

# ALMANAC

The Newsletter of the American Antiquarian Society | Fall 2023 | Number 106





## From the President's Desk

Many of our public programs feature books researched in our collections. Fulfilling as it is to highlight the culmination of scholarship pursued here, we take equal joy in more intimate presentations. These include fellows' work-in-progress talks at the end of the fellowship month or semester. Still in the thick of their projects, they talk about what they've looked at and how their thinking has developed through their time in our collections and our community.

Last month, Sherita L. Johnson, one of our first Diana Korzenik Equity Fellows, gave a remarkable end-of-fellowship talk about her project, "Panoramic Travel with Frances Harper: Archival Recovery of the Reconstruction Years." Dr. Johnson—who first came to AAS in 2022 for the History of the Book in American Culture summer seminar, "Black Print, Black Activism, Black Study"—is tracing the speaking tours of the prolific author and poet Frances Ellen Watkins Harper in the late 1860s and 1870s. Drawing upon newspapers, railroad guides, and railroad maps, as well as correspondence and books, she is literally mapping the experience of a Black woman traveling across the recently defeated U.S. South. Dr. Johnson, who is associate professor of English at the University of Southern Mississippi, pursued her fellowship entirely remotely through our digitized collections and with staff support. From Mississippi she participated virtually in our scholarly community. We look forward to welcoming her back to share more of the story.



*J.C. Clink Meat Market, advertising albumen cabinet photograph, Fadner Studio, Berlin, Wisconsin, between 1891 and 1898.*

Dr. Johnson's experience is a microcosm of what happens at AAS—in person and virtually—as people connect with one another and with the primary materials of the American past. We are working to make more of those materials openly accessible. AAS recently received a new grant from the Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation to catalog and digitize six hundred images and documents about the experiences of working women. (I especially love the promotional card of a woman butcher bedecked in sausages.) Progress on the Historic Children's Voices project continues, with funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities (described in the spring 2023 *Almanac*), and we are planning a symposium (May 2–3, 2024), as well as a summer institute for K–12 teachers (August 2024), generously funded by AAS member Dorothy Hurt.

Your support is invaluable to all that we do: continuing to build and preserve the collections, broadening opportunities to use them, and creating public programs to highlight what they can teach us. My colleagues and I—and our entire community—are grateful for your sustaining generosity.

With warmest wishes,

*Cover: Collection of sixty adventure stories by Charles Austin Fosdick (1842–1915) issued in one hundred fifty variant editions and bindings (ca. 1864–1900), in process and awaiting cataloging. Using the pseudonym "Harry Castlemon," Fosdick was a prolific writer of juvenile stories and novels, intended mainly for boys. Much of this collection was assembled by a collector who valued the variety of colorful late-nineteenth-century publishers' bindings as much as the interior text. Purchased by AAS in 2023.*

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Editor: Julieane Frost; Designer: Jackie Penny; Photographer: Nathan Fiske

# Internship changes lives for recent graduates

Creating pathways to the library profession is an essential goal of the Nadia Sophie Seiler Internship at AAS. With a holistic approach that emphasizes mentoring and networking along with skill building, Seiler interns gain confidence and contacts as well as experience.

The internship program was created at AAS in 2020 in memory of Nadia Sophie Seiler, a passionate and enthusiastic rare materials cataloger at the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C. Seiler interns are recent college graduates interested in a library career or already enrolled in library school. While at AAS, they work closely with curatorial, acquisitions, readers' services, and cataloging staff and learn the roles these departments play in a special collections environment. The interns are paid a competitive stipend and receive on-campus housing and a travel allowance.

"One of the best ways to honor Nadia's memory is to offer opportunities for young professionals that she would have loved to have," says Andrew Platt, executive director of the Nadia Sophie Seiler Memorial Fund. "We want to make sure anyone, regardless of their financial situation or distance from Worcester, can take advantage of the internship."

Since 2020, five Seiler interns from across the country have cataloged a wide variety of material, including sheet music, book trades publications, cabinet card photographs, schoolbooks, broadsides, Spanish-language titles, religious materials, and more. A focus has been to uncover underrepresented voices, such as those of women and African Americans and other people of color. Filling these gaps in the archives was one of Seiler's passions.

This summer's interns—Liss Castillo of Orlando, Florida, and Chloe Leon of Wilson, North Carolina—advanced this crucial work. In the Graphic Arts Department, Castillo cataloged seventy-two titles of Cuban and Mexican sheet music. In the Manuscripts Department, she tackled a poorly cataloged collection that has been at AAS since the 1940s and includes a mid-nineteenth-century diary from a Cuban sugar plantation. Taking advantage of her father's Cuban family connections and her Spanish language skills,

Watercolors Unboxed presents a selection of rarely displayed drawings from the Worcester Art Museum's collection. Among them are watercolors by acclaimed American artists, including Childe Hassam, Winslow Homer, Rockwell Kent, Maurice Prendergast, and John Singer Sargent. These artists favored the medium as a way to document their travels and note their immediate surroundings. This exhibition also introduces visitors to our collection of European watercolors and Mexican works from the San Ildefonso school, many of which have not been shown here before.

Watercolors are especially susceptible to fading. For this reason, they are not on permanent display and are stored in red light. The Museum's ongoing commitment to care is evident in the outstanding condition of the watercolor works on display. Many of the works on display have not been in the galleries since the 1987 exhibition *American Traditions in Watercolor*, making this exhibition particularly special.

Many of these drawings were created in the mid-20th century, when the curators primarily focused on the work of American artists, most of whom were white. The Museum's ongoing commitment to explore the medium of watercolor and to fill the gaps in our collection by growing its collection of works by people of color is evident in this exhibition.

