taxi (413-256-4500), and Taxi Express (413-977-0769).

PVTA and other bus and taxi services drop off and pick up passengers at **Haigis Mall** on the UMass campus. This is by the Fine Arts Center in a quad formed by Isenberg Business School, the Fine Arts Center and Herter Hall, with a long green and flag lot in front. The bus shelter is near to Herter Hall. The Campus Center is 5-10 minutes walking time from the bus stop. The Center is directly behind the Fine Arts Center, but at the other end of the Campus Pond. As you exit the bus, walk on the left side between Herter and the FAC. The pond will be on your right.

LODGING AND FOOD

Our wonderful local arrangements chair, **Allison Butler** of the UMass Communications Department, has provided an extensive list of options: <https://nepca.blog/local-arrangements-for-2017-conference/>

REMINDER: NO CREDIT CARDS ON SITE!

This announcement does not apply to those who have pre-registered.

If you are registering at the conference, **fees must be paid by personal check, bank check, money order, in cash, or online.** NEPCA does *not* accept credit cards. If you'd like to use a credit card, you can use **PayPal**, but it's easier if you do this *before* you arrive at the conference.

OTHER THINGS TO DO IN THE AREA

On the same link <<https://nepca.blog/local-arrangements-for-2017-conference/>> Allison has provided numerous suggestions for those looking to extend their stay. Just a quick note: the Pioneer Valley of Western Massachusetts is a very popular tourist destination. Amherst and Northampton are the hubs for those visiting the Five Colleges region. They are seven miles apart from each other along Route 9, with the mall/fast food/gas station corridor of Hadley in-between. You find a broad assortment of restaurants, cafes, museums, galleries, and shops in the area and coffee is practically a religion!

ROLLINS BOOK PRIZE

The winner of the Peter C. Rollins Prize for the best book on popular or American culture published in 2016 is: **Doug Dibbern**, for *Hollywood Riots: Violent Crowds and Progressive Politics in American Film*, published by I. B. Tauris.

NEPCA thanks the 2016 Rollins Prize Committee: **Jeff Cain** (Sacred Heart University), **Andrea McClanahan** (East Stroudsburg State), **Robert Niemi** (St. Michael's College), and **Katherine Allocco** (Western CT State University). Professor Cain chairs the committee.

Nominations are now open for the 2016 Rollins Prize. Publishers should consult the NEPCA Website for details. Please note: Only publishers can only nominate books for the Rollins Prize; if you have published a book in 2016 and wish it to be considered for the upcoming Rollins Prize, please ask your publisher to consult <https://nepca.wordpress.com/nepca-prizes/> for details. Winners receive a cash prize and a certificate.

Edited collections, reference works, and original creative works (novels, plays, etc.) are ineligible for the Rollins Prize.

See a review of our 2016 prizewinner on page 7.

GRADUATE-STUDENT-PAPER AWARD

NEPCA is pleased to announce its two graduate-student-paper awards for outstanding papers presented at the 2016 conference at Keene State College.

Winner of the **Carol Mitchell Student Essay Prize**: **Eren Odabasi** (University of Massachusetts Amherst) for his paper “The Postman Always Rings Twice: Three Adaptations of a Noir Classic.”

Winner of the **Amos St. Germain Graduate Student Essay Prize**: **Nova Seals** (St. George’s University) for his “Knowledge, Form and Function: Checking Out the Posthuman Condition in Gene Wolfe’s *A Borrowed Man*.”

The members of the 2016 committee were: **Andi McClanahan**, (East Stroudsburg University), who chaired the committee, **Adam Crowley** (Husson University), and **Heather Tulilo** (Franklin Pierce University). Thanks to all!

The graduate prizes come with a cash prize and a certificate, which will be awarded at the conference luncheon.

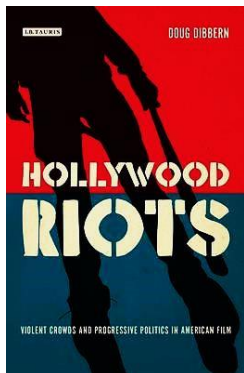
Graduate students attending this year’s conference should contact their session chair to be eligible for the 2016 prize. *Only the session chairs can nominate papers.*

BOOK REVIEWS

Book reviews are actively sought for our *peer-reviewed* online journal. Contact Rob Weir if you’d like to write one (or more!): weir.r@comcast.net. Below are several new reviews, plus live links to ones that appeared throughout the year on NEPCA’s blog.

Winner: NEPCA's 2016 Rollins Prize

***Hollywood Riots: Violent Crowds and Progressive Politics in American Film* (2016). By Doug Dibbern. I.B. Tauris, 205 pp.**



A few years before the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC) conducted its witch-hunt to ferret out alleged communists in the Hollywood film industry—it held hearings in 1947 and 1951—there had been violent, racially-motivated disturbances in Los Angeles known as the Zoot Suit Riots (1943). There had also been brutal clashes between striking union workers and studio strikebreakers in the film industry (1945-47). According to film scholar Doug Dibbern (NYU), these instances of civil strife inspired a raft of independently produced Leftist “message movies” that featured violent crowds unleashed by a cynical press in order to promote fear, enforce social conformity, and bolster the new and more deeply repressive social order that emerged in the United States after the Second World War.

In his book, *Hollywood Riots*, Dibbern has identified a cycle of sixteen films made between 1949 and 1951 “in which mass violence is paramount and in which the causes of the violence are explained by the power of reactionary newsmongers to incite angry mobs that persecute minority

victims” (17). Dibbern rightly sees these films as the allegorical means by which progressive filmmakers fought the blacklist and the conservative daily newspapers of that era, i.e., forces promoting political paranoia that valorized discrimination and inflamed public opinion against organized labor, minorities, radicals, and dissidents of all kinds.

Much has been written about the shameful period that Lillian Hellman called “scoundrel time,” but until Dibbern’s superb study appeared, no one seems to have noticed, much less written about, the valiant rearguard action that had been waged by progressive filmmakers on America’s movie screens as America veered sharply to the political Right at mid-century.

Dibbern divides his book into three parts. In Part I (“Postwar Anxieties, Independent Aspirations: Political Filmmaking and the Economics of the film Industry”), Dibbern provides historical context behind the cycle of mob violence-themed films he is examining by delineating the economic factors that gave rise to independent film production, as well as the political factors that virtually destroyed the American Left in the late 1940s. In Part II (“Incendiary Ideologies, Reactionary Crowds”), Dibbern analyzes the political role played by L.A. metropolitan dailies, weeklies, and monthlies in shaping popular opinion and inciting mob violence. In Part III (“Creative Artists, Activists Historians”), Dibbern narrows his focus in order to examine and explicate the four most representative films in the mob violence cycle: Joseph Losey’s *The Lawless* (1950); Cy Endfield’s *The Underworld Story* (1950) and *The Sound of Fury* (1950), and *The Well* (1951), directed by Russell Rouse and Leo Popkin. Dibbern concludes his book by discussing the decay of progressive filmmaking: “By the end of the 1950s, the political factors that gave rise to the movies of mob violence had dissipated. The blacklist eventually came to an end, but its victims were no longer [Communist] Party members... [Los Angeles] was now a one-union town. The Civil Rights movement was gaining steam: race riots and lynchings seemed like they might have become a thing of the past ... The movies of mob violence themselves disappeared from critical consciousness” (160).

Concise, well-organized, meticulously researched, and written with the utmost clarity, *Hollywood Riots* tells a fascinating story well-grounded in political science, economics, social history, and film theory; it constitutes a valuable contribution to American film studies. Published some months before the election of Donald Trump, *Hollywood Riots* also seems to have taken on greater relevance of late. In today’s racially charged and divisive political climate, marked by civil unrest, red-baiting and increasingly shrill appeals to patriotism—ginned up by reactionary elements of the nation’s press and abetted by a rabble-rousing Chief Executive—a study of the media manipulation of popular opinion—and the progressive filmmakers who stood in opposition—offers instructive lessons from dark days not so long past.

