



# IFUSS Newsletter

International Forum for U.S. Studies

International Programs, The University of Iowa

Spring 2002

**G**reetings! We hope you and your loved ones are all well, and that your intellectual passions remain as active as ever. We have been in touch with many of you over the past 12 months and have had the pleasure of seeing and working with several of you as well. We thank you for your continued support, friendship, concern, scholarship, and creativity. For many of us the past twelve months have been a roller-coaster ride. In the aftermath of September 11, the continuing violence in more than one part of the Middle East, and the heightened and dangerous tension between India and Pakistan, it is easy to forget that the past year also brought with it great intellectual engagement, wonderful personal connections, and special personal accomplishments (not to mention adventures).

IFUSS is alive and well, and hosting nearly a dozen colleagues (for varying periods of time) this spring semester. Our Ford Foundation "Crossing Borders" grant funds will be coming to an end, but we continue to have Rockefeller Foundation support for the special initiative focusing on connections with U.S. specialists in Latin America. And thanks to Jane's relentlessly wonderful efforts we have been able to secure a small seed grant to begin a comparative project on "Americanization."

We are back in the U.S. after spending the 2001-2002 academic year in Budapest, Hungary, teaching in the Department of American Studies at Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE). It was terrific to be based in Central Europe and to have numerous opportunities to meet, talk, and read work by colleagues in so many countries from all over Europe. Engaging conferences and connections took both of us to various parts of Hungary and to Russia, Germany, England, and France. And they took Jane to Romania, Estonia, Italy, and Moldova as well.

We are indebted to the Salgo-Noren Foundation and to Enikő Bollobas and her colleagues in American Studies at ELTE who made this possible. Jane and I shared the Salgo Chair in American Studies, splitting the teaching duties so that Jane taught three courses in the fall and I taught three courses in the spring. Working with Hungarian students seriously engaged in the study of the United States was also a personal treat for both of us, and we are delighted to remain in touch with quite a good number of the ELTE students.

It was exciting for both of us to teach material we care about in a very different context. For Jane this meant teaching three of her favorite courses: "Arts in America," "Museums and the Politics of Representation," and "Theories and Methods in American Studies" (taught at the doctoral level). For me it meant using this as an opportunity to develop three new courses focusing almost exclusively on the U.S.: "Race, Racism, and Anti-Racism in the U.S.," "Contemporary American Lives: Experimenting with Social Science Methods," and "Visions of America: Representations and Their Critiques" (taught at the doctoral level). We were happy to be involved in the first year of ELTE's doctoral program in American Studies, and are delighted to know that a critical mass is emerging now that there are two classes of doctoral students engaging in lively debate and keeping each other going. Those of you who have taught students here know the freedoms and fears and frustrations and joys that go along with teaching in a different system of higher education. The really curious, open, serious students are wonderful, even when they're not quite sure what to do with you, and the bureaucracy seems inescapable.

We took great pleasure in seeing IFUSS people over the past year: Chris Saunders in South Africa; Moshe Shokeid, Geoff White, and Jan Radway in Washington, D.C.; Enikő Bollobas in Hungary; Emory Elliott in New York; Kousar Azam and R.S. Sharma in Moscow and South Africa; Tania Venediktova and Heinz Ickstadt in Moscow; Anna Maria Martellone in Florence; and wonderful new additions to the IFUSS network Sonia Torres (Rio de Janeiro) and Loes Nas (Cape Town) at the Board meeting of the International Association for American Studies which was held in Keele, England, in April 2001.

We hope to see many more of you in the near future through the new International American Studies Association (on whose Board we now both serve), at opportunities elsewhere, and even here in Iowa City. We continue to expand our knowledge and our network as we go to press, scheming and plotting as usual to continue learning and provoking. As we approach the seventh anniversary of the day we got the great news from the Rockefeller Foundation about the terrific initial four-year grant that launched us, we are delighted we took the plunge and remain relentless about continuing.

*Virginia and Jane*

**IFUSS Co-directors:**

Jane Desmond & Virginia Dominguez

**Newsletter editors:**

Leslie Abadie & Amy Spellacy

**Layout designers:**

Chui Yee Tang & Sok Lin Lim

# IFUSS activities in 2001

## AMERICAN STUDIES: IFUSS VISITS SOUTH AFRICA



*IFUSS delegates to South Africa share their reflections on the trip. From left to right: Virginia Dominguez, Rich Horwitz, Kristin Solli, Erica Still, John McKerley, Jane Desmond. Not pictured: Deborah Lombard.*

Six universities in South Africa played host to a team of IFUSS travelers in the summer of 2001. Part of the larger Crossing Borders Ford Foundation initiative at the University of Iowa, the trip focused on “Reciprocal American Studies” by exploring firsthand the ways in which the U.S. is studied, researched, and taught in South Africa. A special emphasis of the “Reciprocal American Studies” project is the relationship between India, South Africa, and the U.S. This trip built on a similar journey to India in March 2000.

