SEAN

The Society of Early Americanists Newsletter

Volume 29, Issue 1/Spring 2017

THE SOCIETY OF EARLY AMERICANISTS

From the SEA President

I had hoped in this column, my first as SEA President, to describe the awesome features of our redesigned SEA website. Unfortunately the project is behind schedule and not until July will it begin to roll out. So I leave that for the next newsletter, and instead will write about the SEA biennial in Tulsa and plans for the 2019 SEA conference in Eugene, Oregon.

Our Tulsa conference was a great success. We had more than three hundred registered attendees, and many more local guests, including tribal leaders and participants in Wednesday's public outreach event local schools. SEA President Laura Stevens did amazing work planning the events, recruiting local partners and sponsors, and arranging visits to the Gilcrease Museum and the Cherokee Heritage Center in Tahlequah. We all enjoyed tremendous hospitality from staff and volunteers.

Following the conference, Laura wrote a letter to the EARAM listserv about the high cost of some the conference amenities we have come to depend upon, such as video projectors and wi-fi in the meeting rooms, and coffee urns just outside them. These are two ways that conference hotels reap revenue even as they offer discounted room rates and "free" meeting spaces. In the final accounting for the Tulsa meeting, only about half the costs were paid for by the conference registration fees. Because grant funding and support from local host universities may not be available in the future at the same levels that Laura was able to secure in Tulsa, she asked in her letter for members to respond with priorities and wishes for future conferences. I've been reading through the responses, and I want to thank all who contributed and shared some of your ideas.

The advantages of a single conference hotel, where one can roll out of bed and get to an early session without a winter coat or umbrella, and where chance encounters in elevators and hallways can foster networking among SEA members, are important to many members. "I really appreciate the convenience of being in one place for lodging and conference events," wrote one Tulsa attendee. But another countered that he found it "rather fun to share a dorm room at the last U Maryland conference and at Chicago. Conference hotels always strike me as not worth the cost. On top of everything else, as a professor, I feel most comfortable on campuses."

Inside this Issue . . .

Sketch of a Secotan Village published by Theodor de Bry in 1619

I too have lodged in dormitories for conferences at Universities of Toronto and Maryland, and in Kingston, UK, and Quebec City. I enjoy getting a student's view of another campus. But the walk from the Kingston dormitory to the meeting was long, and I understand why many colleagues don't want to endure narrow, hard beds and shared showers.

Among the many responses to Laura's letter, opinion was also split on the value or necessity of computer projectors and coffee. One member wrote: "for every great multimedia presentation, there are at least two or three where Powerpoint could easily be replaced by a handout (which you can take home)." Others declared a willingness to seek out a nearby coffee shop rather than pay hotel rates of $80/gallon. I realize, however, that a panel's audience may be more likely to arrive to a panel on time if coffee is available on site.

So for 2019 I am planning a compromise. Our eleventh biennial conference in Eugene will be shared between the University of Oregon campus and the downtown Hilton hotel, the largest in the city, with about 270 rooms. Conference sessions will be held for one or two days at the hotel, and the remainder will be at the university's recently expanded Erb Memorial Union, which has classrooms with advanced lighting, soundproofing, and built-in screens, projectors, and wiring. The two venues are 1.3 miles apart, a flat walk-able trip, with the option of bus rapid transit that runs every ten minutes. Dormitory rooms are not available during our winter term in February/March, but several low-priced hotels are in the area around campus, and I will arrange a room block at one of these, with prices slightly less than the Hilton.

The SEA is unusual among scholarly societies in that our biennial conferences really are connected to the history and culture of host cities. From our inaugural meeting in Charleston to subsequent events in Williamsburg, Philadelphia, Providence, Savannah, and in Bermuda, the SEA has enabled its members to visit important sites in American colonial history. Only recently has our organization moved toward the Midwest with meetings at Chicago and Tulsa.

The SEA schedules have always included visits to historical sites, and these are some of the best memories I have of our conferences: the Prophetstown battlefield site in Indiana, the Roger Williams national Memorial in Providence, the Wormsloe Historic Site in Savannah, the Castillo de San Marcos in St. Augustine, and the Cherokee Heritage Center in Talequah this year. As experts on early America, we can be discerning critics of the exhibits and guides on these field trips, as at Tahlequah, where I heard colleagues challenging the authenticity of the reconstructed houses for the post-removal period of Cherokee life. But I've always enjoyed the stories told by guides. It's a performance, not just an exhibit.

Our 2019 host city, the SEA's first conference venue on the West Coast, was founded (as "Eugene City" by pioneer Eugene Skinner) in 1851, well after the new terminus date of the SEA's purview in 1830. But it is important, I believe, that our society be ready to span "from SEA to shining sea" and examine the Pacific world as well as the Atlantic, and to explore Native history in the Columbia basin. I plan to invite a plenary speaker to tell us more about the Astoria expedition and the links between the fur trade and the métis population of the Willamette Valley prior to the Oregon Trail period that has been so mythologized in American History. I also hope to organize a panel on 18th century maps and exploration of the Northwest, using books held at in Rare Books and Special Collections at the UO. I am working on ideas to involve Oregon students and faculty in the SEA 2019 conference, and I look forward to welcoming our members to Eugene.

Gordron Sayre
SEA President
University of Oregon

From the SEA Vice-President

It was truly regenerative. I believe this statement adequately describes the experience of everyone involved in the public outreach program at Kendall-Whittier Elementary School in Tulsa, planned by the Public Outreach Committee of Kris Bross, Lorrayne Carroll, Cathy Kelly, and Clark Maddux with assistance from Laura Stevens. A group of circa 15 biennial conferencers arrived a day early, met for a morning of planning lessons, enjoyed lunch together, and then spent part of the afternoon rotating through several 5th-grade classes talking with the students about early American maps, music, primers, and wordplay poetry.

We thus assisted teachers at Kendall-Whittier, especially the intrepid Dessa Weber (whose class met us in period costumes she had collected and hand-sewn over the years), in strengthening their American history and culture curriculum. The responses, excitement, questions, and exuberance we received from the students taught us the value of what we do but also challenged us to think about what we do too rarely. What seemed particularly meaningful was the presence of scholars from across the nation and the world, which communicated to the students that their learning matters to people—beyond their classroom, school, and city. In turn, working with students who represent the cultural, ethnic, linguistic, social, and regional/national multiplicity of America in the present moment made us reaffirm our commitment to studying and teaching the vastness of early America (to play on Karin Wulf's twitter series #VastEarlyAmerica).

