Although it has only been a short while since we learned of the plan to demolish the Popular Culture Building, much has already been written about it. A petition has been started (and garnered over 1600 signatures) and there have been heated arguments back and forth concerning the historical significance of the house. The decision, which, once made public, appalled and saddened local residents, current students, alumni, faculty, and staff alike, is unlikely to be changed, and as of this writing both the provost and BGSU’s president have issued statements expressing their determination to proceed with the demolition as part of the administration’s Master Plan for the complete overhaul of BGSU’s campus. We are assuming that anyone reading this newsletter is relatively informed on this issue. We also believe that it is not the place of a departmental newsletter to engage in activist work, no matter how we may feel about something as individuals. Rather, we hope to take this opportunity to mourn. For some of us the house has been a more steadfast presence in our lives than friends or spouses. For some of us the house will always be a symbol of Ray Browne’s vision of a humanities that celebrates the dignity of the ordinary person and the power of regular people to creatively live their lives. The president was right, after all, the POPC house is far from an unadulterated kit house. Instead it is a bricolage, an improvised space, repurposed to fight against the orthodoxies of academia. May it rest in peace.

DISCLAIMER: The opinions expressed in this newsletter are solely those of the individual(s) indicated in the byline of the articles, not of the Department of Popular Culture as a whole.
Student Awards

Myc Wiatrowski was honored as a finalist for the BGSU Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award.

Jacob Brown was inducted into the national leadership honorary society Omicron Delta Kappa.

Ashley Chapman and Michael Kneisel were inducted into the national academic honorary society Phi Beta Kappa.

Brittany Knisely was awarded the Ray and Pat Browne Scholarship in Popular Culture for 2012-2013.

Jacob Brown and Rebecca Denes were awarded the Popular Culture Department Achievement Award.

Ashley Chapman and Lexie Lausch were awarded the Popular Culture Research Award.

Brittany Knisely, Rebecca Denes, Jacob Brown and Lexie Lausch attend the Undergraduate Student Awards Banquet, April 17, 2012

Brittany Knisely and Pat Browne attend a celebration Brunch, April 18, 2012

Shatzel Hall, future home of the Department of Popular Culture. Another historic BGSU facility, Shatzel Hall was built in 1923 and originally served as a dormitory for students. The department will be moving from its current residence in the Montgomery Ward Kit House on Wooster Street to Shatzel in August 2012.
First Annual Ray Browne Conference
By: Cory Barker, Conference Chair

“There’s nothing Ray liked better than a conference!” – Pat Browne

When the current second-year MA students sat down to discuss the formation of the Popular Culture Scholars Association, one of the first things that came up was the possibility of organizing an academic conference. From the beginning, we knew that we wanted to celebrate not only the formation of the organization with a conference highlighting the kind of quality work contemporary popular culture scholars are doing, but we also wanted to celebrate the department and the life and work of Ray Browne. Of course, for so long, the conference just seemed like a possibility, and one with all sorts of challenges and obstacles that could keep it from happening.

However, thanks to the tireless work of the members of the PCSA and the support of some of our great faculty and alumni, those possibilities were all realized. On the weekend of March 30-April 1, undergraduate and graduate students from more than a dozen states, university faculty and department alumni all helped make the First Annual Ray Browne Conference on Popular Culture a success. The three-day event included an opening reception on Friday evening and two-full days of conference presentations, roundtables and talks on Saturday and Sunday. Although both the PCSA organization and the conference were brand new, we had a really solid attendance for the conference. Across Saturday and Sunday’s various sessions, we had roughly 165 unique visitors, with a “session average” of just over 28 people per session.

Among those in attendance were Pat Browne, Ray Browne’s wife and a number of supportive POPC alumni including Margaret King, the first person to ever receive a Master’s Degree in Popular Culture (King also delivered Saturday night’s plenary address), Eileen O’Neill (Group President for the Discovery and TLC Networks), Karen Stoddard, Christopher Geist, Paul Fischer and Gary Hoppenstand (who also gave the conference’s Keynote address). Current POPC chair Marilyn Motz handled multiple duties, speaking during the conference’s opening address, introducing King’s plenary address and moderating one of the Sunday panels. POPC faculty members Esther Clinton, Angela Nelson, and Jeremy Wallach chaired panels as well, while Charles Coletta, Dan Shoemaker and Matthew Donahue all presented work. Donahue closed the
conference with a presentation and musical performance emphasizing the Fender guitar. Many students majoring in POPC from both the undergraduate and graduate population joined the faculty and instructors in participating in the conference. Graduate students Sean Ahern, Cory Barker, Seth Brodbeck, Broc Holmquest, Brian Keilen, Travis Limbert, Anna O’Brien, Kate Reynolds, Eric Sobel and Myc Wiatrowski and undergraduate student Jacob Brown all presented new work. Other graduates (Jared Brown, Anna Mullins, Chris Ryan and Mackenzie Ryan) and undergraduates (Becky Denes, Emily Davis and Brittany Knisely) played integral roles in the conference’s planning and organization.

The conference’s theme, Popular Culture in the 21st Century, brought together countless intriguing and informative papers that were presented in both typical panel and shorter roundtable formats. Some of the panel themes included Sci-Fi, Science and Politics; Narrative, Materiality and Space in Fan Culture, and Popular Culture in the 21st Century while the roundtables tackled subjects such as masculinity in contemporary television; intertextuality, digital distribution, and outsider efforts in the contemporary comic industry; and the past, present and future of the Browne Popular Culture Library. As expected, the individual paper topics were wide-ranging, as the conference heard presentations on everything from the Furry Basketball League to Twilight’s Forks, Washington to nationalism in Doctor Who. Both the traditional panel and shorter, looser roundtable formats fostered an environment open for friendly, purposeful discussion.