Bob Niemi
St. Michael’s College

Redman, Samuel. *Bone Rooms: From Scientific Racism in Human Prehistory to Museums*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016. Pp. 373. \$29.95

Samuel Redman’s new monograph explores an interesting topic: the history and cultural significance of the vast collections of human skeletons that flooded museums and public fairs in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. By focusing his text on the careers and motivations of the collectors who stocked these Bone Rooms, Redman argues that this increasingly popular trend of disinterring ancient skeletons for the sake of scientific knowledge

and public display defined and perpetuated scientific racism, the practice of using scientific evidence to support racist ideas.

Redman focuses on the period between the Civil War and World War II, a period generally characterized by movement and displacement in American history. As the American West opened and pioneers transformed the land, scientists took advantage of access to new regions and especially to battlegrounds and gravesites, which they eagerly opened. These gravesites yielded ancient skeletons of unfamiliar peoples and cultures that fascinated anthropologists and biologists who were looking for clues about race, biology and prehistoric migration. The bones they uncovered were usually disinterred, removed from their final resting places, and then shipped back to museums to be studied and cataloged. Many were also displayed for the scientific community and for the public. Bone Rooms became very popular and well populated, as many other museums including the Smithsonian, the Mütter Museum in Philadelphia and the Field Museum in Chicago received thousands of skeletons from avid collectors.

Redman captures the exuberance and the excitement that these early scientists felt at their discoveries and notes their complete lack of hesitation or reticence in desecrating gravesites and removing people's earthly remains. Redman repeatedly asserts that these anthropologists, driven by their disrespect of non-white peoples' bodies and cultures, institutionalized scientific racism, perpetuated racial divides, and contributed to the development of eugenics, a growing field at the time.

Specifically, Redman follows the careers of a number of men who were at the center of this movement: Aleš Hrdlička, a Czech-born physical anthropologist at the Smithsonian; Franz Boas, a Prussian cultural anthropologist at Columbia University, Alfred Kroeber, Boas' student, and W. Montague Cobb, an American anatomist and physical anthropologist at Howard University. Redman spends a great deal of his book tracing these men's biographies and careers and describing their contributions to the development of Bone Rooms and scientific racism. Hrdlička comes across as a particularly odious person. Appointed to the Smithsonian as the curator of the Bone Rooms in 1903, he aggressively competed with other collectors to amass the largest collection and to ensure that his cataloging and interpretation of skeletal significance dominated the field. Hrdlička dedicated his career to trying to uncover the patterns of prehistoric human migration to North America and seems to have truly believed that a biological analysis of the racial identity of the skeletons would reveal those answers. Hrdlička's greatest rival was Franz Boas, who had trained as a physicist, geographer and anthropologist-ho spent his career studying Eskimo-Aleuts and other indigenous peoples across North America. He later became a curator at the American Museum of Natural History. Boas not only collected bones for scientific inquiry, but also sold them to the public. Redman presents both men as obsessive collectors who were so driven by their need to catalog human subjects and type them racially that they never once thought to reflect upon the ethics of their activities.

W. Montague Cobb, who was hired by Howard University in 1932 and thus belonged to a later generation, did raise ethical questions, though he was also a collector. Cobb collected over 700 skeletons for Howard and also kept the skeletons from the cadavers that he used in the medical classes that he taught. Cobb differed from his predecessors in that he emphasized similarities among races rather than differences. Cobb, who was widely respected and influential, helped initiate a shift in thinking about bones and race and turn the tide against scientific racism. Cobb later became an activist and served as the president of the NAACP from 1976-1982. By using his scientific evidence and expertise, he was able to promote racial equality through his many compelling and authoritative publications.

Bone Rooms contains a vast collection of wonderful photographic reprints that depict both the individuals Redman discusses and the exhibits and the bone rooms themselves.

This book would be well used in classes interested in public history, sociology, anthropology, or racial politics. Although Redman's topic would spark discussion among popular culture scholars, he does not ask the same kinds of questions that a scholar of pop culture would. Redman, a historian, does look at the displays of bones in museums and at World Fairs, but is much more interested in dissecting the personalities of the great collectors of the age and condemning the field of racial science, which, fortunately, seems to have disappeared from legitimate scientific studies and museum exhibits. In 1990, the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act initiated the process of returning many of these bones to their rightful locations. In his epilogue, Redman reflects on mortality and humanity within the context of these cultural and political changes.

Katherine Allocco
Western Connecticut State University

***Legends Never Die: Athletes and Their Afterlives in Modern America.* By Richard Ian Kimball. Syracuse University Press, 2017.**

On July 4, 1939, New York Yankees first baseman Lou Gehrig bade farewell in a speech that has found its way into the pantheon of American history's most famous orations. When Gehrig told a Yankee Stadium crowd of 61,808 that he considered himself "the luckiest man on the face of the earth," there was nary a dry eye to be seen. All knew that Gehrig was stricken with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, which robbed him of his strength and life before he reached his 38th birthday.

In a sense, argues Brigham Young University history professor Richard Ian Kimball, Gehrig was indeed lucky; he became a forever-young immortal. Kimball's is a study of how American culture canonizes athletes who die in the bloom of life. In a deft introduction, Kimball places sports stars that flamed out early within a grander sweep of Western luminaries, including Achilles, Pheidippides, battlefield soldiers, John F. Kennedy, and Princess Diana. He invokes A. E. Housman's 1896 poem "To an Athlete Dying Young" to affirm journalist Simon Barnes' observation that "only the unfinished is perfect" (3). In Kimball's words, "The black hole of unfulfilled potential magnifies the energy in the universe of memory" (4). Young athletes who perish tap into collective mourning rites as few others do.

Kimball is perhaps hyperbolic to claim that sports deaths help Americans cope with their own mortality, but he is correct to assert that such passings are imbued with public significance. He illuminates this through selected case studies, beginning with the only athlete whose early death rivals Gehrig's in the public imaginary: Notre Dame football star George Gipp. If you have any doubt that sports matter, consider how Gipp's 1920 parting subsequently advanced the careers of his coach, Knute Rockne, and the man who played "The Gipper" in a 1940 Hollywood film: Ronald Reagan.

Kimball packs a lot into just 144 pages of text, with each figure standing as synecdoches for American society. The deaths of rodeo stars Bonnie McCarroll (1929) and Lane Frost (1989) hardened gender roles, with McCarroll's tragic bronco ride leading to enduring limitations on events open to women, and Lane's demise reinforcing perceptions of male toughness. Call it the difference between tragic victimhood and brave martyrdom. The sexual spin-off of this is the

1962 death of boxer Benny Paret at the hands of welterweight Emile Griffith. Many date the decline of boxing's popularity from this public death, but a greater irony lies with the savagery of Griffith's blows after Paret uttered a homophobic slur. Griffith was a known bisexual. That such an individual was compelled to preserve his manhood with such bloodlust speaks volumes. NASCAR driver Dale Earnhardt represents the other end of public morality scale. Kimball whimsically references him as "Princess Diana with a push broom moustache" (100), but his death at the 2001 Daytona 500 took on redemptive meanings for numerous evangelical Christians, complete with perceived miracles. Earnhardt's death also provided a template for the phenomenon of "cybermourning" (10) in the emerging electronics age. Kimball connects each athlete to popular culture; after all, mourning remains mostly private unless print, film, television, music, or cyberspace universalizes and memorializes loss.