More than just a highlight of SEA 2017, however, this public outreach activity should serve as an inspiration and a challenge for our society. As incoming SEA Vice-President, I would like to take up the conversation not only to look ahead to planning public outreach activities for future conferences but also to ask how to make outreach more central to our activities and our identity as a scholarly society. What do we consider the nature of public outreach? The MLA's 2016-2020 Strategic Plan, for example, defines "Outreach" as communicating to "a broad audience of people" the "work of the association and its members" (www.mla.org/content/download/52909/1816786/MLA-Strategic-Plan-August-2016.pdf). I think that for the SEA outreach should be something more akin to service. Our brand of outreach could profit from our relatively small size and bring a humility to our service that could open doors and break down false assumptions about scholarly insularity. Rather than using public outreach to make ourselves feel better, we should first ask what the public needs, who needs us, and how we can make relevant connections and contributions.

For that purpose, I would like to find out which members are already involved in outreach projects led by scholarly/academic institutions and what expertise and experiences they could share. How can outreach and service carry the sense of regeneration we all get from attending SEA conferences through the time between them, while sharing it with people, especially students, outside of our scholarly network? For example, I could imagine using the new SEA website that is in preparation as a place where members offer their service/expertise to schools and other institutions, while highlighting stories of successful service projects—not to self-promote but to inspire.

Perhaps regional clusters of early Americanists could join for a semi-annual day of service, sharing their expertise with underserved communities. What if, for example, those of us with bilingual abilities worked with immigrant communities in literacy projects or harnessed our research to overcome the sense that entering or living in America today means checking one's culture and language at the door? Let's get to work doing service that can truly make a difference!

Patrick Erben
SEA Vice-President
University of West Georgia

From the Executive Coordinator

I am honored to be joining the SEA Council of Officers as executive coordinator this summer, and look forward to working with Gordon Sayre and Patrick Erben during the next two years. Also, I want to take this opportunity to thank Laura Stevens for her outstanding leadership and service as SEA president, vice president, and executive coordinator during the last six years. I owe a great deal to the Society of Early Americanists, which has been my primary intellectual home and community, as well as professional network, since my days as a graduate student.

The SEA has afforded me many professional associations and even personal friendships, and it has been generously supportive of my initiatives throughout the years. I am therefore delighted and honored to be serving the SEA community and look forward to working with my fellow officers on ensuring that the steady growth that the organization has seen in the last two decades continues in the future. As the organizer and program chair of the 2005 SEA biennial conference (which was held in Alexandria, VA), and the co-organizer and program co-chair of four 'Special Topics' conferences co-sponsored by the SEA that have collectively come to be known as the 'summits'—a tradition that started under David Shields' leadership in Tucson, AZ, in 2002 and that has brought together junior and senior scholars from various fields and disciplines (including English, Spanish, French, History, Anthropology, and Art History) over the years— I look forward to collaborating with my fellow executive officers in further expanding the inter-disciplinary scope and reach of the SEA and in strengthening our professional ties to scholars in multiple fields, disciplines, and languages.

Although the SEA has traditionally served primarily scholars working in the field of literature written in English, it has always been an inter-disciplinary space where scholars from other fields, disciplines, and languages feel welcome, included, and at home. It has been wonderful to witness the programs of even the regular SEA biennial conferences become ever more inclusive and diverse in this regard, and I look forward to seeing the SEA's continual growth in that direction.

Also, as a native of Germany, where I received my early education and where I continue to maintain close professional and personal ties, I have always appreciated the SEA as an international space. It is a community where scholars from outside the United States have a home and make important contributions. I look forward to collaborating with my fellow officers in further strengthening the SEA's international reach and network, not only in Germany but also in other countries in and beyond Europe in order to ensure that the SEA remains the open and welcoming community that it has always been, especially in light of the current political climate in the United States. Finally, as the founding and general editor of the Early Americas Digital Archive (http://eada.lib.umd.edu/), I have been delighted to observe the SEA's leadership, energy, and innovation in the growing field of digital studies. I look forward to collaborating with my fellow officers and colleagues in the SEA in further fostering the field of the digital early Americas in the coming years.

Ralph Bauer
SEA Executive Coordinator
University of Maryland

Announcements

Change in SEA Mission Statement

As voted upon recently, the members of the Society of Early Americanists have voted to extend the range of study to 1830. The SEA's Mission Statement has been updated on the website to reflect this change:

The purpose of this Society shall be to further the exchange of ideas and information among scholars of various disciplines who study the literature and culture of America to approximately 1830. The Society shall promote the exchange of ideas and information among its members through a newsletter, which serves as the primary forum for members' concerns, through an electronic bulletin board, and through meetings, joint research projects, and any other means the Society might deem appropriate. [1994; Revised and Approved, May 4, 2017]

Grants and Fellowship Opportunities

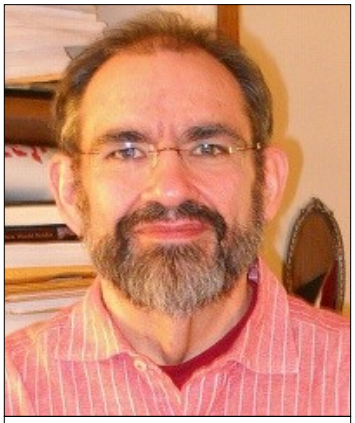
Program in Early American Economy and Society (PEAES) Post-Doctoral Fellowships

The Library Company of Philadelphia. Applicants have the opportunity to use the Library Company's collections to research aspects of early American economy. Applicants must have attained a PhD by September 1, 2018. Deadline for application is November 1, 2017. For more information, please see http://librarycompany.org/academic-programs/fellowships/postdoc.

Omohundro Institute and the Jamestown Rediscovery Foundation: Short Term Fellowship

The Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture and the Jamestown Rediscovery Foundation are offering short term fellowships for scholars interested in colonial history, architecture, African American studies, early Jamestown, and material culture between 1500 and 1720. Application deadline is October 16, 2017. For more information, please visit: https://oieahc.wm.edu/fellowship/

New SEA Treasurer and Finance Committee



E. Thomson Shields

The Society of Early Americanists is proud to announce the appointment of E. Thomson Shields as the first SEA Treasurer, for a five year appointment beginning June 2017. The Treasurer position was added to the slate of Advisory Officers in an amendment to the Society's constitution approved by a vote of the members this spring. As the amendment provides, the treasurer will be in charge of the central business office of the Society and of its funds.

Tom Shields is a long-time member of the society, an Associate Professor of English in the Thomas Harriot School of Arts and Sciences at East Carolina University, and a specialist in the literature of exploration and settlement in the southeast, in Spanish and English.