Overall, the conference went better than I think any of us who worked on it could have imagined. It was truly wonderful getting to meet many of the department’s most notable alumni and learning all sorts of POPC history. And it was just as satisfying to meet scholars from all over the country and to discuss engaging research topics. Many of us who attended the national PCA/ACA conference were approached by various people who had heard great things about this year’s conference and the student organization, which is both a great honor and exactly what we hoped we would accomplish. On behalf of the PCSA Executive Committee and Conference Planning Committee, I would like to say thanks to everyone who came to, spread the word about or helped with the conference. We could not have done it without you.

Dr. Dan Shoemaker presents his paper on sci-fi films, "The Disappearance of the Future," at The Ray Browne Conference on Popular Culture
Meet Marsha Olivarez, New Secretary to the Department of Popular Culture
By: Pamela Wagner

In October 2011, the BGSU Department of Popular Culture welcomed new secretary Marsha Olivarez. Marsha replaced former secretary Bernice Aguilar, who retired in December 2010. A native and lifelong resident of Bowling Green, Marsha has worked for the University in various capacities for the last twenty-six years. In 1984, Marsha worked in administration at the University’s Population and Society Research Center, conducting telephone interviews and recording population and other statistical data on an early Macintosh computer. When the department folded in 1996, Marsha moved on to the College of Business Administration where she spent five years before again moving on, this time to BGSU’s Department of Finance where she worked with the Applied Statistics Operations Research department. During her long and diverse career at the university, Marsha simultaneously pursued higher education, taking classes at BGSU when time permitted. In December 2011, just two months after taking on her new role as Department of Popular Culture secretary, Marsha completed her undergraduate degree, earning a Bachelor of Liberal Studies and becoming a proud BGSU alumna. Congratulations, Marsha!

While she juggled work and school, Marsha, a divorced mother of three, raised daughter Diana and sons Anthony and Carlos. Carlos, a recent graduate of Bowling Green High School, will be entering BGSU in the fall. Marsha is also the proud grandmother of Mia (2) and Braden (3 months). Her family also includes boyfriend Ernesto, with whom she has enjoyed a long-term relationship.

Marsha enjoys spending time with her growing family. In this photo she holds her new grandson, Braden

A hobby enthusiast, Marsha is a skilled jewelry designer who makes handcrafted beaded earrings, bracelets and the like. Her colorful and elegant pieces have been displayed and sold at craft shows and church bazaars and even selected as the accessory of choice for various weddings and special events. Marsha is also an avid gardener who has utilized her expertise on flowers and foliage to cultivate a beautiful floral landscape at her home. During her spare time, Marsha enjoys attending flea markets throughout northwest Ohio. She also loves to travel and has been to many different places, including Ireland, Great Britain, France, Belize and Mexico. Marsha especially enjoys taking cruises with family and friends.

Back in her new office at the POPC house, Marsha, who has a long history of working independently, has quickly adapted to her position as the solo support staff for the Department of Popular Culture and has comfortably fit-in with the professors and students who work together in the program. Friendly and
enthusiastic, Marsha has also lent her creative talents to the Popular Culture house itself, bedecking the space with both seasonal and permanent decorations that add to the building’s overall charm. She will no doubt continue those efforts when the Popular Culture department transitions to its new offices in Shatzel Hall. Welcome, Marsha!

Notable Links:

Dr. Jeremy Wallach on the "Heavy Metal Witch Hunt":
http://www.popmatters.com/pm/tools/full/158667

Upcoming symposium on heavy metal and globalization at the University of Dayton featuring Dr. Clinton and Dr. Wallach:
http://www.udayton.edu/artssciences/artsseries/event_5.php

The Heavy Metal and Popular Culture Conference will take place April 4-7, 2013 at Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, Ohio, USA.

Keynote Speakers:

Laina Dawes, author of What Are You Doing Here?: A Black Woman’s Life and Liberation in Heavy Metal (Bazillion Points, 2012)

Keith Kahn-Harris, author of Extreme Metal: Music and Culture on the Edge (Berg, 2007)

Robert Walser, author of Running with the Devil: Power, Gender, and Madness in Heavy Metal Music (Wesleyan, 1993)

Call for Papers will be forthcoming. Check http://www.metalrulestheglobe.com for further updates.
Meet Dr. Susana Peña, Director of the School of Cultural and Critical Studies
By Jeremy Wallach and Esther Clinton

“"I consider myself a child of the Caribbean." Of Cuban descent and raised in Puerto Rico and Miami, Dr. Susana Peña attended Amherst College and the University of California, Santa Barbara before coming to Bowling Green in 2001 to teach in the Ethnic Studies Department. At Santa Barbara, where she received her Master’s and doctorate, she participated in the struggle to get her sociology department to recognize the importance of race in social analysis. As a specialist in the gay Cuban-American subculture in Miami who has conducted extensive ethnographic research, she has drawn on all four areas of the School of Cultural and Critical Studies in her scholarship.

