

Department of Popular Culture Newsletter

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 1 SEPTEMBER 15, 2010

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Layout: Menghan Liu

FROM THE EDITORS:

Welcome to our first departmental newsletter for the 2010-2011 academic year! In this issue, we bid farewell to the late Ray Browne, the founder of our department. But first, we welcome the next generation of practitioners of our discipline, those who will carry on Dr. Browne's legacy: the first-year Popular Culture MA class! Also in this issue: an update on the School of Cultural and Critical Studies, the complete AY 2010-2011 POPC Colloquium schedule, the official Call for Papers for the Music and Everyday Life conference to be held in April here at BGSU, a special Class of 2006 edition to inaugurate our Where Are They Now? series, and notes on how POPC professors spent their summer vacations (spoiler alert: one spent it repeatedly jumping out of airplanes...).

MEET THE FIRST-YEARS!



Sean Ahern
hometown: Albany, New York
undergrad: Colby-Sawyer College in New London, New Hampshire (aka The Women's College in *Animal House*)
major: communication studies
research interests: subcultures, music scenes, and superheroes.
fun fact: Busy Phillips (*Freaks and Geeks*, *Cougartown*) was my babysitter back in the day.



Brian Keilen
hometown: St. Johns, Michigan
undergrad: Aquinas College in Grand Rapids, Michigan
major: English
research interests: violence, particularly women who are violent; gender politics in sci-fi and graphic novels.
favorite show right now: *The Guild*



Cory Barker
hometown: Hartford City, Indiana
undergrad: Indiana University-Bloomington
major: journalism and communication & culture
research interests: television studies, including "cult" television, network branding, and audience responses to all things TV-related.
fun fact: I'm a wannabe television critic; I run my own television website (www.TVSurveillance.com) to pursue that goal.



Travis Limbert
hometown: Wapakoneta, Ohio (about an hour south of BG)
undergrad: BG
major: popular culture, minor in psychology
research interests: religion and popular culture, gaming and popular culture (tabletop gaming).
fun fact: In the summer of 2009 I got a free plane ticket to Honolulu, Hawaii to participate in the Magic: The Gathering Pro Tour.



Anna Mullins
hometown: Northumberland, England

undergrad: North Carolina State University
major: English literature
research interests: violence, particularly women who are violent; gender politics in sci-fi and graphic novels.
favorite show right now: *The Guild*



Christopher Ryan
hometown: La Crosse, Wisconsin.
undergrad: University of Wisconsin - La Crosse
major: English
research interests: horror films and horror literature, depictions of the occult in popular culture.
fun fact: Before coming to BGSU, I spent three years as a textbook editor at a major financial education company, and know more about state-specific insurance continuing education requirements than anyone ever should.



Michael Wiatrowski
hometown: Cape May, New Jersey
undgrd: The Ohio State University
major: English and comparative studies (focus on folklore studies)
research interests: folklore, narrative theory, virtual community, oral tradition.
favorite television show: *Firefly*



Nathan Winters
hometown: Indiana, Pennsylvania
undergrad: Indiana University of Pennsylvania
majors: English and anthropology
research interests: Japanese popular culture; gender and sexuality.
fun fact: I have an intense love of cats and fancy hats.

Compiled by Brandi Venable.



Class of '12 at work and at play.

All photos by Kendall Binder.

MEMORIAL TRIBUTE TO RAY B. BROWNE

FOUNDING CHAIR OF THE BGSU DEPARTMENT OF POPULAR CULTURE

DISTINGUISHED UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR EMERITUS

JANUARY 12, 1922-OCTOBER 22, 2009

Ray Broadus Browne was a man not afraid to make enemies. But this forceful, impassioned advocate for the serious academic study of popular culture also made many friends and had legions of admirers among those who worked and studied with him. Some of them came to share their recollections on Friday, June 18, 2010, when colleagues, family and friends gathered in BGSU's Prout Chapel to honor Ray's memory and celebrate his legacy. The reception in the Union following the memorial tribute included a display of items related to Ray's career selected by Eric Honneffer from the Ray Browne Collection at the Browne Popular Culture Library. Tributes spanning Ray's forty years at BGSU attested to his influence and inspiration as a lifelong teacher and learner.



L-R, Mike Marsden shares his memories of Ray, Matt Donahue and Bill Schurk at the reception following the service, members of Ray's family look at the display of Ray's papers from Jerome Library's Special Collection. Photos by Brad Phalin.