Kimball concludes with a look at three baseball legends that were not "lucky" enough to die young: Joe DiMaggio, Mickey Mantle, and Ted Williams. Each lived long enough for revisionists to tarnish their images. DiMaggio's persona as a suave sophisticate gave way to stories of his jealousy, money obsession, and egoism. Mantle's once hidden vices such as his alcoholism and womanizing became public knowledge. It's hard to imagine a sadder exit than that of Williams, who was already viewed as a misanthrope. But that is inconsequential in comparison to the family squabble that led to Williams being cryogenically frozen after death, his body in one tube, his severed and battered head in another. One might argue that Mantle is out of place in this chapter, as before his death he did public penance for his misdeeds and is now invoked as a cautionary tale—a new life for an old legend. But such a quibble hardly diminishes Kimball's larger point that athletes who outlive their fame are heroes for a season, whereas those taken prematurely are immortals.

Legends Never Die is a natural for undergraduate classes given its brevity and its easy-to-digest prose. It would work quite well in a sports history course, but also in classes focusing on aspects of American culture such as celebrity and fandom studies, identity politics, folklore, civic religion, and explorations of death and dying.

Robert E. Weir
University of Massachusetts Amherst

Dava Sobel. *The Glass Universe: How the Ladies of the Harvard Observatory Took the Measure of the Stars*. New York: Viking, 2017. 324 Pg. \$30.

Dava Sobel has written another wonderful book about women and science. *The Glass Universe* tells the story of the dozens of women who worked in the Harvard College Observatory in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. She lovingly narrates the biographies and contributions of these hard-working students, college graduates and family members who painstakingly interpreted the images of stars that the male astronomers of Harvard had captured on their glass plates. Sobel sings the praises of the patrons, human computers, spectrographers, mathematicians and aspiring astronomers who worked long hours for very little pay to contribute to the growth of astronomy.

The story begins with Anna Draper, the generous widow who, in 1883, donated numerous telescopes and the glass plates containing stellar photographs to the Harvard Observatory. The director, William H. Pickering, another great hero of this story, recognized the potential of these instruments and hired as many willing assistants as he could regardless of gender. Dozens of young women applied and moved to Cambridge to begin logging long hours in the Observatory

interpreting the glass plate images of stars and then creating new systems of classification and measurements of the stars. The women whose stories Sobel tells include: Willamina Fleming, Antonia Maury, Henrietta Swan Levitt, Annie Jump Cannon and Cecelia Payne.

Pickering and his team of “computers”—those individuals capable of high-level mathematical computation—studied Draper’s glass plates, each of which contained an image of a star that had been captured from a long-exposure camera. At first, the images were used to help understand each star’s spectrum, which enabled useful categorization of stars. As the women worked, they were also able to use the plates to calculate the star’s matter and to also calculate the distance between stars. Pickering sent his male assistants (and later Annie Cannon) to the Andes and to California to take more photographs. This required that they lug expensive and sensitive equipment up mountaintops, treat the glass plates with photographic emulsion fluid, and then carefully pack the delicate plates to be loaded onto ships and sent back to Cambridge so that these women could analyze them. Although it took years, Harvard eventually created nearly half a million glass plate photographs that are still archived at the Observatory. Pickering’s ambitious project required great discipline, hard work, and a dedicated team willing to experiment with new methods and to ignore restrictive social convention. He seems to have recognized how fortunate he was to have such talented “ladies” on his staff.

Sobel writes beautifully. Her novelized style draws readers into the story and creates connections with each of the individuals she discusses. She frequently quotes letters and diaries and confidently ascribes emotions and an inner life to each of these women, thereby investing readers in their successes and challenges. Sobel describes complex scientific concepts and processes so deftly that any reader can understand them and get caught up in the excitement of these initial discoveries. Clearly, Sobel admires these pioneering young scientists who contributed so much and received so little recognition from Harvard during their lifetimes.

Sobel uses a diverse array of sources, including journal articles published from the findings of her subjects. In addition, she consults diaries, letters, lab notebooks, symposia proceedings, and newspaper advertisements written by the men and women who participated in these experiments. Her monograph includes eight pages of images that range from photographs, reprints of the glass plates, and portraits of the “ladies” themselves. This book also contains a useful glossary and timeline. Her meticulous research and inclusion of such personal images and sources contributes to the intimate feel of her text.

The Glass Universe is enjoyable and compelling. This book would be perfect for a women’s studies class or a history of science class.

Katherine Allocco
Western Connecticut State University

***The Banjo: America’s African Instrument.* By Laurent Dubois, Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2016.**

Laurent Dubois, professor of Romance Studies and History and director of the Forum for Scholars and Publics at Duke University, asks a seemingly simple question early on in his book: “What sound will accompany the end of days?” (19). The question serves as the beginning of the story of the banjo that draws upon the history of instrument making in tenth-century Spain and the prominence of lutes. Dubois notes that the lute began to transition during this time period from an instrument with a wooden body and an opening under the strings to a new

instrument made of a hollowed wooden body that was round or oval and covered with animal skin. The new instrument became known as the banjo. A prolific author with books on Haiti (2004, 2011) and the politics of soccer (2012), Dubois completed his research on the banjo with support from a Guggenheim Fellowship, a National Humanities Fellowship, and a Mellon New Directions Fellowship.

In his book, Dubois seeks to provide the reader with a biography of the banjo through its emergence in Africa to the folk music of Woody Guthrie and Pete Seeger from the 1940s and beyond (though post-1970s uses are more of a coda). The descriptions of the banjo in West African culture provide the reader with a detailed history of how the creation of certain instruments has a major impact on cultural conventions. Dubois explains that the banjo was used to “connect with both the past and the present, to build a bridge of memory and recall. It welcomed different styles, generating solidarity and community through its sound” (52). While this description is offered as a reflection of the early days of the banjo, Dubois shows how the ability of the banjo to link the past to the present and to cross cultural divides continued as the instrument grew in popularity among certain populations, including the newly invented genre of bluegrass after 1946, and the (mostly) white folk music revival that stretched from the 1940s through the 1960s.

While one may be able to find a book on the history of the banjo for a certain period of time, Dubois breaks new ground by offering a thorough biography of an instrument riddled with a diverse history. One of the strengths of Dubois’ book is his ability to move from time period to time period while keeping his reader engaged. Dubois does not shy away from politically complicated topics as he reflects on the role of the banjo as an integral part of minstrelsy. Further, Dubois details the role of the banjo in slave culture and how this was used as a means of protest as well as a means of escaping slavery.

Dubois’ book would be most appealing to those interested in music and popular culture. However, his writing and his ability to weave multiple areas of popular culture including art and literature into his explanations, makes this book suited to a wider population. The execution of the research and writing on the banjo as America’s African instrument is appealing to those who may question how history intersects with artifacts of which we pay little attention. For example, it remains underappreciated that the banjo’s centrality in “white” Appalachian music from the 19th century on was an appropriation of black culture. While most people have seen and heard a banjo, learning about how this instrument played a significant role throughout history may make the reader believe that a banjo very well be one of the sounds accompanying the end of days.

Andi M. McClanahan
East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania

Will Thomas. *The Seeking*. Edited by Mark Madigan. University of New England Press, 344 pages, 2013 edited reprint of 1953 original.

The Seeking slipped under the radar, but deserves new attention. My copy literally got buried under an avalanche of titles that came my way and I failed to notice that my longtime Northeast Popular Culture Association colleague Mark Madigan, edited this volume. It should be considered a companion to Jane Beck’s *Daisy Turner’s Kin* (2015), which mines the same turf: experiences of African Americans in Vermont.

