A Word From The ASAT President

We hope you enjoy the inaugural issue of ASAT News-2018 Conference Preview Issue. Mia Moody-Ramirez and her editorial staff at Baylor will continue to produce the ASAT News issue in the fall, while this issue will focus on promoting ASAT@SHSU, the annual meeting held the 2nd week in November. This year’s dates are November 8-10.

The keynote speaker for the 2018 conference will be Dr. Lydia Kang. More information about Lydia is included here. Her research reflects interdisciplinary interests that will amuse and educate her audience, and her presentation will be a highlight of the event.

Included in this year’s conference itinerary is a tour of the Sam Houston Memorial Museum and Park. Those who have an interest in pre-Civil War architecture, East Texas culture, or the life and career of Sam Houston will enjoy the opportunity to see and learn about the historical structures and artifacts included in the museum’s extensive living history exhibit.

Though we are the Texas chapter of the American Studies Association and are always interested in submissions that focus on Texas Studies, we encourage anyone whose scholarly focus is on American Studies in general to submit an abstract for consideration. This year’s theme is “Tell All The Truth, But Tell It Slant: Reading Between The Lines Of The American Narrative” and the CFP appears on page 6.

To those of you who have supported ASAT with your membership and attendance at previous meetings, thank you and please continue to promote ASAT to your colleagues and have them promote it to their graduate students as well. Without fluid membership, the organization cannot exist and its history is too rich to let that happen.

We hope to see you on the SHSU campus in November.

Barbara Miles,
ASAT President
ASAT @SHSU Conference Coordinator
Dr. Diane Dowdey and her husband, James Watson, have participated in living history events focused on the American Civil War for a number of years. In the following interview they share how these experiences have enriched their interest in American Studies.

**ASAT** - The two of you often participate in Civil War Reenactments; was there any particular aspect of these reenactments, or of the Civil War itself as opposed to other historical events, that really interested you?

**James** - Well, the Civil War has always been a sort of fixation of my family’s; they’d always talk about it, and I grew up with this sort of passion for it. I remember first seeing a commercial for a Civil War reenactment way back when they were first getting popular and thinking “I’ve got to try that at least once,” and I did; now I go to one every year.

**Diane** - Actually, I got involved because James first took an interest in it, and we’ve just kept going ever since.

**ASAT** - Are there any roles in the reenactments that the two of you prefer?

**James** - I used to go as a part of the cavalry, but I’ve started taking an interest in some of the more civilian roles as I’ve gotten older. Recently I was a Civil War Settler, who was enlisted to sell supplies.

**Diane** - I usually participate as a military laundress, which was one of the few roles women could have in the Civil War that was directly related to the army. There were a few other roles that would have been historically accurate, such as being an officer’s wife, but those weren’t really involved in the war in the same kind of way.

**ASAT** - How has your perspective about history, American culture, or the Civil War changed since becoming involved with living history events?

**James** - It’s changed a little, but nothing crazy. My perspective on how people talk about the Civil War has changed, but that’s it.

**Diane** - For me, it is mostly learning about how people lived at the time.

**ASAT** - Is authenticity of the costuming an essential component to the reenactment experience?

**James** - Well, some of the people who go to these reenactments are pretty strict when it comes to historical accuracy. They’ll even check your clothes and what they’re made of. Sometimes they look at seams and thread counts, so it’s hard not to be accurate when they’re being so persistent about it. You just sort of pick up what is more accurate and authentic because it’s all around you.

**Diane** - For Civil War era clothing, the first place to check for accuracy is in the magazines and photographs of the time period. *Godey’s Ladies Book* and other magazines published detailed descriptions of clothing. Many original articles of clothing still exist and some museums, such as the Wisconsin Historical Society, have created patterns from some of the garments they own. Simplicity Patterns at one time created patterns based on historic garments for reenactors of various time periods. Other companies that produce goods for museums and the reenacting community also create patterns as well as sell period clothing. The living history community has workshops and conferences about period clothing where historic garments are examined and period construction techniques are taught.
ASAT - In your opinion, what is the best part of reenactments?

