THE EASTERN VOICE

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From the Editor's Desk

Can you sense it in the air? Can you feel it in your bones? Great change is underway! The swimming pools are now drained because the urchins have gone back to school. The apples have ripened on the branch and are starting to drop. The summer blockbusters have issued their final barbaric yawps and have meekly slunk off to the \$2 theater. And don't look now but the grocery store cereal aisle is haunted – by Frankenberry, Boobery, and Count Chocula. Yes, that's right: summer has come to a end and fall has arrived. I am reminded - as I always am this time of year – of verses by Emily Dickinson: "As Summer into Autumn Slips." In that pearl of pithy poetry, Dickinson describes this transitional time as one in which humanity enters into a state of denial. We keep our focus squarely on the weakening sun, she says, prolonging summer so as not to confront the disturbing reality that another season's passage brings us closer to "Life's Declivity." I don't think I need to tell you what that is! Far be it from me to disagree with the reclusive genius of Amherst, but I must disagree! For we lucky few who practice American Studies in the Eastern region, autumn's coming constitutes not a sad ending but A NEW BEGINNING! Just think about all the splendor that is yet to come! Welcome to the new academic year!

This year, we have a lot in store for you. And by "a lot" I mean exactly three things: two newsletters and a conference. However, don't let that seemingly small number fool you. After all, what are newsletters and conferences but intellectual portals that take you to new opportunities, ideas, events, and experiences! Viewed in this way, our annual EASA offerings – far from being finite – actually approach...infinity! Profound? Indeed, I'd say so!

Back to reality, this newsletter contains several highlights you won't want to miss. First, I ask that you take special note of the "Call for Papers" and strongly consider sending a proposal; we hope to see you in Lancaster, Pennsylvania this spring on the campus of Franklin & Marshall, the site of the



2016 Conference. Special thanks to Louise Stevenson, Abraham Lincoln scholar and professor of History and American Studies. Louise has already begun laying the groundwork for what promises to be an outstanding conference. Second, please pay close attention to the article on the Honor Society. Along with providing you with an update (and a list of new inductees), this article explains how you or your students can become involved with the nation's first and only American Studies Honor Society. Finally, we have several excellent features designed to elevate your excitement for our region's rich cultural offerings. More specifically, David Beecher has written articles on Lancaster's Central Market and Lydia Hamilton Smith, and Jennifer Drissel has written a piece on the history of the Ouija Board. David and Jen, by the way, are people you might want to get to know. Both are doctoral candidates in American Studies at Penn State Harrisburg, David and Jen co-edit this newsletter and will be assisting with conference organization. Keep up the good work!

In closing, I urge you this year to accomplish three things: to create fresh knowledge, to learn about our storied past, and to never forget our stirring motto or fail to carry out its awesome mandate – Enjoy Culture!

John Haddad Penn State Harrisburg

Additional events in Lancaster to visit include:

- Ghosts Tours of Lancaster
- Heritage Press Museum
- Walking Lancaster History Tour
- The Living Gallery
- The North Museum of Natural History and Science
- President James Buchanan's Wheatland
- Rock Ford Plantation
- The Lancaster Newspapers Museum
- The Lancaster Public Library (Providing library service in Lancaster for over 250 years)



The Lancaster Central Market

By David Beecher

Although today's farmers market has undergone numerous iterations over the past four hundred years, there are certain locational and design constants that remain. Located within dense population centers, markets provided locals with convenient places to buy, sell, and barter farm goods. Of course, information was also important! Thus, as an important side benefit, locals could share family news, engage in gossip, and discuss political issues. In addition, markets presented governments with a means to regulate commerce. The market place was seen as an area that stood for justice and fair access, while under the laws and customs of the parent jurisdiction. There is a difference between a market house and an open air market. The difference is, as one would assume, the existence of a permanent structure. The location of the market was frequently marked by a Market Cross.

In the mid eighteenth century Lancaster County was at the western boundary of Commonwealth territory. Originally known as "Hickory Town", it wasn't until 1729 that prominent citizen John Wright gave it its current name (after Lancaster, England where he was born). Today it is one of the oldest inland cities in the country. The market was originally laid out as a 120 foot square lot by Andrew Hamilton, a prominent Pennsylvania attorney, in the 1730's. In 1742 King George II chartered a public market in Lancaster. This was meant to be the only public market within an eight mile perimeter. Included within the re-



quirements of the land grant was the erection of a courthouse, a town hall and a prison. The original land grant included what is today the City of Lancaster. According to one local, Witham Marsh, "They have a good market in this town, well filled with provisions of all kinds, and prodigiously cheap." The Lancaster Central Market originated as an open air farmers market. In 1757 a structure was built. That structure was a rough shed. Shortly thereafter an addition was put on the building.