As the recently appointed director of the School of Cultural and Critical Studies, Dr. Peña identifies numerous challenges and opportunities for faculty and students of the School’s constituent units: Women, Sexuality, and Gender Studies; Ethnic Studies; American Culture Studies; and Popular Culture. Aiming to overcome past disagreements between units, she hopes to increase faculty’s access to resources, raise the university-wide profile of our research activities, and perhaps explore team-teaching opportunities. In general, she says, “I want us to work closely together on things that we’re passionate about.” Dr. Peña is also committed to raising the quality and consistency of graduate training within SCCS and “maximizing our undergrads’ experiences,” taking seriously their concerns about their future career prospects.

As SCCS Director Dr. Peña received her first major jolt when she was notified in mid-July that the faculty of the Department of Popular Culture was suddenly expected to relocate to new offices in Shatzel Hall before the start of the fall semester. She has handled the situation with great aplomb, keeping us informed of new developments and personally visiting the POPC House on numerous occasions. Undoubtedly Dr. Peña will face many more unforeseen challenges, and we are confident that she will face them effectively with empathy and determination. Her leadership is welcome in these challenging times.

Follow BGSU POPC on Twitter!
@POPCULTUREBGSU
Original advertisement from the Sears, Roebuck and Company Catalog of The Colchester model kit home that serves as the foundation for the Popular Culture House

Notable Links:

- Report on Dr. Matt Donahue’s Guitar Presentation at The Ray Browne Conference on Popular Culture: BG News
  [http://tinyurl.com/7d69ts](http://tinyurl.com/7d69ts)

- Dr. Charles Coletta comments on Andy Griffith, Mayberry and the creation of nostalgia: Christian Science Monitor,
  [http://tinyurl.com/7axsa3x](http://tinyurl.com/7axsa3x)

- Dr. Jeffrey Brown on Brave and action heroines: Deseret News
  [http://tinyurl.com/cv7zcs5](http://tinyurl.com/cv7zcs5)

- Dr. Esther Clinton on Abraham Lincoln, Vampire Hunter: NorthJersey.com
  [tinyurl.com/887hjhz](http://tinyurl.com/887hjhz)

- Dr. Montana Miller on social media and marketing in a CustomerManagementIQ.com podcast:
  [tinyurl.com/3esvzlw](http://tinyurl.com/3esvzlw)
Continued Success for *Metal Rules The Globe*

By: Pamela Wagner

Heavy metal is an often-maligned musical genre that has been embraced by youth and adults alike, with the music spreading from one region to the next through myriad transnational trading networks facilitated by globalization. Through these networks, everything from audiocassette tapes, metal albums, fanzines and written correspondences are shared by devotees from areas as diverse as China and Nepal, Malta and Slovenia and the United States and Japan. The proliferation of metal music throughout the world has also benefited from the technological revolution of the last twenty-odd years, with MP3s, concert videos, blogs, websites and other digital media enabling metalheads to share new and vintage metal via the Internet. In the first part of *Metal Rules the Globe*, the editors of and contributors to the volume explore the ways in which metal music has traveled these world highways, providing forms of escapism, empowerment and resistance for the “global proletariat” that embraces this musical art form.

*Metal Rules the Globe: Heavy Metal Music Around the World*, a collection of scholarly essays on the influence of heavy metal music in countries all over the map, continues to garner praise from both academics and heavy metal fans. The six-part tome edited by BGSU POPC associate professor and ethnomusicologist Dr. Jeremy Wallach, along with Dr. Harris M. Berger, music professor at Texas A&M University, and Dr. Paul D. Greene, associate professor of integrative arts at Pennsylvania State University, includes essays on globalization, gender and masculinity, nationalism, extremist ideologies, the music industry, and small nation case studies, all compiled in a carefully organized volume that examines these subjects in relation to the global influence of heavy metal music. *Metal Rules the Globe* was published in December 2011 by Duke University Press and is available as a paperback, hardback, and e-book.

*Dr. Jeremy Wallach, Co-editor of Metal Rules the Globe*

The introduction is followed by various case studies, drawing upon ethnographic, historical and textual methods. In Part Two, Wallach provides a thick description of the transnational Malay metal scene in Singapore, Indonesia and Malaysia and investigates its connection to local notions of masculinity. In Part Three, which
explores metal music in relation to the nation state, Paul D. Greene offers a detailed analysis of the ways in which metal music expresses frustrations brought about by local Nepalese cultural and religious obligations and norms. Part Three also includes scholar Idelber Avelar’s study of the Brazilian metal scene and the rise and influence of Sepultura, a group that has successfully negotiated the post-dictatorship era in Brazil to create music that is socially conscious, poetic, yet remains true to heavy metal’s fast tempo and pulsating sounds. In Part Five, music scholar Steve Waksman examines cultural exchange in the 1970s in the context of Kiss’s and Led Zeppelin’s worldwide tours. Waksman contrasts Kiss’s ethnocentric attitudes toward Latin America and Japan with Zeppelin’s cultural and musical curiosity regarding India and Morocco.