James - By and large, the historical accuracy. The amount of effort people go through for their costumes and the proper way to hold their gun or roll gunpowder shows such attention to detail. It really feels so authentic when it goes right. Some people might be strict about accuracy, but it’s hard not to be impressed by it.

Diane - For me, the best part of being a living historian is sharing the past with people. Because I focus on military laundresses of the Civil War era, I tell people about a part of women’s history and American history that most people haven’t heard. I like bringing the forgotten lives back to life. I also talk about the hard physical labor most women and children did in the nineteenth century to help twenty-first century people appreciate their lives and the sacrifices their ancestors made for the world we live in today.

ASAT - And the worst part?

James - Well, the worst part to me is when people show up in sunglasses and sandals; it ruins the whole experience to see people who just don’t care enough to be fully immersed in the reenactment experience. It just baffles me why they’d show up and not try a little harder, especially considering they usually pay to get in.

Diane - Living the past does mean living with the inconvenient, labor-intensive tasks of the past. Putting up canvas tents with wooden poles and iron stakes is hard work. Cooking over fires and hauling water to camp and heating it over a fire to wash dishes is hot, hard work. It helps remind me of the work that once was a part of the daily lives of everyone.

ASAT - Finally, do you have any advice for people who might want to get involved with Civil War reenactments?

James - I’d say just do your research. Get in contact with groups and just talk to them about how they work. Figure out what you want out of the experience and then just do all the research you can. I think it’s absolutely worth it and people really should give living history events a try.

Diane - To get started with reenacting for any period, visit events and talk to the reenactors. Find a group that has people you enjoy talking to and who share your values about history. Your fellow reenactors can help you find resources and develop your impressions. Once you have joined a group, you can do research on your specific persona.

ASAT - Dr. Dowdey, you have been an active participant in ASAT ever since it came to the SHSU campus; how did you initially become involved in the organization?

Diane - I actually wasn’t aware of the existence of ASAT until my colleague Barbara Miles submitted a proposal in 2014 to our department chair to bring the event to the SHSU campus.

ASAT - So it began with support for your department and your colleague.

Diane - Well, it was a place where I could really hone my interests. I was a double major when I was an undergrad, History and English, I was involved with an American Studies program, and I’ve always been really interested in that sort of intersection between history and literature that is a substantial portion of what American Studies encompasses and ASAT represents.

ASAT - How has ASAT@SHSU evolved since 2014?

Diane - I like it. I really want to foster the recognition that American Studies is a part of our program —that SHSU offers an American Studies minor. The conference is a good way to do that, and I think it’s another way I can pursue some of my own academic interests. I even brought my husband along.
to some of the keynote speakers, when they were talking about subjects he’d be interested in; in 2016 I became more directly involved in the event by participating in the conference planning with Barbara. ASAT—Thank you, Diane, and once again thank you both for sharing your experiences with us and for supporting ASAT.

As an aspect of American Studies, living history blends a variety of knowledge and approaches to history. A living historian needs to know the broad facts of the time period he or she is portraying and needs to be familiar with primary sources like letters, diaries, newspapers, and magazines to get a sense of the lives and culture of those he or she is reenacting. Living historians learn about the material culture of the time—what people wore and ate and items they used in their daily life, as well as the work they did and how they spent their time. These reenactments can be challenging but clearly can be a very positive part of one’s life, and anyone with an interest in American Studies or history should consider giving it a try.