The nine-member delegation met with faculty and students at universities serving diverse populations in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Durban, and Cape Town. The two-week trip featured formal presentations as well as informal conversations and meetings with students, faculty, public intellectuals, and cultural activists. Chris Saunders, History Professor at the University of Cape Town, participated in the 2000 India trip and, in turn, hosted the IFUSS delegation in Cape Town.

Delegation members included: IFUSS Co-Directors, Jane Desmond and Virginia Dominguez; IFUSS Board Member Richard Horwitz; four UI graduate students, Kristin Solli and Deborah Lombard (American Studies), Erica Still (English), and John McKerley (History); and 1999 IFUSS Fellow and current IFUSS Board Member Kousar Azam and Radhe Shyam Sharma from Osmania University in India. In preparation for the trip, participants viewed films and read books and articles on the current situation in South Africa. As a group, they discussed South African films and music as well as U.S. depictions of South Africa.

Upon returning to Iowa, IFUSS hosted a roundtable discussion for the travelers to share their reflections with an audience of twenty UI faculty members and students. The delegates talked about how the trip contributed to their academic work and future avenues of inquiry.



*IFUSS delegates from the U.S. and India meet with South African scholars. Third from left to right: Kousar Azam, John McKerley, Radhe Shyam Sharma, Rich Horwitz.*

John McKerley said the trip provided him a wealth of personal experience from which to draw when he teaches about South Africa. These insights, he said, range from the mundane—the correct pronunciation of “veld” (grassland)—to the transformative—the profound poverty of life in a squatter camp. Kristin Solli mentioned the visit to the Centre for Jazz and Popular Music at the University of Natal in Durban as helpful in her study of popular music and culture. And Deborah Lombard highlighted visiting an exhibition and meeting with students in Guguletu to mark the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Cape Town’s 1976 protests. The exhibit, titled “We Are Not Fighting—Don’t Shoot,” documented the events of the famous student protests in Soweto. Some students who survived spoke and the mothers of some of the students who were killed sat in the audience. Deborah said that seeing the mothers’ faces and hearing firsthand from the students was a vivid connection to the real lives and legacy of the continuing struggle in South Africa.

Furthermore, the wide-ranging discussion touched on issues such as comparative South African/U.S. history, forgiveness and the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and the agency of South African academics at this time of great change and opportunity for the nation.



*IFUSS delegates Erica Still, Kristin Solli, and John McKerley (on right) with South Africa graduate students at the University of Cape Town.*

The trip was successful in forging ties between people in the U.S., India, and South Africa. And, as Erica Still suggests, it gave the participants understanding of their work as a part of a larger community, “This trip was eye-opening, to say the least. It helped me to see myself in light of the larger world.”

*Look for more on the South Africa trip on the IFUSS website in April when an article by Deborah Lombard will be posted. She reflects upon her return to South Africa with the lens of an American academic tourist.*  
(<http://www.uiowa.edu/~ifuss>)

# Recapping activities in 2001

## IFUSS OFFERS SPECIAL COURSE: FOREIGN SCHOLARSHIP ON THE U.S.

Building on the “Reciprocal American Studies” trips to India and South Africa, Jane Desmond and Virginia Dominguez developed and taught a Crossing Borders Graduate Seminar titled “Foreign Scholarship on the U.S.: Special Focus on India and South Africa” in Fall 2001 at the University of Iowa. The course explored the intellectual and political contours of the academic study of the U.S. outside the U.S., and the key issues, methodologies, and possibilities and constraints that form work in these geographical regions.

Readings by scholars outside the U.S. were supplemented by guest speakers, such as Dr. Makarand Paranjape from Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi, as well as readings focusing on how academic knowledge is constructed. Topics covered in the class discussions included the impact of the U.S. abroad, the overlap and distinction between notions of “globalization” and “Americanization,” the reception and reconfiguring of U.S. popular culture and consumer products abroad, and comparative studies of social differentiation along the lines of race, class, caste, and ethnicity.

Two graduate students, Brent Steele and Sharmadip Basu, describe how the course contributed to their academic development:

While I intended on taking the class for purely selfish reasons (in order to gain a foothold on some fresh research ideas, I felt the class would “jog” up some ideas), the events of September 11 made discussions so much more than simply academic exercises. The class was special for not only the subject matter of the texts, but also for the perspectives on the events occurring within and outside the United States in the wake of World Trade Center and Pentagon attacks.