In addition, Timothy Sweet, West Virginia University, and Caroline Wigginton, University of Mississippi, have agreed to serve on the first financial review committee. Tom Shields will be the third member of this financial review committee

Caroline Wigginton

Timothy Sweet

I was not planning to contribute a column to this issue of SEAN, for I am now transitioning (or more accurately, collapsing) out of my term as president. In the wake of the biennial conference in Tulsa, though, I have decided to share a few thoughts on a subject that I think is critical for the Society of Early Americanists.

My profuse thanks to all of you who were able to make the trek to Tulsa. I know that for many of you it was a longer trip than has been usual for our biennials, and I was so happy to see you here. I was especially thrilled at how supportive you were of our collective ventures into public outreach. The visit that fifteen of you made to the fifth-graders of Kendall-Whittier Elementary school the day before the conference, the generous contributions so many of you made to the Kendall-Whittier fifth-grade classroom fund, and the warm welcome you provided to our local visitors — such as the twenty Tulsa Teaching Fellows and many attendees from Oklahoma-area indigenous nations — all stand out for me as my favorite parts of this conference.

I know I am not alone in feeling that the Native American attendees from Oklahoma, including Muscogee (Creek) Chief James Floyd, Cherokee Former Chief Ross Swimmer, Osage Second Chief Raymond Red Corn and Shawnee Second Chief Ben Barnes; the Chickasaw, Creek, Osage, and Choctaw princesses; and several archivists, linguists, artists, and scholars from the Chickasaw, Cherokee, Creek, Delaware, and other nations, added a great deal to our conference. Like many of you, I was grateful that they could attend — with some of them driving over two hours to be here. From them I learned much about the history of early America, Oklahoma, and their nations. My thanks go to our program committee member Betty Donohue, who was at the center of these outreach efforts.

Most of our Native attendees expressed to me that they felt that they were welcomed and honored by the SEA, and they were glad to have been invited. One, though, reported a brief conversation to me that has weighed on me, and that I think merits contemplation by our membership. In an informal conversation following a talk he had given in one of the concurrent sessions — a talk dealing in part with issues of tribal history and identity — this attendee was asked how he could claim to speak as an Indian, because he "did not even look Indian… maybe Hispanic, but I would not say Indian." As it was reported to me the tone of the questioning conveyed less of a quest for information and more of a challenge to the speaker's legitimacy as an Indian. I'd like to pause here and ask that you resist two possible responses to hearing about this event. The first is to stop reading because you did not make this comment and therefore think it does not involve you; the second is to focus on the question of who made this comment. I've decided that I do not want to know who made this comment. Both responses bypass my goal in writing this column, which is to call every member of the SEA to think about how we can make our organization more inclusive, especially to scholars and students of early America who are not, like the current vast majority of our membership, white.

How might we understand this comment made to one of our Native attendees? It was, among other things, a microaggression. At the risk of insulting the knowledge of our membership, I will take a moment to explain. This term was proposed in 1970 by Chester M. Pierce to describe the casual insults and derogatory comments that African-Americans regularly hear. The term has since been expanded to encompass what Derald Wing Sue has described as "brief and everyday slights, insults, indignities and denigrating messages sent to people of color by well-intentioned White people." Part of the difficult nature of microaggressions is that the comments may "appear like a compliment or seem quite innocent," such as telling an Asian American born and raised in America that he or she speaks excellent English. Moreover, those who deliver these comments often "believe in and profess equality, but unconsciously act in a racist manner." Such comments "are potentially more harmful" than intentional and direct assaults on people of color "because of their invisibility, which puts people of color in a psychological bind," hazarding being "labeled 'oversensitive' or even 'paranoid' if they express offense at those comments." While microaggressions are, as their term indicates, small, collectively they can exact "a huge emotional toll" on an individual.

All microaggressions are, to say the least, offensive, but this particular comment struck me as an especially awful one to hear at an SEA event, because it gets at the very ideologies that would seem to be at the center of our collective expertise. After all, the idea of a world cleanly divided into races that are visibly detectable in our physical features, especially skin color, is a fiction that developed in concurrence with the growth of Western Europe's global hegemony starting in the early modern era. This ideology developed largely for the purposes of sorting, ranking, and controlling humans to suit the desires of those in power.

The indigenous peoples of the Americas did not invent our contemporary categories of race; rather, these categories were deployed to deprive them of land, sovereignty, language, and culture, just as they were deployed to justify the enslavement and oppression of Africans and their descendants. In other words, this very issue is part and parcel of the time and place to which our Society is dedicated.

On the heels of a conference dedicated to the theme of Early America and the Public, it is also worth noting that the questions of how and why we attach physical appearances to races, with assumptions about the entitlements, burdens, and characteristics those attachments bring, is precisely one of the issues where the work of early Americanists has intense relevance to everyday contemporary life.

Why is it especially hurtful to question whether a Native American who does not "look like an Indian" can legitimately speak as a Native American? I spoke to Jennie Stockle, one of my Native students at the University of Tulsa, about this incident, and with her permission I will quote her response: "For me, the denial of Native identity by non-Natives (even some Natives) is the largest and most insidious problem Indian Country faces.… This problem, rooted in the deep soil of racism, undermines understanding, compassion, and growth." I will add that it is an accusation with painful resonance for several of the peoples who were forcibly removed to Oklahoma, such as the Cherokees. Starting in the eighteenth century the Cherokees adopted many of the customs, religious beliefs, economic practices, and political structures that Europeans had brought to their land, including Christianity, writing based on a phonetic alphabet, plantation agriculture, slavery ownership, and the formation of a nation with a representative government. For even longer they had intermarried with whites, blacks, and other Native peoples. John Ross, who became Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation in 1827, had one Cherokee great-grandparent and 7 white ones. None of these aspects of the Cherokee people, however, saved them from forcible removal, most notoriously in the Trail of Tears. In a sense, one cumulative lesson of this history was that Indians could never be "white enough" to protect themselves from land theft, whether that whiteness was defined by ancestry or culture. To tell a Native American that he or she does not look like an Indian is to provide yet another ironic twist on this early American history of violent dispossession. It also communicates to the person being questioned that he or she does not belong in our scholarly community nor in her or his own community.