Although it has only been out for a little over six months, Metal Rules the Globe has already been positively reviewed in both academic and heavy metal fan publications. Lauren Welker, who reviewed the book for the Journal of Folklore Research, writes that it is a “groundbreaking work for the field of metal studies” and that the “book’s contributors go beyond a repetitious, descriptive demonstration of metal music’s global breadth, using ethnography, social, musical, and other analyses to discuss the complex ways in which metal fans participate in international musical networks while contributing to local discourses on issues such as gender, class, ethnicity, and the nation.” Troy Belford of the Anthropology Review Database concluded, “This book is an impressive creation, a first formative step into a vastly untapped area of academic inquiry, showing how this music genre is adapted locally to unique cultural conditions. Anthropologists and ethnomusicologists should now seriously consider heavy metal music as yet another of the components of North American and Western European globalization.” On the metal front, the website Metal Rules notes that the book provides “academic proof” to back up their lofty proclamation that heavy metal music indeed rules the globe. Offering a humorous bent on this academic analysis of metal music, reviewer Josh Wood notes, “I believe the editors and authors can all be proud of this monumental work. As one of the crude, unsophisticated, mono-browed, knuckle-dragging, mouth-breathing, unkempt, mono-syllabic, head-banging dudes who has dedicated his entire life to the metal, my final analysis of this excellent collection of academic papers is this… Me like!” Kurt Morris of Razorcake argues that the book is a “fine work” that will no doubt prove to be an important text for “academics in pop culture, anthropology, musicology, and sociology fields.” Morris closes his review with the exclamation, “Long live metal! No matter where in the world it comes from.” Finally, Sam Dunn, director of Metal: A Headbanger’s Journey and Global Metal, writes, “Metal Rules the Globe will surely join the ranks of Robert Walser’s Running with the Devil and Deena Weinstein’s Heavy Metal as one of the classics of heavy metal scholarship. A fascinating and valuable read!”

Taken separately, the essays in Metal Rules the Globe offer keen insight into the various ways metal music is created, experienced and shared throughout the world. Organized and assembled in this edited volume, these essays define and trace the history and expansion of the vast transnational web that carries and sustains this music genre in parts of the world where censorship, dismissal and even ridicule of metal music are commonplace. In doing so, Metal Rules the Globe also acknowledges and offers respect to the musicians and fans that defy cultural expectations by creating and celebrating metal music.

Dr. Wallach’s book Modern Noise, Fluid Genres quoted in Jakarta Post article on dangdut, Lady Gaga, and eroticism: HTTP://TINYURL.COM/CQL3RTO
Two of the Popular Culture Department's MA students were honored at the University's 17th Annual Gregory T. DeCrane Applauding Excellence Awards Ceremony. Cory Barker was recognized as the Student Organization Member of the Year for all of his work with the Popular Culture Scholars Association. Jared Brown was the recipient of a 2012 Student Life Award. For more news of Cory and Jared, see below!

Sean Ahern, Graduate Class of 2012

Sean Ahern is currently finishing work on his Master's Thesis on the punk band The Clash and the use of mass media in their music. In the fall Sean will be attending The State University of New York at Buffalo in pursuit of a PhD in American Culture Studies and has also recently been asked to be a part of the editorial board for the newly-minted *Journal of Fandom Studies (Intellect)*. Other projects he is working on include revisions to a paper on the Dropkick Murphys for an edited volume tentatively titled *Skinned to the Bone: Aggressive Music in the 21st Century* (Eric James Abbey and Colin Helb, eds., Lexington Books, forthcoming) and a paper on the Furry Basketball Association for a compilation on popular culture in the 21st Century.

Cory Barker chaired the First Annual Ray Browne Conference on Popular Culture put on by the Popular Culture Scholars Association here at BGSU in the spring. He presented at that conference, as well as at March’s POPC colloquium and April’s national PCA/ACA conference in Boston. He officially completed his MA thesis in February and he will begin his PhD work in the Department of Communication and Culture at Indiana University in the fall.

Jared Brown: I will be serving as an intern for CNN beginning in early June. The internship I was selected for is with the network’s Domestic Show Team, which is based in Atlanta, Georgia.

I have previously completed internships with National Public Radio and Public Broadcasting Service. I am looking forward to taking the lessons I have learned from my research as a television studies specialist and utilizing them to develop further my professional skills as I pursue this new and exciting opportunity!
**Dr. Jeffrey Brown**: I had two articles come out in the past year. The first was “Supermoms?: Maternity and the Monstrous-Feminine in Superhero Comics” in the *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics* (Vol. 2, No. 1), about issues of parental authority and adolescent enculturation in comics. The other was a requested chapter “Ethnography: Wearing One’s Fandom,” in the book *Critical Approaches to Comics: Theories and Methods*, (Matthew Smith and Randy Duncan editors, Routledge Press) which is a collection of essays reviewing and instructing about different cultural theories and research methodologies by focusing on comic book literature. Also, **Angela Nelson** and I are both contributing chapters to the forthcoming anthology *Black Comic Strips: Past and Present*, (Sheena Howard and Ronald Jackson, eds., Continuum Press).

Dr. Esther Clinton at the Undergraduate Awards Banquet where she was invited by two different students as a Favorite Faculty Member

**Dr. Esther Clinton** is working on the heavy metal music conference being planned for April 2013. In April 2012, the students in Dr. Scott Magelson’s graduate Performance-Studies class invited Drs. Clinton and **Wallach** to be keynote speakers at the conference they designed and planned, called “The World is a Contact Zone: Performativities in Contested Identities, Epistemologies, and Popular Culture.” Also in April she was an invited discussant at the “Borders, Boundaries, and Beyond” International Graduate Historical Studies Conference at Central Michigan University in Mt. Pleasant, Michigan. She was a discussant for the panel “When Societies Collide: Societal Adaptations and Changes Under Colonialism,” where people were excited about her notion of “intellectual history from below.” In March 2012 she presented a paper called “The Gothic Menace, Then and Now: Gothic Literature, Heavy Metal Music, and Moral Panics” as part of the “Metal Studies Rising” Panel at the joint IASPM-US (International Association for the Study of Popular Music) and EMP (Experience Music Project) Conference in New York City. In December 2011 as part of the BGSU Popular Culture Symposium, she presented a paper called, “How to Train Your Dragon to be a Fairy-Tale Character: Poetics and Parallelisms in a Modern Blockbuster,” which drew a surprisingly large crowd considering that it was given the last week of classes.