Michael Marsden, now Dean of the College & Academic Vice-President of St. Norbert College, first worked with Ray as a graduate student in 1964 and later joined him as a faculty colleague. Mike returned to campus after many years away to share his memories of Ray as an inspiring mentor of graduate students and as the visionary creator and first chair of the Department of Popular Culture, which was founded while Mike was a member of BGSU's faculty. Bill Schurk, Sound Recordings Archivist, had been a colleague of Ray's at BGSU ever since he was first hired in 1969. He told of "foraging expeditions" with Ray and his wife Pat to recover books, periodicals, and recordings from barns and dusty attics, amassing a vast collection of materials that formed the core of what is now the Browne Popular Culture Library and the BGSU Sound Recordings Archives. Jack Santino, Professor in the Department of Popular Culture, sent a tribute from Ireland noting that Ray was "an unfailing friend and supporter of graduate students and junior faculty" who "embraced ideas and initiatives from others whole-heartedly."

Former students expressed their appreciation of Ray as a teacher and mentor. Ray's son Kevin read a tribute from Ron Ambrosetti describing how Ray's continuing support and encouragement sustained him when his graduate education was interrupted by the military draft in the 1970s and inspired him to return to an academic career as a scholar of popular culture. Matthew Donahue, Instructor in the Department of Popular Culture, described his experience in a graduate seminar Ray taught shortly before his retirement. Ben Urish, editor of a forthcoming collection of Ray's key articles, spoke at the reception that followed about how Ray urged his students to probe beyond accepted theories and interpretations and to trust their own

ability to pursue original ideas.

Ray's daughter, Alicia Browne, described her father's lifelong curiosity and his desire to share with others the joy he found in intellectual exploration. Mike Marsden's closing remarks sum up the tributes to Ray Browne's influence and inspiration: "Ray Browne was a teacher who made everyone he met into a student, and then empowered them to help us all better understand and appreciate the importance and significance of everyday culture. We should take this opportunity in celebrating Ray's life to remind ourselves that he lives on in our collective work, which he is still encouraging us to complete through our memories of what he represented."

Dr. Marilyn Motz, Chair, Department of Popular Culture

Dr. Browne's original obituary in the BG Monitor:

<http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/mc/monitor/10-26-09/page72819.html>

Forthcoming anthology of Ray's writings edited by Dr. Urich:

<http://www.mcfarlandpub.com/book-2.php?id=978-0-7864-4162-4>

Document Conservator and Manuscript Specialist Eric Honneffer's Web-based guide to the Jerome Library's collection of Ray Browne's unpublished papers: http://www.bgsu.edu/colleges/library/pcl/pclms216_intro.html

UPDATE: School of Cultural and Critical Studies

The School of Cultural and Critical Studies is now over two years in the making and better for its long incubation. Last year it was greatly strengthened by the decision of the Department of Popular Culture faculty to join the school. Over the winter the proposed school charter was redrafted to encompass all four of the academic units that now comprise it: American Culture Studies, Ethnic Studies, Popular Culture and Women's Studies.

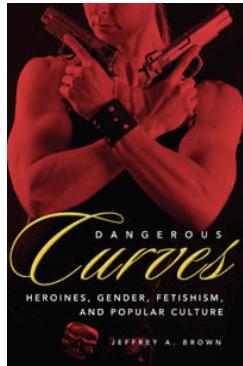
This academic year the new school will move forward on several tracks. It will undergo review by the curricular and academic governing bodies of the University. A joint committee of school faculty will put the finishing touches on a new core curriculum shared by all the school's programs while planning continues at a university level to consolidate all the school's units into one shared space. Everything seems to be moving according to schedule so as to have both an administrative structure and a new curriculum in place for the entering class of Fall 2011. Whether the school will be physically consolidated into one building at that point remains to be seen, but by this time next year we will officially greet our incoming class to the School of Cultural and Critical Studies.

Dr. Timothy Messer-Kruse, Department of Ethnic Studies



FACULTY NOTES IN BRIEF

POPC Overseas! Dr. Kristen Rudisill and Dr. Dan Shoemaker were invited by Professor Pramod Nayar to be keynote speakers at the University of Hyderabad in Hyderabad, India for a conference/workshop taking place September 6-8, 2010 about using popular culture to interest Indian students in American Studies. We're very excited to hear about their adventures in India, about which they promise to write in our next issue!



Dr. Jeffrey Brown's next book, *Dangerous Curves: Gender, Fetishism and Action Heroines in Modern Popular Culture*, is coming out this fall on University of Mississippi Press! More info: <http://www.upress.state.ms.us/books/1323>.