On a purely academic level, this class exposed me to different angles of research, both methodological and theoretical in nature that I definitely would not have been aware of taking the electives offered solely in my department (political science). This extra exposure, of course, had its merits. Perhaps the most important revelation was that, when deciding on a dissertation topic, I needed to be fully aware of the truly global nature of research available in my field of inquiry. Not only could the possibility exist that I could be doing something that had already been done in the United States, but now there was the distinct probability that outside of American academia there existed publications that may have unfortunately already covered certain topics I may have been interested in. Therefore, the most redeeming quality of the course simply was its ability to make me aware of a larger pool of research, to both guide and caution me on my dissertation possibilities. With two professors who facilitated group discussion (and either playing devil’s advocate at any opportune time), class discussion proved lively and provocative. Most importantly, the professors did a good job of synthesizing discussion from students who came from enormously diverse disciplinary backgrounds.

- Brent Steele,  
*UI graduate student in Political Science*

I am a first year international graduate student from India. My academic interests encompass transnational transmission of American culture and cultural expressions, especially the transmission of American sub-cultural phenomena that do not have the benefit of “mainstream” channels of cultural movement across national boundaries.

My first significant step in approaching the aforementioned objective and conceiving it in concrete terms amenable to subsequent research has been achieved through the Crossing Borders Seminar class on Foreign Scholarship on the U.S. with Dr. Virginia Dominguez and Dr. Jane Desmond. What made the course particularly special was the emphasis the professors placed on the social, cultural, economic, and political context out of which such scholarship emerges, the various stereotypes of America that the authors dwell on and the audience for it. However, what was a wholly new experience for me was how the class discussions were conducted. It was one of the most interactive, intellectually stimulating and engaging classroom atmospheres that I have ever been in. We could throw any idea—however politically correct or incorrect—on the table for discussion. I will never forget the class on Tzvetan Todorov’s *Conquest of America*, which was slated for discussion right after the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks. Certain books assigned for the course like *Reading National Geographic* and *How to Read Donald Duck* have profoundly affected the way I read any text now.

This course has not only widened my world-view significantly, it has also made my thinking process far more nuanced. It will stand me in immeasurable good stead as I proceed further with my graduate studies.

- Sharmadip Basu,  
*UI graduate student in American Studies*

## 2001 IFUSS FELLOW ANA CELI



Dr. Ana Celi, Professor of North American Literature and Director of the Department of Languages at the Universidad Nacional de Río Cuarto, Córdoba, Argentina, came to the University of Iowa in the spring of 2001, as the first fellow in a new initiative to extend IFUSS activities into Latin America. During her residency, Dr. Celi taught a newly developed six-week course, “Integrating North and South through Literature,” in the American Studies department. The class discussed works by U.S. and Latin American writers—Rudolfo Anaya, Ana Castillo, Lilian Castillo-Speed, William Faulkner, Gabriel García Márquez, Walt Whitman—not only to explore reciprocal influences but also to provide a wider context for the study of American culture.

Dr. Celi also gave a successful talk on interdisciplinarity in ethnic literature, which generated a lively and stimulating discussion among the faculty and students in attendance. She spent the rest of her time in Iowa conducting her own research at the university libraries and establishing intellectual connections with UI faculty.

Her IFUSS residency was funded by a new three-year Rockefeller Foundation initiative to stimulate a new level of scholarly exchange among U.S. and Latin American specialists on U.S. culture.

# Future Activities & New Initiatives

## 2002 IFUSS SCHOLARS

Throughout the spring 2002 semester, IFUSS will welcome 10 distinguished scholars to the University of Iowa. Here is a brief introduction to our visitors:

- **Kousar Azam**, Professor of Political Science at Osmania University, India, and 1999 IFUSS Fellow, is returning to Iowa March 4-12 to participate in the Crossing Borders Convocation. From 1995-2000, she served as Senior Academic Fellow at the Indo-American Center for International Studies (previously the American Studies Research Center), which hosted the March 2000 conference “Rediscovering American Studies.”
- **Sabine Broeck**, Professor of English and American Studies and Vice President for International Relations at the University of Bremen, will be at the University of Iowa from March 26-April 13 to discuss possibilities for establishing transnational collaborative research projects with IFUSS.
- **Nila Das** is Professor of English at the University of Kalyani in India. Dr. Das came to the University of Iowa in spring 2000 under a Crossing Borders research residency; she is returning March 4-11 to participate in the Crossing Borders Convocation.
- **Eva Federmayer**, Associate Professor of American Studies at Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest, Hungary, will be in Iowa from April 8 to July 11. A Keller Foundation grant recipient and IFUSS affiliate scholar, she will conduct research on her specialty area of African American literature and culture while in Iowa. Dr. Federmayer will also present a lecture titled “A ‘New Negro Woman’: Race, Gender, and Class in Jessie Fauset’s *Plum Bun* (1929).”
- **Lesley Marx** hails from South Africa, where she is Associate Professor of English at the University of Cape Town. Her research and teaching interests include American and South African culture, with a particular focus in literature, film, and history. Dr. Marx is coming to the University of Iowa March 4-16 to participate in the Crossing Borders Convocation.
- **Makarand Paranjape** is Professor of English in the Centre for Linguistics and English, School of Language, Literature, and Cultural Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi. Dr. Paranjape will be in Iowa for a month starting April 15 to conduct research on American Literature and to give a public lecture titled “Re-Presenting India: Indian English and its Con/texts.”
- **Lilea Rilea** is Deputy Dean of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature at Moldova State University. She has received a Fulbright grant to study at the University of Iowa under IFUSS’ sponsorship as an affiliate scholar. Dr. Rilea’s fellowship allows her to develop an American Studies curriculum for a new M.A. program in American Studies at her institution.
- **Christopher Saunders** teaches in the History Department at the University of Cape Town. He first visited the University of Iowa in the spring of 2000 with the Crossing Borders “Reciprocal American Studies” program and will return March 21 for two weeks. Dr. Saunders’ current research involves comparative racial politics of the United States and South Africa.
- **Radhe Shyam Sharma** is Professor Emeritus, Department of English, and former Dean of the Faculty of Arts at Osmania University. One of the pioneers of American Studies in India, he has contributed to American Studies curriculum development in Indian universities. He is returning to the University of Iowa March 4-12 to participate in the Crossing Borders Convocation.
- 2002 IFUSS Fellow **Sonia Torres** is Associate Professor at the Institute of Letters, Universidade Federal Fluminense, in Rio de Janeiro where she teaches English Language Literatures and Hispanic Literatures. She is former president of the Brazilian Association of American Studies, and is currently Vice-President of the International American Studies Association. Her IFUSS residency involves teaching a six-week course in the American Studies Department titled “America: Crossed Gazes, Close Encounters” (see side bar). In addition, she presented a lecture on March 1 titled: “Remembering the Alamo, Dismembering the Cowboy,” which was followed by an unusually lively discussion.

## **2002 FELLOW SONIA TORRES DEVELOPS NEW COURSE, “AMERICA: CROSSED GAZES, CLOSE ENCOUNTERS”**

**D**r. Sonia Torres’ six-week course for UI students examines a variety of cultural texts through a cross-list of novels, short stories, poems, essays and films produced by Americans from the U.S., the Caribbean, and South America—for example, Carson McCullers (U.S.) Clarice Lispector (Brazil), Paule Marshall (Barbados), Karen Tei Yamashita (US), Jamaica Kincaid (Antigua), Rolando Hinojosa (U.S.), Ana Castillo (US.), Silviano Santiago (Brazil), Luiz Rafael Sánchez (Puerto Rico), Paul Auster (US), Rubem Fonseca (Brazil), Julio Cortázar (Argentina), John Sayles (U.S.), Bruce McDonald (Canada), Bruno Barreto and Walter Moreira Salles (Brazil). Projected as a way of breaking down some of the barriers among “area studies,” the course focuses on different national identity discourses as they are defined through representations of space, such as the domestic sphere, “contact zones,” metropolitan spaces, and the open road.

## **IFUSS ANNOUNCES NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH SAGE PUBLICATIONS**

**I**n the next few months, IFUSS will begin serving as the American receiving address for the newly constituted journal entitled *Comparative American Studies*, to be edited by Paul Giles and published by Sage Publications in the U.K. Journal manuscripts and other submissions originating from within the U.S. can be sent to IFUSS’ mailbox. The new partnership provides the journal a visible editorial address in the U.S. and it provides IFUSS a visible institutional link to reinforce its profile as an international program.

## **THIRD CROSSING BORDERS CONVOCATION FOCUSING ON “GLOBALIZATION AND/OR SPACES OF HOPE”**

**A**s this newsletter goes to the press, scholars from around the world are coming to Iowa City to participate in the third Crossing Borders Convocation held on the campus of the University of Iowa on March 7-9, 2002. Panels of younger and established scholars, many returning from recent research in Asia, Africa, Latin America and Europe, explored the Convocation theme of “Spaces of Hope,” a phrase that comes from David Harvey’s book (2000) of the same title. Harvey examines the possibilities for social and economic justice under conditions of “late modernity,” and assumes a general bleakness as a result of globalization’s integrative economic, political, and cultural processes. By designating “spaces of hope” as the theme of the Convocation, we aimed to initiate a thoughtful discussion of the difficulties individual actors, communities and whole nations face in creating conditions of general welfare.

In order to reflect IFUSS’ participation in the Crossing Borders project through the Reciprocal American Studies Program, two of the convocation panels were made up of IFUSS scholars, “Reciprocal American Studies: Transformative Possibilities” and “American Studies Outside the United States: A Form of Globalization?” The IFUSS Reciprocal American Studies Program aimed to internationalize American Studies by fostering links not only between institutions in the U.S. and institutions elsewhere, but also by facilitating reciprocal connections among institutions outside of the U.S. This program is focused especially on the Indian Ocean area, specifically South Africa and India. IFUSS panelists are drawing on their international travel and research to examine the theme of the conference in relation to the Reciprocal American Studies program.