**Dr. Charles Coletta**: I’ve had a very productive academic year both inside and outside the classroom. When not teaching my various ACS and POPC courses I can be found working as a contributing writer on several forthcoming pop culture texts: *Icons of the American Comic Book*, a revised edition of the *St. James Encyclopedia of Popular Culture*, and *Comics Through Time*. This last text is a massive encyclopedia and I am currently in the process of composing nearly 70 historical essays on a variety of comic strip and comic book creators, titles,
characters, companies, and themes. I am also working on devising a new 3000-level course for ACS titled "Comics, Superheroes, & Culture" that will be offered through the Chapman Learning Community in the Fall 2012 semester. In November, I was invited to Malone University as a guest speaker. I participated in the Worldview Forum series where the topic was "(Un)Popular Culture: Destroying our Character or Bringing Culture to Millions?" It was an invigorating discussion at a Christian university where many of the students’ attitudes about pop culture are much more politically conservative than many of their BGSU counterparts. The highlight of the year came in December when I traveled on the Turner Classic Movie Cruise, which left Miami and made visits to Key West and Cozumel, Mexico. While onboard the ship I had a wonderful time visiting with Eva Marie Saint (the Oscar-winning actress and BGSU’s most famed alum) and her husband Jeffrey Hayden. Thanks to Ms. Saint and Mr. Hayden I was able to acquire some donations for the BPCL from noted actors Ernest Borgnine (The Poseidon Adventure) and Tippi Hedren (The Birds). I also had the opportunity to meet director Norman Jewison on the cruise.

Dr. Matthew Donahue gave a presentation for the Popular Culture Colloquium Series titled “The Heavy Metal T-Shirt in Popular Culture and Beyond: An International Perspective.” He exhibited a selection of photographs as part of the “Gang of 35” exhibition highlighting photographic perspectives of the 2011 Black Swamp Arts Festival that took place at Grounds for Thought Coffee Shop in Bowling Green. Donahue gave a special presentation and performance at the Ray Browne Conference on Popular Culture as part of his research on the guitar in popular culture titled “Guitar Stories: On Fender,” which consisted of a lecture on the Fender guitar brand and a 30-minute performance of instrumental guitar tunes with a bassist and drummer. He received an Authors and Artists award from the Friends of the Library at BGSU for his exhibition of art cars at the Henry Ford Museum. His
service to BGSU's Jerome Library continued with his joining the Board of the Friends of the Library and the Jerome Library Building Task Force Committee. This summer he will be working on developing a new course for the fall titled “Rock Music Subcultures” and working with Esther Clinton and Jeremy Wallach on planning the international conference on heavy metal to be held at BGSU in Spring 2013. His academic and creative efforts were highlighted recently in the BG News at [link]. Mackenzie James-Ryan: The 2011-2012 school year has been very busy for me. Chris Ryan and I were married in Prout Chapel here on campus in January 2012. I also traveled to Boston to present my paper on online grave memorials at this year’s National PCA/ACA conference. It has also been a year of figuring out what my next step will be once I graduate in August. I am pleased to announce that I will be attending the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada to pursue a dual Master's degree in Library and Information Science and Archival Studies. This decision was heavily influenced by the past year that I have spent working in the Browne Popular Culture Library.

Travis Limbert was the Treasurer and one of the founding members of the new student organization, the Popular Culture Scholars Association. He also helped plan and presented at the First Annual Ray Browne Conference on Popular Culture at BGSU this spring. He presented his thesis research at the national PCA/ACA conference in Boston as well as the April POPC Colloquium at BGSU. He is finishing up his Master’s thesis, “Magic of Community: Gathering of Card Player’s and Subcultural Expression,” this summer.

Dr. Montana Miller spent the spring revising her book, "Playing Dead" (forthcoming in fall of 2012 with Utah State University Press) and continuing her research into skydivers' beliefs and rituals surrounding death. She presented a paper on that topic, "Death and the Drop Zone: The Esoteric and Exoteric Folklore of Skydiving," at the annual Western States Folklore Society meeting in Sacramento, California in April, followed by a research trip to document the 20-year anniversary commemoration of the worst tragedy in the history of skydiving, the crash of an Otter full of jumpers at Perris Valley, California. Dr. Miller coincidentally survived a near-tragedy over spring break in Nicaragua when she and her entire planeload of skydivers were blown into the Pacific Ocean, due to unexpected 70 mph winds at deployment altitude. Over a mile out to sea and close to drowning, Dr. Miller was rescued by fishermen in truly folkloric fashion.

Dr. Miller’s book: [link]

Editor's Note: Dr. Miller also received tenure this semester. Congratulations, Montana!