What should our takeaway be from this incident? One of my favorite things about the SEA is how welcoming it is. But is it really, or is it just welcoming to white scholars like me? This event has left me thinking that it is imperative to consider what we can do to be more inclusive. An organization's inclusiveness comes across in its formal policies, but even more so in the nuances of how each of its individual members treats fellow members and participants from the broader community. What more can we do to make sure that our expectations of others—regardless of our and their racial, gender, religious, sexual, and other identities, our and their degrees and forms of ability or disability, our and their ages —do not make individuals or groups feel unwelcome, excluded, stereotyped, or silenced? I sincerely hope that our takeaway from this event will not be to focus on the missteps of one of our members, but rather to consider what all of us can do.

This event is about all of us. I say this for two reasons. First, the person who reported this conversation to me said that he initially had decided not to tell me about it. It was only after reflecting on the incident and spending more time at our conference, with many positive interactions with SEA members, that he changed his mind. His experience makes me wonder if other things might have been said that were not conveyed to the SEA officers. Second, I think it is not enough for all of us to rest easy if we have not said (or do not realize that we have said) offensive things. In my opinion, how we react to others' words and actions is crucial in determining how inclusive the SEA is in terms of our membership, the scholarship we produce, and the connections that we make to our communities. As a white scholar I cannot say how it feels to be the recipient of racist microaggressions, but in emphasizing the importance of others' reactions I can draw upon my experience as a woman in academia.

Let me relate one story to illustrate my point. Two years ago I was asked to chair a panel at another organization's conference. One of the presenters on this panel, which otherwise was all-male, gestured to me in the middle of his talk dealing with early dictionaries and said that "the lady on the panel" might be interested in the entry for the word "diaper." I was confused at first, then shocked, then offended. I did not outwardly react, though, being unsure what to do. I looked around the room as he continued talking and realized that the audience was almost entirely male. I scanned their faces, looking for some reaction — raised eyebrows, perhaps — and waited to see if any would make eye contact with me as the scholar who had been singled out in a denigrating way for her sex. No one reacted at all, during or after the panel. It was easy for me to dismiss one man's idiocy. It was far harder for me to contend with the group's lack of response.

I would have felt so much better if just one man in that room had come up to me afterwards and quietly said, "Wow, that was weird." It was a tiny thing, but I've thought a lot about it. Running in the background of all this thinking was the question: do they really think of me as one of them?

I share this story with hesitation, because I do not want to make this event about me. I did however want, without putting words into other peoples' mouths, to try to articulate how it feels to be the recipient of a microaggression and why such comments merit all our attention. Thinking about just this one event has taken up a share of my energy entirely out of proportion with the actual event. It's exhausting to deal with this kind of stuff, and it should not be the task only of those who suffer from microaggressions to deal with it. We should all share this load. It has been such an honor to serve as the Executive Coordinator, Vice President, and then President of the Society of Early Americanists. I look forward to seeing how the Society continues to flourish under the

under the stewardship of Gordon Sayre, Patrick Erben, Ralph Bauer, the future Executive Committee Members who will follow in their path, our Advisory Officers: Raymond Craig, Susan Imbarrato, Mary Balkun, and of course our new Treasurer, Tom Shields, while I transition to the comparatively idle role of Immediate Past President. I know that our officers are thinking hard about the way forward, as they seek to make our organization as inclusive and welcoming as possible. At their request, I would like to conclude by inviting any of you who have suggestions about this issue of inclusiveness to email any or all of them: gsayre@uoregon.edu, perben@westga.edu, bauerr@umd.edu. You are also welcome to contact me: laura-stevens@utulsa.edu. I have faith that the Society of Early Americanists is up to this important task.

Laura Stevens
SEA Immediate Past-President
University of Tulsa

Digital Early America

"Digital Early America" is a new SEA newsletter feature that will highlight a different early Americas digital project in each issue. This issue looks at *Musical Passage*, a project created by Laurent Dubois, Duke University, David K. Garner, University of South Carolina, and Mary Canton Lingold, Duke University.

As the website states: "In this site we offer a careful interpretation of a single rare artifact, from Hans Sloane's 1707 *Voyage to the Islands of Madera, Barbados, Nieves, S. Christophers and Jamaica*. Tucked away in this centuries-old book, are several pieces of music that make it possible to hear echoes of performances long past." According to the project creators, "This document is the first transcription of African music in the Caribbean, and indeed, probably, in the Americas. Thanks to this remarkable artifact, we can listen to traces of music performed long ago and begin to imagine what it meant for the people who created it."

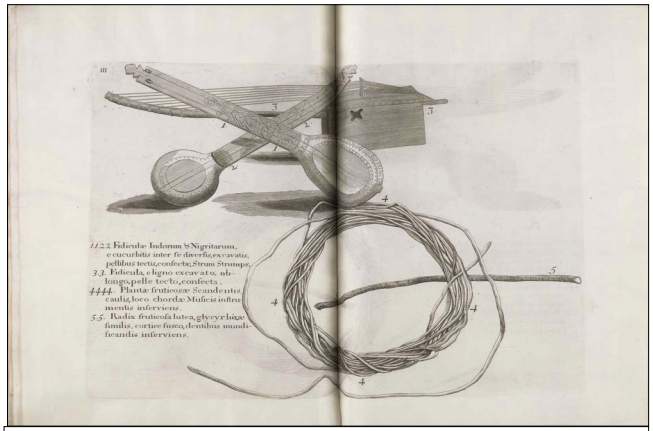


Image of an instrument that would become the banjo

Duke Today ran an article about the project, stating that "This aged sheet music is one of the earliest known records of African diasporic music, a genre that would give rise to all manner of popular music generations later." In an interview with *Duke Today*, Mary Canton Lingold shared how the digital project was created to reach a broad audience, including musicians and historians. She adds that the unique aspect of their project is that when someone brings up the website, they will hear what the rare sheet music would have sounded like. *Slate* also ran an article about the project that emphasized the interactive aspects of *Musical Passage*. David Garner, composer on the project, explained that the versions of the music heard on the website are not what they consider "authentic reconstructions", but rather "interpretations." Therefore, they invite musicians to record and upload their own interpretations of the music on the project's associated Soundcloud page. *Musical Passages* can be found at: http://www.musicalpassage.org

Laura Stevens: SEA Honored Teacher

Laura Stevens, Immediate Past President of the Society of Early Americanists and Associate Professor of English at the University of Tulsa, will join the ranks of SEA's Honored Teachers thanks to an anonymous donation from a long-time member of the Society. As noted on the SEA website, "The Fund to Honor Excellence in Teaching provides an opportunity for members or friends of the Society to honor the teachers who have made important contributions to their lives and careers. Honorees are listed on the Society's website and celebrated in conference programs and other publications. Teachers may be honored (or memorialized) by a contribution of $300 to the Society of Early Americanists." The other SEA Honored Teachers include Kristina Bross, Annette Kolodny, Dennis Moore, and Frank Shuffelton.