The Crossing Borders Convocation brought together University of Iowa scholars who participated in a trip to South Africa as well as a number of international colleagues, including Lesley Marx (South Africa), Sonia Torres (Brazil), Kousar Azam, Radhe Shyam Sharma, and Nila Das (India).

Drafts of the scholars’ presentations will be available on the IFUSS website soon.

## IFUSS LAUNCHES AFFILIATE SCHOLAR RESIDENCIES

IFUSS is pleased to announce the inauguration of a new residency program, the IFUSS Affiliates. This program is especially designed for scholars on sabbatical from their home institutions outside the U.S., who want to conduct American Studies research in the U.S. during the U.S. academic year (late August through May). It is also appropriate for scholars holding research fellowships such as Fulbrights or Wenner-Grens.

Although IFUSS cannot offer any monetary support for these residencies, we can arrange access to an excellent research library, a lively American Studies intellectual community, computer access and email account, and a small office account to help with costs for phone, copying, and mailing. In a few cases of long term residencies, office space may be available. In addition, we will assist the visitor, through the offices of International Programs, in locating housing. Affiliates must supply their own health insurance and make final arrangements for housing and transportation.

Exceptional scholars at all professional levels (post Ph.D.) are welcome to apply. Residencies usually run for terms of one or two semesters. Applications are accepted year-round, but please apply well in advance of your anticipated period of residence. Selection criteria include: excellence of the scholarly record, appropriateness of the proposed work to the IFUSS mission, and availability of resources for the application period.

To apply, please send a letter of application stating the dates you wish to be in residence, the nature of the specific research project that you will be conducting during the residency, and an indication of the type of fellowship or sabbatical support you will be arriving with. To this letter of application please append the following: a detailed description of the research project you will be undertaking while in residence and the previous work already done on this project (no more than five pages), a curriculum vitae and one sample article or book chapter from a recent publication.

While in residence, IFUSS Affiliate Scholars are expected to meet informally with University of Iowa faculty and students, attend IFUSS lectures/related events, and join fully in the intellectual life of the university. No formal obligations of lecturing or teaching are required, but on occasion we will be able to arrange a lecture or informal discussion of the Affiliate's work-in-progress if he/she so desires.

Although short research or conference trips off campus are fine, the Affiliate should plan to be in residence at the University of Iowa for the majority of his/her time, except during formal University holidays. In other words, Affiliate Residencies are not appropriate for those scholars merely needing a U.S. host institution as a sponsor for research they may wish to conduct in multiple sites for the duration of their time period. Rather, we offer the opportunity of conducting sustained research using excellent library facilities as part of a lively and committed American Studies intellectual community with a specific commitment to transnational American Studies.

## BOOKS ACROSS BORDERS: IFUSS ANNOUNCES A NEW INITIATIVE TO RESPOND TO THE NEED FOR AMERICAN STUDIES RESOURCES IN LIBRARIES OUTSIDE THE U.S.

Although the Internet increasingly makes available access to primary resources for research on U.S. topics (see the Richard Horwitz website featured on page 14) there is still a pressing need for access to works on the U.S. in fields like cultural anthropology, literature, social history, political science, geography, cultural studies, and art history. With the closing down or downsizing of many United States Information Service libraries outside the U.S. over the past several years, access to current books is needed even more. To address this need, IFUSS is spearheading the "Books Across Borders" project which links U.S. academics, U.S. presses, and libraries of academic institutions outside the U.S.

Many U.S. academics are asked to review manuscripts by leading U.S. presses. Since the monetary payment offered is very small, especially after taxes, many academics choose to receive books from that press in lieu of payment. If you do several reviews for one press, after a while, you have received the books from that press that you want. Here is where Books Across Borders comes in.

Instead of taking your "payment" in books, you donate those books to the program. Individual U.S. academics will be linked with academic colleagues overseas, who will then choose from among the press' available books those they would like to add to their institution's library. (The books go only to libraries where students and faculty may use them, not to single individuals.) In this way the books are well targeted to enhance the existing collection in the foreign library and to respond to the research agendas of foreign researchers. The U.S. academic in effect donates his/her labor in manuscript reviewing and the press sends the books directly to the recipient library. Presses may, of course, decrease the amount of books in order to cover their expenses for shipping abroad. For example, a reviewer's fee of the equivalent of \$150 U.S. dollars (which would ordinarily translate into a non-monetary payment of twice that amount in books) may supply \$200 of books, and the equivalent remaining for shipping costs.

We are just beginning to implement this program, with the IFUSS directors as the first contributors. In the future, we will be talking directly to leading U.S. presses to explain the new venture (which, of course, is good publicity for them in the long run, getting more of their publications widely read abroad). The program will begin by matching U.S. scholars with former IFUSS Fellows from various countries where the need for additional resources is particularly acute. Eventually, we would hope to expand this program to include books on the U.S. published by non-U.S. publishers, which are often just as difficult to get in the U.S. or in other countries outside their country of origin.