The Seeking is, at turns, fascinating and frustrating. It was penned by African American journalist, novelist, and scriptwriter Will Thomas, the *nom de plume* of William “Bill” Smith (1900-70). He’s a nearly forgotten writer whose best-known work was his 1947 novel *God is For White Folks*. *The Seeking* focuses on the years 1946 to 1953, after Thomas sold his home in Los Angeles and moved his young to Westford, Vermont, a small village in a remote corner of Chittenden County. His reasons for doing so, by his own admission, were not entirely logical, and the fact that he first contemplated relocating to Haiti instead is testament to his conflicted mind. Thomas was a contemporary of Richard Wright and, like he, struggled to make sense of the vagaries of race in America.

The Seeking is another challenge to viewing race as a simplistic binary. Thomas’ father was white and he didn’t begin to think of himself as black until after his father’s death. His mother moved the family from Kansas City to a black Chicago neighborhood, where Will assumed the last name of his African-American stepfather. Thomas later married Elise Leseur, who was 1/8th black, and they parented three children. *The Seeking* often feels as if Thomas is working out an identity crisis. It was a challenging time to do so. World War Two brought triumph over the perverse racial theories of fascism, yet American racial progress had scarcely advanced since the collapse of Reconstruction in the 1870s. By the time Thomas landed in Westford, he had abandoned Christianity as an oppressor’s religion and was on the cusp of losing his national faith as well.

Thomas spoke with the fervor of a Frederick Douglass as filtered it through the accommodationism of a Booker T. Washington. This probably explains why his work fell into obscurity during the Black Power-influenced late 1960s. Thomas’ personal bifurcation comes across during his Vermont sojourn. Fiery words and complaints of racism stand side by side with vigorous pursuits of white patronage, burning desire to be viewed as a serious writer, and efforts to fit into rural Vermont village life. He was a casual friend of Wright and knew James Baldwin, but spent more time with black intelligentsia such as Ralph Bunche, Horace Clayton, Jr. and Chester Himes. By 1953, when Thomas published *The Seeking* and appeared on Edward R. Murrow’s “This I Believe” program, his tone was more that of the optimist than the activist.

Thomas admits he was ready to take offense at every glance, frown, and stray word, yet he found warmth among flinty New Englanders. He does not make Vermont into a Utopia and notes casual animus towards Jews, Catholics, and French-speaking residents—not to mention the stray racial slur, but he found acceptance among his neighbors and respect from Vermont’s arts community. He is especially praiseful of Dorothy Canfield Fisher, the Green Mountain State’s grand *femme de lettres*. His account is out of synch with recent critics who charge Ms. Fisher was a bigot.

Whom do we trust? Thomas’ prose is old-fashioned and lacks the timeless qualities of Wright or Baldwin. Little of book’s dialogue rings true. In fact, much of it has been deliberately crafted to enhance self-perceptions of literary brilliance, manliness, wisdom, and steely head-of-family decision-making. Elise Thomas emerges as a nay-saying foil for her husband’s musings rather than an independent mind or helpmeet. As NPR’s Dan Gediman reveals in the afterward, there is much about Thomas/Smith to tarnish his exalted claims—multiple marriages, a peripatetic lifestyle, shaky finances, and poor health. The Thomases divorced in 1955, with Will staying in Vermont until around 1960. It took sleuthing to unearth the final decade of his life.

We are left with a tantalizing account of a black family in isolation in one of the whitest states in the Union. It makes a nice companion piece to Beck's work on Daisy Turner, but what do we make of either book? My take away is that folks judge their neighbors differently than they categorize people in the abstract, that New Englanders respect honest effort, and a race-blind society remains elusive.

Robert E. Weir
University of Massachusetts Amherst

The following books were reviewed on NEPCA's blog since the last conference:

Jeremy McCarter, *Young Radicals*: A fascinating look at five pre-World War One radicals: Randolph Borne, Max Eastman, Walter Lipmann, Alice Paul, and John Reed
<https://nepca.blog/2017/06/19/book-review-young-radicals/>

Dave Anthony and Gareth Richards, *The United States of Absurdity*: An uneven but often funny look at trivia and overlooked episodes from the past <https://nepca.blog/2017/06/03/united-states-of-absurdity-mine-it-but-dont-assign-it/>

John Fea, *Was America Founded as a Christian Nation*: An important and balanced look at a thorny American issue <https://nepca.blog/2017/05/05/was-america-founded-as-a-christian-nation-book-review/>
David Grann, *Killers of the Flower Moon*: Did you know that Osage Indians in the early 20th century were among the richest Americans? Here's the story of what happened.
<https://nepca.blog/2017/04/11/killers-of-the-flower-moon-the-last-indian-war/>

Roseanne Montillo, *Wilderness of Ruin*: The story of America's youngest serial killer.
<https://nepca.blog/2017/03/28/wilderness-of-ruin-both-fascinating-and-frustrating/>

Tom Grace, *Kent State: Death and Dissent in the Long Sixties*: A look at what really led up to Kent State from the perspective of one of its survivors <https://nepca.blog/2017/01/23/kent-state-reconsidered/>

Alan Robert Ginsberg, *The Salome Ensemble*: A look at Rose Pastor Stokes, Anzia Yezierska, Sonya Levien, and Jetta Goudal and the connections between them
<https://nepca.blog/2016/12/07/salome-ensemble-a-slice-of-20th-century-history/>

Jay Newman, *Strange History*: As advertised and perhaps a bit of guilty pleasure reading, but lots of stuff you can steal for classroom use! <https://nepca.blog/2016/12/05/nothing-high-falutin-but-maybe-stuff-you-can-use/>

THE CULTURED CLASSROOM

This section is devoted to ideas about teaching popular culture. Two book reviews were posted in the past year that could be of use.

Rob Weir offered some ideas about how to use the book *White Trash* to explore issues of social class, race, and politics: <https://nepca.blog/2017/01/20/history-of-white-trash/>

Tim Delaney and Tim Madigan discuss ways in which sociologists and philosophers can integrate pop culture into courses. Their book is reviewed here: <https://nepca.blog/2017/01/20/history-of-white-trash/>

TENTATIVE 2017 CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

This schedule shows all scheduled panels and presenters. The final schedule will be handed out at registration, though none of the panel times will change.

2017 NEPCA CONFERENCE SCHEDULE : (as of 9/25/17)

All conference panels will take place on the 8th and 9th floors of the Campus Center,
University of Massachusetts Amherst

REGISTRATION – Amherst Room, 10th floor, Campus Center
Friday, October 27, 12:00-5:30 pm
Saturday, October 28, 8:30 am-3:30 pm

Session I: Friday, October 27, 1:00-2:30pm

PANEL 1 – CC 803 – The Fantastic: Horrors Past and Present

CHAIR: Amie Doughty, SUNY Oneonta

“Horrorfying Mythical Obstacles: Masculine Anxieties and Alternate Gazes in Robert Eggers’s *The Witch* (2015),” Dustin Fisher, University of Cincinnati

“Images of the Indigenous Monster in *The Green Inferno* (2013),” Erica Tortolani, University of Massachusetts Amherst

“The Decomposing Youths and the Revival of the Zombies in Contemporary Korea,” Ha Rim Park, Seoul National University

“The Bunhill Apocalypse: Robert Aickman’s ‘Larger than Oneself’ (1966) as a Post-Christian Metaphor,” Steffen Silvis, University of Wisconsin-Madison

PANEL 2 – CC 805-09 – Film & History: Representation of Identity Factors

CHAIR: Megan Genovese, University of Pennsylvania

“Prestige Cinema and Historical Queer Rehabilitation,” Audrey Black, University of Massachusetts Amherst

“Reception of Hindi Films by the Indian Diaspora in the US,” Eren Odabasi, University of Massachusetts Amherst

“The Politics of Provincialism in Disney’s Princess Movies,” Marilyn Squier, Independent Scholar

PANEL 3 – CC 811-15 – American Literature I

CHAIR: Mark Madigan, Nazareth College

“Femme Non-Fatal: Holding's Noir Classic *The Blank Wall*,” K. A. Laity, College of St. Rose