Please help the Museum preserve these works by not using flash on your camera.

This exhibition is generously sponsored by KAPLAN



Curator of manuscripts Ashley Cataldo (left) and Seiler intern Chloe Leon at the Worcester Art Museum.

Castillo created a new catalog description, which includes information about the people enslaved on the plantation, and a contents list for this important collection.

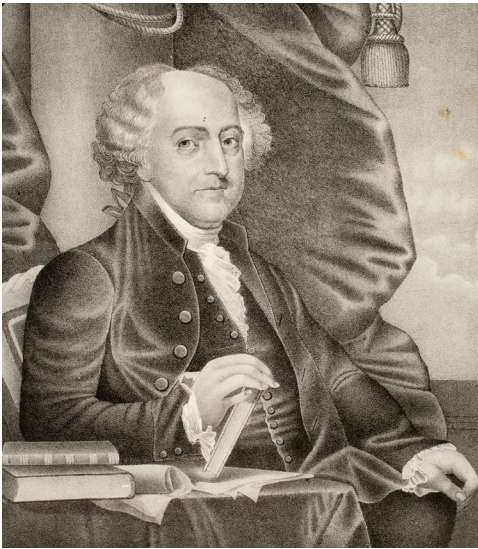
At the same time, Leon cataloged more than fifty broadsides—most related to African American singing groups and women's history—and helped rehouse some of the map collection. She also did research on the Crawford family who lived in Ohio from the 1840s through the twentieth century and whose papers are in the AAS manuscript collection. She found wills, deeds, and other records that illuminated the family's complex history from enslavement in Virginia and Kentucky to freedom in Ohio. Leon developed a genealogy and wrote a family history that will help researchers piece together and use this fragmentary collection.

Castillo and Leon also visited libraries and museums in central New England and met with a variety of experts in the library field and with past Seiler interns. They attended the Society's seminar (see page 7) on

(continued on page 8)



# Letter reveals John Adams's continuing interest in Massachusetts politics



John Adams: Second President of United States, lithograph by Nathaniel Currier, 1841.

A letter written by John Adams, recently acquired by AAS, provides a window into the former president's state of mind soon after losing the contentious election of 1800. Newly home in Quincy, Massachusetts, Adams wrote on March 31, 1801, to Isaiah Thomas Jr., the publisher of the *Worcester Spy* and namesake of the paper's founder (who would establish the American Antiquarian Society eleven years later). Adams had received four recent issues of the *Spy*, and asked Thomas about current political leanings in Worcester County.

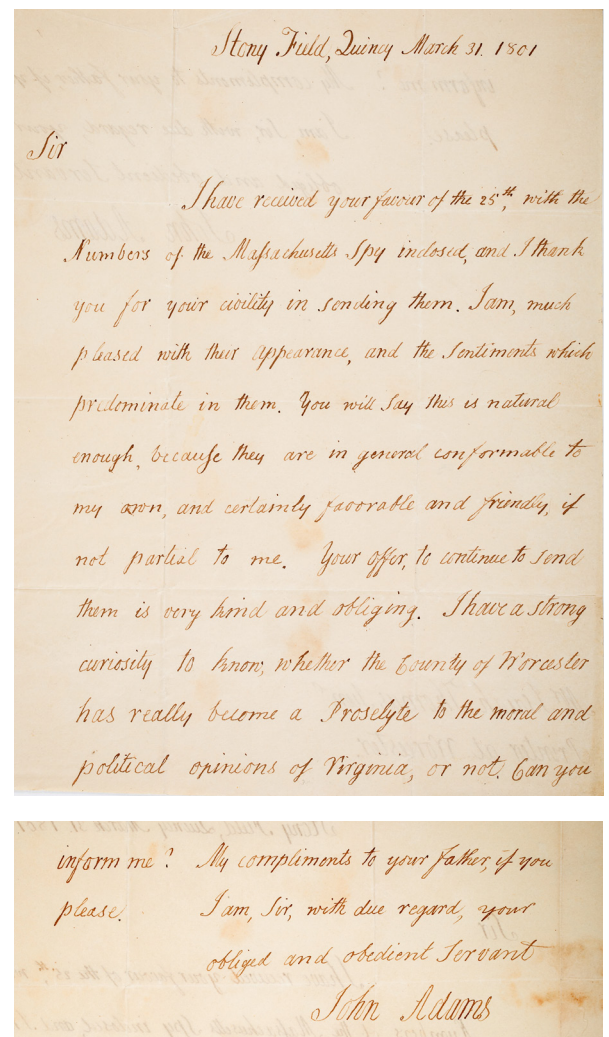
Less than four weeks after relinquishing the presidency, Adams worried that his home state might succumb to Thomas Jefferson's "moral and political opinions." "He was almost certainly bitter and processing the electoral loss," says Joseph Adelman, AAS member (elected October 2019) and author of *Revolutionary Networks: The Business and Politics of Printing the News, 1763–1789*.

"After being unceremoniously 'tossed to the curb,' Adams goes off into retirement, but not quite. He still wants to keep a finger on the pulse of what's going on. He is wondering, have they [Massachusetts voters] all gone over to the Jeffersonians?"

According to Adelman, the letter "helps to illuminate Adams's continuing interest in politics and in Massachusetts after being away from home for twenty-five years. Despite his long national and international career, he still maintains connections with Isaiah Thomas, whom he sees as an ally. It's interesting that Adams is keeping up his networks."

When Ashley Cataldo, curator of manuscripts, noticed the letter in an online auction in May, she knew right away that it would be a significant addition to the Society's collections. "The letter is so important to us at AAS because in his retirement John Adams came back to Massachusetts and, while trying to sort out his own political legacy and the legacy of his party, looked to our founder's paper and our founder's son for insight into what the present—and the future—could hold."