The existing structure was built in 1889. The architect, James Warner, designed a structure in the Romanesque Revival style. The construction period was six months, and the end result was a 25,000 square foot structure with a brick exterior (locally produced), and two towers connected by a hip roof. The interior is open with a wood structure. The design, still in evidence today, includes a shed roof on the one end of the building that would keep the elements off the fish. The twenty-two operable dormers enabled fresh air to circulate. The floor is on a slight incline to enable the floor to be washed off at the end of the day. There are thirteen doors that provide access to vendors and patrons.

During the nineteenth century private markets would crop up through the city. By the late 1800's there were eight of these markets, and city officials grew fearful that these small market stands could jeopardize the perception of healthy products at a fair price. As a result, the city took over ownership of the market and thereby control of the market business in Lancaster. The market is currently owned by the City of Lancaster and since 2005 has been managed by the Central Market Trust, a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization. It is still a working farmer's market (and at one time had almost four hundred stands), and the longest running stand has been there for one hundred years. Today it is also recognized and promoted as a tourist destination and in 2013 CNN Travel named it one of the World's Ten Best Fresh Markets.

Sources Include: The National Registrar of Historic Places.

For more information about the Lancaster Central Market, visit http://www.centralmarketlancaster.com/

The editors would like to thank Dr. Linda Aleci from Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster for her invaluable contributions to this article.



The Legacy of Lydia Hamilton Smith:

Thaddeus Stevens's Life Partner

By David Beecher

Lydia Hamilton Smith was born in 1815 near Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Her father, of Irish descent, and her mother, a free African-American of mixed race. Carl Sandburg would later describe her as "a comely quadroon with Caucasian features and a skin of light-gold hint." She married Jacob Smith and had two sons, William and Isaac.

After separating from her husband, Lydia and her two sons moved to Lancaster in 1847 (Jacob later died in 1852). By this time, Thaddeus Stevens had moved to Lancaster to practice law. Though he too had lived in Gettysburg, there is no record of him meeting Lydia Smith prior to her arrival in Lancaster. A lifelong bachelor, Stevens lived in Lancaster with his two nephews, whom he adopted in the 1840s. Smith's cousin referred her to Stevens, who had just been elected to the House of Representatives. Stevens hired her as his housekeeper.

For the rest of Stevens's life, Lydia Hamilton Smith served as his housekeeper. However, many sources imply that she was much more. Although there is little, if any, primary evidence of the nature of their relationship, indirect evidence suggests romantic involvement was possible. Lydia hosted parties with Stevens, who required that guests refer to her as "Madam" or "Mrs. Smith"; at this time, such respectful appellations were seldom used with African-American servants. Stevens also commissioned a portrait of her by noted Philadelphia artist Charles Bird King. Most convincingly, their neighbors considered her to be his common-law wife, perhaps because he built a house for her and her two sons on property adja-

cent to his own home. All that being said, there is no surviving evidence that indicates conclusively that their relationship was anything more than one of mutual respect.

Regardless, she was a true partner in every sense of the word. Smith assisted Stevens in his abolitionist activities, including aiding him with slaves traveling along the Underground Railroad (Stevens home has been verified as being a stop on the Underground Railroad). She also helped Stevens raise his two nephews.

And when Stevens died in 1868, Lydia Hamilton Smith, among others, was with him. In his will he provided a stipend for her. After his death, she used her inheritance to purchase a boarding house in Washington, D.C. and had other real estate investments and business ventures. A long-time member of St. Mary's Catholic Church in Lancaster, she was buried there after her death in 1884. Her grave remains there to this day.

Over the years different biographers have gleaned disparate opinions about the relationship between Stevens and Smith from the documents that chronicle the life of Thaddeus Stevens. Stevens, outside of his will, does not offer any insight either. Lydia Hamilton Smith, a woman of color, an active member in her community, was invaluable to the anti-slave movement, a devoted mother, and a successful businesswoman. We can only hope that historians will soon shed more light on her fascinating life and her relationship with Stevens.

Expert Discusses Halloween's Changing Meaning

Pamela Apkarian-Russell, the "Halloween Queen,"™ is the owner and proprietor of the Castle Halloween Museum in Altoona, Pennsylvania. She has written numerous articles, appeared on TV and radio shows, and is the acknowledged authority on all things Halloween.

Interview by Karen Bowman, American Studies Student, Penn State Harrisburg

Q: Why did you decide to open a Halloween-themed museum? Is yours the only one in the country?