“Philip Wylie and the Clash of the Modern,” Louis Mazzari, CUNY LaGuardia Community College

“Klay's *Redeployment*: Home in a 21st Century War Story,” David Downey, Wentworth Institute of Technology

“Corruption of the Innocent in Social Problem Fiction,” David Rochefort, Northeastern University

PANEL 4 – CC 903 – Digital Media: Historical Issues

CHAIR: Shelly Jones, SUNY Delhi

“Videogame Poetics: Return of the Avant-Pop,” Adam Crowley, Husson University

“*Comedy Bang Bang's* Aesthetics: Notes Towards a Podcast Canon,” Paul Arras, SUNY Cortland

“Sound and Semiosis in the Selenitic Age of *Myst*,” Stephen Armstrong, Eastman School of Music

PANEL 5 – CC 904 – Politics and Civic Life

CHAIR: June-Ann Greeley, Sacred Heart University

“Mapping a Catalytic 1930s (Jewish) Communist Public Sphere,” Joel Saxe, University of Massachusetts Amherst

“Muslims and Terror in US Popular Culture,” Neelofer Qadir, University of Massachusetts Amherst

“The Intersection of Pop Culture and Political Activism in *The Handmaid's Tale*,” Andi McClanahan, East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania

PANEL 6 – CC 905-09 – Gender & Sexuality I

CHAIR: Don Gagnon, Western Connecticut State University

“Embracing the ‘Dumb Blonde’: Navigating Identity in Anita Loos' *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*,” Krista Aldrich, North Dakota State University

“Heart-of-Gold in the Heteronormative Body Market; Belle du Jour's *Secret Diary of a Call Girl*,” Marisa Carter, Western Washington University

“Battling for Equality: Sexuality vs. Skill in the UFC,” Jennifer Drissel, Pennsylvania State University, Harrisburg

PANEL 7 – CC 911-15 – Health, Disease, & Physical Culture

CHAIR: Jennifer Tebbe-Grossman, MCPHS University

“JFK and the 50-Mile Hike Phenomenon,” Richard Preiss, Suffolk University

"Undetectable: Representation, Temporality, and AIDS Archives," Marika Cifor, Bowdoin College

"Death Makes a Sign, After All," Emily West, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Session II: Friday, October 27, 2:45-4:15pm

PANEL 8 – CC 803 – The Fantastic: Meeting Monsters

CHAIR: Michael A. Torregrossa, Independent Scholar

"'Everything That Ought to Have Remained Hidden': Sublimation and the Uncanny in *Anya's Ghost* (2011)," Shane Gomes, North Dakota State University

"Murder, Reproduction, and Bad Women in Junji Ito's *Tomie*," Rahel Worku, University of Maryland

"A Trekkie's Guide to the Zombie Apocalypse," Cinzia DiGiulio, Merrimack College

"Scientists Become Monsters: *The Strain's* Dr. Goodweather," Kristine Larsen, Central Connecticut State University

PANEL 9 – CC 805-09 – Film & History: Film Adaptations

CHAIR: Eren Odabasi, University of Massachusetts Amherst

"From Print To Film: American Actuality Films (1896-1901)," Alex Bordino, University of Massachusetts Amherst

"Women Adapting Life, Literature, and Film in the 1920s," Alan Ginsberg, Columbia University

"*Inherent Vice*: Entropy, Heat Death, and Ethics," Gary Vaspoul, Salve Regina University

PANEL 10 – CC 811-15 – American Literature II

CHAIR: Anthony G. Cirilla, Niagara University

"The Notorious E.E.D.: Rap in the Poems of Emily Dickinson," Holly Norton, University of Northwestern Ohio

"Cultural Appropriation in Tony Hillerman's Navajo Narratives," Eve Kornfeld, San Diego State University

PANEL 11 – CC 903 – Digital Media: Identities, Roles, and Relationships

CHAIR: Emily West, University of Massachusetts Amherst

"Blinded by the Roll: The Critical Fail of Disability in *D&D*," Shelly Jones, SUNY Delhi

"The Perception of 'Black' on Turkish Twitosphere," Bilge Narin, University of Massachusetts Amherst

"*Dark Souls 3's* Phallogocentric Messaging System," Stephanie Jennings, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

"*Mystic Messenger* and the Future of Parasocial Romance," Kim Khanh Tran, York University

PANEL 12 – CC 904 – Humor

CHAIR: Kraig Larkin, Colby-Sawyer College

“The Hitler Rant Parody Phenomenon,” Robert Niemi, St. Michael’s College
“*The Great Dictator* and *Saturday Night Live*,” Amanda Salmon, Belmont University
“Straddling Isaac Oliver’s Queer Lines: Consuming, Resisting, and Becoming an Intimacy Idiot,” Kimberlee Pérez, University of Massachusetts Amherst

PANEL 13 – CC 905-09 – Gender & Sexuality II

CHAIR: Carol-Ann Farkas, MCPHS University

“What’s the Story with Gay Men and *The Wizard of Oz*?,” Dee Michel, Independent Scholar
“Queer Kids in *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*,” Elizabeth Light, Fordham University
“LGBT Representation in *The Office* and *The Mindy Project*,” Meaghan Loraas, Texas State University
“Stop Killing Fictional Lesbians,” Nicole Rizzuto, Drew University

PANEL 14 – CC 911-15 – Teaching Hip-Hop: Boosting Student Agency

CHAIR: Kellie Deys, Nichols College

Roundtable/workshop presenters: Kellie Deys, James Deys, Cathy Temple, Sofia Piazza

Session III: Friday, October 27, 4:30-6:00pm

PANEL 15 – CC 803 – The Fantastic: New Approaches to the Heroic in Fantastic Fiction

CHAIR: Shane Gomes, North Dakota State University

“Happy Endings: Frankenstein’s Creature as a Romantic Lead,” Maggie Damken, Independent Scholar
“Decentering Monsterhood: Blurred Histories, Genres and Narrative Identities in John M. Ford’s Fantasy *The Last Hot Time* (2000),” Angela Gustafsson Whyland, Southern New Hampshire University
“Guinevere, the Warrior Queen of Camelot?: The Altered Fate of Guinevere in Recent Comics,” Michael A. Torregrossa, Independent Scholar

PANEL 16 – CC 805-09 – Film & History: Memorable Images and Sounds

CHAIR: Carol Mitchell, Springfield College

“The Legal Journey of *Nothing Sacred*,” Claudy Op den Kamp, Bournemouth University
“Affective Sound in Fassbinder’s *In a Year with Thirteen Moons*,” Ryan LaLiberty, University of Massachusetts Amherst
“Towering Infernos, Smoldering Anxieties,” Randy Laist, Goodwin College
“@IAmJacksBot: Exploring Twitter Bots for Cult Film Tributes,” Randall Livingstone, Endicott College

PANEL 17 – CC 811-15 – World Literature: Gaiman and the Grimms

CHAIR: Susan Gorman, MCPHS University

“The Chronotope of *The Graveyard Book*,” Caroline Kidd, Texas State University

“Adapting Grimm: Points of Convergence, Divergence, Departure,” Matthew Jones, County College of Morris

“*American Gods*: Postmodern Epic or a Marker of Epic’s Demise?,” Susan Gorman, MCPHS University

PANEL 18 – CC 903 – Philosophy and Pop Culture: Philosophy and Popular Poetics

CHAIR: Anthony G. Cirilla, Niagara University

“Philosophy of Mind and Subalternity in *To Pimp a Butterfly*,” Austin Lillywhite, Cornell University

“Slam Poetry and Collective Reasoning,” Micah Isser, Independent Scholar

“Chill’ Moderation and Feminine Loudness,” Robin James, UNC Charlotte

“Medieval Philosophy and Saving Fame in the Videogame *MediEvil*,” Anthony G. Cirilla, Niagara University