Dr. Laura Stevens

Welcome To Tulsa!

Workshop on Mississippian artifacts led by Phil Round and Laura Bryant, Anthropology Collections Manager at the Gilcrease Museum.

SEA members planning their visit to Kendall-Whittier school.

Margo Murphy at Kendall Whittier School, telling the students that SEA that Heather Bouwman had donated 110 copies of her children's book, A Crack in the SEA, to the 5th graders. (Each student will have his or her own copy).

Students in Dessa Webber's 5th grade classroom at Kendall-Whittier, dressed up to greet the SEA visitors.

Exhibit at the SEA conference in Tulsa.

Chief James Floyd of the Muscogee (Creek) nation addressing the conference.

Mississippian artifacts workshop at the Gilcrease Museum and Helmerich Center for American Research.

From left to right: Patrick Erben, Megan Gibson, Laura Stevens, Chelsea Mullins, Andrea Waldron.

Dr. Pauline Harris (on the left) from the John Hope Franklin Center for Reconciliation leading a tour of the Greenwood District, which was burned down during the 1921 race riot/massacre, and Reconciliation Park.

Kristina Bross at the opening night of the conference.

Interview with Kirsten Iden
President of SEA Junior Scholars Caucus

What was the initial reason for founding the SEA graduate student caucus?

Our primary reason for founding the JSC was to better connect and support junior scholars in the field of early American studies. The American Society for Eighteenth Century Studies (ASECS) has an active graduate student caucus, and we thought that such a group would be similarly successful here.

Tell us the story of its founding. How did it come to be?

The JSC has been a long time in planning. I do not remember exactly how/when it was founded, but the SEA's past three presidents—Laura Stevens, Kristina Bross and Hilary Wyss— were integral in the group's formation. They encouraged us to create the group, and made sure that the JSC had a space within the SEA to grow and develop. Melissa Antonucci and I were the (then) graduate students tasked with organizing the group, and we've been working on it together since 2014.

What are some future events that the SEA graduate students have planned or would like to plan?

As with the conference in Tulsa, the JSC will have a sponsored panel at the next SEA conference, as well as an informal meet-and-greet for its members. We are in the process of setting up a mentoring program, which would pair a junior scholar with an established scholar in the field. Pairings would be based on scholars' areas of research and interests, and mentors would provide guidance on professional and career development. Dennis Moore, the group's founding mentor, has graciously volunteered to help with matching up interested Caucus members with volunteer mentors. We're excited to introduce this program prior to the next SEA conference in 2019.

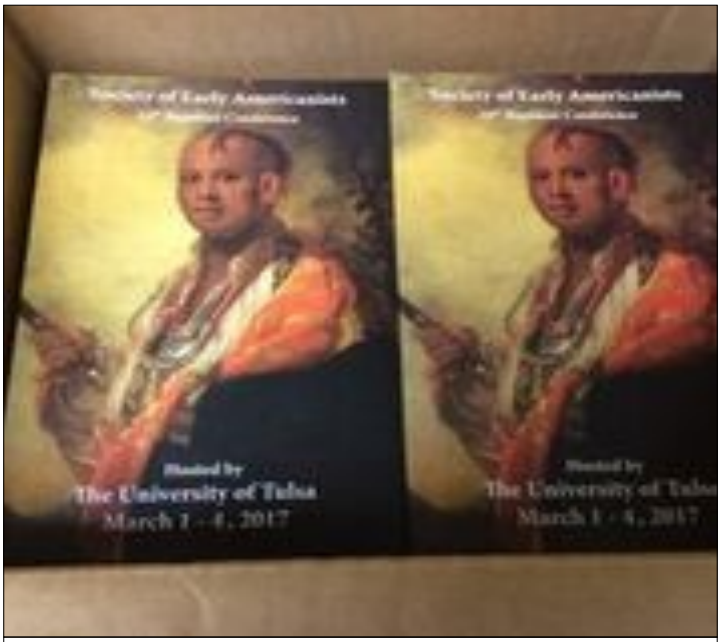
What do you see for the future of the SEA graduate student caucus?

Getting the JSC up and running has been years in the making, but now that we're established, I look forward to growing the group— both in terms of membership, and in what we're able to offer to our members.

For students who are interested, how they can become members of the caucus?

The JSC is open to graduate students and those within three years of receiving their terminal degree. If you are interested in becoming a member of the caucus, you can email me (kti0001@auburn.edu) or co-chair Stacey Dearing (sdearing@purdue.edu) and we will add you to the list. You can also follow the group on Facebook (www.facebook.com/SEAJRScholars) and Twitter (@SEAJRScholars).

Meeting of the SEA Junior Scholars Caucus at the 2017 SEA Conference in Tulsa, OK.



SEA 2017 Conference Program

Interview with Sarah E. Chinn

Professor and Chair of English, Hunter College, CUNY, Chinn is co-editor of the forthcoming *Nine Plays of Early America, 1763–1818*, from Early American Reprints. She has authored three books, the most recent being *Spectacular Men: Race, Gender, and Nation on the Early American Stage* (Oxford UP, 2017)

Why were you interested in working with Early American Reprints?

I think that Early American Reprints, which has issued already four novels, is an exciting development, something that's badly needed. While many of these texts are available from online archives, there's nothing like reading a print book. The print editions that do exist are fairly expensive, while EAR offers its books at unusually low prices (in large part because all the scholarly labor is donated and there's no overhead). I'm especially pleased that this volume, which is quite large, at 6 x 9 and about 480 pages, will sell for only $15.00.

Why do you think this collection of nine plays will be a valuable addition to the teaching canon?

There are only two collections in print that include Early American plays. One is Jeff Richards's 1997 Penguin collection, *Early American Drama*, which retails for $17.95 and includes only three plays from before 1830 (the SEA's outside date), all by men. The other is Amelia Howe Kritzer's 1995 collection, *Plays by Early American Women*, which retails for at least $35.00 and, of course, contains only plays by women. The nine plays I've selected are a mixture of work by women and men. Richards's and Kritzer's collections are invaluable for the field, but they've also had the effect of creating a new "canon" of early US plays. I wanted to introduce readers to lesser-known, but equally interesting, work from the pre-Jacksonian period. Some of these plays haven't been reprinted since they first appeared, so it's exciting to make them available to a whole new audience of readers.

Do you think that there is, or is going to be, a demand for more teaching of Early American drama?