To read a transcript of John Adams's letter, scan the QR code.



Letter written by John Adams to Isaiah Thomas Jr., March 31, 1801.





***Forney Building, Miss Brenninger's [Breininger's] Class, March 24, 1898. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 1898.***

This photograph depicts twenty-nine public grammar school students in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, with their teacher Miss Helen Breining, who became principal of the school in 1897. Miss Breining, who was paid \$67 per month as principal and carried teaching duties for two groups of students, stands in the back row at the left. This photograph will be included in the Society's project—funded by a grant from the Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation—to catalog and digitize material about women at work in the American economy before 1900.

—*Lauren B. Hewes, vice president for collections and Andrew W. Mellon Curator of Graphic Arts*

**Pedro Calderón de la Barca, *Las Comedias de D. Pedro Calderón de la Barca. Edición Cubana corregida y aumentada. Habana: Imprenta de R. Oliva, editor, 1839.***

One of Spain's greatest dramatists, writers, and poets, Pedro Calderón de la Barca's work enjoyed a resurgence in popularity among the Romantics of the early nineteenth century. This first, extremely rare Cuban edition of his *Comedias* was lavishly illustrated with thirty-one hand-colored plates made in Havana by lithographers Alexandre Moreau de Jonnés and Frédéric Mialhe. Published by the house of Ramón Oliva, the two volumes, bound here as one, comprise one of the most elegant and technically sophisticated literary works published anywhere in Latin America or the West Indies during the first half of the nineteenth century.

—*Elizabeth Watts Pope, curator of books and digital collections*





## Program Highlights

# Rare Book School course at AAS dives deeply into African American print culture

Throughout the nineteenth century, African Americans used a variety of print forms to share and advance issues important to their lives. This was the focus of a Rare Book School (RBS) course, *African American Print Cultures in the Nineteenth Century*, developed and led at AAS by members Derrick Spires (elected November 2020) and Benjamin Fagan (elected April 2022) in July. Drawing on the Society's extensive collection of early African American print materials, twelve professionals from a variety of fields studied Black pamphlets, periodicals, and books, as well as Colored Conventions—an organized activist movement closely connected with Black print culture.



Left to right: DeLisa Minor Harris, Rachel Winston, and Karissa Muratore examine primary sources during the Rare Book School course at AAS.

This was the first time RBS, an independent institution offering continuing education on the history of the book and printing, offered a course at AAS. According to Fagan, it was an especially fitting location for the topic. “AAS is one of the key collections of this material in the U.S., but a lot of African American print culture scholars don’t know about it. Part of our mission was to spotlight the collection as one that scholars should consider visiting,” he says.

While the collection formed the course’s foundation, Spires says the interactions with AAS staff were the most inspiring. “The participants make the course. We’re in the space with curators, conservators, and catalogers, and everyone brings their own perspectives to the discussion around the table.”

Initially developed by Spires and Fagan for AAS’s 2022 Summer Seminar in the History of the Book, the week-long course was structured to blend academic work with hands-on learning. Mornings were devoted to lectures and discussions, and afternoons to examining primary sources, which staff brought into the Learning Lab during the noon break. “After lunch, as people come into the room, you see eyes light up. People are raring to go when they see a letter written by Phillis Wheatley on the table or *Freedom’s Journal*, the first newspaper edited by an African American [1827],” says Spires. “There is astonishment at what we can put our hands on.”

“It was very profound and intense,” says participant DeLisa Minor Harris, AAS member (elected October 2023) and director of library services at Fisk University. “It made me speechless to see the materials firsthand. It helped me to understand how important it is to conserve these materials and to ask the question: what are some ways we can use our own collection [at Fisk] as teaching tools?”





Participants (left to right) Linda Goetz, Patricia Klassen, and Ann Braude (elected April 1997) examine collection items in this summer's seminar, *Material Religion: Objects, Images, Books*, cosponsored by the Center for Historic American Visual Culture (CHAViC) and the Program in the History of the Book in American Culture (PHBAC). Led by Sonia Hazard, associate professor of religion at Florida State University, and Christopher Allison, director of the McGreal Center at Dominican University, the weeklong seminar was held in June.



Richard Yarborough (elected October 2023) presented the thirty-fifth James Russell Wiggins Lecture in the History of the Book in American Culture on July 19. The great-nephew of Caterina Jarboro, the first African American prima donna to be featured with a white, U.S. opera company, Yarborough discussed his research in his talk "Caterina Jarboro, the 1898 Wilmington Riot, and the Challenges of the Archive."



The inaugural Jane Ramsay Pomeroy Lecture on print and printmaking—a series created in memory of the independent scholar and printer—was delivered by Ron Tyler (elected April 1986) on September 14. Tyler (*above left*) discussed his recent book, *Texas Lithographs: A Century of History in Images*, in which he assembled works from 1818 to 1900, many of them promoting investment and settlement in Texas as an Eden of opportunity.

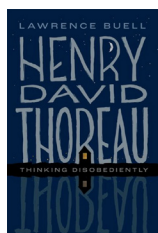
Coinciding with the Society's Annual Meeting, Nell Irvin Painter (elected October 1987) presented the eighteenth Robert C. Baron Lecture on October 19. Painter's talk, "Sojourner Truth Was a New Yorker, and She Didn't Say That," reflected on her 1996 book, *Sojourner Truth: A Life, A Symbol*. The Baron Lecture, inaugurated in 2004, brings a distinguished AAS member who has written a seminal work of history to Antiquarian Hall to reflect on the book's impact on scholarship and society in the years since its appearance.