PANEL 19 – CC 904 – Marketing and Advertising

CHAIR: Kraig Larkin, Colby-Sawyer College

“Don’t Put TV in the Corner: Accepting the Tube at Home,” Jennifer Hackney, Smithsonian-GW Corcoran Decorative Arts and Design History

“Princesses and Pirates: Disney’s Commodification of Childhood,” Priscilla Hobbs, Southern New Hampshire University

“The Impact of Female Empowerment in Advertising,” Victoria Drake, New York University

“Retail Therapy: The Cultural Importance of the Shopping Mall,” Allison McBride, Independent Scholar

PANEL 20 – CC 905-09 – Gender & Sexuality III

CHAIR: Don Gagnon, Western Connecticut State University

“Gendered Leisure in Mother’s Day and Father’s Day Cards,” Stephanie Kolberg, MCPHS University

“The Mother Tongue: Narratives of Race, Maternity and ‘Deviance,’” Stephanie Kaylor, European Graduate School

“Wonder Women: The Radical Impact of Cinematic S/Heroes,” April Heaslip, Southern New Hampshire University

PANEL 21 – CC 911-15 – Food & Foodways: International Cuisine

CHAIR: Terry Hamblin, SUNY Delhi

“Crime Cuisine: Food in International Detective Fiction,” Cecilia Macheski, CUNY LaGuardia Community College

“The Russians Are Cooking! Russian Food in 20th Century US,” Ann Kordas, Johnson & Wales University

“Cosmos a la Carte: The Food Travel Show as World Literature,” Steven Herran, CUNY Graduate Center

“Feasting on Fandom: Identity & the ‘Unofficial’ Fan Cookbook,” Jennifer Dutch, York College

Plenary Presentation:

"25 Years of Critical Pedagogy: The Media Education Foundation and Independent Film"

Sut Jhally

**Professor of Communication, University of Massachusetts Amherst
Founder and Executive Director, Media Education Foundation**

**Communication “Hub,” 3rd floor, Integrative Learning Center
7:30-9pm**

Session IV: Saturday, October 28, 8:45-10:15am

PANEL 22 – CC 803 – The Fantastic: New Approaches to the Fantastic

CHAIR: Nova Seals, Salve Regina University

“*The Princess Bride* and Slavoj Žižek’s Fantasy of the Real,” Heather Flyte, Kutztown University of Pennsylvania

“Madness and Mixed-Bloods: Racial Metaphors in Seanan McGuire’s October Daye Series,” Amie Doughty, SUNY Oneonta

“Heredity And The Hero: The Role of Heredity in Shaping Popular Heroes and Why It Matters,” Cheryl Hunter, University of Massachusetts Lowell

PANEL 23 – CC 805-09 – Television: Masculine Identities, Roles, and Personas

CHAIR: Cinzia DiGiulio, Merrimack College

“TV’s ‘G-Men’: Tall, Dark, Handsome, and Brilliant,” Jacqueline Brown, Independent Scholar

“Uprooting Roots: Race in *The Richard Pryor Special?*,” Jacob Walters, Cornell University

“Greed and Goomahs: Toxic Masculinity in TV’s New Golden Age,” Alexandra M. Lucas, Independent Scholar

PANEL 24 – CC 811-15 – Global Cultures

CHAIR: Stephanie Kaylor, European Graduate School

“When Private Knitting Becomes Public Art,” Carmen McClish, St. Anselm College

“Dance and Literature: The Brazilian Immigrant,” Nora Vaz de Mello, Federal Center of Technological Education/CEFET-MG

“Globalization, Bakhtin, and ‘Tiki Culture’ in the US,” Eric Silverman, Wheelock College

PANEL 25 – CC 903 – History and the Uses of the Past

CHAIR: Terry Hamblin, SUNY Delhi

“Indian Hill: Re-imagining America’s Beautiful Past,” Amy Lenoce, Naugatuck Valley Community College

“Trauma in the Museum: A Case Study,” Cheryl Harned, University of Massachusetts Amherst

“Architecture’s War on Terror: Gulf Futurism,” Joseph Donica, Bronx Community College

PANEL 26 – CC 904 – *Suicide and Pop Culture I*

CHAIR: Mike Alvarez, University of Massachusetts Amherst

“Pilate Dead in *Songs of Solomon*: Suicide, Natality, and the (Un)Thought of Blackness,” Adrian P-Flores, University of Arizona

“Don’t Die: Video Games and Suicide,” Dese’Rae Stage, Independent Scholar

“‘It Happens All the Time’: The Werther Effect of Eric Steel’s *The Bridge*,” Brennan Thomas, St. Francis University

“The Production and Consumption of Suicide in Raoul Heimrich’s *Suicide* and the Shock Site BestGore.com,” Mike Alvarez, University of Massachusetts Amherst

PANEL 27 – CC 905-09 – Music: Conflicts and Transitions

CHAIR: Brian Wright, Fairmont State University

“‘I Think Al Qaeda Sent Them’: The Nickelback Hate Assemblage,” Ryan Tsapatsaris, University of Pennsylvania

“Actually Listening: Nickelback’s Musical Bona Fides,” Frank Rein, Independent Scholar

“Don’t Know Much About History: And We Don’t Care!,” John Dougan, Middle Tennessee State University

“Abuela Claudia Beats the Odds in *In the Heights*,” Geraldine Wagner, Johnson & Wales University

PANEL 28 – CC 911-15 – Teaching and Pop Culture: Pop Culture in the Classroom

CHAIR: Karen Honeycutt, Keene State College

“Constructing a Pedagogy of Identity Through Gonzo the Magnificent,” Christopher Ketcham, University of Houston Downtown

"Heroes and Superheroes: Pop Lit and Writing Studies," Charlee Sterling, Goucher College
"Teaching Professional Ethics through Superhero Comic Books," Chris McGunnigle, University of Louisiana at Lafayette
"Teaching Sociology Through TV: An Update," Karen Honeycutt, Keene State College

Session V: Saturday, October 28, 10:30am-noon

PANEL 29 – CC 803 – The Fantastic: Re-Thinking the Monstrous

CHAIR: Heather Flyte, Kutztown University of Pennsylvania

"'If You're So Hungry, Why Don't You Get a Job?': Patrick Bateman as Neoliberal Monster and Hero in *American Psycho*," Caitlin Duffy, Stony Brook University
"Tackling the Femme: The Psycho-Biddy Genre," James Patrick Carraghan, Kutztown University
"The Aesthetics of Abjection in *Anna Dressed in Blood* (2011)," Nova Seals, Salve Regina University
"The Brides of Dracula Tell All: Dracula as Romantic Protagonist in Recent Neo-Victorian Fiction," Terry Riley, Bloomsburg University

PANEL 30 – CC 805-09 – Television: Female Embodiments

CHAIR: Andi McClanahan, East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania

"Nolite te carborundorum bastardes, Bitches: *The Handmaid's Tale*," Rebecca Carpenter, McDaniel College
"'It Isn't That I am a Purist': A Case Study in Appropriation," Megan Genovese, University of Pennsylvania
"Pregnancy and Motherhood in *Little Women* and *Total Divas*," Marla Harris, Independent Scholar
"Supergirl and Lena Luthor: Constructing Personas," Johanna Church, Johnson & Wales University

PANEL 31 – CC 811-15 – Sports: Race and Sports

CHAIR: Dennis Gildea, Springfield College

"Depictions of Race in Early Sports Media," Brian Sheehy, North Andover High School
"Black Baseball in Louisville, Kentucky," Joe Baumstarck, University of Louisville
"Taking 'the Crookeds with the Straights': Baseball in the Play and Film *Fences*," Philip Wedge, University of Kansas