Please join us in this exciting new initiative. U.S.-based academics who would like to join us in this program can send us a brief email at [ifuss-cics@uiowa.edu](mailto:ifuss-cics@uiowa.edu)

# News & Information

## FROM THE DIRECTORS

Jane's new edited book *Dancing Desires: Choreographing Desires on and off the Stage* came out in print in fall 2001, published by the University of Wisconsin Press. Virginia says the red cover is something to behold, and the content of the book rich and daring. Jane is delighted it is out and getting an excited readership.

Virginia was selected recently to serve as the new Editor of the *American Ethnologist*, the main U.S. journal of sociocultural anthropology, beginning in July 2002. The challenge ahead is appealing and daunting, especially since (perhaps characteristically) she is proposing revolutionizing the journal which has lost some of its luster in recent years, and the Board of Directors of the American Ethnological Society, which owns the journal, thought that was "just great." Those of you who have edited journals yourselves are probably sighing with recognition!

## JANE DESMOND RECEIVES UNIVERSITY OF IOWA "GLOBAL SCHOLAR" AWARD, 2001

During this past year, as the University of Iowa's "Global Scholar," an award that provided research leave to travel extensively outside the U.S., I had the immense pleasure of attending "American Studies" meetings in a number of countries: Estonia, Moldova, Romania, Britain, Hungary, Chile, and France. In each place, I encountered lively debates, intense determination and, most often, a few very dynamic academic leaders who were donating their immense energies to building and/or maintaining a thriving academic community among scholars in multiple disciplines who work on issues related to the U.S. I am grateful to all of my hosts and colleagues who shared their work with me.

The privilege of seeing national communities of scholars debating among themselves is always an eye-opening experience, and it has renewed my commitment to continuing to build IFUSS as a transnational switching-point for a lot of that intellectual energy. In addition, the topics that are of concern to many of my colleagues outside the U.S. are also influencing my own work and the new work that IFUSS hopes to enable. In 2002-3 we will begin a pilot project on "Americanization" as a concept/practice/and critical analysis. We plan to link researchers from the U.S. and abroad for on-site analysis of this issue, which is, in some countries, a key topic of academic debate in U.S. Studies. The next newsletter will provide details on the structure of this multi-national research project. Stay tuned!

## NEWS FROM IFUSS FELLOWS, BOARD MEMBERS, AND AFFILIATES

Board member **Emory Elliott** coedited *Aesthetics in a Multicultural Age* (Oxford, 2002). The essays in the collection are from a 1998 conference at the University of California at Riverside called "Aesthetics and Difference: Cultural Diversity, Literature, and the Arts."

2001 IFUSS Fellow **Ana Celi** will be organizing the third conference of the Río Cuarto Association for American Studies, which will take place June 15-16, 2003. Dr. Celi also co-edited and contributed to *Saul Bellow in the Postmodern Era* (Río Cuarto National University Press, 2001).

Thanks to a grant from the Center for Global and Regional Environmental Research, Board member **Rich Horwitz** has been, among other things, studying American responses to the prospect of global warming. He is especially interested in communication or the lack of it among scientists, policymakers, and the general public. In the fall, he presented a paper on "Relations Between 'Folk' and 'Expert' Knowledge of Climate Change," at the Annual Meeting of the American Folklore Society in Anchorage, Alaska. He will present more of his findings at two upcoming conferences: "Facing and Effacing the Facts of Global Warming" at the annual meeting of the New England American Studies Association in Boston, April 26-28; and "Global Warming, Scientists and 'Stakeholders'" at the European Conference of the International Society for Literature and Science in Aarhus, Denmark, May 8-12.

In 2002-3, Rich will be on leave from the University of Iowa. He will be working in Rhode Island as a Senior Fellow of the Coastal Institute and hold visiting appointments in American Civilization at Harvard and Brown Universities.

Selections from 2000 Crossing Borders scholar **Chris Saunders'** new publishing projects include: *The Siege in History, in the Siege of Mafeking* (Brenthurst Press, 2001); *The Aftermath, in the Siege of Mafeking* (Brenthurst Press 2001); *Transition in Southern Africa: Comparative Aspects* (with H. Melber, Uppsala, 2001); and "South Africa's Regional Policy Approach" in *African Foreign Policies* (with R. Ralinala, Africa Institute, 2001).

**Tatiana (Tania) Venediktova**, 1999 IFUSS Fellow, is heading up the organizing committee for the Second Annual Russian Conference of the Fulbright Association of Russia, "The University Scholar and the Challenges of Contemporary Culture: The Fulbright Experience." The conference will take place April 20-21, 2002, in Yaroslavl, the ancient Russian city on the Volga river. Participants will learn more about each other's experiences and discuss the present and future of the Fulbright Alumni Association in Russia.