Meet Dr. Lloyd Daigrepont: Teacher, Scholar, and Three-Decade Member of ASAT

There have been many members of ASAT over the past 67 years, but none is as dedicated as Lamar University professor and avid scholar of American Studies, Lloyd Daigrepont, who has a 30+ year history with the organization. Lloyd earned his Ph.D in Early American Literature from Louisiana State University and since then he has continued to follow his passion for that period of literary history by authoring a number of articles published in peer-reviewed journals, book reviews, and conference presentations. He focuses much of his scholarship on Hawthorne Studies and has taught several classes specifically on the author. When asked why themes such as faith and romanticism often form the basis of his publications, Lloyd replied, “Faith, or rather the loss of faith, has been one important fact since ancient and medieval times. Each era since the Renaissance has tried to compensate for this loss in philosophy or science. I believe that Romanticism—which posits the idea of a God or Creator to be found in Nature and which does away with the Great Chain of Being and the notion of hierarchy—has some of the best answers, like Hawthorne and Faulkner’s emphasis upon the truth of the human heart. Romanticism also has some of the worst answers—like the so-called cult of passion, which leads to a confusion of love and passion. As a matter of fact, my lifelong interest in ideas or concepts that shape our vision of God, the world, and our place in the world convinces me that there are far more phony or just plain bad ideas than good ones and that rhetoric and appeals to “tradition” (in the flimsiest sense) can help us deceive ourselves.”

In addition to his academic endeavors, Lloyd has enjoyed a 45-year teaching career that includes 29 undergraduate, honors and graduate seminar courses. He has advised graduate students, edits the Lamar Journal of the Humanities and the Review of Texas Books and has served as faculty advisor for the student magazine, Pulse. In addition, he has presented at a record 12 ASAT conferences.

Lloyd Daigrepont has proven himself to be a dedicated member of his campus community and ASAT; no doubt his contributions to them and to the field of American Studies in general will continue to be abundant and impressive in the coming years.

Diane Dowdey (center front) is pictured among a group of living history participants in period costumes

Lloyd Daigrepont shares his research on Innocents Abroad at the 2017 ASAT@SHSU conference. (Photo courtesy of www.asatexas.org)
Diane Dowdey (center front) is pictured among a group of living history participants in period costumes.

Dr. Lydia Kang (photo courtesy of http://www.lydiakang.com)

creative expression through the writing of essays and poetry. Kang then took the leap to young adult fiction writing after reading several intriguing works within the sub-genre. In fact, much of her writing success can be attributed to her eclectic taste in books—everything from non-fiction to historical and contemporary fiction, thrillers, and fantasy resides on her shelves. Scaling back her practice to part-time has allowed Kang to successfully direct her writing process and pursue yet another interest that explores the intersection of her two passions: she currently assists other authors in presenting medical accuracy in their writing.

Quackery: A Brief History of the Worst Ways to Cure Everything came about when friend Nate Pedersen suggested they collaborate on a project that combined his love of history and her passion for medical research. The result is a very accessible, informative, and darkly humorous account of the lengths to which humans will go in order to seek answers about everything from virility to terminal ailments. Some “treatments” Kang shares are barbaric, while others are benign, but all of them reveal something about our refusal to accept mortality, our unwillingness to “go gentle into that good night.”

Readers are invited to learn more about this book and others authored by Dr. Kang at the 2018 ASAT@SHSU Keynote Luncheon on Friday November 9th. For more information email asat@shsu.edu

Ellicott City, MD native Lydia Kang’s fascination with science began at a very early age; everything in the natural world, from insects to astronomy captured her attention. Inspired by both her psychiatrist father and a volunteer stint in an emergency room, she melded her love of science with the desire to help other people; a decision to pursue medicine allowed her to realize that goal.

Kang graduated from Columbia University and New York University School of Medicine before completing her residency at Bellevue Hospital in New York City. As her career progressed, she re-discovered her love of reading and writing, which had taken a back seat to a curriculum focused on math and science. Her patient experiences led to creative expression through the writing of essays and poetry. Kang then took the leap to young adult fiction writing after reading several intriguing works within the sub-genre. In fact, much of her writing success can be attributed to her eclectic taste in books—everything from non-fiction to historical and contemporary fiction, thrillers, and fantasy resides on her shelves. Scaling back her practice to part-time has allowed Kang to successfully direct her writing process and pursue yet another interest that explores the intersection of her two passions: she currently assists other authors in presenting medical accuracy in their writing.