There is a growing interest in all of Early American Literature—nurtured by the Early American Reprints series and the Just Teach One project—but I think that interest in and teaching of early drama has lagged behind the novel. For decades we've looked to the novel to contextualize the early American period for us. But in fact, many more Americans went to the theatre than read novels in those years: The theatre was cheaper, was more accessible for working people, and offered a wide variety of entertainment. As I argue in *Spectacular Men*, if we want to know what working men, the bulk of the audience for plays in the years of the Early Republic, thought, we should look, not to the page, but to the stage. Given the interest in the forthcoming edition expressed at the most recent SEA conference this past March in Tulsa, I'm confident that demand for Early American plays will increase.

How did you go about selecting the plays? I noticed that two of the plays, André and The Glory of Columbia, are by the same author, William Dunlap, and on the same theme, the John André affair. Why did you choose to do that?

Richard Pressman, EAR's publisher and my co-editor, and I decided on a balance of fairly well-known plays that are already available in broader anthologies, along with some plays that, in my judgment, deserve more attention. The two Dunlap/*André* plays provide a fascinating study of a playwright's reworking of a text to meet both ideological pressure and audience demand to read history in a patriotic way at a particular time. Not only is *The Glory of Columbia* far more explicitly nationalistic than *André*, which deals with the challenges of the new nation in nuanced ways, it's also deliberately entertaining, rather than thought-provoking. Dunlap wrote it as a crowd-pleaser to include comic and romantic songs, populist plot points, pageantry, splashy tableaux, and the like. The success of *The Glory of Columbia*, which ran on and off for fifty years but has barely been touched by critics is in marked contrast to *André*, which has received much more critical attention, but was a box office flop.

Sarah E. Chinn

How was working with EAR's publisher, Richard Pressman?

It's been a pleasure to work with Richard! Not only am I an admirer of his scholarly work, I've been impressed by his skills as an editor. He's extremely conscientious, understanding both the larger framework into which a book fits—in this case, nine plays over a period of 55 years— and the minute details of meaning in a given work.

He's an excellent editor who values clarity in his own writing and encouraging it in mine (any prolixity or opacity in my introduction or headnotes are all my own!). The explanatory footnotes are profuse and precise, and the book itself is beautiful.

When do you expect books to be available? How does one order books?

Richard is confident that books will be available late this summer, probably early August. Everyone should have a look at his website, which contains all the information. I know that there are two ready ways to order. One is through Alibris.com, the other directly from him. The website is at EarlyAmericanReprints.wordpress.com.

Editor's note: Early American Reprints has released four books before the drama text, all novels: *Margaretta* (1807), *Female Quixotism* (1801), *Kelroy* (1812), and *The Asylum* (1811). All are available from EAR.

Interview with Joshua David Bellin: Early Americanist and Sci-Fi Novelist

With the YA market blooming, right now, what do you believe distinguishes the *Survival Colony 9* series from other dystopian novels?

I think my series is more science fiction-based than the norm. A lot of YA dystopian stories devolve into rather uninspired social commentary (Bad Government v. Good Rebels, which is a stand-in for Bad Parents v. Good Teens) and romance clichés. I was going for something grittier, a dramatization of the social dynamics within human colonies that survived apocalyptic events. In that respect, I like to think my series (like all good science fiction) has one foot in history, the other in fantasy.

You mentioned in another interview that Thomas Moore's *Utopia* is a good entry point for your students when you teach utopian/dystopian themed literature. What other early texts do you find beneficial for introducing this theme in your classes?

There are so many utopias and dystopias out there, it's hard to choose. But I've had great success with Henry Neville's oddball work *The Isle of Pines* (1668). There are satirical and metatextual aspects to this story that allow me to explore with my students how utopian texts, pushed to a certain level of self-reflection, can become parodic critiques of utopian thinking itself. And that discussion, of course, opens up whole worlds of thought about the interrelationship of literature and history, the practice of close reading, and (in a composition class) the writer's tone and relationship to her/his audience.

Joshua David Bellin

How would you say that your background in early American literature, specifically Native-American literature, informs your fiction?

My fiction is very much based on place, which is something I've learned to value as a student of early American and Native American literature. In each of my novels, setting exists not as a backdrop to action but as an essential component of story and character, shaping what people are and what choices they make. I always map out my stories before I write them, because I believe you need to know where things take place in order to know why things take place. That's particularly true of the story I'm working on right now, a YA alt-history novel titled *Polar*, which is set during the early twentieth-century race to reach the North Pole.

What inspired you to move from writing critical, scholarly writing to young adult fiction?

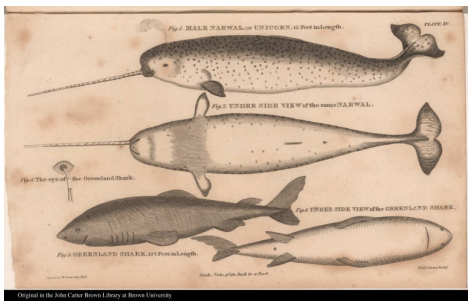
I've been a fiction-writer for a long time, and I'd produced several (unpublished) YA novels in my high school and college years. But in graduate school, I became so immersed in scholarly research and writing, there really wasn't room for any other kind. It was my good fortune to work at a college that doesn't place much of an emphasis on scholarship; anything I produced was on my own time and my own dime. So when I felt I'd achieved all I needed to as a scholar, it was natural to return to fiction. I really wish, by the way, the academy placed a higher value on forms of writing other than the scholarly article and monograph. There's great potential for creative people like us to experiment with fiction, creative nonfiction, memoir, hybrid forms, and so on—but try showing up for your tenure review with a handful of short stories on your c.v.

You have mentioned that one of your major research interests is monsters. What aspects of your studies in early American literature crosses paths with your studies in monster culture?

Wow—there are so many great monsters in early American literature, I don't know where to start! There are the monsters of the oral tradition, whether Native American or Euro-American. There are sideshow monstrosities, witches and demons from the religious imagination, monstrous races in the literature of exploration. One of my favorite texts to teach is the anonymous pamphlet Strange Newes from Scotland: Or, a Strange Relation of a Terrible and Prodigious Monster, Borne to the Amazement of All Those That Were Spectators (1647), which professes to be the account of a so-called "monstrous birth." It's all a gimmick, of course, to warn people to repent of their sinful ways, but it's a great illustration of how monsters signify a culture's deepest fears, anxieties, and internal contradictions.

In what ways do you think you could use YA dystopian literature to teach early American literature, which is often stereotyped by students as boring and dry?