There is so much interest in Halloween and the paranormal. For years, everyone would ask if they could see my collection, but of course I did not have the room to bring people into my home, especially as so much of my collection was packed away in trunks. Sharing is the most enjoyable part of collecting, and as a social historian I wanted to share both the collection and the social history behind what people see. We are the only Halloween Museum with about 50,000 items covering 250 years, and we are constantly adding to it and researching it.

Q: How did you acquire your collection? Do you have an archive in addition to exhibits?

Our research library is quite large as are the catalogues which identify items. My collection has come from all over the world: auctions, other people's collections, gifts from friends and kin, antique shows, and from the many folk artists who add such class to the modern items being produced. Having begun collecting almost 50 years ago, it took me a long time to convince people that I really wanted the vintage and art of Halloween and related subjects but now it is very different. I buy a lot because people call or email me, and they know I will be honest with them and fair.

Q: How do you think Halloween has changed from its earliest origins in the U.S. to its celebration in the last 100 years?

I think we have gone overboard with the blood and gore. We do not do any of that here at the museum. We concentrate on the fact, fantasy, and the earlier, kinder fun part of the holiday. As a society we have become addicted to violence and mayhem, and I feel that has little to do with Halloween – but [a lot to do with] with everyday life. I can't help but think that many of these people should go work in the ER of a hospital and be constructive with their passion for the gory. Gross and scary are two different things.

Q: When did trick-or-treating become the custom? What do you give the children that coming knocking on YOUR door?

It is centuries old. I really love homemade food but you cannot do that in today's paranoid society, so apples and chocolate are my favorites.

Q: What do you think about the rise of the store-bought costume that we have witnessed over the last 25+ years? In your view, is Halloween becoming too commercialized?

Store-bought costumes have been around for a long time. We have over a thousand of them here at our museum, many in the original boxes. I think they have become boring. Too much of the same thing...we had such fun making up our costumes as children and some of them were really cool. Imagination is being stifled and that is sad, but then we are a throw away, let's do it guick, society. People need to relax and enjoy life, not watch it on TV.

Q: Do you enjoy the hundreds and hundreds of haunted attractions that have sprung up recently around the country?



Strobe lights can cause seizures, so I cannot take my husband and as I am a klutz and don't see well in the dark, I find them just loud. I've tried but after falling over the poor actor who was supposed to scare me as I walked in, I felt it would be better if I stayed away. I do confess I love going through them when they are closed and dimly lit. Scary to me is sitting in the dark and listening to old radio programs like "The Haunting Hour" & Arch Obler's "Lights Out." Vincent Price is still the master. Scary is in your mind, not a voyeuristic trip to the ER! Guess that is why I like Tim Burton's creations so much. I must say I love the Haunted House at Disney and usually go through 4 times minimum in a day there. Halloween should be fun, not gross. Sorry, that is how I feel, and I know I am not alone.

Q: Do you view Halloween as an evolved European import or as a distinctly American tradition?

The seed came from the Celts, basically the Scots, because of Robert Burns. When the Celtic wave arrived here, they brought traditions, and the poems of Robbie Burns – those were the seeds. Here the seeds were planted, nurtured, and grew, absorbing the traditions and cultural stories, myths, and celebrations of other countries. It is American as Americans are of all nationalities, and that is why as it (Halloween) is imported to other countries, they love this holiday so.

Q: Do you see a spike in visitors at the museum this time of year?

Summer is usually our best time. Christmas is also a heavy time as we show how all the holidays are related, and people love "The Nightmare Before Christmas" exhibit and the holiday room. Holidays are...with us all year long, and there are so many haunted houses in October, sometimes we get forgotten.

Q: Is Halloween still evolving? If so, where do you see it heading in coming decades?

Oh yes, it is morphing all the time, and that is good. There are some great artists out there giving a vision of Halloween, and people of other nations coming here, and adding to the folklore of the holiday. As we as humans become more ecumenical, and catholic in our tastes, we grow and absorb other cultures: Halloween helps us do that. Also, look at the amount of products that are made from pumpkin today available in the stores. Limited edition means we can charge more and nothing else, but some of the packaging on them [the products] is so cool, and I see a lot more of this in the future. The beer bottle labels are super, and we actively look for all this commercial art. I dream of having a candy, a beer, or a wine using the museum or my registered trade mark, "The Halloween Queen." I see the historical becoming more important in the future, and the cultural roots of the holiday with all its fantasy and older traditions reining in the future. I see the Mexican Day of the Dead influencing the graphics and celebration of Halloween, and that is great. Halloween will go even more global and hopefully, people like Food Network will make cakes and food that look like the fantasy items that people like Jack Roads and Debbie Thibault [folk artists] make and collectors go bonkers over. And yes, Halloween might even go back to how trick or treating, was when I was younger, and not regulated by silly people who are masters of bureaucratic nonsense.