Tania is also director of the Fifth Summer School in Humanities that will take place in June, 2002, at Moscow State University. During the program, American and Russian specialists will explore this year's theme, "Popular Literature: American and Russian Experience in Cultural Mythmaking," through a series of lectures, seminars, and discussions.

**Geoffrey White** became President of the Society for Psychological Anthropology in November 2001, and recently co-edited with Takashi Fujitani and Lisa Yoneyama *Perilous Memories: The Asia-Pacific War(s)* (Duke 2001). In addition, Geoff is just finishing up his third year as Co-Director of the University of Hawai'i & East-West Center's Certificate Program in International Cultural Studies. That program will sponsor an international conference in September 27-28, 2002, "De-Americanizing the Global?: Cultural Studies Interventions from Asia-Pacific." For more information, email the program at: [cultural@hawaii.edu](mailto:cultural@hawaii.edu)

## ACHEN FOCUSES ON SEPTEMBER 11 AND ITS AFTERMATH

The Asociación Chilena de Estudios Norteamericanos (ACHEN) held its annual conference December 3-5, 2001, in Santiago, Chile, with a heavy emphasis on September 11 and its aftermath. Thanks to helpful information provided by Sonia Torres of Rio de Janeiro, IFUSS Directors Jane and Virginia contacted then President and political scientist María Eugenia Morales about the opportunity to attend the conference and meet with Chilean colleagues. In the end Jane presented a paper and Virginia chaired one of the key sessions devoted to "September 11 and Its Aftermath."

The heavy social science presence at this conference made it a significantly different experience from many the Directors have had over the past seven years in the U.S. and other countries. It furthered the desire to explore the institutional, disciplinary, and intellectual varieties of the practice (and politics) of American Studies scholarship around the world.

Titles of presentations (most of which were given in Spanish and which appear translated into English here) included:

- "The Chilean Story of Terror" (about the influences of Edgar Allen Poe on Chilean short story writers, by Teresa Poblete)
- "The Foreign Policy of the U.S. and Terrorism" (by Alberto Sepúlveda)
- "A Chapter in the Cold War in South America: Chile, September 11, 1973" (by Mario Valdés)
- "U.S. Treatment of Intellectual Property in connection with the Pharmaceutical Industry" (by Bernadita Blasco)

- "The Twin Towers and the September Holocaust: The View from the Design School at the University of Valparaiso" (by Juan Ciorba)
- "Official and Journalistic Communications since the September 11 Attack" (by María Eugenia Morales)
- "The Truman Doctrine from the Perspective of the Chilean Press in 1947" (by M. Consuelo León, who at the end of the conference was elected President of ACHEN).

## RICH HORWITZ DESIGNS NEW WEBSITE THAT FEATURES AMERICAN STUDIES RESOURCES

In his travels for much of the past decade, UI Professor of American Studies and IFUSS Board Member Rich Horwitz has urged students and teachers to consider the value of primary and secondary sources already on the World Wide Web for advancing study of the U.S. He has found teachers and students are eager to hear of particular sorts of sites—those that welcome but do not require special training or interests. There are excellent virtual reference works, surveys, and time-lines of U.S. history, searchable collections of American fiction, lore, custom, and criticism, demographics, visual arts, popular culture, support for job hunting, research, and study abroad, and more. These sites can help teachers prepare lessons and lectures or students to research subjects, place them in larger contexts, or craft imaginative presentations—thereby reducing some of the disadvantage that many scholars feel if their libraries or personal collections are short of ideal. Rich's site is designed to provide links to these resources and to some of his own works that aim to define the field of American Studies, its history, methods, and recent challenges. Visit the website at <http://twist.lib.uiowa.edu/rhorwitz/index.html>

### IFUSS STAFF

**Leslie Abadie** has been an IFUSS program assistant since 1999. A graduate student in the American Studies Department at The University of Iowa, she is currently working on her dissertation on African American Catholics in Holly Springs, Mississippi.

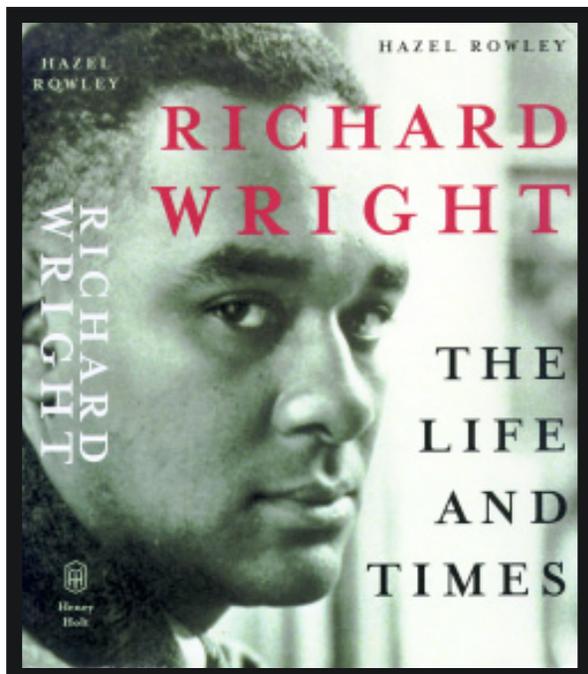
**Amy Spellacy** joined the IFUSS staff in October, 2001. Amy is a graduate student in the Department of English at the University of Iowa, focusing on 20th-Century American Literature, Latinos/as in the U.S., and U.S.-Latin American relations. She is in the process of writing her Ph.D. dissertation on U.S. culture during the period of the Good Neighbor Policy, 1933-1948.

