What an exciting year 2008-2009 has been for all of us associated with Carolina’s Program in Medieval and Early Modern Studies (MEMS)! In an academic year filled with so much bad news—hiring freezes, cutbacks, retrenchments—all of us associated with MEMS are acutely aware of how fortunate we are to offer so much positive news, and so many splendid opportunities, to the academic community on our campus and beyond. So with this newsletter, we wish to take a moment to celebrate MEMS’ accomplishments during this academic year with you, and share information about our growing opportunities to serve our local and global academic communities in the future.

As you will see in the pages that follow, in 2008-2009 MEMS’ Crossroads Lectures series, directed by Dr. Jane Burns (Women’s Studies), continued to bring fascinating speakers to the Carolina campus, and MEMS’ first conference, on the theme of “Global Encounters,” was a great success due in large part to the leadership supplied by Dr. Brett Whalen (History). MEMS provided a large number of grants and awards for faculty and students, for research, course development, graduate student recruitment, and travel to archives and conferences. Thanks to generous gifts made by Dr. John Headley and Dr. Donald Gilman respectively, MEMS also awarded the first Ryan-Headley Dissertation Fellowship in Fall 2008 and the first Gilman Research Support Award in Spring 2009. Dr. Jessica Wolfe (English and Comparative Literature) and Dr. Dorothy Verkerk (Art) offered the first MEMS seminars, interdisciplinary courses on the history of the book, which received enthusiastic responses from the students enrolled in the classes. The proposed MEMS minor received official approval, and will be up and running in Fall 2009. The future for MEMS looks bright indeed, and we are grateful for the continuing support of the Mellon Foundation, the College of Arts and Sciences, and of a dynamic, interdisciplinary, and ever-growing group of faculty, students, staff, alumni and MEMS enthusiasts from a variety of locales and backgrounds. While in Fall 2009 we begin the implementation of the MEMS minor, we will also start the design of the MEMS major, which we hope to have approved and ready for implementation within the next three years. Under the leadership of Dr. Jessica Wolfe, plans for an international conference on Erasmus and Sir Thomas More, scheduled for Spring 2011, have started to take shape. New MEMS seminars will be offered next year, as well as two Crossroads Lectures, and a lunchtime colloquia series focusing on faculty research. MEMS will continue to offer an array of grants and awards to encourage faculty and graduate student research in Medieval and Early Modern Studies.

From the beginning MEMS’ focus has been global and interdisciplinary in nature, and so it should come as no surprise that some of our most promising endeavors pertain to global partnerships with peer institutions in other countries. As this newsletter goes to print, plans are underway for a conference jointly sponsored by MEMS and the Center for Late Antique and Medieval Studies (CLAMS) at King’s College London in Spring 2010. This summer a MEMS delegation led by Dr. Kathryn Starkey (German), former Director of MEMS, will travel to Berlin to discuss formalization of a MEMS partnership with representatives at the prestigious Freie Universität. Discussions with officials of the distinguished Universidad Complutense in Madrid regarding a similar partnership are currently taking place. These initiatives should lead in the near future to opportunities for faculty and graduate student exchanges, collaborative research projects and publications, jointly sponsored conferences, and perhaps joint degree programs.
In keeping with its mission of studying cultural crossings in the medieval and early modern periods, MEMS hosted two Crossroads Lectures this year, looking first at artistic exchanges between Christians and Muslims in medieval Spain and subsequently at cultural and economic exchanges between native peoples and Europeans in colonial America.

In September we heard from Professor Jerrilynn Dodds, Distinguished Professor of Art History and Theory, School of Architecture of the City College of the City University of New York, and lecturer and consultant at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, who spoke on "Hunting in the Borderlands: Castilians and Nasrids Forge Cultural Identities in the Paintings of the Alhambra." A medievalist who specializes in Islamic art in al-Andalus, Prof. Dodds’s work centers on issues of artistic interchange and the formation of group identities through art and architecture. In addition to her public lecture, Professor Dodds held an interdisciplinary workshop for graduate students and faculty from departments across the UNC campus on the topic of "Culture and Interaction" in which she looked at the application of post-colonial methodologies to specific case studies.