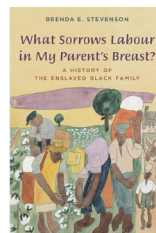


# Recent books by members and fellows

Pictured are selected recent books by AAS members and past fellows. For other recent publications, see [americanantiquarian.org/recent-scholarship](http://americanantiquarian.org/recent-scholarship).



**Lawrence Buell** (elected October 1992), *Henry David Thoreau: Thinking Disobediently* (Oxford University Press, 2023)

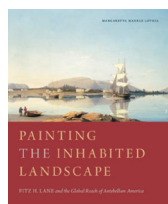
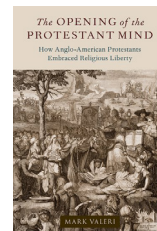


**Brenda E. Stevenson** (elected October 2022), *What Sorrows Labour in My Parent's Breast?: A History of the Enslaved Black Family* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2023)

**Camille T. Dungy** (Hearst Foundation Fellow, 2005; elected November 2020), *Soil: The Story of a Black Mother's Garden* (Simon & Schuster, 2023)



**Mark Valeri** (National Endowment for the Humanities Fellow, 1989–90; American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies Fellow, 1998–99; elected October 1998), *The Opening of the Protestant Mind: How Anglo-American Protestants Embraced Religious Liberty* (Oxford University Press, 2023)

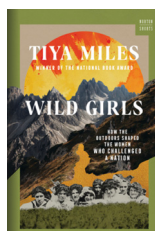


**Margaretta Markle Lovell** (Mellon Distinguished Scholar in Residence, 2007–8; elected October 2001), *Painting the Inhabited Landscape: Fitz H. Lane and the Global Reach of Antebellum America* (Penn State University Press, 2023)

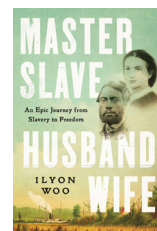


**Kathryn Walkiewicz** (National Endowment for the Humanities Fellow, 2021–22; elected October 2022), *Reading Territory: Indigenous and Black Freedom, Removal, and the Nineteenth-Century State* (University of North Carolina Press, 2023)

**Tiya Miles** (elected October 2011), *Wild Girls: How the Outdoors Shaped the Women Who Challenged a Nation* (W. W. Norton & Company, 2023)



**Ilyon Woo** (Kate B. and Hall J. Peterson Fellow, 2004–5; elected April 2023), *Master Slave Husband Wife: An Epic Journey from Slavery to Freedom* (Simon & Schuster, 2023)



## Seiler Internships (continued from page 3)

the materiality of religion and in July the Rare Book School course at AAS on African American print culture (see page 6). During each week-long program, they met and spoke with a wide range of scholars and library professionals.

“What we are doing produces life-changing outcomes for people,” says Platt. “We’re setting these young professionals up for success.” Previous Seiler interns from AAS have moved on to professional library positions at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Amherst College, and the Pasadena Unified School District.

Chloe Leon didn’t have to wait long to discover the outcome of her work at AAS this summer.

“A couple days after I cataloged the broadsides from the Massachusetts Woman Suffrage Association, a fellow researching the ways in which white women’s activism differed from Black women’s requested them for her dissertation research,” she says. “Moments such as these have been incredibly rewarding, because as a direct result of my work, I’m helping people access what they need.”



# Unlocking the Past: Justine S. Murison

Justine S. Murison (Northeast Modern Language Association Fellow, 2014–15), professor of English and Conrad Humanities Scholar at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, reflects on how her research at the Society helped to shape her recent book, *Faith in Exposure: Privacy and Secularism in the Nineteenth-Century United States* (2022).



## How did you initially become interested in your topic?

My interest began with a question left over from my previous book about nineteenth-century medical theories of the nervous system: Why was there so much backlash against these theories as irreligious and atheistic? My research began to focus on the connection between privatized religion and fears of atheism, and it grew into a book exploring the legal and cultural assumptions about privacy in the United States. As a literary historian, I focus on the types of stories people told about privacy and how novels, in particular, shaped people's expectations about it.



Hiram Bingham, *Bartimeus, of the Sandwich Islands* (New York: American Tract Society, ca. 1854), frontispiece.

## How did your fellowship experience at AAS influence your work?

It was a turning point for my research! The wealth of the collections in print and visual culture allowed me to expand my archive considerably. Many of the sources and images in the book were drawn from my time at AAS, including the first image in chapter one, a political cartoon about Thomas Jefferson called “The Philosophic Cock,” which a librarian showed me on the very first day of my fellowship.

## Was there one collection item that was crucial to your research?

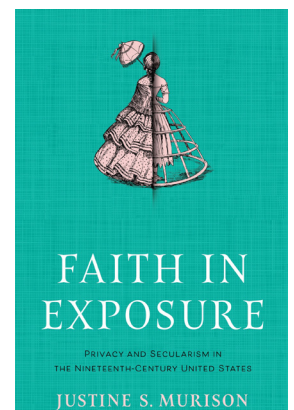
I spent a lot of time reading the American Tract Society pamphlets, and one was Hiram Bingham's *Bartimeus, of the Sandwich Islands*. When I subsequently visited the archives at the Hawaiian Mission House in Honolulu, I found a drawing by a missionary woman of Bartimeus, and the two discoveries together solidified my argument about how missionary societies approached the relation of clothing to Christianity.

## How might your work resonate for today's readers?

Though it is about the nineteenth century, the book speaks to the clash over and erosion of privacy rights today. We see it primarily in two realms: first, the establishment in the mid-twentieth century and now near-disappearance of the right to privacy in relation to reproductive rights; and second, in the rise and pervasiveness of social media. Novels in the nineteenth century shaped how people thought about their own private lives. Today social media sites do that, fueling a culture obsessed with exposing our private lives for public consumption but also in calling out other people's faults and hypocrisies.