Dr. Esther Clinton is collaborating with **Jeremy Wallach** and **Kristen Rudisill** on a new anthology titled *Researching Popular Culture: An Introduction* featuring the work of a new generation of popular culture scholars along with some classic contributions to the field. Topics covered range from Barbie dolls to Halloween to *American Idol*. The book prospectus is currently under review at the University of Wisconsin Press (more details in future newsletters!).

Dr. Becca Cragin reports the following article: Cragin, Becca (2010) "Beyond the Feminine: Intersectionality and Hybridity in Talk Shows," *Women's Studies in Communication*, vol. 33, no. 2, pp. 154-172.

Dr. Matthew Donahue had a very cool music video accepted in the annual juried art exhibition "Toledo Area Artists" sponsored by the Toledo Museum of Art: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W-ru3Eb_TDE. He also exhibited two of his art cars in the Maker Faire July 31 and August 1 at the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan, and won the Editor's Choice Award for his "Red, White and Blue Jackson Pollock-tik" car. Here's the article about it from the BGSU Monitor: <http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/mc/monitor/08-09-10/page84330.html>. In addition to the Maker Faire event, he exhibited three of his art cars in Louisville, Kentucky at the Kentucky Art Car Weekend sponsored by the Kentucky Museum of Art

and Craft August 5-7 and in Columbus, Ohio at the Hot Times Music and Art Festival September 10, 11 and 12. And speaking of art cars, Dr. Donahue will be exhibiting photographs of his art cars as part of the juried exhibition at the Arts Commission of Greater Toledo-Parkwood Gallery Series in Toledo from October 12 through November 19; for more information: www.acgt.org or call (419) 254-2787.

Professor Jack Santino has been awarded the Fulbright-Alexis de Tocqueville Distinguished Chair at the Sorbonne in Paris and will be Distinguished Professor in American Studies at France's leading university for AY 2010-2011. He arrived in Paris last week and reports that he is gradually settling in. Dr. Santino also had the opportunity to visit the Arc de Triomphe, which he describes as "massive" and "breathtaking."

In August, **Dr. Dan Shoemaker** was invited to speak at his alma mater, Antioch College, as part of their series on Freedom Summer. Dr. Shoemaker was asked to speak about the Civil Rights Movement's impact on American popular culture, and to introduce and contextualize the film *In the Heat of the Night* (1967, dir. Norman Jewison). He spent the following day doing archival research about Antioch's near-demise and current revival.

Dr. Jeremy Wallach's 2008 book, *Modern Noise, Fluid Genres: Popular Music in Indonesia, 1997-2001*, has been reviewed favorably in major academic journals in France, the UK, and Malaysia as well as top American journals in general anthropology, Indonesia studies, and cultural anthropology. More info: <http://www.modernnoisefluidgenres.com/reviews/> For information on Jeremy's forthcoming co-edited volume with Duke University Press, click on www.metalrulestheglobe.com.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW? *Special Class of 2006 Edition*

Alex Boroff is still writing fluff journalism pieces for local publications in Northwest Ohio, and, for the time being, that's just fine with him. He also has an upcoming side gig as an English instructor at Tiffin University starting fall semester 2010, which means that he's been brushing up on his gerunds and split infinitives and comma splices and so forth. Alex and his wife Emily (who remains Alex's primary point of contact with the outside world) have two wonderful children: Eleanor, who will be three years old in September, and Henry, who is six months old. Both are quite adept at keeping their parents busy, busy, busy, or crazy, crazy, crazy, depending on the day. Alex hopes all is well with everyone who has passed through or still resides in the hallowed halls of the Department of Popular Culture at BGSU. He also hopes the building gets a bigger parking lot someday, just for the sake of the people who still work there.

Rick Claypool is an online organizer for Public Citizen, a consumer advocacy organization in Washington, D.C., founded by Ralph Nader nearly 40 years ago to rein in corporate power. Rick has used the Web to mobilize a grassroots network of more than 100,000 activists to advocate for universal health care, breaking up the "too big to fail" banks on Wall Street, and amending the Constitution to assert that political spending by corporations is not the same thing as speech by actual human beings. In other words, probably not doing quite enough to undermine corporate hegemony to please Adorno and guilty of refusing to imagine what McLuhan might say about Twitter.

Michelle Cordone currently lives in Overland Park, KS, a suburb of Kansas City, with her husband and her rabbit, Bun Bun. She's working on the lit review for her PhD in American Studies from Saint Louis University. Recently, her paper "Who is the Doctor?: The Meta-narrative of Doctor Who," which she co-authored with her husband John Cordone, was published in the anthology *Ruminations, Peregrinations, and Regenerations: A Critical Approach to Doctor Who* (2010).