In March we were pleased to host Professor Daniel K. Richter, the Edmund J. and Louis W. Kahn Term Professor of History and the Richard S. Dunn Director of the McNeil Center for Early American Studies at the University of Pennsylvania. A specialist in first contact with native peoples whose research and teaching focus on Colonial North America and on Native American history before 1800, Professor Richter spoke on “Exotic Goods and Cultural Power: The Politics of Native American Trade with Europeans, 1500-1800” to a diverse, cross-disciplinary audience. Next year we will continue the pattern of inviting one medievalist and one early modernist, each from a different academic discipline, to share new and innovative perspectives on medieval and early modern studies within an even broader geographic and cultural scope.

Greetings from the Interim Director Continued...

Effective July 1, 2009, MEMS will have a new Director—Dr. Darryl Gless (English and Comparative Literature). MEMS, envisioned and created by Dr. Gless when he was Senior Associate Dean in the College of Arts and Sciences, is extremely fortunate to have such a gifted leader at this pivotal moment. This year Dr. Gless received the C. Knox Massey Award for Distinguished Service at Carolina, and he has recently been appointed Roy C. Moose Distinguished Professor in Renaissance Studies. MEMS leadership for 2009-2010 will also include: Dr. Jane Burns—Lectures Officer; Dr. Kathleen Duval (History)—Grants and Awards Officer; Dr. Brett Whalen—MEMS Major and Minor Officer; and Dr. Marsha Collins (English and Comparative Literature)—Globalization Officer.

Finally, on a personal note, I would like to thank everyone for their kindness and support during this year I have served as Interim Director of MEMS. I am especially thankful to former Director Dr. Kathryn Starkey for the generous contribution of her time and energy to MEMS endeavors during her research leave, and to MEMS assistant Jennie Carlisle for her patience, hard work, and endless good cheer. It has truly been a great honor to work with everyone associated with this wonderful program, and I look forward to seeing MEMS’ bright future unfold in the days and years to come!

Marsha S. Collins (English and Comparative Literature)
Interim Director, MEMS

Glaire Anderson and Jerrilyn Dodds
MEMS Seminars 2009

This spring Ellen Welch (Romance Languages) and Glaire Anderson (Art) were each awarded a grant from MEMS to develop new graduate student seminars in Medieval and Early Modern Studies. These interdisciplinary seminars are intended to expand the curriculum and draw graduate students from across the disciplines. For more information about these courses, please contact the professors directly.

Students in Ellen Welch’s Writing the Mediterranean will explore early modern literary representations of the Mediterranean as a space of cross-cultural encounter, exchange, and negotiation. Through readings of literary and documentary texts from both the northern and southern shores of the “Middle Sea,” we will ask whether this geographically and imaginary space offers different ways of theorizing cross-cultural encounter, beyond the typical binary formulations of “East-meets-West.” Through our study of stories of captivity and conversion, slippery figures such as the corsaire and the renegade, and internecine romances, we will discuss a variety of topics, including: the negotiation of “European” identities in relation to North Africa (and vice versa); literary treatments of the instability of cultural signifiers and the fluidity of identity; the relationships between literature and history, fiction and imperialistic discourses; the politics of aesthetic delight in depictions of the “other”; the place of gender in representations of cultural difference; questions of religious identity and discourses on conversion; and the role of language and translation in negotiating and forging new identities. Course readings include travel narratives, captivity narratives, maps, novels, novellas, plays, and an opera originally written in French, Spanish, Italian, English, Arabic, and German. Graduate students from all disciplines are welcome and encouraged to participate. This course will be offered in Spring 2010.