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Books by Dr. Lydia Kang

[Images of book covers]
“Tell All the Truth, but Tell It Slant’: Reading Between the Lines of the American Narrative”

The 62nd Annual American Studies Association of Texas (ASAT) Conference, ASAT@SHSU, will be held November 8th-10th, 2018 on the campus of Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, Texas. The Conference Committee is now accepting individual and panel proposals for the upcoming meeting that address the conference theme within subject areas of research including:

Agriculture/Rural Studies          Journalism
Art (visual/performing)              Literature and Language
Communication Studies              Political Science
Creative Writing                    Popular Culture
Criminal Justice and Reform Studies Religion
Environment and Landscape            Social Justice
Film/Theater                         Sports
Folklore Studies                      Transatlantic Topics
Gender Studies                         War and the Military

Individual Proposals: Each session will consist of 3 presenters, each of whom will have twenty minutes to present, with fifteen minutes allowed for introductions and questions at the conclusion of the session. Panel proposals must be detailed in their thematic address of the conference theme.

Panel Proposals: Submissions must be for a 4 person panel: a moderator and 3 presenters. Total panel presentation time will be 1 hour, with fifteen minutes allowed for introductions and questions at the conclusion of the session. Panel proposals must be detailed in their thematic address of the conference theme and must include an abstract for each presenter’s submission.

The following is a suggested, though not a comprehensive, list of panel presentation topics to consider:
• The “Fiction” of a Post WWI America
• America,1968: Truths, Triumphs and Tragedies
• Propaganda and the capture of the USS Pueblo
• The Real Consequences of Fake News
• Taking a Knee, Taking a Stand: Athletes and Activism

To learn more about ASAT, please visit www.asatexas.org
For conference itinerary, please visit:
http://www.shsu.edu/academics/american-studies-conference/ fall 2018

The generous sponsorship of the Sam Houston State University Office of Academic Affairs, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Elliot T. Bowers Honors College and Department of English make ASAT@SHSU possible.

Deadline for submissions: October 15, 2018
Contact email: asat@shsu.edu
ASAT 2018 CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM

(Please print and complete this form and submit it with your payment upon arrival-SEE NOTE BELOW REGARDING CAMPUS PARKING)

Name: ________________________________________________

University affiliation: ____________________________________

Current university email address: ___________________________

(Email addresses will be used for membership records and for notification of annual conference information only)

If not university affiliated, please provide your city/state of residence and a current email address:
______________________________________________________

Are you presenting at this year’s conference?   Yes  No

(If you are a presenter, you must also be a member of ASAT. These dues are required in addition to the conference registration fee-see below).  PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO ASAT-BOTH FEES MAY BE PAID IN ONE CHECK. Please request a paid receipt for departmental reimbursement at the time of registration or request that one be emailed to you post-conference.

Conference registration fees: (Please check one-payment must be made in advance or upon arrival. Presenters must be registered prior to their session time.)

(These fees include admission to all conference events and meals indicated on the conference schedule)

Presenters:
Tenured/Tenure-track/Retired faculty: 65.00 _____
Post-graduate/Graduate/Honors/Non-academic): 55.00 ______

Attendees:
Tenured/Tenure-track/Retired faculty: 45.00 _____ Luncheon only: 15.00
Post-graduate/Graduate/Honors/Non-academic): 40.00 ______ Luncheon only: 10.00

ASAT membership dues: (Please check one)-if you previously paid your 2018 dues directly to ASAT Treasurer Greg Giddings at Midwestern State University or are a sustaining member, you DO NOT NEED to complete this portion of the form. However, this payment had to have been received no later than November 1st.