## NEW AMERICAN STUDIES ANTHOLOGY

**T**he *American Studies Anthology*, edited by Rich Horwitz, is an introduction to the long and varied history of generalizing about America. Emphasis is placed on identifying the ways that observers—scholarly as well as popular, domestic as well as foreign—have characterized America and the stake they have in it, their motives and modes, sensibilities, and conclusions. The intended audience consists of undergraduate students enrolled in culturally-oriented general education courses in the liberal arts, especially American Studies courses. It is arguably the only such text in print—explicitly interdisciplinary and international. The volume would be ideally suited to a survey course for majors, but it is also designed to allow instructors to customize assignments. A major theme, for example, is the link between the substance of American Studies (e.g., what “America” represents) and its methods, the interdependence of popular and scholarly concerns. The volume begins with an original essay, summarizing key themes in discussions of American culture. Thereafter the volume is divided into four parts: America as Prospect, American Prospectors, Academic Gold, and Contested Legacy. Each part begins with a list of suggested discussion questions followed by reprints of classic and contemporary texts and images. And each reprint is preceded by an original contextualizing essay, linking the reprint to both its own time and place and the here and now. Although these components highlight chronological development, readers will be directed to their continuing relevance. “America” remains a rich and rewarding subject of popular imagination.

See the table of contents:

<http://twist.lib.uiowa.edu/rhorwitz/asacontents.htm>



## IFUSS FELLOW HAZEL ROWLEY BREAKS NEW GROUND WITH WRIGHT BIOGRAPHY

*Richard Wright: The Life and Times* (New York: Henry Holt Publishers, 2001).

**I**n *Richard Wright: The Life and Times*, biographer Hazel Rowley offers new insight into the life of celebrated American writer Richard Wright, author of *Native Son* (1940) and *Black Boy* (1945). Rowley draws on a wealth of recently discovered archival materials, including first drafts, appointment books, bills, letters, photographs, and newspaper clippings to describe the world of this icon of twentieth-century American literature.

*Richard Wright: The Life and Times* has been described by *Kirkus Reviews* as “a fresh and realistic depiction” and by Michael Upchurch of *The New York Times* as “Everything a literary biography should be.” Arnold Rampersand, author of *The Life of Langston Hughes* (Oxford, 1986) calls Rowley’s work “a portrait of uncommon penetration and skill—surely one of the finest literary biographies to appear in many a year.”

Donna Seaman of *Booklist* praises Rowley’s analysis and insight into Wright’s life and work:

A precise, straight-ahead biographer who eschews facile analysis, Rowley chronicles every step of Wright’s remarkable, always daunting journey from the South to Chicago, New York, and Paris—and from *Native Son*, the novel that made him famous, to his scorchingly honest books about Africa and Spain, works decades ahead of their time. Wright had to fight for every manuscript page, faced prejudice the world over, and constantly defended his political and artistic beliefs. Rowley writes that he was “driven by a passionate desire to bring about change,” a mission he accomplished at immense personal cost. Now, for the first time, Wright’s complicated life and work are fully and justly illuminated.

Hazel Rowley was an IFUSS fellow at the University of Iowa in 1997. She is also the author of *Christina Stead: A Biography*, a *New York Times* notable book. She has taught at The University of Iowa and at Deakins University in Melbourne and is a Bunting Fellow at Radcliffe College. She currently lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

# IFUSS Newsletter

## IFUSS Web site

Visit the IFUSS website. Recent additions include the papers that will be presented at the Crossing Borders convocation, March 2002, and Deborah Lombard's reflections on the IFUSS trip to South Africa in August 2001. <http://www.uiowa.edu/~ifuss>

FAX: (319) 335-0280

PHONE: (319) 335-2476

EMAIL: [ifuss-cics@uiowa.edu](mailto:ifuss-cics@uiowa.edu)

OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT:

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## Brochures

IFUSS has brochures with general information about the Forum's rationale and operations. If you would like to receive brochures either for your own use or for further distribution, please let us know and we will mail them to you.

International Forum for U.S. Studies  
International Programs  
University of Iowa  
226 International Center  
Iowa City, Iowa 52242, USA