Glaire Anderson’s seminar Exploring outside the Walls: Medieval Societies and the Suburban Landscape will examine medieval suburban architecture, landscape and social structures. It will also emphasize how medievalists have successfully bridged disciplinary boundaries and consider the possibilities and problems of cross-cultural and interdisciplinary approaches to this issue. Topics of reading and discussion will include: the discourse of the villa and its medieval “disappearance” from a perspective that looks beyond western Christendom to the Islamicate lands, Byzantium, and areas of convergence such as Sicily and North Africa; fluid relationships between monastic and residential establishments in both Christendom and Islamdom; and the ongoing debates over continuity/discontinuity between the medieval period and antiquity. The “Middle Ages” as a historiographical construction is partly predicated on the idea of the disappearance of “the villa” and its associated suburban and rural social life between late antiquity and the early modern period. It has become increasingly apparent that the study of medieval life “outside the walls” is a fruitful topic of investigation, but one which requires interdisciplinary and multicultural perspectives.
On 14-15 November, 2009, the MEMS program hosted the interdisciplinary conference “Global Encounters: Legacies of Exchange and Conflict (1000-1700)” at the Friday Center. This event was co-organized by Brett Whalen (History) and Jaroslav Folda (emeritus, Art History) with the help of Glaire Anderson (Art History); Wayne Lee (History); Carmen Hsu (Romance Languages), and Jonathan Boyarin (Religious Studies). This assembly of scholars from local universities and from around the country included fifteen panels on topics in literary studies, art history, history and other fields, ranging from the Americas and Africa to Europe, the Islamic world, and Eastern Asia. There were over seventy-five attendees over the course of two days. The conference featured an opening address by Professor Karen Kupperman (NYU), “Communication through Music in Encounter Situations,” and a closing address by Alfred J. Andrea (emeritus, UVM), “The Cult of Santiago Matamoros in Sixteenth-Century Mexico: The Adaptation of Reconquista Ideology by an Amerindian People.” Funding was provided by the Mellon Foundation, the College of Arts and Sciences, the Associate Provost for International Affairs, and the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies at Duke University.

**Introducing the new MEMS minor**

During the academic year 2008-2009, the new MEMS minor received final approval for launch during the fall semester 2009. This interdisciplinary minor provides students with a broad, humanities-based approach to the rich and fascinating cultures that flourished from around 500CE to 1800CE globally. During the next academic year, plans will begin for the design of a MEMS major. Those interested in the minor should visit our website or contact Brett Whalen (History).

**MEMS AWARDS FIRST RYAN-HEADLEY DISSERTATION FELLOWSHIP**

This year MEMS awarded the first Ryan-Headley Dissertation Fellowship to doctoral candidate Robert Policelli (History). Rob is an historian of the Italian Renaissance whose dissertation focuses on the way in which Renaissance historians, at least in part in response to a period of foreign invasions, developed a wide range of Italian narratives with varied rhetorical strategies.

The Ryan-Headley Dissertation Fellowship is made possible through a generous gift from Eminent History Professor emeritus John Headley. The Fellowship enables outstanding doctoral students working in the area of the Renaissance, roughly 1350-1700, to devote their time to producing a significant portion of the doctoral dissertation. MEMS is most grateful to Dr. Headley for recognizing this important area of need for our exceptional doctoral students, and we thank him for this valuable contribution to MEMS and to graduate education at Carolina.
Marcus Bull accepts appointment to the History Department

MEMS is happy to announce the impending appointment of Dr. Marcus Bull (effective July 1, 2010) to the History Department. He is currently professor of History at the University of Bristol in England. A noted medievalist and author of several books, Dr. Bull is also the recipient of a major grant from the British Arts and Humanities Research Council.

MEMS SPONSORS FACULTY AND GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

This year the Program in MEMS recognized the outstanding work of thirty five faculty and graduate students!

Two MEMS Faculty Research Leave Awards were given this year.