Annual Membership: 25.00 ____  Sustaining Membership: 50.00____

Student/Retired faculty/Memberships: 15.00____

Total: __________________

MAKE SURE THAT YOU FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS INCLUDED ON THE PARKING PAGE OF THE CONFERENCE WEBSITE. NEITHER THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT NOR THE UNIVERSITY WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR CITATIONS ISSUED TO REGISTRANTS OR ATTENDEES.
ASAT Past President, Treasurer And Long Time Member Retires

SHSU Professor of English Gene Young retired in May 2018 after a long and distinguished career in the classroom and in several administrative positions including Chair of English and Foreign Languages, Dean of the Honors College, and Interim Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. In addition to serving as an ASAT officer and campus host, he and his wife, Marynell, along with Eric Clum (members of the No Foolin’ String Band) have been the featured entertainment at several of ASAT’s annual meetings. Gene and Marynell have relocated to Austin to enjoy their grandchildren and the Austin music scene. However, Gene has pledged to make the annual trek back to Huntsville for ASAT@SHSU.

ASAT Member And Author Presents In Ecuador

SHSU instructor and author Kim Davis presented at a writer’s conference in Ecuador at the end of May 2018. Davis has a long history of working in the creative writing field, being involved with several literary magazines and writing several works of fiction over the years. With her background in world travel, Davis’ unique insights are reflected in themes of femininity, discrimination, loyalty, and self-discovery. Davis, who has been a member of ASAT since 2014, and her family plan to relocate to the Denton area where she will continue her writing and editing projects.

Faculty/Graduate Student Research To Be Published in Prestigious Historical Journal

SHSU history professor Jeffrey L. Littlejohn with Charles H. Ford (Norfolk State University), and SHSU graduate students Jami Horne and Briana Weaver collaborated on research to produce “The Cabiness Family Lynching: Race, War, and Memory in Walker County, Texas,” scheduled for publication in Southwestern Historical Quarterly in July 2018.

This article challenges contemporary accounts of the Cabiness lynching, which occurred in Walker County in 1918. Originally explained as a preemptive attack on a dangerous black family, this article argues that the lynching was carried out by a racist white mob with national and international implications.

Littlejohn, Weaver, and Horne presented excerpts of this project at the 2017 ASAT@SHSU conference.
American and Texas Studies Holdings on Display in SHSU Special Collections

Did you know that Sam Houston State University is home to the William Breitenbach Mexican Mask Collection, the 4th largest of its kind in the United States? Another impressive holding is The Mark Twain Correspondence and Ephemera Collection, which contains original correspondence from Samuel Langhorne Clemens, including letters, postcards, and photographs from a trip to Europe. The collection also has numerous newspaper clippings and ephemeral booklets relating to the iconic American author.

Want to learn more about integral figures in the early Texas Judicial System? The Texas Jurists Collection includes autographed documents of 53 early Texas attorneys and judicial officials. These collections and many more artifacts about both Texas and American Studies are housed in the Thomason Room, located on the 4th floor of the Newton Gresham Library. There will be a guided tour given during this year’s ASAT@SHSU event.

As the 2016 ASAT@SHSU Keynote Speaker, Littlejohn shared his experiences in writing *The Enemy Within Never Did Without: German and Japanese Prisoners of War at Camp Huntsville, Texas, 1942-1945* (Texas A&M University Press, 2015)

Recently, Horne and Weaver were part of the team of historians who worked on the *Historic Postcards of Walker County, Texas* (2018). Proceeds from sales will benefit the Walker County Historical Commission.

Thanks to the efforts of Jami Horne (left), Jeff Littlejohn, and Briana Weaver, Walker County history is being shared in numerous publications. (Photos courtesy of www.asatexas.org)

JOIN US FOR ASAT@SHSU NOVEMBER 8-10
EXPLORE TEXAS CULTURE AND HISTORY AT THE 2018 ASAT@SHSU EVENT

The Sam Houston Memorial Museum, part of the Sam Houston State University campus, is located on a 15-acre property that once included the homestead of General Sam Houston (1793-1863). Take a step back in time by walking among historic buildings, including Houston’s office, and grounds that preserve many plantings common during Houston’s life. Below is a map that details the museum grounds located within walking distance of the university. A tour of the museum and grounds will be held during this year’s ASAT @SHSU event.