## What are you currently working on?

My new book project, “American Obscenity: Realism in the Age of Comstock,” focuses on the cultural and literary impact of the first federal legislation in the United States outlawing the distribution of “obscenity” (1873). Colloquially known as the Comstock Act after Anthony Comstock, a crusader in New York City for the “suppression of vice,” the law regulated the distribution through the U.S. Postal Service of any material deemed lewd, corrupting, or sexually explicit. This included reproductive information. With this new book, I hope to explore the influence of these new obscenity laws on the form and content of the realist novel and what it means that reproductive information was—and still fundamentally is—thought of as “obscene.”





# Welcome new long-term fellows

Visiting year-long fellows contribute immeasurably to AAS's vibrant community of learners. This year, we are delighted to welcome Jesse Alemán and Chip Badley.

## Jesse Alemán, Mellon Distinguished Scholar in Residence

Jesse Alemán comes to Worcester from the University of New Mexico (UNM), where he is a professor of English and a Presidential Teaching Fellow. While at AAS he is conducting archival research for his upcoming book, *Latinx Civil Wars*, which analyzes letters, memoirs, manifestos, novels, and other forms of writing by U.S. Latinx who observed or participated in the U.S. Civil War.



Chip Badley (left) and Jesse Alemán in the Reading Room.

Alemán's research spans two fields: nineteenth-century American literature and Latinx literary and cultural histories in the United States. He has recovered and republished *The Woman in Battle*, the 1876 autobiographical narrative of Loreta Janeta Velazquez, who fought for the Confederacy as Lt. Harry T. Buford. He co-edited *Empire and the Literature of Sensation* (with Shelley Streeby) and *The Latino Nineteenth Century* (with Rodrigo Lazo)—two foundational collections of U.S. Latinx literary and cultural histories—and has published over two dozen peer-reviewed articles, essays, and chapters. The most recent appears in *PMLA*, the journal of the Modern Language Association of America.

Alemán has received many awards, including UNM's College of Arts and Sciences Award for Teaching Excellence, the American Indian Student Services' STARS Award, and the Wertheim Award for Outstanding English Faculty Member. He was (twice) named Outstanding Faculty Member by the English Graduate Student Association and UNM's Peer Mentoring for Graduate Students of Color. He holds the title of Presidential Teaching Fellow, the highest recognition for teaching excellence UNM bestows.

## Chip Badley, Hench Post-Dissertation Fellow

A former managing editor of the journal *Camera Obscura: Feminism, Culture, and Media Studies*, Chip Badley examines aesthetics, literature, and gender and sexuality studies in pre-1900 American culture. At AAS he is doing research for his upcoming book, "Kindred Arts: Painting and Queer Sexuality in American Literature," which offers a prehistory of queer identity prior to the so-called "invention of the homosexual" typically dated to the 1870s.

Badley's work has been supported by AAS (as a Stephen Botein Fellow in 2018–19), the American Philosophical Society, the Library Company of Philadelphia, the Massachusetts Historical Society, and the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture. His writing has appeared or is forthcoming in *Early American Literature*, the *Henry James Review*, *J19: The Journal of Nineteenth-Century Americanists*, and elsewhere.



## Member and fellow news

**Jane Kamensky** (elected October 2001), pictured at right, is the new president of Monticello, a UNESCO World Heritage site.

**Ned Blackhawk** (elected October 2011) is the winner of the 2023 National Book Award in Nonfiction for *The Rediscovery of America: Native Peoples and the Unmaking of U.S. History* (2023).



© Thomas Jefferson's Monticello

**William Fowler** (elected October 1998) was presented the Commodore Dudley W. Knox Lifetime Achievement Award in Naval History at the MacMullen Naval History Symposium held in September 2023 at the United States Naval Academy.

**Kirsten Silva Gruesz** (elected April 2011) received the Colonial Society of Massachusetts's 2022 John Winthrop Prize in Early New England History for her book, *Cotton Mather's Spanish Lessons: A Story of Language, Race, and Belonging in the Early Americas* (2022). Gruesz also received the 2023 Book History Book Prize from the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading, and Publishing.

**Richard C. Nylander** (elected October 2007) was appointed by President Biden to the Committee for the Preservation of the White House in April 2023.

**John Wood Sweet** (elected October 2023) has won seven prizes for his book, *The Sewing Girl's Tale: A Story of Crime and Consequences in Revolutionary America* (2022), including the Bancroft Prize and the Francis Parkman Prize.

**Rachel Walker** (National Endowment for the Humanities Fellow, 2020–21) won the 2022 Mary Kelley Prize for the best book on the history of women, gender, or sexuality from the Society for Historians of the Early American Republic, for *Beauty and the Brain: The Science of Human Nature in Early America* (2022).

**Michael Witgen** (elected April 2022) was named a finalist for the 2023 Pulitzer Prize in History for *Seeing Red: Indigenous Land, American Expansion, and the Political Economy of Plunder in North America* (2021).

## Staff news

**John Garcia**, director of scholarly programs and partnerships, has had two recent articles published. "Critique, Critique, Critique! Black Labor in the Early American Book Trade" appears in *Criticism: A Quarterly for Literature and the Arts* (2023) and "Revising a Narrative of Mental Illness: The Overwritten Diary of a Nineteenth-Century Mental Patient" appears in *Handwriting in Early America: A Media History* (2023).