Carl Ernst (Religious Studies) will be working on his project The poetry of al-Hallaj: A translation and study. Husayn ibn Mansur al-Hallaj (the Sufi mystic executed in 922 in Baghdad) was one of the most powerful and controversial religious thinkers in early Islam, known especially for his ecstatic sayings (e.g., “I am the Truth”). His writings are a major contribution to the early Arabic literature of Islamic mysticism or Sufism. While his poetry is the largest corpus of Arabic poetry by any early Sufi, only a small portion of it has been translated into English. Ernst plans to produce a complete literary translation of his poems (ed. Massignon 1955, al-Shaybi 1973, rev. 1984, etc.) with a contextual interpretation and notes, with reference to recent scholarship, including translations of his works in European and Middle Eastern languages. For further information (including links to contemporary musical settings of his Arabic poems), see http://www.unc.edu/courses/2009spring/reli/890/042/.

On her leave, Pika Ghosh (Art) will complete writing her book, tentatively titled, Envisioning Devotion: Experiments in Imagery and Ecstasy in Early Modern Bengali Temples. Specifically, she will write the third chapter, which addresses the creation of a new composite icon on the Keshta Ray Temple at Vishnupur (1655). This chapter will introduce multiple aspects of yoga and meditation as an alternate mode to ecstatic song and dance in the quest for the divine in the worship of the popular Hindu god Krishna. Together, the new icon inside and its proliferation on the temple’s exterior sculpture, offer two modes of ascetic engagement with the divine: the path of the world renouncer, and the disinterested engagement of the householder. And finally, Ghosh will suggest that creative resonances with earlier conceptualizations of Krishna, particularly his exhortation of detached fulfillment of responsibility in the Bhagavad Gita, indicate a creative adaptation of the long and rich heritage of Krishna worship to which this community laid claim.
History professor **Melissa Meriam Bullard** plans to use her research travel grant this summer in the U.K., in Liverpool and London. She is researching the legacy of the Italian Renaissance in the Atlantic world. This summer she will be focusing on philanthropist William Roscoe, a self-styled, latter-day Lorenzo de’ Medici, who promoted the major cultural institutions founded in Liverpool in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. His philanthropic efforts attracted the attention of Americans like writer Washington Irving and President Thomas Jefferson who found inspiration in his talent for combining commerce and culture and using the later to dignify the new wealth created by the former. Roscoe’s extensive correspondence is located in the Central Library and Public Record Office in Liverpool. Bullard will consult other important papers and early editions in the British Library in London.

A MEMS research support grant will allow **Omid Safi** (Religious Studies) to make two trips to Turkey. He went there in March to look at the buildings built by Sinan in the city of Istanbul. In May and June, Safi will return to Turkey, this time examining the legacy of Sinan in the Anatolian countryside. He will be looking at a wide range of monuments, mosques, shrines, Sufi houses, public baths, caravanserais, and bridges. Safi is deeply grateful for MEMS support in bringing this project to fruition.
Rob Policelli is the inaugural recipient of the prestigious Frank Ryan and John Headley Dissertation Fellowship for outstanding graduate students working in the area of the Renaissance (1350-1700). In the fall 2009 semester, Rob will be working on finalizing his dissertation, Italy Rewritten: Renaissance Historians and the calamità d’Italia, 1494-1555. The dissertation looks at the ways in which Renaissance historians, partially in response to a catastrophic period of foreign invasions, developed a wide range of Italian historical narratives. A dominant sense of Italia and its past never emerged, but a dynamic, intertextual dialogue about the issue did. That Renaissance dialogue, in both content and form, had implications for later historical discourses on Italia, including those on the eve of Italian unification in the nineteenth century. Rob is grateful that his work in the fall semester will be funded by the Ryan-Headley Fellowship.

Three graduate students from the Departments of English and Comparative Literature and History report on how they will use their MEMS Dissertation Grants:

Matthew Lubin
History

Matthew Lubin, a third-year Ph.D. candidate in the History Department, is undertaking research on the diplomatic consequences for the entire Mediterranean of the Cyprus War between Venice and the Ottomans in 1570-71, for the sixty or so years after that war. The MEMS dissertation grant allowed him to travel to Istanbul and then to Kyrenia and Nicosia, Cyprus, between December 2008 and May 2009, and to use Ottoman documents in both places to better round out his picture of political developments and strategic calculations during this important period. These findings have complemented his earlier work, in the Venice State Archive and in the Vatican Secret Archive, in 2008.