Map and legend of the museum grounds located within walking distance of the SHSU campus (courtesy of the Sam Houston Memorial Museum)

What Members Are Saying About ASAT@SHSU

• This was an amazing conference. Not only were my students able to witness the value in interdisciplinary scholarship through the conference presentations, they also gained meaningful experience in conference etiquette and professionalism. I would highly recommend this conference to any honors or graduate student looking to gain experience in presenting their research in a conference setting - Portia Hopkins, Professor of History and Division Chair, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Lee College
• What’s great about the ASAT conference is that it provides a supportive space for faculty, students, and scholars to engage in meaningful interdisciplinary dialogue - Cody Parish, Coordinator, Redwine Honors Program, Midwestern State University
• I always learn something new at ASAT’s annual conference, with its diverse assembly of literary and media scholars, historians, and creative practitioners. For instance, I was ignorant of the ‘Pershing Chinese’ and their importance to Texas history and U.S. policy until I heard Tom Cox’s presentation. Two years ago I also discovered that I can be too polite from a keynote speaker in disguise! I look forward to learning about everyone’s new and ongoing projects this fall - Grant Wiedenfeld, Professor of Mass Communications, Sam Houston State University
• My second year presenting at ASAT was just as relaxed and friendly as the first. I felt incredibly welcome as a graduate student, and it was a pleasure to make professional connections and hear about other’s research - Alicia Ward, Midwestern State University
• The ASAT Conference provided my students with a splendid forum to present their research and eventually to publish. ASAT has my enthusiastic endorsement - James Duban, Associate Dean for Research and National Scholarships, Texas Academy of Mathematics and Sciences, and the Honors College, University of North Texas
Minor in American Studies at Sam Houston State University

What is American Studies?

American Studies is an interdisciplinary approach to the study of America’s people, places, and cultural productions. The minor allows students to take courses in English, History, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, Communications Studies, Foreign Languages, and Criminal Justice. It allows those interested to explore aspects of the American experience locally, nationally, and within the global community from various perspectives, and is an excellent minor for those who will pursue graduate school or careers in Education, Politics, Law, Museum Studies, Journalism, Communications Studies, and related fields.

Program Information

Minors complete 18 hours of study, including Introduction to American Studies and five elective courses from the following categories: Regional and Borderland Studies, Ethnicity and Race in America, and Gender in America.

Regional and Borderland Studies
- CRIJ 3394 Global Terrorism and Homeland Security
- ENGL 3388 Texas Crossroads
- ENGL 4370 American Regional Literature
- HIST 3391 Colonial Latin America
- HIST 3398 Texas and the Southwest
- HIST 4367 The American South
- HIST 4370 The History of the West
- SOCI 4332 Sociology of Demography and Migration
- SPAN 3374 Intro to Spanish American Literature
- SPAN 3385 Spanish Presence in the New World

Gender in America
- COMS 4386 Family Communication
- ENGL 3336 Women’s Literature
- FCS 3369 Family Relationships
- HIST 3383 American Women’s History
- POLS 2335 Politics of Ethnic Minorities and Gender
- POLS 4377 Gender and Political Thought
- PSYC 3334 Human Sexuality
- PSYC 4391 Divorce: The Psychological Impact
- SOCI 3325 Gender and Inequality

Ethnicity and Race in America
- COMS 3370 Intercultural Communications
- CRIJ 4385 Crime, Justice, and Social Diversity
- ENGL 3337 African-American Literature
- ENGL 3338 Multicultural Literature
- HIST 3382 Immigration and Ethnicity in American History
- HIST 3392 American Indian History
- HIST 3393 African-American History
- HIST 4333 History of the Black Civil Rights Movement
- HIST 4363 History of American Slavery
- POLS 2335 Politics of Ethnic Minorities and Gender
- SOCI 3324 Social Inequality
- SOCI 3335 Race/Ethnic Inequality

To learn more:
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