PANEL 32 – CC 903 – War, Peace, and Culture

CHAIR: Bruce Cohen, Worcester State University

"Disability and Gender Essentialism in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*," Victoria Parker, University of New Hampshire

"Prime Time Vet: The Vietnam Veteran on Television," Shawn Driscoll, Independent Scholar

"America, Stereotypical Roles, and Asian Characters in *M*A*S*H*," Ashley Stevens, Independent Scholar

PANEL 33 – CC 904 – *Suicide and Pop Culture II*

CHAIR: Mike Alvarez, University of Massachusetts Amherst

"Dreaming of 'Life After Death' When You're 'Ready to Die': Notorious B.I.G. and the Sonic Construction of Black Afterlives," *Andrew Belton, UNC Chapel Hill*

"Durkheim and Freud: Competing Narratives of Suicides," *Aaron Botwick, CUNY Graduate Center/Lehman College*

"When Masculinity Fell On Black Days: Media Representations of Male Celebrity Suicides 1994-Present," *Kathryn Rinehart, North Dakota State University*

PANEL 34 – CC 905-09 – Music: Beyond Genre and Gender Limits

CHAIR: Amanda Scherbenske, Eugene Lang College - The New School

"Listen to the Racket: Lesbian Reggaeton Across the Americas," *Elena Igartubutu, University of Massachusetts Amherst*

"Sexual Queerness and Moral Agency in R&B Culture," *Marlon Moore, US Naval Academy*

"Women's Rock Narratives," *Jacqueline Ellis, New Jersey City University*

"Postgenre as Reparative Practice," *Amanda Scherbenske, Eugene Lang College - The New School*

PANEL 35 – CC 911-15 – Teaching and Pop Culture: Pedagogic Strategies

CHAIR: Nicole A. Heller, Siena College

"Wanna Play? Creative Strategies for Teaching Pop Culture," *Lance Eaton, Brandeis University/North Shore Community College*

"Challenges of Media Representation in the Media Classroom," *Erin Waggoner, University of Connecticut*

"Compare and Contrast in Sakai Lessons," *Julie Ann DeCesare, Providence College*

"Course Design in the Age of Trump," *Daniel Mulcare, Salem State University*

NEPCA Annual Luncheon and Business Meeting

Marriott Center

11th Floor, Campus Center

12:15-1:15pm

Session VI: Saturday, October 28, 1:30-3pm

PANEL 36 – CC 803 – The Fantastic: Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*: 199 Years Old and Still Going Strong

CHAIR: Kristine Larsen, Central Connecticut State University

"*Frankenstein* and the Real: A Psychoanalytic Look at Power and the Unconscious,"
Emilie Lewis, Simmons College

"Coexistence of Gender Binaries: Bisexualism in *Frankenstein*," Christopher Maye,
California State University, Long Beach

"Modern Prometheus Bound," Dennin Ellis, Independent Scholar

PANEL 37 – CC 805-09 – Television: Politics and Social Order

CHAIR: Andi McClanahan, East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania

"*Beto Rockefeller*: Telenovela and National Identity Under Brazil's Military Dictatorship,
1968-1969," Thamyras Almeida, Brown University

"Persian-American Identity in Bravo TV's *Shahs of Sunset*," Lauren Silber, University of
Massachusetts Amherst

"All in the Game: Foucault, Bourdieu, and *The Wire*," Valerie Saturen, William Paterson
University

"Instruments of Social Order in HBO's *Deadwood*," Nadum, Boston University

PANEL 38 – CC 811-15 – Sports: Global and Political Perspectives

CHAIR: Dennis Gildea, Springfield College

"Athlete Activism: An Historical Review," Linda K. Fuller, Worcester State University

"A 'Difficult' History's Derby: Poland-Russia at EURO 2012," Martin Kozon, University
of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

"Mulatto Soccer: Race and National Identity in Contemporary Brazil," *Tiago Maranhão*,
Vanderbilt University

"Soldiering' On: Thai Female Athletes and National Heroes," Sukrittaya Jukping,
Thammasat University, Bangkok

PANEL 39 – CC 903 – Comics/Graphic Novels: War Topics

CHAIR: Audrey Black, University of Massachusetts Amherst

"Retconning Magneto within Holocaust Memory Studies," Joshua Roeder, Drew
University

"Reporting for Duty: Census and Diversity in G.I. Joe Comics," Wade Simpson,
Bennington College

"This Crummy War': War Comics and Vietnam, 1965-2016," Stephen Connor, Nipissing
University

"The Demythologizing of the Soldier," William Price, Brandeis University

PANEL 40 – CC 904 – Ethnicity and Race: International Issues

CHAIR: Joe Baumstarck, University of Louisville

“‘Gross and Racist’? Sam Harris and Liberal Islamophobia,” Yusef Hayes, North Shore Community College

“What’s in a Name: Rivière Niger, a Racial Epithet, or the Noblesse and Beauty of Africa,” Robert MacGregor, Bishop’s University

“Making Waves: The Culture-Nature Relationship in Disney’s *Moana*,” Colby Miyose, University of Massachusetts Amherst

PANEL 41 – CC 905-09 – Music: Hardware, Techniques, and Strategies

CHAIR: Cory Matieyshen, Independent Scholar

“Rethinking Popular Music History Via the Electric Bass,” Brian Wright, Fairmont State University

“Transparent Sound: The Klon Centaur and Neoliberal Ethics,” Matt Brounley, Stony Brook University

“DJ Screw’s Mixtapes and the Poetics of Representing Houston,” Matthew Carter, CUNY Graduate Center

“Making Old New Again: Charles K. Harris and Musical Synergy,” Alex Lawler, Case Western Reserve University

PANEL 42 – CANCELLED

Session VII: Saturday, October 28, 3:15-4:45pm

PANEL 43 – CC 803 – The Fantastic: New England Horrors

CHAIR: Cheryl Hunter, University of Massachusetts Lowell

“Body Horror in Lovecraft Fiction and Film,” Shastri Akella, University of Massachusetts Amherst

“The Dead Past in New England Vernacular Poetry,” N. C. Christopher Couch, University of Massachusetts Amherst

“Tilting at Vampires,” Katie Gagnon, Independent Scholar

PANEL 44 – CC 805-09 – Television: Audiences, Their Practices, and Domestic Spaces

CHAIR: Megan Genovese, University of Pennsylvania

“Push Pin Projects (PPPs) in Television and Cinema,” Benjamin Miller, Queensborough Community College

“The Role of the Internet in Modern Fandoms of Pre-Internet TV,” Laura C. Brown, Boston University

“Dexter at Home: Domesticated Monster / Ideal Father,” Stan Pelkey, Florida State University

PANEL 45 – CC 811-15 – *Psychology and Pop Culture*

CHAIR: Nicole A. Heller, Siena College

“Gestalt Theory in the Face of the Popular Music,” Mahdi Kammoun, Higher Institute of Music, Sfax, Tunisia

“Color Me Restless: Defying the Rhetoric of Adult Coloring,” Terri Toles-Patkin, Eastern Connecticut State University

“The Aftermath of Divorce in *Crazy Stupid Love*,” M. J. Wraga, Smith College

PANEL 46 – CC 903 -- Comics/Graphic Novels: Current Trends

CHAIR: Joseph Donica, Bronx Community College

“Wait Here While I Cover the Story: Flash and 2-Career Couples,” Charles Henebry, Boston University

“‘A Great Museum of Memories’: Paco Roca’s *La casa*,” Sarah Harris, Bennington College

“Realism and Rhythm in *Gemma Boverly*,” Haniyeh Barahouie, University of Virginia

PANEL 47 – CC 904 – Ethnicity and Race: The Construction of Blackness

CHAIR: Cory Matieyshen, Independent Scholar

“They Dared to Cross the Color Line,” William Foster, Naugatuck Valley Community College