For more information, please visit the website (http://www.castlehalloween.com) or consider visiting the museum itself!

A Brief History of the Ouija Board

By Jennifer Drissel

Should we believe in the supernatural capacity of the Ouija Board? Scientists state that the only true power that the Ouija Board possesses is that of the human mind, through a process called the ideometer effect (when thought influences muscle

reaction unknown to the subject). Regardless, the board's ominous history is enough to spook the average spectator.

The popularity of spiritualism in the late 1800s gave rise to the development of the "talking board", which would eventually be patented as the Ouija Board. At the time, practices such as séances and automatic writing were seen as conventional means to communicate with the spirit world. These practices were so popular that they even took place in the White House. While in office, former first lady Mary Todd Lincoln conducted séances in attempt to communicate with her son had died at the age of eleven.

Realizing the potential profitability of spiritualism, Charles Kennard, a Baltimore, Maryland native, put together a group of investors to form the Kennard Novelty Company, with intentions to patent the talking board. Interestingly, the now infamous Ouija name is said to have come from the talking board. As the story goes, the group of investors and a spiritual medium played the board and asked it what it should be called. The board replied "Ouija," which the spirit said meant "Good Luck."



Norman Rockwell: the Ouija Board. Photo courtesy of Saturdayeveningpost.com

The manner in which the Ouija board received its patent is just as eerie. According to Ouija board historian Robert Murch, the Kennard Novelty Company demonstrated the function of the board by having it spell out the patent officer's name, which was reportedly unknown to the group. The Ouija board was successful in completing this task. With the patent officer now petrified, the board received its patent as a game on February 10, 1891.

The Ouija board became increasingly popular in American society over the next few decades. In 1916, author Pearl Curran wrote a series of poems and stories, which she said were communicated to her through the Ouija board by a spirit named Patience Worth. In 1920, the cover of the *Saturday Evening Post* depicted a painting by Norman Rockwell, which showed a man and woman playing a Ouija board (see picture). In 1982, Pulitzer Prize winning author James Merrill even credited the Ouija Board for aiding him in writing his poem, "The Changing Light at Sandover."

Despite the fact that the Ouija board is currently associated with less friendly entities, as a result of William Friedkin's 1973 film *The Exorcist*, it still remains extremely popular in American Culture. Although the spiritual powers of the Ouija board remain questionable, it is fascinating to explore the history of the mysterious object. From its origins as a solid wooden board, to its newest bright pink cardboard design, the Ouija board has become a staple of American culture.

Sources Include: Smitsonianmag.com

First Honors Society in American Studies Continues to Grow

In the Fall of 2011, EASA piloted the first American Studies honor society – Epsilon Alpha Kappa. These Greek letters stand for "excellence in the study of American culture," and the first four cohorts of students certainly met this high standard. This year, we would like to add more institutions to the Honors family. If you are teaching at a college or university with an American Studies program, please get in touch with the president of the society – Anthony Buccitelli of Penn State Harrisburg (abb20@psu.edu). He will go over the ropes with you, and let you know how your program can become involved.

Students wishing to join Epsilon Alpha Kappa must meet several requirements. Though a complete list of requirements can be obtained by contacting Dr. Buccitelli, the most salient of these concerns are 1) GPA and 2) scholarly/creative work. Students must achieve a minimum GPA of 3.4 in courses relating to American Studies and must submit a piece of research or creative work assessed as "excellent quality" by an induction committee (consisting of three professors from the student's campus). After paying the induction fee (\$25), the student will receive both an official certificate and a red, white, and blue honors cord to be worn at graduation. The student will also have the option of being inducted into the Society at the annual EASA conference, and his or her name will be published in the EASA Newsletter – The Eastern Voice.

Honors students are also encouraged to submit works of scholarship to our journal: New Errands. This academic journal, dedicated to undergraduate research, is edited by Anthony Buccitelli and published twice each year. Though many submissions come from our region, the journal in fact welcomes research papers from any American Studies undergraduate student living anywhere in the country – or anywhere in the world. To view current and past issues, please visit the online location of New Errands: http://journals.psu.edu/ne/issue/archive

We have one additional aspiration for the Honor Society. Our hope is that on individual college campuses, Epsilon Alpha Kappa might evolve into something more than just a means to recognize distinction in American Studies. Students and faculty associated with the society might come together to organize American-Studies themed events. For example, one might imagine honors students working in conjunction with a faculty member to schedule field trips, to invite guest speakers to campus, and to organize trips to conferences. So as you consider bringing Epsilon Alpha Kappa to your program, please consider its full potential as a possible bringer of intellectual community.