Dr. Angela Nelson: During the 2011-2012 academic year, I presented a workshop for teachers: “Understanding Popular Culture and Law-Related Themed Arts” at the Ohio Center for Law-Related Education Annual Law and Citizenship Conference, 19 September 2011. My journal article “Religious Rhetoric in Tyler Perry’s Play Madea’s Family Reunion” was published online in Rhetoric and Religion, a special
issue of the *Methodist Theological Seminary Journal* 50 (Spring 2012) and “Put Your Hands Together”: The Theological Meaning of Percussion and Percussiveness in Rap Music” was published in *Americana: The Journal of American Popular Culture* 10.1 (Spring 2011), also an online journal. I coordinated with Myc Wiatrowski and Brian Keilen of the Popular Culture Scholars Association, to produce the Center for Popular Culture Studies’ monthly Colloquium Lecture Series. We successfully co-sponsored nine lectures which included Dr. Pavitra Sundar of Kettering University, Marc Sumerak, former writer and editor of Marvel Comics, and thesis presentations by five of our Master’s degree candidates. I served as President for the Midwest Popular Culture Association/Midwest American Culture Association during its October 2011 meeting and led a panel discussion with past and current officers of the MPCA and PCA concerning the future of regional humanities’ associations such as ours and solicited their advice concerning best practices so that the MPCA continues to grow and thrive. Furthermore, the MPCA Executive Council appointed a journal committee to investigate the development of a peer-reviewed, scholarly journal for the Association. We hope to have an editor in place and a journal proposal completed and submitted by the end of May. I also continued to co-chair the Black Music Culture and Hip-Hop Culture Areas of the 2012 PCA/ACA where 23 faculty members and graduate students presented scholarly papers on various topics related to hip-hop, spirituals, blues, and jazz.

**Dr. Kristen Rudisill:** So I am four months into my six-month Fulbright-Nehru Senior Research Fellowship in Chennai, India. It has been an amazing, fun, surprising, and productive time for me. I’m researching the dance scene in Chennai, and to understand it better, I am taking dance classes at three different studios in a variety of styles: cinematic, Tamil folk, zumba, hip hop, and free-style. I will perform on the Music Academy of Madras stage on Saturday, May 5th with three friends after completing the Raack Academy of Dance summer camp. I have been busy interviewing my fellow students and instructors as well as contestants, choreographers, judges, and producers on two different dance reality television shows. *Ungalil Yaar Prabhudeva* (“Who Among You is the Next Prabhudeva”—Prabhudeva is often referred to as “the Michael Jackson of India”) and *Manada Mayilada* (“The Deer Dances and the Peacock Dances”) have been accommodating enough to allow me to attend rehearsals as well as shootings, and I have very much enjoyed getting to know the participants and these two very different programs. I also have two side projects while I’m here, which adds to the fun and confusion. For one, I am looking Page Turn Publications, which started in 2010 to publish English-language “red-blooded desi romance” novels. For the other, I am looking at the representation of members of the Tamil Singapore diaspora in (Indian) Tamil theater. I am interviewing romance authors and readers as well as theater fans for these projects. In addition to the field research, I have presented lectures at several universities in India and Singapore in the past few months. These include DAV College in Chandigarh, Adikavi Nannaya University in Rajahmundry, and, thanks to the kind generosity of the O'Neill-Stoddard Fund, the National University of Singapore. I am also helping to organize and will present at the first annual conference for the brand new School of Indian Film Music in Chennai, which has invited me to sit on its board. I have met a lot of amazing people on this trip as well as spent time with many old friends. I have two months left here in India before returning to Bowling Green and I know that they will be just as full and rewarding as
the first four have been. In other news this semester, my article “Everyday Flamboyancy in Chennai’s Sabha Theatre” has just come out in the latest issue of the Asian Theatre Journal.

This was a year that broke some personal records for Dr. Jeremy Wallach, with the publication of a co-edited volume, two co-authored journal articles, and the delivery of seven conference presentations plus a POPC colloquium on toy dinosaurs. In addition, his 2008 Ethnomusicology article, “Living the Punk Lifestyle in Jakarta,” was reprinted in the anthology White Riot: Punk Rock and the Politics of Race (Stephen Duncombe and Maxwell Tremblay, eds., Verso; 2011), alongside essays by Lester Bangs, Dick Hebdige, Greil Marcus, Norman Mailer, and James Baldwin—a rare honor indeed. Highlights of the academic year include extolling the value of studying Southeast Asian popular music at a conference at the University of the Philippines in Manila (see POPC Newsletter Vol. 3, No. 1), emphasizing the growing global importance of Asian popular culture at the Harvard Project for Asian and International Relations Conference in Cambridge, Mass. (funding for that trip generously provided by the O’Neill-Stoddard Fund), and meeting a precious handful of serious heavy metal scholars as a result of giving three papers on the subject in three very different venues. The uncontested professional high point of the year was the release of Dr. Wallach’s second book, the edited volume Metal Rules the Globe: Heavy Metal Music around the World (with Harris M. Berger and Paul D. Greene, eds., Duke University Press, 2011) in late December, for which he contributed a co-written introductory chapter and a case-study chapter based on his research in Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singapore. Metal Rules the Globe has already received favorable reviews in the music and academic press (see story elsewhere in this newsletter). None of the above would have been remotely possible without his wife, collaborator, and co-editor Esther Clinton.

In the coming year, Drs. Clinton and Wallach are planning an international conference on heavy metal music with
Matthew Donahue for April 2013 and working on a special issue of Asian Music on Indonesian popular music and the politics of genre. Dr. Wallach is also contributing a Foreword to a forthcoming collection of essays on “aggressive music” that includes a chapter by his current MA thesis advisee Sean Ahern and is co-edited by Dr. Wallach’s former PhD (ACS) advisee Dr. Colin Helb ’09.