"From Michael-mas Day to Thanksgiving: The Transatlantic Transformation of Michaelmas Day," by **Laura Wasowicz**, curator of children's literature, has been published in *Transnational Books for Children 1750–1900: Producers, Consumers, Encounters* (2023).

Three staff members were promoted in September: **Rebecca Giguere** to cataloger; **Sarah Barnard** to acquisitions librarian; and **Brianne Barrett** to assistant head of readers' services. **Laura Haskell** joined AAS as a library assistant in the readers' services department.

Congratulations to staff members who reached significant milestones at AAS since October 2022: **Ashley Calaldo**, fifteen years; **Dan Boudreau**, ten years, **Joseph Haebler**, ten years, **Nathan Fiske**, five years.

We recently bid farewell to three colleagues. **Amy Tims**, cataloging initiatives librarian, departed after eleven years to become head of cataloging and description at the Lilly Library, Indiana University Bloomington. **Amanda Kondak**, program coordinator, left AAS after five years to join the staff of Harvard's continuing education division. **Beth Kopley**, vice president for advancement since 2019, accepted the role of associate director for advancement at Smithsonian Libraries and Archives.



# Members elect new Council leadership at annual meeting

*The following members were elected to the AAS governing board in advance of the Society's annual meeting on October 20, 2023.*

Chair **Paul S. Sperry** (elected November 2013) is co-founder and president of Sperry, Mitchell & Company, a New York-based investment bank, and owner and chairman of Percival Scientific, a leading manufacturer of biological incubators and plant growth chambers. Sperry serves on the executive board of the Omohundro Institute of Early American History & Culture and the Board of Visitors of the History Department at Columbia University. He has chaired the board of the Guttmacher Institute and the finance committee of Planned Parenthood of New York City, and served on the Board of Fellows at Trinity College and executive board of the Organization of American Historians. Sperry has served on the AAS Council since 2016, including as vice chair since 2019.



Vice Chair **Rosalind Remer** (elected October 1997) is senior vice provost for university collections and exhibitions at Drexel University, executive director of the Drexel University Lenfest Center for Cultural Partnerships, and an affiliated faculty member in Drexel's Department of History. She previously served as executive director of the Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary and co-founded Remer & Talbott, a consulting firm serving museums, libraries, universities, historic sites, and other nonprofits. Remer chairs the board of managers of the Lenfest Institute for Journalism, the nonprofit owner of the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. The author of *Printers and Men of Capital: Philadelphia Book Publishers in the New Republic* (2006), Remer has served on the Council since 2021.

Councilor **Sharon Block** (elected April 2022) is professor of history and associate vice chancellor for equity, diversity, and inclusion at the University of California, Irvine. A scholar of race and sexuality in North American history as well as digital humanities, she is the author of *Colonial Complexions: Race and Bodies in Eighteenth-Century America* (2018), *Rape and Sexual Power in Early America* (2006), and more than twenty-five articles and essays in scholarly journals and anthologies.



Councilor **Douglas Brown** (elected October 2021) serves as president of community hospitals and chief administrative and legal officer for UMass Memorial Health. Brown began his career as a trial lawyer in the private sector and served in the Massachusetts state government as assistant attorney general, general counsel of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means, and director of the state Medicaid program. He collects antiquarian books and manuscripts of early America.

In addition, **Ann Fabian** was reelected as secretary for foreign correspondence, and outgoing chair **Jock Herron** was elected to the Council.



# New members

*Thirty individuals, elected in October 2023, have accepted membership in the American Antiquarian Society.*

## Jared Bowen

Boston, Massachusetts

Jared Bowen is executive arts editor for WGBH and Emmy Award-winning host of the weekly television series, *Open Studio with Jared Bowen*. He covers the region's theater, art, music, dance, and film on *Morning Edition* and Boston Public Radio, and as host of the new GBH 89.7 program, *The Culture Show*.

## Caroline A. Camougis

Worcester, Massachusetts

An expert in the nonprofit sector, Caroline Camougis is cofounder and managing director of Delphi Partners and a principal at Boston Film Partners, an advisory group for financial and philanthropic investments related to social impact film. Camougis serves on the board of IndieCollect, an organization that preserves independent films, and as a Worcester Art Museum corporator.

## Matthew Fox-Amato

Moscow, Idaho

Matthew Fox-Amato, associate professor of history at the University of Idaho, studies American visual and material culture. His first book, *Exposing Slavery: Photography, Human Bondage, and the Birth of Modern Visual Politics in America* (2019), was researched partly at AAS as a Last Fellow in 2011–12.

## Bob Frishman

Andover, Massachusetts

Bob Frishman, owner of Bell-Time Clocks, has a deep knowledge of the history of clocks and time keeping, particularly of American clockmakers and manufacturers. He is a Silver Star Fellow of the National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors, liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Clockmakers in London, and exhibit curator of the Horological Society of New York.

## Randall Fuller

Lawrence, Kansas

Randall Fuller, the Herman Melville Distinguished Professor of American Literature at the University of Kansas, is the author of *Emerson's Ghosts: Literature, Politics, and the Making of Americanists* (2007), *From Battlefields Rising: How the Civil War Transformed American Literature* (2011), and *The Book That Changed America: How Darwin's Theory of Evolution Ignited a Nation* (2017). He was a Guggenheim Fellow in 2014–15.

## Amanda Gorman

Los Angeles, California

The U.S.'s first National Youth Poet Laureate, Amanda Gorman has published *The One for Whom Food Is Not Enough* (2015) and *Call Us What We Carry* (2021) as well as acclaimed children's books. In 2021 she delivered her poem, "The Hill

We Climb," at the inauguration of President Joe Biden. One month later, she became the first poet to perform at the Super Bowl when she delivered her poem, "Chorus of the Captains."