Annual Conference of the Eastern American Studies Association (EASA)

Theme: "Connections and Collisions: The Divisive and Unifying Forces of Race and Ethnicity"

Date: April 1-2, 2016

Venue: Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster PA

As current events remind us, race and ethnicity remain at the forefront of American life. This year, EASA will explore the role of race and ethnicity in shaping the stories and histories that continue to unify us as a people yet, paradoxically, also divideus. Fittingly, our venue - Lancaster, Pennsylvania - figures prominently in America's racial and ethnic past and present. Several homes and churches served as temporary safe houses for fugitive slaves using the several routes of the Underground Railroad. The city was also the home of James Buchanan, Democrat, who served one term as President prior to the Civil War(1857-1861). Buchanan, who tolerated slavery to preserve the union, presided over some of the most racially turbulent years in American History, a four-year span that included the Dred Scott Case, Bleeding Kansas, John Brown's raid and subsequent execution, and the rise of Abraham Lincoln and the Republican Party. Buchanan's home, Wheatland, which is now a museum, is in easy walking distance from the Franklin & Marshall campus. Thaddeus Stevens, abolitionist and Congressman from Pennsylvania, also called Lancaster home. After the Civil War, Stevens led the "Radical Republicans" in enacting a legislative plan for Reconstruction that involved rights and enfranchisement for African Americans. After his death in 1868, he was laid to rest in Lancaster at Shreiner's Cemetery, a grave yard that did not distinguish between white and black. Shifting to ethnicity, Lancaster possesses America's oldest Amish and Mennonite communities – based on religion, Germanic tradition, and agriculture. A remarkable yet controversial tourist infrastructure has grown around this community, raising issues about whether tourism based on ethnicity unites or divides. From the racial turmoil of the 1850s to the anti-German protests in the World War I Era to the desegregation movements of the Civil Rights era, Lancaster has remained culturally and politically vibrant as far as race and ethnicity are concerned. Feeding off that energy, this conference provides scholars and students who work in this area with a venue at which to present their research. As always, EASA is open and welcoming to papers and panels on any topic of American Studies, including those which do not fit under the conference theme.

Submission Guidelines:

Individual Papers: Send a short abstract (no more than 200 words) and a brief CV or resume of no more than two pages. Place your name and email address on both documents.

Pre-formed Panels: Send a cover sheet with the title of the panel, the names of each participant, and the titles of their presentations. Include a short abstract of each paper (no more than 200 words each) as well as a CV or resume of no longer than two pages for each panel participant.

All materials should be sent to David Beecher (dlb375@psu.edu) before Friday, January 8, 2016. Graduate students whose proposals are accepted will be encouraged to submit their final papers electronically several weeks prior to the conference to be considered for the Simon J. Bronner Award for the outstanding graduate paper in American Studies. The conference will also host an Undergraduate Roundtable. Faculty members interested in having their undergraduate students present research at the conference should contact Dr. Francis Ryan of La Salle (ryan@lasalle.edu). Roundtable participants will compete for the Francis Ryan Award, given out annually to the most outstanding undergraduate paper.

Any general questions can be directed to John Haddad of Penn State Harrisburg (jrh36@psu.edu).

> For more information, including our downloadable newsletter, see the EASA website: http://harrisburg.psu.edu/easternamerican-studies-association



Congratulations to 2015-2016

Inductees!



Class of 2015: Genevieve Spears, Charlotte Briggs Alaina Sforza Katherine Keating

Class of 2016:
Mary Cadwell
Molly Gilmore
Kelsey Glander
Maria Guarisco
Erin Moyer
Lauren Mulliawan
Shannon Ricchetti
Courtney Rinden
Samantha Smith
Emilie Woods
Sara Wheaton

Ramapo College of New Jersey Bridget O'Keefe Penn State Harrisburg

Rosemary Yee

Hobart and William Smith

Maximilian Eyle (Hobart College Class of 2015) Olivia Lowenberg (William Smith College Class of 2015) Morgan Mayer (William Smith College Class of 2016)

La Salle University
Erin Herman
Cora Jones
Alyssa Mallamaci
Odile Ta
Amy Nash

Rowan University

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Rutgers University

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