Myc Wiatrowski’s final year within the Department of Popular Culture has been an exciting adventure. He is partly responsible, along with co-conspirator Brian Keilen, for the establishment of the Popular Culture Scholars Association, a new student organization aimed at bringing together and engaging community members, students, alumni, professionals, and scholars who are dedicated to the creation and study of popular texts and vernacular culture. Myc and Brian also ran the 2011-2012 Popular Culture Colloquium Series, and with the PCSA and its many dedicated members, were responsible for organizing and hosting the first Ray Browne Conference on Popular Culture. Both endeavors were well received and Myc considers them to have been smashing successes. In addition to co-organizing academic conferences, Myc also presented at both the Ray Browne Conference here in BG and at the national Popular Culture Association conference in Boston, Massachusetts. Currently he is in the process of editing two collections for publication with fellow PopC alums, the first on television’s Smallville with Cory Barker and Chris Ryan and another entitled Popular Culture in the 21st Century: Proceedings from the Ray Browne Conference on Popular Culture, which he will also be editing with Cory Barker.

Myc recently finished his Master’s thesis entitled “A Man’s Gotta Do: Myth, Misogyny and Otherness in Post-9/11 America” and is preparing to move on from the department. He will, however, not be going far as this fall he will enter the MBA accelerated degree program at BGSU. After completing the MBA Myc plans to enroll in the Ph.D. program at Indiana University’s Department of Folklore and Ethnomusicology in the Fall of 2013, a program to which he has already been accepted but has chosen to defer for the moment.

For news of Nick Ware ’09, see The BGSU Asian Popular Culture Symposium: Two Years Later on next page.
The BGSU Asian Popular Culture Symposium: Two Years Later

Two years after we invited a diverse array of scholars to BGSU to discuss their work in the burgeoning field of Asian popular culture studies, we thought we’d drop them a line and ask what they were up to. Here are the responses we received.

Nilanjana Bhattacharjya: I will be leaving Colorado College to join the Barrett Honors College at Arizona State University! I’ll be teaching as faculty fellow in an interdisciplinary position in the humanities. I won’t be in any sort of department but will be joining about 20 other faculty to teach the cream of the crop at ASU in liberal arts style seminar classes; they’re great students and faculty, and I’m very excited to work with them. (My husband Aaron teaches at ASU as well, which is the most fantastic part of all!)

Dr. Peter Kvetko addresses the crowd during the concluding panel discussion of the Asian Popular Culture Symposium, April 16, 2010

As far as what I’m working on now, I’m working with Peter Kvetko to co-edit a special issue of the journal South Asian Popular Culture focused on music; it will be published next fall. In my own work, I’ve been increasingly conscious of the fact that so much useful popular music scholarship is being done in disciplines outside music, and this issue responds to the need for those of us working on this topic to engage in more frequent dialogues across disciplines.

I have lots of thoughts about the Symposium. To add to what I’ve written above, the symposium did spark all sorts of neural connections between my own research and others who spoke on topics related to folklore and other forms of media, and I was grateful to have a chance to connect with Radhika Gajjala from BGSU as a result of my visit there! The most valuable outcome of the Symposium was that it opened my eyes to the fact that although we have an abundance of riches in contemporary scholarship in Asia, we have only begun to explore the potential of scholarship on inter-Asian connections—particularly between South Asia, East Asia, and Southeast Asia. There is so much more work to be done there, and I’m thankful to have had a chance to meet and engage with people and ideas I rarely encounter because of our frequent separations into distinct geographical area studies.

Ian Condry: Since the symposium, I submitted my book manuscript "The Soul of Anime: Collaborative Creativity and Japan’s Media Success Story," due out in Spring 2013 from Duke University Press. The symposium at BGSU was a wonderful opportunity to meet fascinating scholars and to gain important feedback on my research. Thanks for all the hard work you do!

Paul D. Greene continues to develop his research on Indian remixes, and plans a final stage of field research on remixes and musical culture in August 2012. He has contributed a chapter on this research, titled “Bollywood in the Era of Filmsong Avatars: DJing, Remixing, and Change in the Film Music Industry of North India” to the forthcoming volume Dancing with the Elephant: Popular Music in India, ed. Gregory Booth. Since the symposium, his co-edited volume has appeared in print: Metal Rules the Globe: Heavy Metal Music Around the Word, eds. Jeremy W. Wallach, Harris M. Berger and Paul D. Greene (Duke University Press, 2011). He has also authored a chapter on South Indian laments for a forthcoming edited volume.

Larissa Heinrich is working on a new monograph project that analyzes representations of the medically commodified body (the body changed or augmented through organ transplant, blood transfusion, surgery, or plastination) in contemporary Chinese and comparative literature, media, visual culture, and popular science discourses. Heinrich is also
putting finishing touches on a translation of Taiwanese author Qiu Miaojin’s final novel, "Last Words from Montmartre," and co-editing a volume of new scholarly work on "Queer Sinophone Cultures" with Howard Chiang (under contract with Routledge). Heinrich is currently teaching a survey class at UCSD on "The Roots of Chinese Popular Culture: 1900-2000."

Peter Kvetko and fellow symposium participant Nilanjana Bhattacharjya are co-editing a special issue on music for the journal South Asian Popular Culture, to be published in the fall of 2012. Peter continues to conduct research on non-film popular music in Mumbai. He will be in India for several months this summer to further this project, as well as to build on a project concerning the use of music by India's political parties.