Katy Smith
History

My dissertation focuses on the lives of white, black, and Indian mothers in the early American South, exploring everything from their thoughts about childrearing to their more public roles as teachers, farmers, and even politicians. Having the MEMS Dissertation Fellowship this semester has allowed me to take several research trips to archives in neighboring states and to actually begin the process of writing the dissertation. As the semester comes to a close, I have written drafts of my first three chapters, an accomplishment which I could not have achieved without the support of MEMS. Thank you!

Calls for proposals for all grants and awards will go out in October 2009. Please check the website for updates and forms: http://mems.unc.edu
This grant will support my progress as I continue researching and writing my dissertation, *The Experiments of Defeat: Royalist Disillusionment and the Development of Flexible Social Identity in Post-Civil War England*. Through an assessment of the literature of the period, I argue that English subjects responded to the institutional failures exposed during the conflicts of the Civil War and Interregnum by imagining a social identity unmoored from the demands of stable authorities. I focus on the intersections of poetry and polemic in canonical authors - Jonson and Milton- as well as some of their less lauded contemporaries – Cowley, Stanley, Cavendish- to examine the experiments with alternative methods of making meaning in a confused culture.

**Graduate Research Support Awards** were given to six students this year in the departments of Art, English, History, and Romance Languages.

**Krysta Black**
Art

My MEMS research award will be used to conduct preliminary research this summer for my dissertation *The León Bible of 960 and Early Spanish Bible Illustration*, which focuses on the program of illustration of the Codex Biblicus Legionensis (León, Archivo Capitular, Real Colegiata de San Isidoro, cod. 2). I will use my award to travel to the Index of Christian Art at Princeton University. I also plan to visit the Morgan Library in New York to see the tenth-century Morgan Beatus.

**Jonathan O’Conner**
Romance Languages

My dissertation research will center on Diego López de Ayala’s sixteenth-century Spanish translation of a fragment of Giovanni Boccaccio’s *Filocolo*. The purpose of the study will be to consider the text within its context, i.e., as it may relate to phenomena such as attempts to establish a specialized printing industry similar to that of Giolito in Venice, the development of a prestigious literary vernacular, the importance of the sentimental novel, and attempts to establish a literary canon. I have used the MEMS research award to obtain a microfilm of the complete copy of the unpublished text from the Austrian National Library’s collection. I have also booked a trip to Madrid in July, where I will spend a couple of weeks doing research in the Biblioteca Nacional.

**Nathaniel Stogdill**
English

This award will fund research at four libraries with extensive early modern archives - the British Library in London, the Newberry Library in Chicago, the Huntington Library in Los Angeles, and the Folger Library in Washington, DC- in support of my dissertation, *The Experiments of Defeat: Royalist Disillusionment and the Development of Flexible Social Identity in Post-Civil War England*. My project requires that I account for contemporary responses to the texts that I examine. Each of these collections has significant holdings of my relevant texts and should provide the extensive marginalia necessary for me to develop my argument.
MEMS SPONSORS FACULTY AND GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Benjamin Reed

History

I will be using my MEMS Graduate Research Support Award for a preliminary research trip to Mexico City this summer during the months of June and July. My primary goals are to survey and, when possible, reproduce sermons and other archival material related to preaching in seventeenth century Mexico City. I plan to visit Mexico's National Archive, the historical notarial archive, the Mexico City Cathedral archives and the CONDUMEX library, which contains a wide array of historical printed literature. I also hope to meet and foster professional contacts with scholars at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México and the Universidad Iberoamericana working on related research topics.