## Jeffrey Griffith

Anaheim, California

A collector since childhood, Jeffrey Griffith is also a historian, author, and hockey enthusiast. In addition to his dissertation, "God Save the Commonwealth: Massachusetts Election Sermons and a Revolutionary World" (2019), he wrote *The Greatest Collection: Legends and Lore Behind Hockey's Treasures* (2019). He was elected to membership in the Colonial Society of Massachusetts in 2021–22.

## DeLisa Minor Harris

Nashville, Tennessee

DeLisa Minor Harris is director of library services for the John Hope and Aurelia E. Franklin Library at Fisk University. She is co-principal investigator for Fisk Forever, a project to preserve and create digital access to the Fiskiana Collection. She is a Rare Book School–Andrew W. Mellon Diversity, Inclusion and Cultural Heritage Fellow and was a Historically Black Colleges and Universities Library Alliance and Digital Library Federation Authenticity Project Fellow.

## Vanessa M. Holden

Lexington, Kentucky

Vanessa Holden is associate professor of history and African American and Africana studies at the University of Kentucky and director of the Central Kentucky Slavery Initiative. Her book, *Surviving Southampton: African American Women and Resistance in Nat Turner's Community* (2021), won the 2021 James Broussard Best First Book Prize of the Society for Historians of the Early American Republic.

## Maya Jasanoff

Cambridge, Massachusetts

Maya Jasanoff is the X.D. and Nancy Yang Professor of Arts and Sciences and Coolidge Professor of History at Harvard University. Her prize-winning books include *Edge of Empire: Lives, Culture, and Conquest in the East, 1750–1850* (2005), *Liberty's Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World* (2011), and *The Dawn Watch: Joseph Conrad in a Global World* (2017). In 2021 Jasanoff served as chair of judges for the Booker Prize.

## Sara E. Lampert

Vermillion, South Dakota

Sara Lampert is associate professor of history and coordinator of the women, gender, and sexuality studies program at the University of South Dakota. She researched *Starring Women: Celebrity, Patriarchy, and American Theater, 1790–1850* (2020) as a Peterson Fellow at AAS in 2010–11.





Members listen to “Surprises from the Stacks” presented by the curators at the October Annual Meeting.

### **Russell L. Martin III**

Dallas, Texas

Russell Martin became director of the DeGolyer Library at Southern Methodist University in 2001, having previously worked at AAS as a cataloger for the North American Imprints Program and as curator of newspapers and periodicals. He was a Peterson Fellow at AAS in 1992–93.

### **Samantha McDonald**

Worcester, Massachusetts

A partner in the Worcester firm Bowditch & Dewey, Samantha McDonald specializes in real estate and business law. She has been involved in local cultural institutions, including as president of the board of ArtsWorcester and as a corporator for Worcester Art Museum, Music Worcester, and Greater Worcester Community Foundation.

### **Emily McGinn**

Baltimore, Maryland

Worcester native Emily McGinn is digital humanities librarian at Johns Hopkins University. She previously served as the humanities computing curriculum specialist at Princeton University, where she developed undergraduate initiatives that increased interdisciplinary work at the intersections of the humanities and data science.

### **Christen Mucher**

Northampton, Massachusetts

Christen Mucher, associate professor of American studies at Smith College, is the author of *Before American History: National Mythmaking and Indigenous Dispossession* (2022), parts of which were researched at AAS as a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellow in 2015–16. She co-edited (with Gesa Mackenthun) *Decolonizing “Prehistory”: Deep Time and Indigenous Knowledges in North America* (2021).

### **Andy Nettell**

Moab, Utah

Andy Nettell is proprietor of Stellar Books & Ephemera, an online antiquarian dealer offering a wide variety of artifacts of American history ranging from letters, manuscripts, and diaries to nineteenth-century photography and twentieth-

century letterpress. Nettell previously owned Back of Beyond Books. Before entering the bookselling business, he worked as a National Park Service ranger in Arches and Canyonlands National Parks.

### **Carla G. Pestana**

Los Angeles, California

Carla Pestana is distinguished professor and Joyce Appleby Endowed Chair of America in the World at the University of California, Los Angeles. She is the author most recently of *The English Conquest of Jamaica: Oliver Cromwell’s Bid for Empire* (2017) and *The World of Plymouth Plantation* (2020) and is one of the authors of the bestselling American history textbook, *The American People: Creating a Nation and a Society*. Pestana was a Peterson Fellow at AAS in 1988–89.

### **Leila Philip**

Worcester, Massachusetts

Professor of English at the College of the Holy Cross, Leila Philip most recently published *Beaverland: How One Weird Rodent Made America* (2022). An earlier memoir that draws extensively on family archives, *A Family Place: A Hudson Valley Farm, Three Centuries, Five Wars, One Family* (2001), won the Victorian Society Book Award and the Documentation of American Life Award. Philip was a Robert and Charlotte Baron Fellow at AAS in 2018.

### **Kenvi Phillips**

Providence, Rhode Island

Kenvi Phillips, director of diversity, equity, and inclusion for Brown University Libraries, directs organizational and programmatic initiatives and expands the library’s outreach. She was previously Johanna-Marie Fraenkel Curator for Race and Ethnicity at Harvard Radcliffe Institute’s Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America and assistant curator of manuscripts at Howard University’s Moorland-Spingarn Research Center.

### **Neil Rasmussen**

Concord, Massachusetts

An entrepreneur, engineer, and technology strategist, Neil Rasmussen is founder of the Center for Microbiome Informatics and Therapeutics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In 1981 he founded American Power Conversion, where he served as chief technology officer and as senior vice president for innovation. Rasmussen collects eighteenth-century American prints and cartoons, as well as maps related to the American Revolution.