Jennifer Robertson: Since that memorable Skype (for me) conference, I've been quite busy. I've also revisited the paper I gave at your conference and will be giving a version at Reed College this November.

I'm presently based in Tokyo, Japan (January through May), and leaving for a week in Korea tomorrow morning. My project, supported by Abe/SSRC and Guggenheim Fellowships, is an ethnography/ethnohistory of the political economy of service and personal robots in Japan, Korea and Italy. (I'll be going to Italy later this year.)

A new article is coming out: "Hemato-Nationalism: The Past, Present, and Future of ‘Japanese Blood’." Medical Anthropology 31(2) 1-20. In it I look at the "cute" mascot cartoon that represent both Japan and the Japanese Red Cross Society.

Nicholas Ware is a Ph.D. student in the Texts & Technology program at the University of Central Florida, where he is quickly approaching ABD status. He recently presented a paper at the International Conference on the Fantastic in the Arts about the Japanese urban legend kuchisake onna and her varied positions in Japanese pop narratives. In 2010, he felt the APC Symposium made a powerful case for considering Asian influences in world culture and considering Asian Popular Culture in a globalized context, and those positions can and must continue going forward.

Christopher Williams, Fellow of the Center for Popular Culture from 2009-2011 and Visiting Assistant Professor at the University of Toledo, presented a paper in November 2011 in San Francisco at the national conference of the American Musicological Society. “Bach in the Shop Window: Weill’s Mahagonny and the Commodification of Musical Society” undertook a complex examination of Brecht and Weill’s most ambitious collaboration against the backdrop of Walter Benjamin’s Arcades Project. In April 2012, he also presented a lecture in the Toledo Symphony Orchestra and University of Toledo’s “Wartime Reflections” series. “Rage and Remembrance” discussed Benjamin Britten’s Sinfonia da Requiem and Ralph Vaughan Williams’s Fourth Symphony as meditations on war, anger, and pacifism. Dr. Williams also gave the pre-concert lectures for the linked Toledo Symphony Orchestra concerts.

Visit the POPC House facebook page at: https://www.facebook.com/bgsupopc.house
A Personal Reflection on the Popular Culture House

Since I first heard the surprise announcement that it was slated for imminent demolition, I’ve been struggling to articulate what the Popular Culture House means to me. I have been both a student and a teacher in the house. As a student in the MA program, I was part of an unusually close cohort of grad students. The linchpin of our group was Ric Bohannon, who had come from Florida to study Popular Culture. He made sure that there was no invidious distinction made between those of us who were funded and those who weren’t.

“What crass irony to have the Popular Culture House dismissed as garbage and deemed fit for the dustbin of history, rather than being loved and treasured for the rare thing it is.”

Ric knew we were all in the same boat, and that it was a boat that was only as big as our sleepy little college town. Ric was both captain and cruise director of that boat, and my experience in the Master's cohort completely spoiled me, in that I have never again experienced such a pronounced sense of collegiality in the academy. I attended the MA program from 1993 to 1995. Ric died of inoperable brain cancer at the end of 1997, leaving his wife, Mindy, a widow before her thirtieth birthday.

When I returned to the department with my doctorate in hand in 2004, I was fortunate to occupy the office with the big picture window and the cool 1960s plastic curtain. When I had been a Master's student, the office had belonged to Carl Holmberg. I hadn't worked with him while I was a student, but I had seen Carl at conferences after I’d graduated, and he had always been decent and kind to me. I was saddened and shocked by his sudden loss. I have thought of him often since 2004, when I took up residence in his room of the house.

So, when I look at the Popular Culture House, I think about people, many of whom are unknown to the current administration. I don’t think the house is literally haunted, but I do wonder where the metaphorical ghosts of Ric and Carl (and others) will hang their spectral hats once the house is razed. I wonder how the shade of Ray Browne will feel. The Department of Popular Culture was founded to recognize the meaning inherent in forms of cultural expression that others in the academy thought were garbage. What crass irony to have the Popular Culture House dismissed as garbage and deemed fit for the dustbin of history, rather than being loved and treasured for the rare thing it is.

I also think about the people I have taught in the house, in the context of my office hours. Faculty hold office hours because we know that not everything can be taught in the classroom format of one-to-many. The one-to-one teaching that happens during office hours can be the most student-centered, and therefore the most meaningful for the student and the most rewarding for the teacher. I have no idea how many students I have helped during my office hours, or how many in general have passed through the doors of the house. But, it has been a place of learning, for many. And I think almost all of them found the building charming. Not all forms of value can be reckoned on a ledger. To me, the house has immeasurable warmth and charm, and while these qualities resist quantification, it’s clear from the response to
the petition that these qualities matter to our community. Our campus will be a little colder and a little less charming in the absence of the POPC house. The University is on a building spree, and so far most of the new buildings are gargantuan. Is there no room on this campus for our little house? Is there no room for modesty? Must we be in such a hurry to obliterate the past? This is not simply a matter of sentiment versus someone's bottom line. This is, at heart, a question of values (and not property values): What things should we care for?

For me, the Popular Culture House is greater than the sum of its parts. When I look at it, I don't just see a building. I see a human dimension, an educational mission, an example of architectural and cultural history, and an institutional heritage, all of which I think are worth preserving. Knocking down the Popular Culture House would be a shame. And it will make me and others love BGSU a little less.

- Dan C. Shoemaker, Ph.D