Faculty Conference Travel Grants were awarded to Reid Barbour (English), Carmen Hsu (ROML), Hassan Melehy (ROML), Ennio Rao (ROML), Ellen Welch (ROML), and Jessica Wolfe (English and Comparative Literature).

Graduate Conference Travel Grants were awarded to Brandon Essary (ROML), Matthew Lubin (History), Michael John Maher (ROML), Jocelyn McDaniel (German), Dustin Mengelkoch (English), Nicolay Ostrau (German), Jennifer Mi-Young Park (English), Mary Raschko (English), Nathaniel Stogdill (English), and Joseph Wallace (English).

MEMS WELCOMES NEW FACULTY

Department of Religious Studies:

Evyatar Marienberg (PhD, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales)
I will be joining the Department of Religious Studies at UNC this July. My doctorate is from the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) in Paris. Among other things, I am interested in Jewish practices and customs in the Middle Ages, with a particular focus on regulation of marital sexuality. In the coming year I will have two courses dealing with medieval sources: one on the Jewish legal literature, and one on medieval Jewish Bible exegesis.

Department of Romance Languages and Literatures (French):

Ellen Welch (PhD, University of Pennsylvania)
Professor Welch joined the Romance Languages and Literatures faculty in Fall 2008 after receiving her PhD in Comparative Literature from the University of Pennsylvania. A specialist in seventeenth-century French literature, she is completing a book manuscript on the problem of exoticism in the early modern French novel. Other research interests include early modern translation theories and practices, Mediterranean studies, and the role of theater and performance arts in seventeenth-century diplomacy.

Department of History:

Ahmed El Shamsy (PhD, Harvard University)
Ahmed El Shamsy's research focuses on the history of North Africa and the Middle East between the seventh and fifteenth centuries. He is particularly interested in intellectual history, cultures of orality and literacy, education, and Islamic law. His doctoral dissertation at Harvard, which he is reworking into a book, examined the early evolution of Islamic law and its institutions in ninth-century Egypt. Other current and upcoming projects analyze the formal aspects of medieval Muslim education, and investigate the nexus of tribal affiliation, religious allegiances, and communal identity in premodern North Africa. His passion is medieval Arabic manuscripts, and he is also working on editions of a number of texts that he has discovered.
The Medieval and Early Modern Studies Program (MEMS) is pleased to announce the establishment of the Donald J. Gilman, Jr. Award. The award or awards are intended to support research in any field in medieval and early modern studies undertaken by doctoral-level students or by MEMS faculty. Research support will assist recipients to travel to collections of primary sources in specialized libraries both within and outside the United States, and will include expenses related to the publication of scholarship in the field. Gilman award(s) were granted to doctoral research students this year, Robert Policelli (History) and Christopher Currie (Art), and will be granted to MEMS faculty in the academic year 2009-2010, with this alternating pattern of awarding grants to continue in successive years.

The Gilman Award is made possible by a generous gift from Dr. Donald W. Gilman, Jr., Professor of French at Ball State University, who received the AB and PhD degrees from The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Dr. Gilman hopes that the award will “facilitate discovery, documentation, and the dissemination of knowledge in medieval and early modern studies.”

MEMS faculty and students extend their deepest appreciation to Dr. Gilman for his support of significant, cutting-edge research.

**PROGRAM WEBSITE**

The Medieval and Early Modern Studies website may be visited at http://mems.unc.edu. The site features information about courses and opportunities being offered to undergraduate and graduate students, faculty research and teaching, upcoming events, and information on MEMS sponsored awards and grants. We invite you to browse our website regularly for additional program news.
SUPPORT MEMS!

We are deeply indebted to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the College of Arts and Sciences for providing the seed money to establish the Program in Medieval and Early Modern Studies. The continued success of the program, however, depends on the support of the University’s alumni and friends, and we are grateful for all gifts. If you are interested in learning about ways that you may give to MEMS, please contact Margaret Costley at the UNC Arts and Sciences Foundation. Margaret will be happy to talk with you about the many opportunities to share in the success of this program.

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