“Monstrous Sexuality in Prime Time,” Kalima Young, Towson University

“*Steel*: Representing a Black Hero from Comics to Film,” Yann Descamps, Université Sorbonne Nouvelle - Paris 3

PANEL 48 – CC 905-09 – Music: Transformation and Reception

CHAIR: Louis Mazzari, CUNY LaGuardia Community College

“Joseph Schillinger and the Reception of Walt Disney’s *Fantasia*,” Jacquelyn Sholes, Boston University

“Bach Transmogrified: Baroque Rock’s Cultural Accreditation,” Sara Gulgas, University of Pittsburgh

“All You Need is Love: The Beatles and the Summer of Love,” Terry Hamblin, SUNY Delhi

PANEL 49 – CC 911-15 – Libraries, Archives, Collecting: Discovering Media Literacy @Your Library

CHAIR: Yonty Friesem, Central Connecticut State University

“Critical Media Literacy @Your Library,” Allison Butler, University of Massachusetts Amherst

“Media Smart @Your Library,” Mary Moen, ‘University of Rhode Island

"Media Production @The School Library," Brien Jennings, Narragansett Elementary School

"Filmmaking as Media Literacy @The Library," Pam Steager, Providence Children's Film Festival

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL/MEMBERSHIP MEETING: 5-6 pm TBA

All members are invited to attend and give feedback at this meeting, though only elected Executive Council members can vote on initiatives.

Executive Council Meeting Topics:

1. Preliminary assessment of the conference.
 - a. Discussion from Marty of what worked well and what needs improvement.
 - b. Discussion from Rob on way to make Google forms more accessible vis-à-vis NEPCA date base.
 - c. Open discussion.
2. Move Marty Norden as NEPCA president for 2017-18. Karen Honeycutt automatically moves into the Past President role. Kraig Larkin is relieved of (that) duty).
3. Treasury report
4. Meeting for 2018: Worcester State University. Move to appoint Russ Pottle as program chair at Peter Holloran's recommendation.
5. Elect executive council member to replace expiring term of Andi McClanahan.
6. Kudos to active area chairs. The following tweaks and changes are up for discussion (by all) and vote (by Council members):
 - a. Need chairs for: Ethnic and Race Studies chair; Humor; TV. Replace Marketing and Advertising chair?
 - b. Sentiment to divide Don's area (Gender, Identity, Sex & Sexuality) and create a separate Gender area. Alternative possibility is to reconfigure it as "Identities."
 - c. Sentiment to disband Musical Theater and incorporate into Music. Would it be better to organize a panel on musical theater if enough proposals came in? At present musical theater has had little traction.
 - d. We have a similar issue with Celebrity and Entertainment. The latter term seems too vague and overlaps other areas. Question for Andi: Would it clarify if we changed the name to Celebrity and Fan Studies?
 - e. June-Ann Greeley has agreed to rework two problem areas: Religion and Folklore. She will do so in a way that does not overlap with The Fantastic. Shall we allow her to work out a new angle in conjunction with Rob?
 - f. Northeast Studies/Travel & Tourism doesn't seem to generate hits. Too vague? Too narrow? Discussion of reconfiguration and/or disbanding.
 - g. Michael wants to subdivide The Fantastic into just Monsters. The Fantastic is our strongest area at present, so there is risk in subdividing. Is it better to focus narrowly or keep the current hydra and allow the chair to spin off papers that don't fit monsters into other panels?
 - h. New area titled Detectives, Outlaws and Rogues?

UPDATE YOUR INFO

Has your e-mail or mailing address changed? Have you changed jobs? If your e-mail or “snail mail” address has changed, please let us know so we can update our database. Each year we lose contact with dozens of you because contact information has changed. You can keep us up to date simply by sending a short email to: weir.r@comcast.net

FIRST CALL FOR PAPERS—NEPCA 2018 CONFERENCE

NEPCA is excited to announce that its 2018 conference will take place on the campus of Worcester State University in Worcester, Massachusetts the weekend of **October 19-20, 2017**.

You can direct initial queries to **Russ Pottle**: rpottle@worchester.edu NEPCA will update its Website and provide further information shortly after the rise of its 2017 conference.

Remember: If you have questions about whether your proposal is appropriate, ask a NEPCA area chair. A list of area chairs is listed on the Website, or by clicking this link:

<https://nepca.wordpress.com/fall-conference/nepca-area-chairs/>

If you'd like to be an area chair and/or propose a new area, please contact Rob Weir:
weir.r@comcast.net

NORTHEAST POPULAR CULTURE/ AMERICAN CULTURE ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

President	2016-17	Karen Honneycutt (Keene State College)
Past President	2016-17	Kraig Larkin (Colby-Sawyer College)
Executive Secretary/Treasurer		Robert Weir (UMass Amherst)
Social Media Strategist		Lance Eaton (Essex Community College)
Program Chair 2017 Conference		Marty Norden (UMass Amherst)
Executive Council [term expires]		Andi McClanahan (East Stroudsburg University) [2017] Mark Madigan (Nazareth College) [2018] Geraldine Wagner (Johnson & Wales) [2018] Carol-Ann Farkas (MPHS University) [2019] Jeff Cain (Sacred Heart University) [2019] Robert Niemi (St. Michael's College) [2019] Don Gagnon (Western CT State University) [2019]

See the NEPCA Website for a list of past presidents and past conference sites:
<https://nepca.wordpress.com/past-presidents/>

MEMBER ACTIVITIES

For updates on what NEPCA members have been doing, consult nepca.wordpress.com and select **NEPCA News Flashes** from the pull-down menu. Please let NEPCA know if you've published a book or an article, presented a paper, won an award, or gotten a promotion so we can share the news with your friends and colleagues.

One of the sad realities of an organization such as NEPCA, now in its 43rd year, is that some of the people who helped build the organization are taken from us. **Marie Ahearn**, our second president (1978-79) died in 2016. She is the second past president to pass away; **Eugene Schleh** (1987-88) died in 2007.

NEPCA ARCHIVE

NEPCA maintains an archive of past *NEPCA News* issues at the Worcester Polytechnic Institute library. This includes print copies from NEPCA's inception through 2014. The newsletter is now online and can be accessed from the website. If you have materials you think should be archived, please contact Rob Weir: weir.r@comcast.net. Those seeking to access archived NEPCA materials should contact: Archivist, W. P. I., Gordon Library, 100 Institute Road, Worcester, MA 01609.

REGISTRATION FORM
40th ANNUAL CONFERENCE
University of Massachusetts Amherst

This form is not necessary if you pre-registered. If you haven't, you can hasten registration by printing it and bringing it with you to registration. NO CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS ACCEPTED ON SITE—CASH OR CHECKS ONLY. You can preregister by using PayPal. There is a link on our Website.

NAME

MAILING ADDRESS.....

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ZIP CODE

CELL PHONE.....

E-MAIL.....

MEMBERSHIP: NEW..... RENEWAL..... (Check One)

AFFILIATION & RANK

SPECIALIZATION.....

FEES:

() CONFERENCE, MEMBERSHIP, and LUNCH REGISTRATION
In person \$110 *Fees for full-time faculty*

() CONFERENCE, MEMBERSHIP, and LUNCH REGISTRATION
In person \$60 *for adjuncts, graduate students, independent scholars, retirees*

() LIFE or INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERSHIP.....\$150

() NEPCA FUND CONTRIBUTION (tax deductible).....\$.....

() Deduct dues if you have paid for the calendar year or if you are a lifetime member. The part of your registration that goes to dues is \$30 for full-time academics and \$15 for all others. Those who have already paid dues and wish to pay the full amount will automatically have their dues applied to the next membership cycle.

TOTAL CHECK/CASH (IN US FUNDS).....\$.....