Genre literature is popular literature, and there's nothing more popular today than YA. So I ask students, "What were the popular genres in earlier times? Why were they popular? What do these genres suggest about the cultures that created and consumed them?" We start with utopias such as More's and Neville's, then we move forward in time to culminate with a modern YA post-apocalyptic novel such as Paolo Bacigalupi's Ship Breaker (2010). I've actually thought of reversing the order, starting with the YA novel then going back to its antecedents so we could investigate how YA emerged from popular genres (religious allegories, slave narratives, wilderness adventure stories, etc.) of the past. It's hard, of course, because there's only so much time in the semester, and there's an expectation that students will be introduced to at least some canonical texts. But I'm willing to spend a week or two on a contemporary YA novel if I think it'll help students understand what was fresh and appealing and culturally rich about texts from hundreds of years ago.



Early America at the ALA

American Literature Association, May 25-28, Boston, 2017

Fake News in Early America I: Hoax, Rumor and Power in the Colonies

Chair: William Huntting Howell, Boston University

- "Serving the 'Emperor of the Six Nations': Tejonihokarawa Hendrick and the Power of 'Bad Birds' in Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) and Colonial Politics," John C. Winters, CUNY Graduate Center
- "Rumors, Violence, and the Transmission of Knowledge in Early America: Thomas McKee Turns Gossip into News in Colonial Pennsylvania," Thomas J. Humphrey, Cleveland State University
- "The Hoax of '63 & Comic Spirit of '76: The Fake News of Francis Hopkinson," K. A. Wisniewski, University of Maryland, Baltimore County
- "'His Majesty's Packet': The Early Black Press in Jamaica and the Atlantic Circulation of (Fake) News," Johanna F. Seibert, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz

Fake News in Early America II: Information Networks in the National Public Sphere

Chair: Lydia G. Fash, Simmons College

- "The Algerines are Coming!: Fake News and Islamophobia in the Early Republic," Jacob Crane, Bentley University
- "Atheism, Treason, and the 'Columbian Illuminati,'" Kirsten Fischer, University of Minnesota
- "The Invisible King: Searching for Authentic News in an Age of Revolution," Jordan Taylor, Indiana University
- "Thomas Paine: Celebrity Hypocrite," Justine S. Murison, University of Illinois
- "The American Museum or Universal Magazine: A Case Study in the Emergence of Public Happiness and the Collapse of the Public Sphere," Thomas Scanlan, Ohio University

Roundtable on Teaching Early American Literature in the Age of Trump

Chair: Len von Morzé, University of Massachusetts Boston

- "Building a Wall?: Teaching for Structure in Early American Literature," Matthew Duquès, University of North Alabama
- "Early American Economies and Inland Blues," James Hewitson, University of Tennessee
- "Common Sense, the Declaration of Independence, and Other Fake News: Teaching the Historical Canon in a Post-Truth World," Lily Santoro, Southeast Missouri State University
- Informational Literacy in the American Literature Classroom," Lydia G. Fash, Simmons College
- "Argumentation as Political Urgency," Rachel Boccio, University of Rhode Island

Early America at ASECS

American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, March 30-April 2, 2017, Minneapolis, MN

"Indigenous Americans and the Academy: A Roundtable on the Challenges and Scope of Research and Teaching in an Elusive Field of Study" (Roundtable)
Chair: Mita Choudhury, Purdue University
- Brian Corman, University of Toronto
- Laura Runge, University of South Florida
- Reiner Smolinski, Georgia State University
- Kathleen Wilson, State University of New York at Stony Brook
- Laura M. Stevens, Tulsa University

"Women of Color and the Law"
Chair: Regulus Allen, California Polytechnic State University
- David Vinson, Auburn University, "Scientific Racism and the Ideology of Empire in The Female American"
- Jamie Rosenthal, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, "Slavery, Sex, and the Law in the Eighteenth-Century British Caribbean"
- Keith Byerman, Indiana State University, "Black Women and the Law: The Trials of Mary Prince and Angelique"

"Colloquy on Abram Van Engen's Sympathetic Puritans"
(Roundtable) (Society of Early Americanists)
Chair: Dennis D. Moore, Florida State University
- Matt Cohen, The University of Texas at Austin
- Molly Farrell, The Ohio State University
- Michael Hoberman, Fitchburg State University
- Joy A. J. Howard, Independent Scholar
- Anne G. Myles, University of Northern Iowa
- Reiner Smolinski, Georgia State University
- Abram Van Engen, Washington University in St. Louis,

"Imagining West Indian Islands" (Early Caribbean Society)
Chair: Richard Frohock, Oklahoma State University
- Susan Imbarrato, Minnesota State University, Moorhead,
- "Countering the 'vices and follies' to 'preserve the niceness of feeling':
- Sarah and Samuel Cary, on Grenada, 1791–1797"
- Christian J. Koot, Towson University, "Between Local and Imperial:
- Manuscript and Printed Maps of the British West Indies"
- Jennifer Reed, Brandeis University, "'Islanding' the Caribbean: Transplanted Geographies and Imagined Topographies"
- Shaun F. D. Hughes, Purdue University, "Space and Place in William Earle's Obi: or, The History of Three-Fingered Jack and Related Texts"

"Ecology and Natural Disasters in Eighteenth-Century Spanish America"
Chair: Mariselle Meléndez, University of Illinois
- Karen Stolley, Emory University, "'The Earth Shook:' Natural Disasters and Enlightened Lessons in Rafael de Landívar's Rusticatio Mexicana (1782)"
- Rocío Cortés, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, "Hunger, Epidemics and Survival in Colonial Mexico"
- Santa Arias, University of Kansas, "On Public Health, Population and the Environment: Jose Hipólito Unanue's Revolutionary Geography"
- Respondent: David F. Slade, Berry College

"Cultures of Loyalism in Eighteenth-Century North America"
(American Antiquarian Society)
Chair: Nan Wolverton, American Antiquarian Society
- Joe Lockwood, University of Oxford, "Loyalism, Patriotism, and Performance of Handel's Music in North America, 1770–1787"
- Sophie H. Jones, University of Liverpool, "'Surged with so many infernal wretches': Patterns of Loyalist Support in Upstate New York"
- Peter W. Walker, Columbia University, "The Religious
- Culture of New England Loyalism: Conscience, Martyrdom, and Prayers for the King"