Following graduation and a brief period of language study in the Faroe Islands, **Sarah Conrad Gothie** spent an additional year at BGSU working as a research assistant in the Department of English and earning an MA in Literary and Textual Studies. She is currently a third-year PhD candidate in American Culture at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, where she specializes in material culture, museum studies, and food studies. In 2010 she co-organized "Thinking About Things": Interdisciplinary Futures in Material Culture," an international conference for graduate students (www.tat2010.com), and co-founded an extracurricular interdisciplinary workgroup for Michigan graduate students interested in museum studies (www.rackhammsw.weebly.com).

Celina Meyers has spent the past four years working for Borders at their home office in Ann Arbor, Michigan. She's currently the Replenishment Analyst for DVD and Blu-Ray, and she's thrilled to have a job where discussing movies and television is required and encouraged! Prior to joining the DVD team she worked with several music categories, including rock, pop, folk, blues, easy listening, and classical. Her short but sweet contribution to academic publishing is the entry she wrote for the TV show "Felicity" in *Girl Culture: An Encyclopedia* (2007).

Kristen Moore, under the auspices of the JET program, moved to Japan for two years, where she "taught" some "English" to a bunch of rural, non-academically-inclined students of various ages; bewildered so many kind people with her faulty Japanese pronunciation; came to appreciate the gentle beauty of the passage of time marked by the cycle of happenings in the rice fields; was briefly courted by a door-to-door salesman; and saw a monkey cross the road! And then she returned to America. And bounced around a bit—some more teaching experiences here, some months in Ann Arbor there. And now she is ensconced in a delightful position at the Joplin Police Department, where she astounds and amazes Joplin's Finest with her organizational skills and can-do attitude. And she in turn is astounded and amazed by the colorful cha-

-acters of her little Missouri town, not to mention the capturing of criminals, especially when it happens right in front of her very eyes! Also, she is taking drumming lessons. That is all.

Adam Murdough moved back home to Robesonia, PA immediately after completing his M.A. at BGSU and went to work for his family's business, Murdough's Décor Inc., retailers of fine Christmas decorations in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. His job is to track inventory and help with buying new merchandise, and he likes to think that his Popular Culture degree affords him some small insight both into the tastes and behaviors of his customers and into the creative decisions of the artists and manufacturers who supply his stores with ornaments and other shiny things.

Adam still reads and loves comic books, and his degree has allowed him to serve as a quasi-authoritative voice on Comic Geek Speak, a locally produced podcast about comics that has attained a global following. On the side, he occasionally does some freelance copyediting and indexing of scholarly books, including those written or edited by the Department's own Jeremy Wallach.

Compiled and edited by Adam Murdough.

CALL FOR BLURBS: Regardless of what years you were here, we want to hear from you! Please send all reports of your current activities and whereabouts to Esther Clinton at estherc@bgsu.edu.

MUSIC AND EVERYDAY LIFE



Photograph of NYC subway musicians by Odd Todd, www.oddtodd.com.

MIDWEST CHAPTER OF THE SOCIETY FOR ETHNOMUSICOLOGY ANNUAL MEETING BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY, BOWLING GREEN, OH, APRIL 8-10, 2011 KEYNOTE SPEAKER: DR. HARRIS M. BERGER, TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

The conference theme for the 2011 meeting will be “Music and Everyday Life.”

Paper proposals should include an abstract of no more than 250 words; panel proposals should include a 250-word abstract for each paper plus a 200-word panel abstract. For more information and all submissions, please contact Jeremy Wallach, MIDSEM President, jeremyw@bgsu.edu.

Abstract Submission Deadline: February 1, 2011



Left: Dr. Montana Miller (in white helmet) with skydiver Mindy Alguire conducting participant observation research for a project on the folkways of the skydiving subculture. Photo from a video shot by Steve Kanat. **Right:** During his travels across Europe this past summer, Dr. Matthew Donahue told current members of legendary German band Accept about the heavy metal and popular culture conference he is helping organize, which is scheduled to take place at BGSU in April 2012. You can tell they're excited.

COMING ATTRACTIONS

Volume 2, Number 2 (Nov. 2010) is our Special Travel Issue. Second-year MA students Sade Young and Jared Brown will be writing about their experiences in Burkina Faso this past summer, POPC Ambassadors Rudisill and Shoemaker will write about their recent visit to India, Jack Santino will send word from France, and the editors might even say something about an upcoming trip to Indonesia. Plus much more!

Don't forget our Twitter feed! Go to
<http://twitter.com/PopCultureBGSU>