### **Amy G. Richter**

Worcester, Massachusetts

Professor of history at Clark University, Amy Richter is the author of *Home on the Rails: Women, the Railroad, and the Rise of Public Domesticity* (2005) and *At Home in Nineteenth-Century America: A Documentary History* (2015). Richter serves as academic director of the Worcester Clemente Course in the Humanities, a college-level seminar for highly motivated low-income adults, sponsored by Mass Humanities.



### Rebecca Romney

Silver Spring, Maryland

Rebecca Romney is a rare book dealer, appraiser, and author. Prior to co-founding Type Punch Matrix, specializing in pivotal works from every field, she was a manager at Bauman Rare Books and a principal at Honey & Wax Booksellers. The co-author of *Printer's Error: Irreverent Stories from Book History* (2017), she is known through her work on the television program *Pawn Stars*.

### Vincent D. Rougeau

Worcester, Massachusetts

An expert in legal education and Catholic social thought, Vincent Rougeau became the thirty-third president of the College of the Holy Cross in 2021. He previously served as dean of Boston College Law School. He has written extensively on law and religion, including *Christians in the American Empire: Faith and Citizenship in the New World Order* (2008).

### Jeanne Schinto

Andover, Massachusetts

Jeanne Schinto worked for more than seventeen years as a reporter for *Maine Antique Digest*. Her three books include *Huddle Fever: Living in the Immigrant City* (1995). As a Baron Fellow at AAS in 2015–16, Schinto researched the formation of the all-male Walpole Society and its relationship with female antiques collector and bibliophile Edna Greenwood.

### Nathaniel Sheidley

Boston, Massachusetts

Nathaniel Sheidley is president of Revolutionary Spaces, a cultural organization that stewards Boston's Old State House and Old South Meeting House. He has curated and provided creative direction for numerous exhibitions and programs, including *Blood on the Snow*, an immersive, site-specific work that dramatizes the pivotal aftermath of the Boston Massacre.

### Jordan Alexander Stein

New York, New York

Jordan Alexander Stein is professor of English at Fordham University. A historian of the book, Stein is co-editor of *Early African American Print Culture* (2012) and author of *When Novels Were Books* (2020). He directed AAS's 2012 Program in the History of the Book in American Culture summer seminar on African American cultures of print.

### John Wood Sweet

Chapel Hill, North Carolina

John Wood Sweet is professor of history at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. His recent book, *The Sewing Girl's Tale: A Story of Crime and Consequences in Revolutionary America* (2022), won the Bancroft and Parkman Prizes, among other awards. He is the author of *Bodies Politic: Negotiating Race in the American North, 1730–1830* (2003). He once served as a tour guide at the house in which Louisa May Alcott wrote *Little Women*.

### Richard Thorner

Manchester, New Hampshire

An attorney by profession, Richard Thorner became interested in antiquarian material through his mother, who ran a “jumble” corner at a group shop. Now a principal in Resser-Thorner Americana, he personally collects pre-1800 ephemera, manuscripts, and imprints. Thorner has been a lecturer and panelist for Rhode Island School of Design, the University of New Hampshire, and the American Society of Appraisers.

### Caroline Wigginton

Oxford, Mississippi

Caroline Wigginton, associate professor of English at the University of Mississippi, is the author of *In the Neighborhood: Women's Publication in Early America* (2016) and *Indigenuity: Native Craftwork and the Art of American Literatures* (2022). She has held fellowships from the American Council of Learned Societies and the Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship of Scholars in Critical Bibliography at Rare Book School.

### Richard Yarborough

Los Angeles, California

Richard Yarborough, professor of English at the University of California, Los Angeles, is associate general editor of the *Heath Anthology of American Literature* and co-editor of the *Norton Anthology of African American Literature*. He was general editor of the *Library of Black Literature* reprint series and co-edited the Norton Critical Edition of Harriet Jacobs's *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*. He delivered the 2023 James Russell Wiggins Lecture in the History of the Book in American Culture at AAS (see page 7).



Left to right: Maryemma Graham (elected April 1995); Priti Joshi (back to camera); Elizabeth Watts Pope, curator of books and digital collections; and councilor Manisha Sinha (elected October 2006) at the reception after the Wiggins Lecture on July 19.





Leonard von Morzé, associate professor of English at UMass Boston, leads the undergraduate American Studies Seminar, fall 2023.

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## Winter program highlights

**Thursday, December 7, 2023, 7:00 p.m.**

*Safeguarding History: Trailblazing Adventures Inside the Worlds of Collecting and Forging History*, featuring historical documents expert and dealer Kenneth Rendell (elected April 1995).

**Thursday, February 1, 2024, 7:00 p.m.**

*On the Edge*, a live performance by the Worcester Chamber Music Society featuring music by American composer Amy Beach and French composer Claude Debussy. Reception to follow.

**Thursday, February 29, 2024, 2:00 p.m.**

*The Many Resurrections of Henry Box Brown*, with Martha Cutter, professor of English and Africana studies, University of Connecticut, Storrs.

**Tuesday, March 5, 2024, 7:00 p.m.**

*Consistent Democracy: The "Woman Question" and Self-Government in Nineteenth-Century America*, with Leslie Butler, associate professor of history, Dartmouth College.

**Tuesday, March 19, 2024, 7:00 p.m.**

*Strong Passions: A Scandalous Divorce in Old New York*, with writer Barbara Weisberg (elected October 1998).

To learn more about and register for these and other upcoming AAS programs, please visit our website at [americanantiquarian.org/programs-events](http://americanantiquarian.org/programs-events).