Upcoming Conferences

Society of Early Americanists Special Topics Conference: Religion and Politics in Early America
St. Louis, Missouri, March 1-4, 2018
This conference will explore the intersections between religion and politics in early America from pre-contact through the early republic. All topics related to the way religion shapes politics or politics shapes religion—how the two conflict, collaborate, or otherwise configure each other—will be welcomed. We define the terms "religion" and "politics" broadly, including (for example) studies of secularity and doubt. This conference will have a broad temporal, geographic, and topical expanse. We intend to create a space for interdisciplinary conversation, though this does not mean that all panels will need be composed of multiple disciplines; we welcome both mixed panels and panels composed entirely of scholars from a single discipline.
From: https://sites.wustl.edu/religionpolitics2018/

American Studies Association
Pedagogies of Dissent
Chicago, Illinois, November 9-12, 2017
The theme for the 2017 Annual Meeting of the American Studies Association, "Pedagogies of Dissent," emphasizes the conjuncture of education, politics, and intellectual work that has long been and remains central to the vibrancy of American studies. From Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* to Jacqueline Alexander's *Pedagogies of*

Crossing, and including a broad and diverse range of iterations signaled by such associated terms as teaching and training, learning and unlearning, transgression and transformation, and consciousness raising, this line of thought enjoins critical recognition of the embeddedness of education broadly and the university in specific, within the social field. From: https://www.theasa.net

Calls for Papers

Contributors Sought for the *Open Anthology of Early American Literature*

We are seeking writers, editors, and contributors of all kinds to *The Open Anthology of Earlier American Literature*, an Open Educational Resource (OER) textbook under development with the Rebus Community. Expanding on Robin DeRosa's pioneering work at Plymouth State University, where the anthology began as a collaborative project to save her American literature students some money, several instructors have since worked with their own students to collect and edit public domain texts and to create accompanying introductions and other materials. This model of a shared and open pedagogy formed the beginnings of what we hope will become the definitive OER anthology of Early American Literature.
For questions and comments about the project, please email: timothy.robbins@ graceland.edu or reply to the project post in the Rebus Community forum.

Family Letters and Imagined Spaces in Early America
NeMLA, 2018
Due Date: September 30th
Submit abstract through NeMLA website:
https://www.buffalo.edu/nemla/convention/callforpapers/submit.html

While the examination of letters as "documents, as material items, and as forms of communication and expression" has become a greater area of interest (Pearsall, *Atlantic Families: Lives and Letters in the Later Eighteenth Century*), much of this work has focused on the role of letters in historical and cultural transformation, in studies of gender construction, or in identity formation. This session will focus specifically on family correspondence in early America, offering a new lens through which to think about letters and letter writing as sites for social and cultural formation. The contents of letters and their physical nature provide clues into the private and public lives of families as they struggled to maintain/sustain connections in an increasingly complex transatlantic world. This session will be a first step in what we hope will be a growing conversation about the importance of family letters as both real and imagined spaces in early America.

The First Frontier: Pittsburgh and Pennsylvania in Early America
NeMLA 2018
Due Date: September 30th
Submit abstract through NeMLA website:
https://www.buffalo.edu/nemla/convention/callforpapers/submit.html

Since the 1939 publication of Perry Miller's classic The New England Mind early Americanists have acknowledged the fundamental role New English Puritanism played in the subsequent development of American culture. Scholars like Edmund Morgan, Sacvan Bercovitch, Andrew Delbanco and many others have placed New England at the center of the development of American identity. Yet in the past generation, other scholars have broadened an understanding of regionalism in the construction of American nationhood,
with many focusing on the polyglot, multiethnic and religiously non-conformist colonies of New York, New Jersey, and especially Pennsylvania. the Brethren as well as the Amish and Mennonites, as well as smaller sects.
This panel asks for papers that help to recontextualize the central role that the middle colonies, and in particular Pennsylvania's far western frontier, held in the future development of American culture.

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Society of Early Americanists

To Our Members

The SEA thanks its new and renewing members for their invaluable support of our Society. Your contributions make early American studies thrive. Please remember to keep your membership current and direct any membership inquiries to the Executive Coordinator, Ralph Bauer (seacoord@gmail.com).

You can also help build our membership by referring colleagues in the field to the Society's homepage: *http://www.societyofearlyamericanists.org/index.html*

Society Information/Membership

The Society of Early Americanists provides a forum for scholarly and pedagogical exchange and professional support among scholars of various disciplines who study the literature and culture of America to approximately 1830. Our membership of over 350 individuals enjoys a bi-yearly newsletter detailing activities in our field, a website that links to many documents of interest to early American scholars and teachers, and a listserv. We also offer opportunities for networking and dissemination of professional work. If you are interested in joining the Society, please see the membership information on our homepage: *http://www.societyofearlyamericanists.org/membership.html*

Opportunities for Giving

In addition to keeping your SEA membership active, you can contribute to the Fund to Honor Excellence in Teaching: http://www.societyofearlyamericanists.org/honored_teachers.html

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5. Dr. Timothy Sweet. Photo credit: West Virginia Humanities Council.

6. Dr. Laura Stevens. Photo credit: Teresa Valero.

7. Welcome To Tulsa! Photo credit: Laura Stevens

8. Workshop on Mississippian artifacts. Photo credit: Laura Stevens.

9. SEA members planning their visit to Kendall-Whittier school. Photo credit: Laura Stevens.

10. Margo Murphy at Kendall Whittier School. Photo credit: Laura Stevens.

11. Students in Dessa Webber's 5th grade classroom at Kendall-Whittier, dressed up to greet the SEA visitors. Photo credit: Laura Stevens.

12. Meeting of the SEA Junior Scholars Caucus at the 2017 SEA Conference in Tulsa, OK. Photo credit: Kaitlin Tonti.

13. SEA Conference Program Cover. Photo credit: Laura Stevens.

14. Exhibit at the SEA conference in Tulsa. Photo credit: Laura Stevens.

15. Chief James Floyd of the Muscogee (Creek) nation addressing the conference. Photo credit: Laura Stevens.

16. Mississippian artifacts workshop at the Gilcrease Museum and Helmerich Center for American Research. Photo credit: Laura Stevens.

17. From left to right: Patrick Erben, Megan Gibson, Laura Stevens, Chelsea Mullins, Andrea Waldron. Photo credit: Laura Stevens.

18. Pauline Harris (on the left) from the John Hope Franklin Center for Reconciliation leading a tour of the Greenwood District. Photo credit: Laura Stevens.

19. Kristina Bross at the conference opening night. Photo credit: Kaitlin Tonti.

20. Sarah E. Chinn. Photo credit: Sarah E. Chinn.

21. Joshua David Bellin. Photo credit: Joshua David Bellin.

22. "Views of the Narwhal and Greenland Shark" http://jcb.lunaimaging.com/luna/servlet/JCB~1~1